



# **Forró and Redemptive Regionalism from the Brazilian Northeast: Popular Music in a Culture of Migration (Latin America)**

*Jack A. Draper III*

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For the many poor and working-class Northeastern Brazilians who have been displaced from their home region for economic reasons, the music of *forró* is a redemptive attempt at establishing an immanent relationship to history and community in the diaspora. The redemption explored in this book is multifaceted, including a desire to return home as part of a larger workforce in a sustainable economy, the desire to see the region's rich culture celebrated throughout Brazil, and to ensure that its traditional legacies are both preserved and further enriched through respectful innovation. The acute perceptiveness of *forró* musicians in portraying the diasporic experience of Northeastern Brazilians is elaborated in various chapters, including: one chapter focused on lyrical, musical, and collective representations or manifestations of diasporic nostalgia (*saudade*), another chapter analyzing the lyrico-musical representation of rural workers' alienation from – and resistance to – life in the urban centers, and a third chapter which contextualizes *forró*'s descriptions of the experiences of Brazil's internal migrants, utilizing an array of testimonials and academic studies on the subject of interregional migration to reveal both the wisdom of *forró* lyricists and some of their blind spots. The study also includes a historical analysis of this Northeastern genre's transformation from a rhythm called *baião* that symbolically represented the Northeast as a simple, coherent entity, to *forró*, a more allegorical representation with a greater appreciation for the class, gender, racial, and generational complexity of the region. The development of the genre, as well as the circulation of theory related to cultural production and identity, are contextualized in a global economy.

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