Chapter 14
Orixality in Africas–Brazils:
Outlining an Aesthetic-Epistemological Perspective in Brazilian Popular Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This chapter outlines the initial theoretical contours of an aesthetic-epistemological imaginative space referred to as Orixality. It also introduces the foundations of the Africas-Brazil category. The analysis considers a range of aesthetic, cultural and ethical codes rooted in Brazilian culture, more specifically those situated in Afro-diasporic religiosities and popular thought. In dialogue with Brazilian popular philosophy (Haddock-Lobo, 2020) intersecting with various fields of knowledge, the article proposes an ethical perspective shaped by multiple artistic languages. What is meant by Orixality becomes a central element in the process of construction of identities and cultural assemblages in contemporary contexts.

INTRODUCTION

These dangerous gentiles, who had begun to proclaim the Brazilians' mission against Brazil itself, were well-versed in many intentions, machinations, and spells—masters of pembas and mandingas, doctors of fire, deception, and mumunhas, stripped of mugingas and canjiras.
(Luiz Antonio Simas, Luiz Rufino, Rafael Haddock-Lobo. Fall on the way up)[2]

This chapter seeks to cover some territories of knowledge constructed from the multiple languages of Afro-diasporic religiosities, more specifically those that are mediated and based on the rites and codes of Umbanda and Candomblé. It aims, first, to establish a geopolitical design on the epistemic location of certain ethical and aesthetic codes of these cultural and religious spaces. After an established epistemic location, the chapter will explain the first contours of *Orixality*, as an aesthetic-epistemological imaginative space referenced in Afro-diasporic matrices.

This inquiry is grounded in a broader effort to engage with a geography of reason[3] through which aesthetic and epistemological paradigms circulate—paradigms with which this chapter will engage critically in order to articulate a situated ethics and aesthetics. This spatio-temporal category, understood as *Africas-Brazils*, emerges from an understanding of *Africas* as a primordial yet inherently diverse and plural ancestral reference.

It brings together, on the one hand, the African cultural matrices brought by different peoples from African territories during the colonial process of enslavement, with their cultural, ethical, and cosmogonic singularities and infinities, and, even today, it continues to mark the places of memory and trauma of enslavement. On the other hand, the category also foregrounds forms of resistance/reexistence understood as dynamic processes of power, negotiation, and cultural construction within the new territory in which these communities became rooted.

In this sense, the set of philosophical, aesthetic and ethical assemblages of Afrodiasporic communities are intimately linked to the historical time of enslavement. The transatlantic slave trade in Brazil was marked by a brutal chapter in history defined by the forced arrival of enslaved Africans, who brought with them a vast diversity of cultures, ethical frameworks, and cosmogonies. This process of enslavement not only established unequal power relations, but also profoundly shaped the formation of Brazilian identity. The concept of "Africas-Brazils", as mentioned in the text, represents this complex and dynamic interaction between African cultural matrices and the constructions of resistance and reexistence forged in Brazil. Afro-diasporic religiosities, such as Umbanda and Candomblé, are examples of how African traditions have remained alive and reinvented themselves in the Brazilian context, influencing the country's cultural, aesthetic, and ethical landscape.

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