



University of Otago

Samba and the Afro-Brazilian *Favela* Communities

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Abstract:

The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the relationship between samba and the Afro-Brazilian *favela* community. To achieve this, a thorough literature review was conducted and the responses of six people involved in the wider samba community to questions on the subject of study were examined. This study shows that a symbiotic relationship between samba and the *favela* has evolved over the past century. Just as samba depended on the tenacity of the Afro-Brazilians living in the *favelas* to survive police persecution in the early years, so these communities depended and continue to depend on samba as a political, educational and unifying tool. Afro-Brazilian culture is passed on through the oral tradition of samba and its importance has recently been recognized by both UNESCO and the Brazilian government, as an intangible heritage.

Contributing to the extensive literature that exists on samba, are the voices of my participants, who discussed the topics of the relationship between the *favela* and samba, samba as a symbol of national identity, samba as an industry and current threats to samba. The latter is a relatively new topic, which deserves further exploration. This thesis shows that the relationship between the *favela* and samba is indeed very strong. Samba culture reinforces community and the *favela* community supports the production and perpetuation of samba culture.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Hypothesis

Samba has risen out of the shadow of marginalization into the world's spotlight. It's metamorphosis from the shuffling of bare feet, danced spontaneously to the clapping of hands and the beat of the drum, to intricately choreographed schools of 5000 people during an internationally televised *carnaval* parade, can be attributed to a combination of factors, however, its origin is indisputable: samba is Afro-Brazilian. The survival of samba during the years of police persecution is greatly accredited to the tenacity and persistence of the Afro-Brazilian communities and the existence of *favelas*, which offered protection and room for cultivation of this art form. The *favela* communities, in turn, reap multiple benefits from their investment in samba culture.

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between samba and the Afro-Brazilian *favela* community. To achieve this, I will investigate the responses of six people deeply involved in the samba world in regards to a number of questions on the subject of study.

Chapter Two of this thesis provides an overview of the significant literature that relates to both samba and Afro-Brazilian culture. In order to discuss current social, political and cultural issues, it was imperative to first research thoroughly the history of the country, exploring the heritages and treatment of the people who today are considered to be *Brazilian*. This thesis includes the examination of texts written in Portuguese (which are unavailable in English), forming a rich

bibliography of literature authored by those studying Brazil from within and afar.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology that was employed in this study; laying out the qualitative techniques used to collect data in order to explore the research questions. This chapter fulfills the requirements of a Science Communication masters to produce both an academic and creative component of the thesis.

Chapter Four presents the data analysis of the interviewees' responses to questions based around samba and the *favela* community, looking specifically at responses which were relevant to the four central themes. Interviewees' perspectives together with literature on the subject were discussed on the topics of: The relationship between the *favela* and samba; Samba as a symbol of national identity; Samba as an industry and Current threats to samba culture. This chapter aims to provide new insights into areas of current academic discussion and to offer new topics for discussion, which have only recently surfaced.

Chapter Five provides a review of the topics covered in this study and summarizes my findings, highlighting gaps in literature that could benefit from more extensive research.

Chapter Two: The Historical Context of Brazil and Samba

This literature review aims to provide some background history and discussion regarding Afro-Brazilian identity and samba, which are the main components in chapter four. To understand the need to form an Afro-Brazilian identity, it is of utmost importance to first understand the history of the African population in Brazil, which is also included in this section. *Carnaval*, the biggest manifestation of samba in Brazil, is the cause of much debate over the authenticity, cultural ownership and the effects of commercialization of this event. As it's origins and celebrations are not exclusive to the samba world, there is also a separate section dedicated to *carnaval*. Laced on occasion, between excerpts from literature on the subjects, are the voices of my interviewees, who reinforce, with their life experiences, the words of the scholars.

2.1 The African Population in Brazil

2.1.1 Transatlantic slave trade

Between four to five million Africans were brought to Brazil by the Portuguese and enslaved for over three centuries, starting in the year 1538 and ending in the abolition of slavery in 1888, until which time, Blacks were not considered citizens in Brazil. This number does not include the multitudes that died on route or those brought via illegal slave trading. Brazil was the last country to abolish slavery. Most of these Africans were brought from areas that are now called Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Angola, Congo and Mozambique. Mainly, because of the sheer number of slaves brought to Brazil, in comparison with the number brought to North America and also perhaps due to the more lenient slave management of the Portuguese, African musical and spiritual traditions survived in a purer form in Brazil (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 395; McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 10; Ortiz, 1994, p. 36). The attitude of the European towards the African over the time of slavery was far from respectful, however, which made it challenging to continue their cultural ways in this harsh environment.

The metaphysical conceptions, the philosophical ideas, the structure of African's religions, rituals, and liturgies, never received respect or consideration as values constituting the identity of a national spirit. And while despising the culture, the Europeans reinforced the racial rejection (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 393).

The African people were not the only ones to suffer this rejection. The music writer Schreiner (2002, p. 7), when discussing the colonization of Brazil wrote that the Amerindians were assimilated into the stronger, newly formed Afro-Iberian culture. Unfortunately both the native Indians of Brazil and the enslaved

Africans suffered the similar degrading treatment by the Portuguese colonists, which gave them an inferiority complex and destroyed their self esteem (Lopes, 1992).

2.1.2 Palmares and resistance

According to Gilberto Freyre, Brazilian society was formed by “balancing antagonisms”. The most friction being between the master and the slave (Freyre & Putnam, 1946, p. 79). Not all enslaved Africans took their fate easily.

Throughout the duration of slavery in Brazil, numerous Africans rebelled against the fate forced upon them, risking severe punishment or death by running away from the plantations and forming illegal settlements called *quilombos*. Palmares was the most famous *quilombo* in the state of Pernambuco, as it was repeatedly attacked by the both the Dutch and the Portuguese during the 17th century yet managed to resist for around seventy years. Quilombos such as this were an obvious threat to the institution of slavery. At one stage, Palmares grew to encompass, according to differing sources, between 20,000 to 30,000 people. Unaffected by the rules or religion of the European colonists, their cultural and religious traditions were preserved (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 394; Levine, 1979, p. 178; McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 11; Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 12).

“Palmares represents the first heroic and desperate outcry of the Africans against the disintegration of their culture in the lands in the New World” (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 395). The last leader of Palmares was Zumbi, whose name, along with that of Palmares, represents black resistance in Brazil. In 1695, a year after Palmares was finally defeated, Zumbi was found and killed (Levine, 1979, p. 227). This insistence to hold fast to their culture was not limited to the *quilombos*, but an attitude of Afro-Brazilian people across the entire country. Zeca Ligiéro (2011, p. 137) says that it was due to the

persistence of the Afro-Brazilian people that their cultural expressions endured the constant discrimination of the state.

2.1.3 Cultural 'bleaching', assimilation and miscegenation

During Brazil's colonial years, efforts were spent to keep the African population separate from the European settlers, however that attitude slowly changed and the idea of strength and uniqueness arising from the mixing of blood became attractive. From the late 1920's miscegenation was considered a base on which to unify Brazil.

The wide-ranging spectrum of skin colors among the population was promoted as proof of cordial race relations and interracial harmony. Prior to this time, blackness, the large Afro-Brazilian population, and their poor condition were perceived by elites as a hindrance to becoming a modern nation (Da Costa, 2010, p. 375).

Marshall (1966, p. 120) mocks the fact that Brazil is often put on a pedestal as an example of a racially harmonious country and suggests that it is simply a ticking time bomb. At some stage, the all too accepting Afro-Brazilian is sure to recognize the discrimination and revolt. The sociologist and historian Gilberto Freyre's concept of creating a truly 'Brazilian' identity by encouraging the mixing of the three dominant races (African, European and Amerindian), thus creating an extra-European hybrid, offered a possible new beginning (Freyre as cited by Browning, 1995, p. 5; Freyre & Putnam, 1946, p. 3; Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 22)

This *harmonious mix* and the writings of Gilberto Freyre have been the topic of many a carnival parade, celebrated energetically by whites and blacks alike (Mussa & Simas, 2010, pp. 80-81). Sheriff (1999, p. 22) suggests that although the inhabitants of the *favelas* scoff at the notion that Brazil is the embodiment of racial democracy, during *carnaval*, they wholeheartedly participate in the

nationalist illusion as they see the festival as the symbolizing a utopian Brazil. “For poor people of color, the carioca carnival is less about Brazil as it is than about Brazil as it ought to be” (Sheriff, 1999, p. 22). Freyre believed that Brazil did not propagate the same racism as was experienced in South Africa and the United States, and that its cultural diversity was indeed the way forward (Browning, 1995, p. 5; Sheriff, 1999, p. 7)

A book published nearly fifty years ago by British author Marshall (1966, p. 121) also claims that there was “no harsh prejudice” in Brazil, as existed in the USA and that “the Brazilians are infinitely generous in their definition of white”. This last comment implies that those of mixed blood are also welcomed into the ‘white’ bracket, whereas they would be considered ‘black’ in the United States or South Africa. The very fact that the word ‘generous’ is used seems to imply that anyone of mixed heritage should consider it a privilege to be considered white.

Vianna discusses what constitutes ‘Brazilian identity’ as perceived by Sílvio Romero around the time of the abolishment of slavery. “Brazilian culture began with race mixing”(Vianna, 1999, p. 48). The various racial components that now fill the veins of most Brazilians, such as indigenous Indian, African and European, were not considered to be ‘Brazilian’ prior to the inevitable miscegenation. This means that in effect, things ‘Brazilian’ only existed once the racial mixing began. This mentality may seem to embrace the various cultures, however, in truth, the government encouraged this racial mixing in an attempt to thin out the African and Amerindian blood in Brazilian society. Smith (1972, p. 63) suggests that the offspring of upper-class white men who had taken Indian female slaves as their wives or mistresses, not only gained the status of their white father but were a

product of their father's contribution to the 'bleaching' of the darker populations. This general desire of the elite to 'whiten or bleach' Brazil, opened up the borders to European immigrants. According to Vianna (1999, p. 50), "The intellectual valorization of race mixing reflected a desire for national unity and homogeneity..." He goes on to say that:

Immigration was prized by nationalists when it promised to "whiten" the population. Romero thought that we needed to Brazilianize the Germans so that they could whiten and civilize us – an almost anthropophagous approach.

This comment regarding the Germans refers to the fact that the German immigrants preferred to keep to themselves and tended not to intermarry with the other races. The Germans referred to above were among many immigrants groups welcomed into Brazil for the simple purpose of creating racial balance in a country "which as of 1890 was one-third mulatto, and majority non-white"(Andrews, 1996, p. 485). These European immigrants helped thin out the blood of the 'other' regional groups according to the 1920 census (Andrews, 1996, p. 486; Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 20).

...one simply needs to look at Law Decree 7967 from 1945, regarding the regulation of immigration, to verify the inconsistency of the racial democracy narrative. According to this decree, the country had 'the need to preserve and develop, in the ethnic composition of the population, the more desirable characteristics of its European ancestry (Soares, 2012, p. 77).

Smith (1972, p. 74), however, argues that although opening the boarders to Europeans contributed to cultural bleaching, the bleaching would have occurred regardless (though perhaps at a slower rate), due to the extra-marital 'adventures' of upper-class white men, who through their illegitimate children, fulfilled the desires of the state.

Sheriff (2003, p. 5) points out that Brazil seems to support two conflicting views towards the formation of 'Brazilian Identity'. On one hand, Brazil claims not to be as racist as other colonizing nations, however, it simultaneously encourages cultural bleaching "which asserts that blackness is a problem, a stigmatized identity that ought to be erased through miscegenation." Miscegenation, however, has not been the resolution for discrimination between the races and has simply been used to negate the fact that racism exists (Da Costa, 2010, p. 377). The concept of *democracia racial* has been frequently criticized, as is seen in the writings of Abdias Do Nascimento (1978, p. 397), where it is noted that racism, within Brazil, is disguised as 'racial democracy'. Although it seems less aggressive than the racism of the United States, the effect is equally unjust. The many comments that surfaced during my interviews, alluding to the fact that racism still exists in Brazil today, are proof that the old mentality has not completely dissipated.

A strange democracy indeed that only allowed the Black the right to become white, inside and outside. The pass-words of this "imperialism of whiteness" became assimilation, acculturation but in the depths of the theory, the belief in the inferiority of the Blacks persisted, untouched (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 396).

Even with the supposed *democracia racial*, Brazilians of African heritage have been kept at a continual disadvantage. Among many contributing factors to their disadvantaged state are poverty and illiteracy. According to Marshall (1966, pp. 133-135), in the mid 20th Century illiterate Brazilians were not allowed to vote, meaning that over half the adult population of Brazil had no political voice. He predicted a revolution when the elite finally notice how big the favelas (shantytowns) are becoming.

2.1.4 The *favela*

A *favela* is the name commonly used in Brazil to mean a shantytown. The name came from a bush, which covered the hills surrounding the town of Canudos, where soldiers camped out during the war of Canudos. Setting up a makeshift shack in the *favela* came to mean on the hills, which is where most of Rio de Janeiro's shantytowns are situated (Cabral, 1996, p. 30). Neuwirth (2005) mentions that over the years, people living in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro have opted to use different, perhaps less derogatory terms for the shantytowns they live in, such as *morro* (hill), *comunidade* (community) or *bairro* (neighborhood) depending on where they are situated (as cited by Williams, 2008, p. 484). These differing terms will appear throughout the various quotes in this thesis, however all refer to a "deprived area on the outskirts of a town" (Dictionaries, 2012). Those living in *favelas* were initially referred to as *favelado*. I have chosen not to use this derogative term, however, as it has come to mean anyone who lives a life of poverty and illegality (Valladares), which I have found not to represent, by any stretch of the imagination, the predominant inhabitant of a *favela*.

The term *comunidade* or community is frequently used and highlights the difference in life style between the poor in the *favela* and the more affluent outside. Within the *favela*, there is a neighborhood support system that creates solidarity amongst those neglected by society. The concept of social capital, as discussed by Worms (2009, p. 15), becomes very important in an environment where 'individualistic living' is not an option. Inhabitants look out for each other and exchange favors at times of need. Individuals establish relationships, share

resources and build networks to take advantage of collective capital.

“Community development results from the compilation of skills that are used to incite positive change within a particular neighborhood” (Worms, 2009, p. 17).

As a result of the 1940 housing crisis caused by the sudden migration of Afro-Brazilians to the capital, along with the evacuation of many Afro-Brazilians from the centre of the city, huge numbers of Afro-Brazilians were forced to settle in the outskirts of town and in the hills above Rio’s most affluent areas, creating the first *favelas* (Barke, Escasany, & O'Hare, 2001, p. 262; Cabral, 1996, p. 30).

The Brazilian state has had a complex and contentious relationship with Rio's favelas. Settled illegally by ex-slaves and new urban migrants over the course of the last hundred years, favelas have received only sporadic improvements in basic urban services. State intervention, for the most part, has been limited to policing, repression, and clientelist vote seeking (Arias, 2004, p. 1).

In 2011, the number of *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro was recorded in an article in the Telegraph (2011) to be around 1000. The many samba schools of Rio de Janeiro are based within these *favelas*, mainly occupied by a population of Afro-Brazilian descent (Pravaz, 2008, p. 81).

The *favela* and its adversities have often been the motivation behind the lyrics of *samba do morro* (samba from the *favela*). Dicro and Bezerra da Silva (who lived in the *favela* Cantagalo where I conducted my research), were famous for singing sambas that spoke of prejudice towards and the unfair treatment of *favela* residents, the violent, criminal side of *favela* life, as well as writing lyrics that protested against the undemocratic regime. (Barke et al., 2001, p. 263; McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 54).

The rebellious nature of these samba lyrics were not appreciated by the government, as mentioned by Barke et al. (2001, p. 263): “Symptomatic of the “undesirable” nature of the favela was the attempt of the Vargas regime to introduce censorship of samba lyrics.”

The link between the *favela* and samba will be discussed more in depth in a subsequent chapter. However, it is important to note that parallels could be drawn between the development of samba and the development of the *favelas*. Just as samba went through various adaptations to be better suited to the middle and upper classes, so did the *favelas*. Barke et al. (2001, p. 269) claim that:

Poverty, black identity and spatial separateness from the “mainstream” were essential contributors to the birth of the favelas and the samba. Somewhat later, censorship of samba lyrics (the whitening of the popular in line with progress and modernity through its appropriation by the middle classes), and a general acceptance of the desirability of eradicating favelas, seem to have been closely associated. The emergence of a more “refined” samba form, appealing to the middle classes, was equally paralleled by a turn towards a policy of incorporating favelas into the wider urban structure.

Perhaps as a result of the fact that *favelas* have received very little support from the state until recently, they have developed within them a sub-society of their own, with which they identify. According to a UNESCO Brasil study performed earlier this year: “The area residents feel more threatened living outside the favela than inside them. The outside world is the unknown; discrimination and prejudice are very much present and the rules of the city are seen as strange and unreliable”(UNESCO, 2012).

2.2 Afro-Brazilian' identity

The term Afro-Brazilian refers to Brazilians of African descent, which could mean *Negros* (blacks) or *Pardos* (of mixed blood). “The choice of “Afro” -meant to emphasize ancestry rather than the traditional Brazilian focus on color- became equivalent to a political statement”(Cultures, 1996). One might ask why the Africans, who were brought by force to the ‘new world’, bothered to create new religious cults, along with music and dance forms, unique to Brazil, instead of simply continuing their old traditional practices. The main reason for this is that slaves were brought from a number of regions of Africa, each with their own languages, customs and religions. Many families were separated upon arrival in Brazil and slaves from differing regions of Africa ended up working alongside each other on the same sugarcane plantations. These Africans pooled their common customs and elements of religious rituals to recreate new cults, to accommodate the different ethnic groups in this new world. For this reason, a new identity of multi-ethnic origins was formed, strengthened by common elements of spirituality and culture. “A process of unification based on the slaves’ common cultural values was necessary, since those working on the Brazilian plantations came from many different African regions and cultures” (Schreiner, 2002, p. 14).

This new *Afro-Brazilian* identity was a form of negritude and created a sense of solidarity for the Africans and their descendants, who had lost all other sense of security under the hardships of slavery. These African people who came, recreated their spirituality and dances in Brazil based around song, dance and

drumming. In his article titled '*Batucar, cantar, dançar*', Zeca Ligiéro (2011, p. 136) explains:

No afã de recuperar rituais e celebrações antigas são criadas novas e vigorosas tradições, genuinamente africanas, mas miscigenadas dentro do próprio processo formador do país. (In the rush to recover ancient rituals and celebrations, new and vigorous traditions were created, genuinely African, but blended within the formation process of the country.)

Ortiz (1994, p. 134) explains that the collective memory of folk groups is maintained by repeated celebrations of traditions such as Afro-Brazilian rituals.

The oral history of these people is passed on through song, dance and ritual.

There were two main eras of radically differing attitudes towards Afro-Brazilian cultural practices. The harsh times of severe discrimination experienced by enslaved Africans, which began at the time of colonization, were gradually replaced by an acceptance and to some extent, even support of cultural events by the Brazilians of European descent. Some scholars have attributed the change in attitude to be economically motivated. It was noted that Blacks worked better when occasionally allowed to have fun the way they did in their homeland. Zeca Ligiéro (2011, pp. 137-138). Aside from this, it has been suggested that the overtly sexual dance movements of the *batuque* sometimes resulted in coupling of dancers, providing even more slaves for the owner (Zeca Ligiéro, 2011, pp. 137-138; Perna, 2005, p. 48).

2.2.1 Afro-Brazilian religions and cultural expressions

2.2.1.1 Candomblé

The Afro-Brazilian religious cult Candomblé was created in the New World yet derives from a pre-existing ancient belief system based around *Orixás*. The Brazilian authorities partially tolerated the worship of African deities, which allowed the recreation and perpetuation of their spirituality through the practice of oral tradition (Zeca Ligiéro, 2011, p. 141). Despite efforts by the Church and the state to repress Afro-Brazilian religions, they became a huge part of Brazilian life and had a strong influence on Brazilian music. Candomblé derives from the same Yoruba roots as santería in Cuba, shango in Trinidad and Haitian voodoo, which became known as voodoo in Louisiana. “Religious, Ceremonial, and festive African music form the basis of Afro-Brazilian songs and dances that eventually developed into various musical forms: afoxé, jongo, lundo, samba, maracatu, and more” (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 16).

Slaves organized themselves into *irmandades* or brotherhoods under the umbrella of the Catholic Church. This gradual assimilation happened first in Rio in 1639 and

...can be regarded as the beginning of what later would become their complete integration into society.... They preserved, on the one hand, their traditional African culture in their annual festivals, such as the *congadas* [a religious and cultural manifestation] while on the other hand, they integrated into these festivals cultural norms borrowed from the Europeans (Schreiner, 2002, p. 16).

These brotherhoods allowed blacks to play music and parade on Church holidays during which a great number of popular songs and dances came about.

Thus, because many slaves from particular cultural groups in Arica belonged to the same irmandades after they arrived in Brazil, they were able to continue their homeland traditions. In many cases, they syncretized elements of their own festivals and ceremonies with those of the Catholic Church (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, pp. 10-11).

Zeca Ligiéro (2011, pp. 137-138) suggests that traditional dance, aside from bringing back memories of their homeland, also creates emotional and spiritual ties between those who share the same destiny of slavery. Dance, song and drumming are fundamental parts of African culture and are used in religious ritual and entertainment alike, often simultaneously. The presence of a *roda* or circle of clapping people, in which the dancers dance, forms the base of African dance. The concept of using music to organize people and convey history is not a foreign concept. Attali (1985, p. 30) suggests that “primordially, the production of music has as its function the creation, legitimation, and maintenance of order.” He goes on to explain that it’s main function is its power as social regulator, not so much the modern aesthetic use. This idea of music creating order could easily be associated with African religious rituals, as there is never a ritual without music and dance, and the steps of these repeated rituals are guided by music. It is of utmost importance to first understand the significance of the circle or *roda* in Afro-Brazilian culture. A *roda* is the coming together of a cultural community, who form a circle with their bodies. It keeps energy within the circle and protects those in the centre from possible threats outside. A *roda* is formed in most Afro-Brazilian cultural celebrations such as *capoeira*, *Candomblé* and *samba*. In the Brazilian martial art *capoeira*, the *roda* may never be broken otherwise the energy of the game is thought to be lost. As people leave the *roda*,

others shift to close the gaps and keep the focus and energy on what is happening in the middle. During the time of slavery, when *capoeira* was forbidden by the authorities, the *roda* served to protect those playing and training in the centre from slave owners on the outside (Browning, 1995, p. 29).

Although the majority of Brazilians are Roman Catholic (Smith, 1972, p. 511), Candomblé and the more recent Umbanda cults have a decent following and a very strong and undeniable presence in Brazil. Perhaps a good example of the attitude towards blacks in the early 1900's, is the complete disregard of their spirituality in the chapter on religion in the book *Brazil After A Century of Independence* by American author James (1925, p. 527). Although in an earlier chapter (p. 259) it is written that in the year 1830, there were over 650,000 more people of African heritage than white, the chapter on religion made no mention of the existence of Afro-Brazilian religious cults, claiming that Brazil was made up of Roman Catholic followers and a smaller number of Protestants. Almost fifty years later, the chapter written about religious affiliations in the book *Brazil People and Institutions* by yet another American author Smith (1972, p. 511) included Afro-Brazilian religions, however a comment suggested that those belonging to Afro-Brazilian cults were "nearly always nominal Catholics". In contrast to James' account of religion in Brazil is a very recent book by the American authors McGowan and Pessanha (2009), who discuss Afro-Brazilian cults in great detail, over a number of chapters, clearly illustrating the change in attitudes over time.

2.2.1.2 Capoeira

Capoeira is an acrobatic Afro-Brazilian martial art, played in a circle to music. It is mainly a non-contact sport played between two people at a time, who display their mastery of movement and trickery (Hedegard, 2012, p. 515; Lewis, 1995, p. 222). This rhythmic martial art was seen as a threat and suffered a similar persecution to Candomblé until it became obvious that the white middle class also began participating in the sport (Browning, 1995, p. 30).

Capoeira is another Kongo-derived tradition, a fighting game performed to percussive music. The moves are fluid, elegant, and potentially devastating if used for effect. Blacks in Brazil trained capoeira for defense of the quilombos –communities composed of escaped slaves-and its practice was prohibited by white authorities (Browning, 1995, p. 29).

The dance-like ginga move and playful off-balance nature of the game served to disguise this otherwise highly skilled fight training as a dance. A capoeirista (player of capoeira) could be viewed as a musician, a poet, a fighter and a master of trickery (Hedegard, 2012, p. 515). The pace of the game was easily changed by the musicians to warn players that there were onlookers, at which time the game would discretely take on a more acrobatic dance-like nature to avoid trouble. Training often in the sugarcane fields on Bahian plantations, they played low to the ground, as not to be seen by the slave owners.

2.3 Samba

2.3.1 The origins of word *samba*

There are varying beliefs as to the origin of the word *samba*, yet most historians believe it comes from Africa. It is generally believed that the word *samba* came from Angola, where the Kimbundu word *semba* refers to the *umbigada*, (a movement made with the navel to invite another to dance)(McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 19; Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 46). *Samba* has its roots in the African *batuque*, which was already danced in Brazil. The dancers formed a circle and clapped hands in time using the *umbigada* to summon the next dancer (Browning, 1995, pp. 18-19; Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 406; Perna, 2005, p. 48). During my interview with Afro-Brazilian Performance scholar Zeca Ligiero (2012), I was introduced to the idea that the word *samba* has a double meaning in Africa: to dance and to pray. Supporting Zeca Ligiero's claim, literature on the subject suggests that the Sudanese word *san-ba* and the Kimbundu word *sánba* also mean 'to pray' (Fryer, 2000, p. 103; Raphael, 1990, p. 74). For the African, spirituality and entertainment are one in the same, whereas for us Westerners they are separated. In his article *Batucar-Cantar-Dançar*, Zeca Ligiero (2011, p. 135) writes:

Dessa forma, podemos entender que a clássica separação entre religião e entretenimento também não se aplica no caso das performances africanas, que são formas complementares dentro do mesmo ritual. (In this way, we can understand that the classic separation of religion and entertainment does not apply in the case of African performances, as they are complimentary forms within the same ritual.)

2.3.2 Birth and development of the music genre and dance form samba

Samba is an Afro-Brazilian music and dance genre, which came from the North East of Brazil and was kept alive, despite repression, in the Afro-Brazilian communities of Rio de Janeiro. However, one could argue that without the influences of other European music forms in the early 1900's or the growing interest of the Brazilian white middle class two decades later, the various forms of Carioca (Rio) samba as we know them would never have developed or spread to the extent that they have today. Browning (1995, p. 19) alludes to this in her comment "Based on similarities to rhythms and dances recorded in Angola, it is probably fair to say that samba is essentially a Kongo rhythm and expression. But it has certainly absorbed other cultural influences. It has also absorbed the eroticization of miscegenation." Rio de Janeiro, the capital of Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century, was a cultural melting pot. The idea of samba being a result of so many cultures living in close proximity was echoed in the words of McGowan and Pessanha (2009, p. 17) "Musically, Brazil has continued to reflect the great racial and cultural miscegenation of its history, and to continually absorb and modify new ideas and styles. A good example of this is the long and rich tradition of Brazil's most famous musical form: samba."

Under the umbrella term of samba, there are a number of different musical and dance variations, some of which I will include in this section. In an effort to describe the dance of samba, Browning (1995, p. 10) writes:

The body says what cannot be spoken. Musically this can be explained as syncopation. Samba is a polymeter, layered over a 2/4

structure. But the strong beat is suspended, the weak accentuated. This suspension leaves the body with a hunger that can only be satisfied by filling the silence with motion.

Interestingly the music writer Claus Schreiner says: “The presence of syncopation in Brazilian music has often been ascribed to African influence. But syncopation seldom occurs in African music, even if the tendency is present among the drummers” (Schreiner, 2002, p. 14). He then goes on to explain that perhaps African’s first exposure to syncopated music was through European melodies such as the Iberian Fandango. Regardless, the precursors of both the music and dance forms of carioca samba are well documented.

O samba , descende também do lundo e do maxixe, além do batuque. Não surgiu como dança a dois, mas sim como gênero musical em que se dançava em roda de forma oriunda das antigas danças que se dançavam ao som do batuque. Posteriormente é que surgiu como dança de salão, evoluindo a partir do maxixe como dança. (Samba also descended from lundo and maxixe as well as from the batuque. It didn’t start as a partner dance, but rather a musical genre to which one danced in a circle, coming from the old dances that were danced to the batuque beat. It was much later that the ballroom samba dance evolved after the dance form maxixe) (Perna, 2005, p. 27).

The three main samba dance forms, which I will discuss are the original *samba de roda*, the *samba no pé*, developed later in Rio de Janeiro and finally the partner dance *samba de gafieira*. Each of these is danced to a different variation of samba. Although there are a great number of musical variations, I will focus only on those directly related to these dance forms.

2.3.2.1 *Samba de roda*

The *samba de roda* (samba in a circle) of Bahia, from which all subsequent samba forms stemmed, evolved in the 17th Century out of other dance forms brought to Brazil by the enslaved Africans. It is danced in a circle made of participants clapping the samba beat in which two people at a time dance in the centre. The dancers are flat footed and the energy of the dance comes from the ground. This dance form was recognized as a UNESCO intangible heritage in 2005 (UNESCO, 2005). *Samba de roda* is a very relaxed, spontaneous manifestation, quite different from the organized samba of *carnaval*, and is present in various areas of life.

Historically *samba de roda* was played in conjunction with the Brazilian martial art *capoeira* in order to fool the slave masters into thinking that they were just dancing and not training for self-defense. Nowadays, among other occasions, it is often played at the end of a *capoeira* game, to loosen up the physical and emotional tension built up during the potentially lethal game, allowing players to enter the *roda* with their defenses down.

During the rituals of the *Candomblé* cult, members dance in a *roda* (circle), each following a particular basic choreography. This will be discussed more in depth in the chapter on Afro-Brazilian cults. A *Candomblé* priest interviewed explained that after the religious ceremony ends, a *samba de roda* is sometimes played using the same instruments as were used in the ceremony, as an informal celebration (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012).

Browning (1995, p. 160) talks about the strength of a *roda* (circle) in differing areas of afro-Brazilian culture:

While the *roda de samba* seems to expand outward into a secular, even commercial, touristic realm, it continues to reinforce its racial and cultural identity. While the *candomblé* circle seems to shift under the pressures of Catholicism and other contrary modes of spiritual representation, it holds its ground of community. And while capoeira seems to bust out into jujitsu and break dancing, it is circling back to its origins.

In a musical *samba roda*, it is the musicians who form the circle playfully inspiring each other and allowing the spirit of improvisation to bounce around the circle. Crowds gather at a *samba roda* to dance and sing for hours apparently tirelessly. It is daily events such as these that keep samba alive outside the *carnaval* (Brazilian carnival) season.

2.3.2.2 Urban Rio samba and samba no pé.

Rio samba or *samba carioca* is a musical genre to which is danced *samba no pé*. *Samba no pé* (samba on the foot) refers to a complicated solo dance often associated with the Brazilian *carnaval*. “The dance is a complex dialogue in which various parts of the body talk at the same time, and in seemingly different languages. The feet keep up a rapid patter, while the hips beat out a heavy staccato and the shoulders roll a slow drawl”(Browning, 1995, p. 2). The dance itself is so complex that in attempting to describe what one’s individual body parts must do in order to dance samba, Browning took four pages, culminating with the comment “It’s to say that the body is capable of understanding more things at once than can be articulated in language. One has no choice but to think with the body”(Browning, 1995, p. 13).

The music genre samba, originated in the northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia and was brought to Rio de Janeiro at the end of the nineteenth century with the migration of released slaves. There, urban Rio samba or *samba carioca* was formed with the convergence of Bahian samba and the other music genres played around the area *Praça Onze*. Due to the great numbers of Afro-Brazilians, this area was nicknamed ‘Little Africa’. (Mussa & Simas, 2010, p. 13; Schreiner, 2002, p. 128)

Most historians attribute the creation of Carioca (Rio) samba to a group of talented musicians who frequented the house of a Bahian woman affectionately called Tia Ciata. The composer Donga (Ernesto dos Santos), along with others

present at the time, composed the first registered samba (or *samba amaxixado* – samba mixed with maxixe - according to many) 'Pelo Telefone' in 1917 (Cabral, 1996, pp. 32,37; Hufferd, 2007, p. 26; Perna, 2005, p. 49; Schreiner, 2002, p. 104; Sheriff, 1999, p. 13).

In this house, composers and musician friends of Donga such as Pixinguinha, João da Baiana, Heitor dos Prazeres and Sinhô gathered to discuss music, experiment musically, eventually forming the first sambas. These were closely related to current genres of the time such as the lundu, maxixe, choro, candomblé and the marcha, and it was only once the musicians, such as Ismael Silva of the neighborhood Estácio got involved, that the standard reference of samba was created, clearly differing from the other genres. From this point onwards, samba became the most popular musical form to be played at carnival, although other genres such as the *marcha* and *maxixe* persisted for quite some time (Cabral, 1996, pp. 32-33; McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, pp. 20-22; Vianna, 1999, p. 79). These late night jam sessions avoided police persecution at a time when Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestations were a punishable offense. The topic of samba's persecution will be elaborated on in its own section. As it was a requirement for Afro-Brazilians to get permission from the police each time they wanted to have a samba gathering, Tia Ciata's house became an obvious choice due to the fact that her husband worked at the police station (Hufferd, 2007, p. 27).

These Bahian *tias* (aunts) are to thank for upholding Afro-Brazilian culture within the new environment of Rio de Janeiro, as it was from these roots that Carioca (Rio) samba grew and through the perseverance of their descendents

that it became well rooted in Brazilian society (Lopes, 1992, p. 9; Perna, 2005, p. 50).

Afro-Brazilians organized themselves around their religious centers and carnival groups, establishing alliances with influential upper-class members interested in their art, who would give them certain legitimacy, protect them from police harassment, and mobilize resources for carnival pursuits (Moura, 1983, p. 60, as cited by Pravaz 2008).

Once established as a unique genre, samba was then cultivated in Estácio with the inauguration of the first samba school *Deixa falar* in the late twenties. With *carnaval* in mind, the faster *samba de enredo*, was developed as way to advance the parade. The samba of Estácio spread rapidly across the entire city (Cabral, 1996, pp. 34,60). As a result of the housing crisis of 1940, samba was taken away from the city centre along with the poorer black people up into the *favelas* or shantytowns built precariously on the hilltops above Rio. This mainly percussive samba was named *samba do morro* or samba of the hill, referring to the favelas in which it survived whilst musicians in the city jumped on the *samba-canção* and *bossa nova* bandwagon. Samba festivities only returned to their place of origin in Praça Onze once a year during *carnaval*. Thanks to changing attitudes towards samba and increasing interest of the middle class, by the end of the fifties samba exploded back out of the favelas and spread throughout the whole of Brazil (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, pp. 30-31; Schreiner, 2002, p. 128).

2.3.2.3 Samba de gafieira

The closest translation of *samba de gafieira* would be 'ballroom samba', however it was never the elegant dance of the elite that this translation might suggest.

Gafieira – É o local onde são realizados bailes com orquestra e dança de salão. Eram considerados como bailes fuleiros, onde iam as classes menos favorecidas. Era um termo pejorativo... (A gafieira is the place where dance parties with orchestras and ballroom dancing happened. They were considered tacky dances, where the lower class went. It was a derogatory term...) (Perna, 2005, p. 71).

As one of Brazil's most famous *samba de gafieira* dancers Carlos Bolacha (2012) pointed out to me during an interview, *samba de gafieira* has a different history to that of other samba dance forms. *Samba de gafieira* was never cultivated in the *favelas* or on the grounds of Afro-Brazilian cults during times of police persecution. It hid in the darkness of Rio's bohemian zones between Lapa and Botafogo.

Samba de Gafieira was created around the 1930's after the decline of its precursor *maxixe*, taking inspiration from other popular dances such as the Argentine tango and becoming more established in the 1940's. The European partner dances that were brought to Brazil naturally suffered alterations as a result of local taste, resulting in the birth of *maxixe*. The *maxixe* was the first truly Brazilian partner dance, stemming from the polka, the tango and the habanera and was considered at the time to be sensual (Fryer, 2000, p. 154; Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 47).

2.3.3 The link between Afro-Brazilian cults and samba

A filha-de-santo (priestess of the Candomblé cult) told me during an interview that a *roda de samba*, held after the rituals ended, served more of a social purpose. Still held within the sacred grounds of Candomblé but usually relocated to the back of the house, this was a time for the priests and priestesses along with the rest of the Candomblé community to relax and dance without the focus needed for the more serious religious dances. Browning (1995, p. 27) suggests that “The secular drumming and dancing are an after-thought, and they may be encouraged as a way of redeeming an evening in which the divine turnout has been disappointing.”

This connection between samba and Candomblé dates back to the time of the repression of samba at the start of the twentieth century. Due to police persecution, samba was confined to the *favelas* (shantytowns) and welcomed onto the grounds of afro-Brazilian cults. Many samba percussionists, composers and dancers in need of a place to rehearse also belonged to the Candomblé and Umbanda cults. Both the social scientist Emilio Domingos (2012) and the academic Zeca Ligiéro (2012) confirmed to me that the relationship between samba and Candomblé is very close because, for a long time, samba developed on the sacred grounds of Candomblé as a result of police persecution. When the ritual ended, they would gather around to play samba. This close connection was reinforced by Pravaz (2008, p. 6).

2.3.4 Early persecution of samba culture.

Samba, like *capoeira* and *Candomblé*, was seen by the state as a threatening cultural manifestation, which empowered the Afro-Brazilian people and therefore encountered great opposition initially, which slowly dissipated (Do Nascimento, 1978, p. 406; Zeca Ligiéro, 2011, p. 136). A song printed in a book on northern Brazilian music in the year 1928 talks of the police repression:

Since the people did not receive permission
To dance the samba
The commanding sergeant
Had them all tied up in chains (Schreiner, 2002, p. 103).

The 1920's were a difficult period for samba artists, who suffered harsh police persecution simply for playing music that was considered to be troublesome, the music of tramps and vagabonds. Due to the lingering prejudice that followed the abolishment of slavery, Afro-Brazilian religious members and samba players were often detained and anyone carrying a guitar was at risk of imprisonment. The once persecuted Afro-Brazilian cults were finally made legal and samba players managed to play their music after the religious ceremonies without being detected by the police (Cabral, 1996, p. 27; Raphael, 1990, p. 74; Vianna, 1999, p. 11).

Not helping the image of samba, were the *malandros* (hustlers) often associated with the dance. During a personal interview, one of Brazil's most well-known samba dancers Carlos Bolacha discusses this:

In former times, samba was discriminated...It was discriminated against because the way that it was done. The 'malandro' (hustler)

was the guy who never worked and lived a life of disrepute. It wasn't a good thing for society (Bolacha, 2012).

The figure of Zé Pelintra, a *malandro* dressed in a fine white suite with a panama hat, has become an iconic figure in both the samba and Umbanda (Afro-Brazilian cult) worlds. During our interview, Zeca Ligiéro (2012) helped me understand that Zé represents a generation of *malandros* who at the time of the emergence of samba, refused to accept the extremely low wages offered to ex-slaves and the inequality offered in white Brazilian society. They were samba dancers and capoeira players, making their money off gambling and women and were therefore the cause of much of the police persecution against samba.

Samba, however, was not limited to the rebellious *malandros*. It was played, danced and supported by law-abiding Afro-Brazilians and was attracting middle-class white musicians also. Unfortunately, the police didn't seem to differentiate the two. The police often attacked Blacks who danced in the plazas or streets of Rio de Janeiro (Raphael, 1990, p. 74). I had the fortune of interviewing a prominent member of the samba community, who was in fact the president of the *velha guarda* (the elders) of *Alegria da Zona Sul* samba school. Dona Sônia Oliveira (2012) personally experienced the dramatic changes that happened over the past 65 years to the samba community and explained to me that many people were beaten by police in the streets and put in jail even as late on as the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's. The police didn't seem to understand that they were fighting to hold on to their culture.

2.3.5 From Afro-Brazilian to Brazilian -changing attitudes

It is incredible to behold how the once shunned Afro-Brazilian cultural expression samba managed to transcend prejudice and not only become an iconic symbol of Brazilian identity but spread across the globe. Samba traveled a long and complicated path to success, involving the input of multiple races, classes and agendas, which in turn adapted samba to fit their purpose.

There seems to be a great gap in literature regarding the complicated path to samba's triumphant victory. Vianna (1999, p. 10) refers to it as a mystery: "Samba's unexplained leap from infamous outcast to (virtually official) national emblem, a transformation conventionally mentioned only in passing, is the great mystery of its history." Vianna's reference to carioca (Rio) samba becoming a 'virtually official' national emblem at the time of writing, can now be updated with the news that on the 9th October 2007 carioca (Rio) samba was officially declared by the Ministry of Culture in Brazil to be an Intangible Heritage (Cultura, 2007). During our interview, the social scientist Domingos (2012) emphasised the importance of this milestone:

It is very important to value all those who contributed to this rhythm. It deserves this acknowledgment. It's a generation of which many people have already died, people who founded the schools. And through their love and passion for this art and culture, have managed to break rules and break barriers.

I will endeavor to explain this transformation in samba's history by piecing together the individual factors that influenced the path to samba becoming considered officially Brazilian.

Samba's acceptance by the wider community began with the interest of middle-class white musicians such as the likes of Noel Rosa, who created 212 samba compositions (Schreiner, 2002, p. 112). The tragically short life of middleclass singer and songwriter Noel Rosa was spent between Rio's bohemia and the favelas, where he took inspiration from the samba players living there (Vianna, 1999, p. 87). Many other white middle-class musicians and composers began to get involved in the samba world during the decade of the 1930's, adopting the lower-class popular genre and adding their influence to it, which helped sambas growth in popularity (Vianna, 1999, pp. 86-87).

The coexistence of different social classes in downtown Rio enjoyed by Noel Rosa ended shortly after his death as a result of the 1940's housing crisis in Rio. Suddenly the urban poor were forced to relocate to the hills and to the periphery of the city. The physical separation of this close-knit samba community meant that the logistics of gathering together in one common place was near impossible. As a result, each newly formed community founded their own samba school, which was based within their *favela*. During our interview, samba researcher Emilio Domingos (2012) attributed this migration to the spread and growth of samba and to the large number of samba schools.

Once samba started gaining momentum, the rise in popularity was greatly aided by the invention of the radio and the inauguration of Rio's first radio station in 1923 (Schreiner, 2002, p. 111; Sheriff, 1999, p. 13). The broadcasting of samba music over the radio enabled the fever to quickly spread throughout the other states of Brazil and be truly embraced by the nation. Brazil's then president Getúlio Vargas was strong on culture and not only supported samba culture, but

used it later on to promote patriotism amongst the people. “Vargas’s impact on samba began in the early 1920s. When still an MP, he promoted a national bill that instituted royalty payments for musicians. In the 1930s, already in power, Vargas authorized the broadcasting of advertising on the radio, transforming the outlook of stations that previously focused on classical music and education. This new policy radically changed the place of popular culture, giving radio a new role as “popular entertainment.” The establishment of the radio stimulated the promotion of samba and similar genres through the various stations’ (Pravaz, 2008). Samba was becoming so wide spread that “...from the 1930’s on, all Brazil began (or was obliged) to recognize in the samba of Rio de Janeiro an emblem of its national identity” (Vianna, 1999, p. 8).

Once samba had spread throughout Brazil, it broke into the American market through the voice of the colourful and vibrant Carmen Miranda. Although she became the iconic image of Brazilian exoticism during the decade of the 1930’s, Carmen Miranda was in fact Portuguese born and then lived the main part of her adult life in the United States. She was however responsible for spreading samba into the international market (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 29; Schreiner, 2002, p. 115).

In 1937, the government of Getúlio Vargas required that samba schools create patriotic or historical samba lyrics, which once accepted by the samba schools, brought additional support in the spread of samba nationally. This point arose in my interview with Domingos (2012) and was also discussed by Vianna (1999, p. 90).

As mentioned earlier, the development and expansion of samba from the original rhythm into the many variations that exist today occurred as a result to its exposure to a number of influences.

First, contrary to the way that it is generally imagined, the invention of samba as a national music involved many different social groups. The favela dwellers and sambistas [samba artists] of Rio de Janeiro played a leading, but not exclusive, role. Among those involved were blacks and whites (and of course, mestiços [those of mixed blood]), as well as a few gypsies – also a Frenchman here or there. Cariocas and Bahianos, intellectuals and politicians, erudite poets, classical composers, folklorists, millionaires, even a US ambassador – all had something to do with the crystallization of the genre and its elevation to the rank of national symbol (Vianna, 1999, p. 112).

When acknowledging these external factors that aided the success of samba as a musical genre, it is important to recognize that it was because of the tenacious nature of the African descendants that samba and its precursors survived persecution and formed a strong base for what was to come (Vianna, 1999, p. 113). Slowly the tides turned and the upper class and elite of Rio de Janeiro stopped viewing things uniquely ‘Brazilian’ – the cultural results of miscegenation, as less than things ‘European’. “...substantial elements of the elite and middle class began sincerely to value Brazilian popular culture and abandon the ideology of white supremacy” (Vianna, 1999, p. 114). Samba became part of Brazilian society, which had an enormous effect on perceptions of African descendants in the community and general race relations. During our interview the social scientist Domingos (2012) stated:

From the moment samba became cultural patrimony, and became part of society, it starts to reduce differences and barriers. So samba today, is not just associated with black people, it is incorporated in Brazilian society.

Vianna (1999) showed that this belief is held by a number of scholars:

[The] scholars [Antônio Cândido, Mário de Andrade and Gilberto Freyre] and others have perceived music, more than other sorts of artistic expression, as having the potential to break down barriers of race and class and serve as a unifying element, a channel of communication, among diverse groups in Brazilian society.

Samba has undeniably served as a race-unifying tool, helping to bring together the disparate social classes, races and cultures that made up a young Brazil.

However, there is always a cloud belonging to the silver lining. What is happening as a result of this cultural 'bleaching' is that modern Brazil is failing to register the African contribution to 'Brazilian' culture. Zeca Ligiéro (2012) mentioned during our interview, that he sees the change in things once classified as 'Afro-Brazilian' to being called 'Brazilian' as a negative thing.

Samba stopped being associated with black Afro culture and became something 'made in Brazil'. So we started to bereave the Afro culture. What is currently associated with afro-culture is Candomblé whereas we know that samba is Afro. Brazilian culture takes everything for itself and pushes to the side the ethnic connotations, which value our African Brazilian heritage.

Ligiéro is not the only person to recognize that the African contribution to Brazilian culture is quietly being overlooked. The Brazilian origin of many black cultural forms was promoted to elevate them as representative of national culture. Confirming this, Sheriff (1999, p. 15) paraphrases Peter Fry (1982):

... modern Brazilian forms of self-representation – whether constituted through the practices and discourses associated with cuisine, samba, or religion – make liberal use of the “African contribution” to Brazil. Those cultural elements historically associated with African Brazilians have been ... racially and politically neutralized ... harnessed to the service of representing the national mainstream.

2.3.6 Resistance through samba

“Samba narrates a story of racial contact, conflict, and resistance...”(Browning, 1995, p. 2). Black resistance to cultural assimilation is commonly expressed through the voice of dance and music such as Afoxé [the secular manifestation of Candomblé] and samba. “Central to this process is axé (pronounced ah-sheh) – energy that enables action – which is created through song, dance, and ritual performance”(Da Costa, 2010, p. 388). *Axé* is evoked to bring power to a group, in a celebratory and motivational manner. *Samba enredo* (carnaval samba) lyrics cover a wide variety of issues and one of them is race (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 35).

In 1977 the samba school Unidos do Cabuçu created a samba called ‘*Sete povos das Missões*’ which exalted the Amerindians, who lost to the Portuguese in this historical conflict, metaphorically positioning them as stars in the sky, as a sign of their remembrance (Mussa & Simas, 2010, pp. 77-78). Until this day one of the oldest and most popular *blocos de rua* ‘Cacique de Ramos’ still dress as Amerindians. Samba has been a tool for political resistance over the years.

Various samba schools often subtly recall the Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian struggle throughout history in their samba lyrics. The samba school Salgueiro is known for the inclusion of Afro-Brazilian themes within their parades (Mussa & Simas, 2010, p. 71). During the carnival of 1960, the samba school Salgueiro chose ‘*Quilombo de Palmares*’, referring to the illegal Afro-Brazilian town of Palmares (as covered in the section ‘African population in Brazil’), as their

parade theme. This was the first time a school had chosen a historical event related to slavery and the desire for freedom. The school won. Until then, Blacks had been dressed in elegant European clothes, as the only costume representative of black people in Brazil was that of a slave. So, for the first time, costumes representative of the pre-slavery African were designed and worn with pride (Cavalcanti, 1999, pp. 32-33; Mussa & Simas, 2010, p. 65). The samba school Salgueiro has in the past chosen three *negra* or 'black' *carnaval* themes. A definition of what a *negra carnaval* theme is, is given here:

Essa versão enfatiza o conflito, valoriza a rebeldia, pensa em mediações e, finalmente, resolve a oposição na diferença cultural que integra. É esse conjunto simbólico específico que chamo de temática "negra".
(This version [of samba music] emphasizes the conflict, values the rebellion, thinks of mediations and finally solves the opposition in integrating cultural difference. It's this specific symbolic combination within a theme, that I call "black") (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 39).

One century after the abolishment of slavery, during the 1988 *carnaval* in Rio, the school Tradição paid homage again to Zumbi dos Palmares (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 40), the Afro-Brazilian leader who was eventually defeated but became an icon for Black resistance and liberty in Brazil. They were one of four schools that used the supposed centenary of liberation as an opportunity to pay homage to black leaders and stir up the embers of resistance. The samba school Mangueira also challenged the effectiveness of the abolition of slavery in their samba song titled 'One Hundred Years of Freedom, Reality or Illusion' composed by Hélio Turco, Jurandir and Alvinho:

Será...
Que já raiou a liberdade
Ou se foi tudo ilusão
Será...
Que a lei áurea tão sonhada
Há tanto tempo assinada

Could it be..
That freedom has dawned
Or was it all an illusion?
Could it be...
That the long awaited golden law
Signed so long ago

Não foi o fim da escravidão	Was not the end of slavery
Hoje dentro da realidade	In the reality of today
Onde está a liberdade	Where is the freedom
Onde está que ninguém viu	Where is what no one has seen
Moço	Boy
Não se esqueça que o negro também	Don't forget that the black man
Tambem construiu	Also built

As riquezas do nosso brasil	The riches of Brazil
Pergunte ao criador	Ask the creator
Quem pintou esta aquarela	He who painted this watercolour
Livre do açoite da senzala	Free from the bonds of slavery
Preso na miséria da favela	Captive in the <i>favelas'</i> misery
Sonhei...	I dreamed
Que zumbi dos palmares voltou	That Zombi of Palmares returned
A tristeza do negro acabou	The sadness of Blacks ended
Foi uma nova redenção	It was a new redemption
Senhor...	Lord...

(Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 42; Mangueira; Schreiner, 2002, p. 20).

The above lyrics do not merely reflect on the importance that Afro-Brazilians had on the formation of Brazilian society but they also question the position that black people have in today's society.

The samba school Unidos de Vila Isabel invoked the black abolitionist Zumbi and the black leaders of the past once again. The magic, power and art of the black culture were praised – and at the end came the demand: apartheid must disappear (Schreiner, 2002, p. 20).

The carnival parades in Rio are the perfect stage from which to voice political concerns. Not only are the parades watched by thousands of visitors but they are televised live around the globe. Songs including political references are not only heard once by millions of people, but they are then sung again by members of the samba school in training, by local amateurs at *roda de samba* and by young women hanging out their washing for years to come. Their lyrics of resistance forever echo throughout the city.

Leaders of black resistance and key personalities connected to the survival of Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestations often resurface in the modern samba world. Tia Ciata, famous for providing the womb from which samba was born – the house in which the first sambas were created, did so at her own risk. At a time when Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions were banned, she housed both Candomblé rituals and samba gatherings, providing space for culture to grow. To further illustrate the impact this legendary woman had on Afro-Brazilian history, a school for street children that was set up in 1983 received her name. The school made use of the viewing rooms of the famous carnival parade catwalk called the Sambódromo, which were otherwise unoccupied for the remainder of the year. “The name of the school, Tia Ciata, was chosen because the name represents resistance, organization and negro cultural leadership in Rio de Janeiro”(Ciata, 2011; Leite, 1991, p. 9).

Although a product of bohemia, a trickster and a womanizer, Zé Pelintra, the infamous *malandro*, also became a symbol of black resistance. Even today samba dancers dress like a *malandro* of the 1920’s and 30’s remembering those who rejected the working conditions offered to blacks at the time and survived off their own cunning.

2.4 Carnaval

Carnaval is the name for the Brazilian carnival manifestation, and is often used in literature to distinguish it from other forms of carnival celebrated around the world. Carnival can be traced back to medieval times and was celebrated the week before the Roman Catholic period of Lent, when members of the Church were expected to give up luxuries and fast. The name carnival is said to possibly come from the Latin word *carnelevarium* meaning lack of meat, which refers to the fasting over the Lenten period. As the *carnaval* began to grow, there was a greater demand for people working behind the scenes, which meant that these people would celebrate their own *carnaval* prior to the main *carnaval* dates. (Britannica, 2012; Levine, 1979, pp. 48-49)

Although *carnaval* and samba are inextricably linked today, the history of *carnaval* in Rio is not the same as the history of samba. The first *carnaval* celebrations in Rio followed the Portuguese tradition of Entrudo, which did not revolve around music and dance as *carnaval* does today, rather it involved water fights and general mayhem (Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008; Sheriff, 1999, p. 12). It may be hard to imagine a *carnaval* in the 1600's without music, whose only participants were men but it wasn't until much later that the intensity of violence and tomfoolery lessened and music was incorporated (Hufferd, 2007, pp. 21-22; Sheriff, 1999, p. 12). *The carnaval* of metropolitan Rio went through many stages of its metamorphosis from the Portuguese *Entrudo* to what it is today, passing through fazes of "maxixes, modas, marchas, careretês, and desafios sertanejos –

none of them coming close to contemporary samba's total domination of the festival, none of them considered to be a "national rhythm" (Vianna, 1999, p. 78).

Around 1846 masked balls, an idea taken from French carnival celebrations was adopted into Brazilian high society. These balls had music and dancing and were exclusively for white Brazilians, leaving the black Brazilians to create their entertainment in the street (Hufferd, 2007, p. 23; Schreiner, 2002, p. 86; Sheriff, 1999, p. 12). The street parties began to take form and involve more organization. Mussa and Simas (2010) explained that those less fortunate celebrated *carnaval* in the streets in *cordões* (a group of costumed party-goers surrounded by a long rope) and *ranchos*. According to Cabral (1996, p. 21), however, *cordões* were just as likely to be made up of people from rich areas as people from poorer areas. *Ranchos* were a street festival from the northeast, usually celebrated on the 6th January as part of the Catholic festival of 'O dia dos santos reis', which celebrated the three wise men. Once brought to Rio, the date was moved to coincide with *carnaval* and slowly became accepted by the middle class. In 1909 the first competition of *ranchos* took place and rules were invented that are still part of *carnaval* today, such as the need to have a *comissão de frente* (leading dance troupe), *abre-alas* (opening float) and so forth. These two manifestations were vitally important in the formation of today's Rio samba *carnaval*. Over time the *ranchos* gradually attempted to fit in with the orderly society and in order to be accepted they began to detach themselves from any Afro-Brazilian references. The efforts to build ties with European cultural references were an example of cultural bleaching as a "path to acceptance" (Mussa & Simas, 2010, pp. 11-12).

Regardless of their efforts to assimilate, the African influence on Rio's *carnaval* was impossible to ignore. "Many lamented the "Africanization" of the yearly festival and bemoaned the collapse of social order it seemed to suggest...During this fertile period, legal persecution and harassment occurred simultaneously with the creative blooming and popular spread of samba"(Sheriff, 1999, p. 13). Regardless of the previous attitude towards Afro-Brazilian involvement in *carnaval*, their contribution to today's *carnaval* is recognized by Schreiner (2002, p. 17) "The development from the Portuguese *entrudo* (carnival) to the Brazilian *carnaval* is hard to imagine without organized African participation".

Due to the fear of potential problems arising from any gathering of the estimated black majority in Rio de Janeiro in the early 1900's, police enforced rules preventing blacks from joining *carnaval*. Eager to celebrate in the way they knew best, through music and dance, the blacks from the favelas created so-called '*blocos de sujos*' – ragamuffin bands, which were often pursued by the police (Hufferd, 2007, p. 24; Raphael, 1990, p. 76). "Following the formation of the first Samba School, numerous blocos converted their groups to Samba Schools, with an eye toward increasing their legitimacy and averting police repression"(Raphael, 1990, p. 76). The name *bloco* became the name commonly used for the street bands.

2.4.1 Samba schools and samba's domination over *carnaval*

As samba became more popular, the first samba school '*Deixa Falar*' was formed in 1928 and the first competitive samba parade occurred in 1929 (Raphael, 1990; Schreiner, 2002, p. 108). In defiance of the police repression of many Afro-Brazilian manifestations at the time, *Deixa Falar* paraded through the streets of Estácio and Praça Onze for the first time in 1929 (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 37). "Following the formation of the first Samba School, numerous blocos converted their groups to Samba Schools, with an eye toward increasing their legitimacy and averting police repression"(Raphael, 1990, p. 76). With the growing popularity of the samba schools, samba began to dominate *carnaval* festivities. "Only in the 1930's did Carioca samba "colonize" Brazilian carnival and become a national symbol. Thereafter, samba would be considered representative of the nation, while other Brazilian musical genres would be considered merely regional styles"(Vianna, 1999, p. 78).

After the creation of *Deixa falar*, it didn't take long before other samba schools began to spring up. In 1928, Cartola and Carlos Cachaca started a *carnaval bloco* which then became the samba school Mangueira (Schreiner, 2002, p. 120). By the end of the twenties, the three samba schools *Deixa Falar*, *Mangueira* and *Portela* were becoming more established.

Monarco (2012), an elderly composer and singer of the Portela samba school, born in the year 1933, commented on the dramatic increase in size of samba schools over the years during our interview. Portela had only 100 people in the

early days and has now grown to 5000. Due to this increase in numbers, the state saw it necessary to install order in the carnival celebrations. “The parades for example, are nearly as well-organized as those of the military. And there is a rigid hierarchy within the samba school, from the directors down to the ordinary folk” (Schreiner, 2002, p. 109). The rules imposed by the state on carnival parades within the Sambódromo restricted the innate impulsive and improvised nature of the samba of the favelas, taking samba further and further away from its roots. The competing schools mixed the sophistication and organization of the upper-class with the lower-class samba rhythms (Sheriff, 1999, p. 14).

Early samba culture was associated with *malandros* (hustlers) and scoundrels, attracting those who rebelled against society’s expectations and thus giving the authorities a reason to clamp down on public samba manifestations. It became apparent to the president of ‘Portela’ samba school, that in order to be accepted by the state, samba artists were going to have to conform to certain social norms and clean up their appearance. When interviewing one of Portela’s oldest living members, Monarco (2012) was proud to confirm that Paulo da Portela was really the one responsible for the success of the samba schools, after he forced dancers to wear suits and leave their flick-knives at home. Schreiner (2002, p. 109) and Domingos (2012) also pay homage to Paulo da Portela as the ‘civilizer’ of samba. He instigated positive change in the samba world, making it more acceptable.

The dancers were better dressed, according to the Brazilians of European descent and the parades were incredibly well organized, breaking the image of marginality. Around 1940 the samba schools began their elaborate parades with choreographed dances and decorated floats, following the chosen theme of the

year (Schreiner, 2002, p. 119). According to Monarco (2012), the schools sung of love, of life in the favela and the beauty of the world until they started receiving the support of the government and were forced to exchange inspiration for nationalism.

Around the mid 1930's Brazil's president Getúlio Vargas used the popularity of the samba schools to strengthen the much desired feeling of patriotism among the general masses. Schools were forced to compose *enredos* around themes of important national historical events and personalities (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 31; Raphael, 1990; Schreiner, 2002, p. 109). This had a major effect on samba, distancing the message of the lyrics from the real motivations of those from the *favelas* who generally composed them. With the new support of Vargas, *carnaval* was moved from *Praça Onze* where it was born to the main avenues of the city centre for around fifty years, eventually becoming too big to for the infrastructure to support. To allow the schools with their floats and often scantily clad dancers to proceed past the judges uninterrupted while simultaneously providing viewing platforms large enough to seat the ticket paying thousands, the state built would change Rio *carnaval* forever (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 37). "Inaugurated in 1984, the Sambódromo, whose parade runway is 700 yards long, resembles a stadium, with huge concrete bleachers on both sides... These structures can seat 88,500 people and contain 300 bathrooms, 35 bars, and 51 box seats in many different sizes, primarily for tourists" (Hufferd, 2007, p. 44).

The samba schools continued to grow in numbers and members, which in turn affected the music. Mestre Monarco (2012) commented on the acceleration of

samba enredo over time. According to Zeca Ligiéro (2012), as stated during our interview, the main reason for adapting the rhythm and accelerating the speed was to allow for the progression of the band and dancers during carnival and later, to accommodate the ever increasing numbers of the samba schools participating in the carnival processions. The songs needed to speed up in order to allow the great numbers of people to pass through the Sambódromo over a short period of time. Schools have grown to fifty times their size over eighty years. Schreiner (2002, p. 120) confirms that: "In the sixties, shorter lyrics with more vigorous themes supplanted the long, patriotic texts". There are so many schools with a high number of members in the modern Rio *carnaval*, that strict rules prevent the proceedings from running late. Samba schools have only eighty minutes to have all the members of their school to pass through the Sambódromo in an orderly fashion otherwise they lose points (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 45).

Once samba dominated *carnaval*, the Afro-Brazilian population became an intrinsic part of Rio's *carnaval* proceedings and, although attempts were made to 'whiten' the *enredos*, these proceedings have retained elements of Afro-Brazilian culture. Despite the fact that *carnaval* is the coming together of varying ethnicities and social classes, many of the symbols used by the schools derive from African heritage, such as the flag-bearer (Hufferd, 2007, p. 76). "The flag is considered sacred and everybody should respect and protect this symbol, much like a national flag" (Hufferd, 2007, pp. 88-89). African mythology and elements of Afro-Brazilian cults are often incorporated in the parades (Crowley, 1999, p. 225; Domingos, 2012). *Carnaval* is taken seriously and celebrated with perhaps

more passion and fervour than most other festivities. "For some devout Carnival maskers, the street parade is both an act of worship and a statement of racial (and political) identity and pride..."(Crowley, 1999, p. 227). The patriotic political ideals that dominated carnival during the Vargas regime lingered well after his time, along with the theme of racial mixing. "Within the popular imagination certainly, the carioca carnaval continues to embody, and, in a sense, to enact, the ideology of *democracia racial*, in that it is thought to celebrate the "African contribution" to Brazil at the same time that it demands affectionate, and even promiscuous, mixing between people of different colors and classes"(Sheriff, 1999, p. 8). A Canadian newspaper article attributes the incorporation of sexual promiscuity to the Romans before carnival even reached Brazil (Dan, 2004), however this was possibly encouraged in the name of nationalization.

2.4.2. The commercialization of Carnival

The *carnaval* parades of Rio started to attract a great deal of tourism, bringing with this the potential for not only the government but local industries to profit off this cultural manifestation. This new profit-making role of *carnaval* began to have a lasting effect on what was once simply a festival of celebration. Positions in the parade usually occupied by Afro-Brazilians are given to paying tourists or the Brazilian elite, causing unrest. “Increasingly, the cultural politics and political economy that underpin the carioca carnival have generated a dispute about contested meanings, contested rights, authenticity, appropriation, and betrayal” (Sheriff, 1999, p. 4). It was taken out of the hands of the people and controlled by those with a different agenda. “Perhaps now more than ever, poor cariocas [inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro] of color suggest that... samba has been stolen and caged” (Sheriff, 1999, p. 15). This sentiment is echoed in the writings of Raphael (1990, p. 73) “Many in Rio argue, however, that the Carnival has lost its authenticity, its spontaneity- its popular flavor. At the center of the argument are the Samba Schools, which have undergone important changes since the first school was founded in 1928”.

The year of 1932 marked the beginning of the parade’s institutionalization when *carnaval* received government sponsorship. The voice of Afro-Brazilian resistance, which was once heard in the *samba do morro* was replaced by the patriotic samba songs of the Vargas regime (Barke et al., 2001, p. 262; Pravaz, 2008).

By offering the Samba Schools financial subsidies in exchange for their participation in the Carnival under certain conditions, the government brought the schools down from their hillside origins to the city's main avenues. There, their parades were judged by the city's elites, in accordance with standards that had nothing to do with the samba, its origins, its essentially Afro-Brazilian flavor, or the popular culture it represented...In order to meet the criteria of the Carnival judges, the schools had to devote more and more resources to producing a "worthy" parade (Raphael, 1990, p. 78).

The fact that “the samba schools of Rio aim for the regal appearance and “education” (a Brazilian euphemism for money)” may have over time been destructive to the integrity of the samba schools (Browning, 1995, p. 165). The competition to create increasingly more elaborate *enredos* lead the schools to bring in outside help. Raphael (1990, p. 83) mentions that by the mid 1970's samba schools from the favela began to look outside their school walls to hire white, middle-class experts to perform tasks in the preparation for *carnaval* that used to be delegated to school members.

Members of the middle class began to parade with the schools, others assumed leadership positions. By the end of the 1960s, several of the schools had outsiders deciding on their Carnival theme, arranging the choreography of their parade, designing their floats, and dancing in key positions on Carnival night (Raphael, 1990, p. 81).

“Instead of representing a spontaneous, indigenous, and authentic form of popular culture, the Samba Schools, by the late 1970s, had become profit-seeking microenterprises rendering services by contract to the city's tourism agency”(Raphael, 1990, p. 83).

Ribeiro-Mayer M.A. (2008) explains that over the years, the parades, which occur in the *Sambódromo* have become even more uniform to guarantee results of such a large investment in time and money. The spontaneity and improvised nature of music and dance common in the early *carnaval* processions was replaced by

choreographies and organization to allow the presentation of this 'show' to an even wider cast audience. Such elaborate shows require funding, as do the schools in preparation for them. From a community point of view, it is problematic that most of the public subsidies go to funding the glitzy *carnaval* of the Sambódrome - which allows only those who can afford it to participate - rather than to other *carnaval* events, which "cater, often more successfully, for different needs: entertainment, play, personal prestige...Certainly, it would be worth giving some water to the numerous smaller seedlings rather than directing the whole river towards the big trunks"(Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 182).

Sheriff (1999, p. 16) claims that in the eyes of people living in favelas,

samba may be embraced by the world—and at the present moment, may be commercialized almost beyond recognition—but it remains an *invengao do povo*, or an invention of the people, and, more specifically, a *coisa dos negros*, a black thing. Although what my informants called the "true sambista" would readily admit that samba is not really "African" but a uniquely Brazilian, or even specifically carioca, synthesis, its "authenticity" is nonetheless conceptualized as rooted in blackness and the sensibilities of *peessoas humildes*, or humble people. Although hybridization, white appropriation, commercialization, and mainstreaming ideological processes have surely been at work since "samba came down from the hills," its "deracination" and "neutralization" evidently remain incomplete.

Browning (1995) points out the inappropriateness of current *carnaval* samba schools "where today white TV soap opera stars parade topless on floats, meagerly twitching their bottoms in a weak imitation of the real thing." Robin Sheriff (1999, p. 18), in her article '*The theft of carnaval*' talks of the frustration expressed by a woman – Joia - from a favela in regard to the fact that Afro-Brazilian people are starting to be sidelined at *carnaval*:

As the carnival season of 1991 approached, Joia fell more and more to ridiculing the white women—often from middle-class and even elite families—who in recent years had begun to monopolize the carnival floats and the greedy eye of the television cameras. Although she had expressed wonder and even irritation at my failure to learn to samba properly, everyone knew, she suggested, that it was mulatas, women of color like herself, who traditionally performed and personified the samba as a dance form. Somehow, skinny blondes had literally stolen the show. Joia suggested that her pique was hardly idiosyncratic. Her words were part of a generalized commentary—what she called, in fact, a *polemica* ("controversy")—that evidently circulated among the morros of Rio. "This is a bad controversy," she explained, bringing out the magazines once again: "It is because they are preferred. They're all white and they have these nice bodies, you know? None of them are dark. It's bad, you know, because samba is a black thing. It began with the negros...Look at them! They're all white, very pretty, but can they samba? No! They can't samba at all!

The financial adversity that impedes those from the favela from being placed in the limelight at carnival is not the only form of exclusion from the annual *carnaval* competition. The exorbitant ticket prices to attend famed Sambódromo separate the majority of poor Afro-Brazilians from the very parade that their ancestors helped create.

"Only the rich," I heard over and over again, "only the *ricos* can get into the Sambodromo." Many of these *ricos* were *gringos*, or foreigners... who, with their easy money, contributed to the commodification of carnival while understanding nothing of what had once been its deeper meaning (Sheriff, 1999, p. 19).

During an interview with the president of the *velha guarda* (elderly group of a samba school), Dona Sonia also commented on the fact that carnival with all its media attention now attracts stars, who pay top dollar to have the best positions on the floats. "Carnival now, you can see that the great artists want to celebrate carnival and be part of it. Why? Because it became culture. Before it was only the people from the favela that participated"(Oliveira, 2012). Mestre Monarco of the Portela samba school also said to me that "those who want to be in the limelight, really beautiful on top of the floats, they pay out of their own pocket"

indicating that it is through financial investment that one claims the prize positions in a samba parade not through the investment of time and dedication to the culture.

The samba schools are now of an enormous scale and technical sophistication that would have been inconceivable to the founders of *Deixa Falar* in 1928. They are also vital to Rio's tourist business and generate huge sums through broadcast, music, and video rights. Not everyone has been happy about the transformation of the *escolas* into giant artistic and commercial enterprises. They have become highly organized productions, quite different from spontaneous street Carnival celebrations elsewhere in Rio and the rest of Brazil. Paulinho da Viola, a major samba figure of the last four decades, left *Portela* for many years because he felt that the *escolas* had become overly commercial and bureaucratic, a common complaint at the end of the twentieth century. He mourned that something got lost along the way. (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 44)

More and more skilled creative's are recruited from outside the samba schools, as the competition is fierce. Inevitably, this weakens the link between the community where the school comes from and the actual parade. What is seen of a samba school during the *carnaval* parade is actually the vision of the *carnavalesco* as opposed to representing the school's community.

Ele é idealmente o criador do enredo, do que decorrem os sambas-enredo e o responsável pela concepção e execução dos carros alegóricos. O carnavalesco vem geralmente "de fora" da escola e mantém com ela uma relação "profissional", circulando num meio social que transcende esta ou aquela escola em particular. (He is ideally the creator of the scenario, the one responsible for designing and creation of the floats. The carnavalesco usually comes from outside the samba school and keeps a 'professional' relationship with the school, circulating in a social environment that transcends this or that particular school (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 28).

Cavalcanti suggests a view of the *carnavalesco* as a cultural mediator:

A evolução das escolas de samba cariocas pode ser olhada com outros olhos, com uma concepção de popular que não suponha, de um lado, uma pureza imaculada, e de outro, um poder malévolo de corrupção. (The evolution of the Rio samba schools could be viewed with fresh eyes, with a popular conception that doesn't suppose on one side an

immaculate purity and on the other a malevolent power of corruption (Cavalcanti, 1999, p. 30).

Sheriff (1999, p. 21) sums up fantastically all that I have discussed in the above chapter on the commercialization of *carnaval* and the threats that these different elements pose, in her statement:

The inflated costs of costumes and Sambodromo tickets, the emphasis on television broadcasting, the presence of middle-class and elite whites in the most visible performance positions, the increased domination of white professionals in the creative management of the parade, and the fact that the Sambodromo competition, as a multimillion-dollar monopolizing spectacle, has dwarfed, devalued, and stolen public attention from all other, more local carnival practices—all of these processes constitute the theft of carnival.

Despite the commercialization of samba, which is largely funded by tourism, Fryer (2000, p. 157) suggests that *carnaval* is not merely a show for tourists, Brazilians put their heart and soul into the festivities every year, regardless of onlookers.

Chapter Three: Methodology

A Science Communication Filmmaking thesis requires both the making of a twenty-five minute documentary and the completion of a written academic component. Both the creative and academic components of my thesis are intimately connected. The anthropological study carried out for the written component serves as an expansion of what could only be briefly covered in a short film. The documentary, in turn, provides equally important visuals that bear witness to the close relationship between the Afro-Brazilian community of the *favelas* and samba culture.

3.1 The rationale behind my methods

Taking into account that the science I am endeavoring to communicate in this thesis is predominantly social and cultural anthropology, the most appropriate research method to employ was qualitative. Qualitative research is a subjective, interpretive approach that uses such methods as case study, participatory inquiry, interviewing, participant observation and interpretive analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 2). This method was also chosen by writers such as Browning (1995), Leopoldi (1978) and Boas (1972) when researching for their books on samba and other dance forms. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 10) point out that qualitative researchers look for answers to questions that emphasize how social experience is created and given meaning. I was interested in registering fully the pride, opinions, complaints and oral history of the individuals interviewed in order to both enrich current literature and introduce themes that have recently arisen as possibilities for future research.

Tracy (2010, p. 839) provides a list of eight important factors in creating high quality qualitative methodological research, which I have aimed to follow: “(a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence.” The third factor, sincerity, refers to the fact that the researcher is not neutral and should be open and aware of their own personal biases, goals and weaknesses and what effect these might have on the research. For this reason, I think it is important to briefly discuss my own motivations, worries and the lenses through which I view the world. There is always a risk when a foreigner attempts to write about the

meaning and importance of culture to a group to which they do not belong. I was very aware of this and was determined not to make my documentary from the point of view of a *gringa* (foreigner), but from the point of view of those living in the *favela* and those intimately connected to the samba world. The academic component of the thesis, however, incorporates the ideas and perceptions of many scholars, academics and critics the world over and across a large span of time. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 5) quite rightly state that: "Objective reality can never be captured", and I am very conscious that the lenses through which I view the world may have affected the questions I asked my participants.

However, I am confident that I constructed, to the best of my ability, an interview, which allowed the participants to discuss matters of direct concern to them. Although British blood runs through my veins, I feel absolutely no pride in the extent of British colonialism, nor do I approve of the methods that Europeans employed when colonizing countries. I have always felt sympathetic to repressed, ignored or disempowered cultures, which perhaps feeds part of the motivation behind choosing the Afro-Brazilian culture as my thesis topic. The remaining motivation stems from an inexplicable connection I have with Brazil. Despite having no Latin American heritage, I speak both Spanish and Portuguese fluently, having never officially studied either language. I feel more at home in Brazil than in any other country in the world and am mistaken by Brazilians to be in fact Brazilian, both in appearance and behavior. I am, however, appalled by the distinct social classes, which exist side by side in Brazil. Corruption occurs on many levels in Brazilian society. The most dangerous, being within the government, which turns a blind eye the lack of basic necessities within the ever-expanding *favelas*. I am also a dancer and find myself having to forever defend

the benefits of dance and the many reasons for which I dedicate time to it. Samba is a perfect example of a dance that is not only good for one's mind, body and spirit, but is in itself the very embodiment of resistance to cultural assimilation (Browning, 1995, p. 2), which I believe should be the right of each and every individual.

As I was often dealing with recording oral history, I kept in mind that multiple truths exist. Campbell and Scott (2011, p. 5) wrote, in regards phenomenological qualitative research that: "Truth is context specific and meaning is context driven", which I think also applies to oral traditions. In essence, there is no right or wrong answer in qualitative research, and if there are differences in historical accounts, they are surely due to how that history was recorded and by whom. History, passed down through Afro-Brazilian oral traditions may be open to embellishment over time due to its intangible nature, however, it provides a counterbalance for the written history of the literate, which in most cases was a product of those who shared the same world perspective as the colonizers.

3.2 The process

Earlier this year I traveled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to conduct research for this study. “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). The fieldwork in Brazil served a dual purpose. It allowed me to gain insight into my thesis topic through interviews, being a passive observer and at times active participant, whilst also filming various aspects of the samba and *favela* communities for my creative component. Being a fluent speaker of Brazilian Portuguese, I was able to engage fully with the people and my surroundings, ensuring the maximum was learnt and absorbed in the time allocated for fieldwork.

As my interviews served both the academic and creative component of this thesis, I interviewed a larger number of people than those that I have chosen to include in the academic thesis. Five of the six interviews used in the academic component of my thesis also featured in my documentary. Some participants were suggested to me by members of the samba and Afro-Brazilian communities, however, others I came across via my own investigations during the long period of preparatory field-work.

Out of the vast array of characters interviewed, I chose the six that would best give a rounded representation of the samba world. Maísa and Dona Sônia served to represent the voice of the favela, Dona Sônia and Monarco represented the voice of the samba schools, Monarco and Bolacha both represented successful

samba artists and Emílio and Zeca spoke from an academic background, both specializing within their fields in samba.

Half of the interviews were conducted in the privacy of the interviewee's home and half chose to be interviewed at their place of work. For Monarco, this was the Portela samba school, for Zeca it was the University and for Bolacha it was at his *gafieira* (dancehall) *Cachanga do Malandro*. Each interview was also filmed and recorded on a H4N Zoom recorder and lasted between an hour and an hour and a half.

In-depth or semi-structured interviews and participant observation are the most commonly used data collection methods in qualitative ethnographic research (Gerrish, 2011, p. 4; Sandy & John, 2011, p. 238). Accordingly, approximately fifteen semi-structured questions were asked during each interview. The number of questions varied depending on the amount of time, willingness and knowledge of the area of questioning. The questions were quite broad to allow the interviewees to speak extensively of history and personal experience, while permitting them to branch off on tangents that could prove valuable to this study. Semi-structured interviews allow an element of the unknown, unpredicted and unexpected to be discovered, incorporated into the work and considered as equally vital as the predicted and purposefully searched for answers. This proved valuable to my interviews due to the fact that new political and social changes were causing cultural reactions, thus making them difficult to predict. I was able to incorporate probes to encourage more in-depth answers within the semi-structured questioning, which had been approved by the Otago University ethics committee. As Sandy and John (2011, p. 246) confirm: "the

focus is on the interview guide incorporating a series of broad themes to be covered during the interview to help direct the conversation toward the topics and issues about which the interviewers want to learn”.

As the interviews took place in Brazil, they were conducted in Portuguese and the questions and answers were translated and transcribed by myself. I have spoken Portuguese for the past ten years and speak fluently to the point that Brazilians often mistake me to be Brazilian. This vital skill allowed me to enter into places that tourists don't usually roam and not only conduct interviews in the Portuguese language, but be able to understand the *carioca* dialect and the slang of the *favela*. Sandy and John (2011, p. 243) quite rightly suggest, that “In essence, the interview method is the art of questioning and interpreting the answers.” For this reason, I spent a solid six weeks, every day and often into the night present in the *favela* in order to become well acquainted with the people of *Cantagalo* and the families I was to film and interview. For this reason, by the time the interviews took place, I had earned their respect and confidence, which allowed for very in-depth interviews.

Below are six examples of the questions asked.

Do you think that dance (and more specifically samba) can transcend prejudice? Can it help to break down barriers between different races, ages, sexes and social classes?

Regarding samba as an industry, how do people in your *favela* community survive off samba? What jobs are provided through the samba world including *carnaval*?

What do you see as the positive and/or negative effects of samba on your life, at-risk youths in the community and the *favela* as a whole?

Is there a link between the *favela* community and samba? If so, what do you see as links? Does the *favela* strengthen samba and vice versa? What purpose does samba serve within the community?

Samba recently gained the status of 'Brazilian Cultural Heritage'. Why is this so important and what effect has this had on how samba is viewed by Brazilians outside the *favelas* and the rest of the world?

How does today's *carnaval* differ from earlier *carnaval* parades and how has the modern commercialization of *carnaval* affected the samba world?

Four main themes were established for analysis in Chapter four and further information was included, when appropriate, in the literature review of Chapter two. The four themes of interest are: The relationship between the *favela* and samba; Samba as a symbol of national identity; Samba as an industry and Current threats to samba culture. The interviews were translated into English and transcribed. One column of the transcription contained keywords from sections of the interview to allow efficient gathering of information under the four selected categories later in the piece. Key points were occasionally supported by literature on the subject.

The analysis section became more of an expansion on previously discussed themes rather than a comparison between opposing beliefs, as those interviewed, although of differing ethnicities and backgrounds, seemed to agree on most points. In the analysis section, I chose to avoid paraphrasing the

testimonies, as their choice of words, and the extent to which they addressed a question, reflects the intensity of their feelings towards the topic. Paraphrasing or intrusive editing of the paragraphs could accidentally alter what I consider to be a very valuable and unique point of view.

Chapter Four: Examining recurrent themes

In addition to the large body of literature written about the social, cultural and political controversies of the samba world, a record of fresh perspectives gained both from studies and through experience in the field is invaluable. The perspectives of my interviewees provide differing angles on common themes – some learnt through in-depth research and others learnt from generations of oral history. This chapter will analyze themes that emerged from the testimonies of the individuals interviewed and considers how they might relate to theories raised in my literature review. To add to the voices of my interviewees, I have also included inserts of another qualitative research project on samba performed during the seventies in a different Rio de Janeiro *favela* by Leopoldi (1978). These serve to demonstrate whether or not attitudes have changed over time and to add depth to the discussions. There are four separate sections: The relationship between the *favela* (shantytown) and samba; Samba as a symbol of national identity; Samba as an industry, and Current threats to samba culture. Sharing their knowledge and personal accounts are members of a *favela* community, members of samba schools and scholars of samba and Afro-Brazilian performance, which together provide a well-rounded resource to compliment current literature.

4.1 Meeting the interviewees

In this section I will briefly introduce the six people I chose to interview. Aiming to gather varied perspectives, which together form a balanced work to add to previous research, I chose two Afro-Brazilian women from the *favela* 'Cantagalo' (currently 'pacified' by the PPC) who are heavily active in the samba scene, two academics who specialize in Afro-Brazilian dance and two famous samba artists. All but Carlos Bolacha featured in the creative component of this thesis. Their voices enriched the documentary and served to inform the audience about the history and positive effects of the samba.

Emílio Domingos

Emílio Domingos is a social scientist and samba researcher who lives in Botafogo, an area historically famous for *samba de gafieira* dances. Emílio has been a director, researcher, scriptwriter and assistant director to documentaries. He has worked with visual anthropology and urban culture since 1997, making him an expert in his field. Emílio's recent research has been related to both samba and *funk carioca*, which made him the perfect person to talk to regarding both the history of Afro-Brazilian dance culture and present day dance forms.

Maísa de Souza do Nascimento Penha

Maísa Souza is a 34 years old samba enthusiast from the *favela* Cantagalo, which sits on the hills above Rio de Janeiro's most affluent neighborhood of Ipanema. Maísa comes from a family heavily involved in samba. Her grandfather and father were samba composers, her grandmother a samba dancer and her

brothers samba dancers and teachers. Maísa is a mother of six children, all of who participate in the samba social projects within the *favela*. Júlia, one of Maísa's daughters has become a professional samba dancer by the age of thirteen. Maísa is passionate about keeping culture alive in the favela and works with social projects.

Dona Sônia Maria Alves de Oliveira

The sixty-five year old Dona Sônia is a resident of the *favela* Cantagalo. Dona Sônia has been involved in the samba world since 1955, holding various important positions within the *Alegria da Zona Sul* samba school before eventually becoming president of the *velha guarda* (elders group) of the school. The 'elders group' is the foundations of the samba school. They are the school's heritage and are very influential.

Zeca Ligiéro

Zeca Ligiéro is a scholar of Afro-Brazilian culture and head of the School of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Performance Arts at Unirio University in Rio de Janeiro. He is also a *pai de santo* – a priest of the Afro-Brazilian cult called Candomblé. Zeca has written a number of books and papers on Afro-Brazilian dance, including the history of samba, making him a wonderful reference of Afro-Brazilian cultural knowledge.

Mestre Monarco

Mestre (master) Monarco's real name is Hildemar Diniz but he is known to the world by his pseudonym Monarco. Mestre Monarco is a famous composer and singer from the third oldest samba school - Portela. At seventy-nine years old, he

is one of the few samba composers who have stayed faithful to the old style samba and still fights to maintain the roots of samba, which are under threat due to the commercialization of *carnaval*. Portela is one of the *grupo especial* (top league) samba schools in Rio. Monarco was able to share a wealth of knowledge thanks to over sixty years of dedication to Portela samba school.

Carlos Bolacha

Carlos Bolacha is one of Brazil's top *samba de gafieira* choreographers, dancers and teachers. He is the proprietor of one of Rio's most important *gafieiras* (dance halls) called *Cachanga do Malandro*. Carlos is a very important figure in the history of the dance form *samba de gafieira*. His dance school has produced some of Rio's best dancers and holds firm to the traditional style of *samba de gafieira*.

4.2 The relationship between the *favela* and samba

This section looks at the symbiotic relationship between the *favela* and samba. Without a doubt, samba *carioca* was 'raised' in the *favelas* at a time when it was heavily repressed in Brazilian society, which makes samba culture indebted to the tenacity and resistance of the people living there (Domingos, 2012; McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, pp. 30-31; Schreiner, 2002, p. 128). In turn, these *favela* communities were previously, and still are to some degree, dependant on samba as a form of sociability as well as being an educational and political tool.

The importance of samba to a *favela* community was expressed during an interview as part of another qualitative research project on samba: "One prominent samba dancer described to an interviewer [from Globo] in the 1970s what samba meant to the Afro-Brazilian community five decades earlier: "The samba was our family, our Sunday stroll, our movies, our lover. It was all we really knew of happiness there on the morro [hillside slum]"(as cited by Raphael, 1990). This comment indicates that samba was for relaxing, for entertainment and for companionship. Maísa confirmed to me that samba not only brings joy but serves as a form of stress release when the hardships of the *favela* get too much: "When I am upset or even angry, I like to play [samba]. I'd prefer to play than to stay at home. Sometimes you don't have money or sometimes you don't have a job or you're unhappy or you've had a fight, so most people go to samba. It helps... You get rid of whatever you are feeling at samba. You get rid of the stress and go back to work the next day feeling better" (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012). When analysing my transcripts, I observed that the common

solution to dealing with problems in the favela was to head straight to samba. Dona Sônia, following the traditional Afro-Brazilian method of oral tradition declared that: "I pass this on to my grand children, no matter what problems you have, you need to deal with them singing and dancing samba"(Oliveira, 2012). Mestre Monarco of the Portela samba school also commented on the idea of samba being a form of therapy:

Sometimes people are going through a sad moment and they come to a *roda de samba* and they forget their problems and just play [samba] with their friends. These are the responsibilities of samba; it is the positive effect it has. Just give me an excuse and I'll make another samba. Samba gives inspiration (Monarco, 2012).

Supporting the view that samba is the centre of a *favela* community, social scientist Emílio said:

Samba permeates their lives. Samba is not just a *carnaval* parade; it is fundamental to the social lives of these people. It's not just during *carnaval*; it is throughout the whole year. It's the work of many people. To give you an idea, a samba school has around 5000 people and a school unites around 5000 people every weekend, so that's a lot of people involved (Domingos, 2012).

During an interview by Leopoldi, conducted as part of a different qualitative research project, the social importance of a samba school to the community was described by a director of the *Mocidade Independente* samba school. He explained that without the samba school there would be no entertainment in the community. For this reason, those living in the *favela* community of *Padre Miguel* demand that the samba school provides opportunities to train samba and have samba shows, otherwise there would be nothing to do (Leopoldi, 1978, p. 96). These comments, referring to differing aspects of the positive effect of samba on a *favela* community, together form a clear picture of its essential place within the community.

Over the last hundred years, samba has acted, in varying situations, as a unifying tool both in regards to a community and the country. The concepts of 'unity' and 'solidarity' came out strongly in my interviews. From the point of view of the samba school, Mestre Monarco claimed adamantly that "Samba really unites people"(Monarco, 2012). Not only does samba unite people but also it provides a democratic space in an otherwise not-so-democratic society. The famed samba dancer Bolacha said emphatically that:

In the place that you go to dance, there are people of all classes. There might be a street cleaner, doctor, lawyer, an office boy, even someone who doesn't work. Here everyone is equal. It's always the same motive – to party and be happy. Become united for this reason. They say that within the *gafieira* [dancehall] nobody is the boss. It's a democratic space. For example, a general who is used to ordering people around within his barracks, here in the *gafieira* he is equal to an office boy or someone who works in the rubbish tip (Bolacha, 2012).

Zeca also commented on the unifying power of the samba school:

Every community has a samba school. This samba school unites the community the whole year round. Evidently within the school's walls, other music such as funk and hiphop take place but the base of that community is the organization of the samba parade. The base of samba is tied to the samba school. In the samba school you learn from very young by watching the adults play and dance. It's an oral tradition that is passed on from generation to generation by contact with the elders. The elders teach and transmit this culture. I think it would be impossible to think of a community of black people, of a favela, without the universe of samba (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012).

Not only does samba provide a communal space open to all ethnicities and social classes but it also welcomes all age groups. This enables entire families to participate in events from the youngest child to the grandparents. When discussing *carnaval*, Dona Sônia showed that this claim is no exaggeration: "It's for children from seven years old to someone who is 100 years old if they can still manage to samba. There are people in the *velha guarda* who are 88 years

old and they drink and dance, they have fun, they don't get old" (Oliveira).

Bolacha (2012) confirmed to me that the same environment exists in the *samba de gafieira* dance world:

Samba doesn't have age-limits. From children to senior citizens, when they get together in a classroom, it is for the same motive, which is to live and enjoy life. Samba offers that... samba is joy, it's a party and people get together for this, to party. Whether it's a young or an old person.

The centre of a *favela* community is the samba school, which offers respected positions in society regardless of what one's occupation, race or class may be.

To be part of a samba school, it is something that gives you status that is not only cultural but social in the community. You might not be an artist but a director of harmony, which is more administrative but it gives you high status in the community. This part of a samba school. It gives you an identity within the group that is very big (Domingos, 2012).

After establishing that the samba world creates a democratic space in which various races, classes and ages are unified, I was interested in identifying further positive effects of samba. I had a variety of responses from my interviewees to this question. Maísa spoke enthusiastically about the entertaining element of samba:

I like samba, because it's a rhythm that moves people, you can't resist... For me, samba means party! I like parties. I like carnival. Everyone is poor, because there are people that are rich but poor in spirit, at least we are poor financially but have culture, which makes us rich (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

Maísa's thirteen-year-old daughter Júlia then told me "samba is really good.

When I dance, I feel out of this world and I feel free." Dona Sônia's view of samba spoke of the deeper aspects of samba relating to the history of samba: "Samba is culture...It's music, it's race, it's love" (Oliveira, 2012) The scholar Zeca also spoke to the long history of the art form: "Samba is a great tradition, it's over 100

years old “(Zeca Ligiéro, 2012). One of Bolacha’s dance students, Donna Arlette said passionately that samba “is good for your soul, your body. Dance is a therapy, it’s good for you.” When evaluating these comments it can be said that samba has a wide reaching effect on individuals and the community, which range from mental and physical health benefits to social benefits.

In addition to the comments I myself recorded, I thought it beneficial to also add some definitions of a samba school given by members who were interviewed for the qualitative research of Leopoldi (1978) as follows:

É uma comunidade onde todos podem ir, onde não há preconceito. (It’s a community where everyone can go, where there is no prejudice.)

É uma casa familiar, onde há muito respeito. (It’s a common house, where there is a lot of respect.)

É um meio de divertimento, um prolongamento do lar, onde a gente vem para se divertir. (It’s a form of entertainment, an extension of the home, where people come to have fun).

É um meio de organização das pessoas para lutarem pelo local onde moram. (It’s a way of organizing people to fight for the place they live in.) (Leopoldi, 1978, pp. 99-100)

The last definition given shows the depth and power that such an organization can have. Most consider a samba school to be a place where one can forget the problems of everyday life and socialize in a democratic space, however, there is a collective power that such an organization gives to the inhabitants of that community, and every community, or favela, has it’s own samba school.

Both scholars spoke of the importance of samba as a means of political and cultural expression. Zeca expressed that: “The *favela* is where samba brews, where culture is being made. I think that samba has a great effect on different

[*favela*] communities because it permits them to express themselves” (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012). Emílio also reinforced this belief:

I think that samba is a way for the afro-Brazilian to assert themselves. Samba is important for the black culture to assert themselves within the Brazilian society. Samba is an identity that ends up generating a positive image of black people for the rest of society and it is very well accepted today. It’s in the *roda de samba* (samba jam) that samba evolves, changes and maintains traditions. Many sambas in the *rodas* were never recorded. It’s there that they are passed down by oral tradition of the people in the *roda*. A *roda de samba* is a kind of live museum. I get emotional talking about this. Every time someone is singing in a *roda de samba*, they are making sure this culture is remembered and our ancestors are remembered. It’s a very strong thing (Domingos, 2012).

The Afro-Brazilian tendency to pass on information through oral tradition has also been written about a great deal in the literature. Ribeiro-Mayer M.A. (2008) explains that as the Portuguese language is complex, cultural expressions requiring the use of spoken or written language tend to be of the middle and higher classes.

The creation of a common cultural identity is therefore the task mostly of performance-based art, music and dance as well as sports. For these allow all Brazilians to participate on an equal footing, independent of their educational level and wealth. (Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008).

Samba dance and music has been, and continues to broach the void between the lower and high classes. The equality that the samba world offers creates a situation in which the skilled musician, from the poverty of the *favela*, can earn the respect of the upper class.

The rehearsals occur all year round, mainly on Fridays and Saturdays, when the people living in the favelas mingle with the white Brazilians who are middle and upper class. Here, there is an inversion of power: the poor become the teachers, the experts in samba dancing and samba-theme, passing their skills on to the middle and upper class pupils as much as possible (Hufferd, 2007, p. 43).

During an interview with a high class white Brazilian who attends samba school in a local *favela*, I learnt that although she had originally thought that it was her helping the poverty stricken Afro-Brazilian teachers by paying for classes, she realized after the stress release and pleasurable entertainment of a samba class, that they were the ones helping her.

Favela life doesn't allow for an individualistic existence. The mere fact that the houses are nestled closely around and on top of each other, means that one's many neighbors become an integral part of daily life. Maísa, an inhabitant of Cantagalo *favela*, explained to me that even without asking, her neighbors would keep an eye out on her children when left home alone. They would often deliver food and make sure they are okay or simply babysit. She pointed out that outside the *favela*, it is not common for people to have this relationship. Often people don't even know their neighbors. Yet in the *favela*, everybody knows everybody and a 'good morning!' will be shouted from across the other side of the hill when you step outside your door (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012). It is evident that the close-knit community-style living of those in a *favela*, whether chosen or imposed, contributes to the perpetuation of the samba school and samba culture.

A importância das relações de vizinhança, de amizade e de parentesco, como elementos propiciadores á incrementação das atividades da Escola, transparecem quando se buscam as raízes da ligação entre ela e os seus componentes. O recrutamento, via de regra, decorre da influência de parentes e amigos ou da própria vivência nas atividades do bairro... (The importance of neighborhood relationships, friendships and kinship, as key elements of the growth of samba school activities, transpire when searching for the roots of the connection between it and its components. Recruitment, as a rule, results from the influence of relatives and friends of their own experiences or activities in the neighborhood...) (Leopoldi, 1978, p. 96).

In other words, it is through family, friends and neighbors that others are brought into the samba schools. During my interview with Maísa, she confirmed this to be true in her personal samba history:

When I was young my grandmother made us parade in samba groups. My dad was already involved in samba; he played and wrote samba songs. My grandfather also wrote. My uncle wrote. My grandmother used to parade in the wing of the Baianas. She is only not parading now because she is very ill, otherwise she would parade. So we grew up like that, I danced like she danced. Then I gave up dancing to play [samba music] and my daughters dance. It gets passed on from one to the other...so when we are in the *velha guarda*, they will be playing or dancing. I think the link between the community and samba is very strong because the people grow up liking it...because if your grandparents and parents like it then you end up liking it (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

It seems a logical conclusion that when your family and friends, neighbors and teachers are all involved in the same cultural expression, you also would be. This results in a higher number per capita of samba artists within the *favela* compared with outside the *favela*. Dona Sônia stated categorically that the relationship between samba and the *favela* community is stronger than in the world outside:

Community has everything to do with music and dance because there are many composers and dancers in the *favela*. You need to have opportunity and insistence. In the community there is more music and dance [and there are] many people with a lot of talent for dance and song (Oliveira).

After my interview with Maísa, she invited me to her birthday party, which was to be held on the samba school grounds within the *favela* Cantagalo. The door was left open to any members of the samba school or community in general to enter. This confirmed to me what I had read in the literature– that a samba school serves the community beyond the primary purpose of its existence. An example of this was found in the book ‘Samba school, Ritual and Society’:

Participar, portanto, da Escola de Samba é, antes de tudo, compartilhar de uma atividade que exprime uma identificação com o contexto em que a agremiação emerge – isto é, o bairro – e de que constitui um produto espontâneo. Muitas vezes a Escola de Samba converte-se em núcleo de expressão da sociabilidade comunitária, o que transparece nas múltiplas ocasiões em que ela serve de palco a manifestações sociais que transcendem seu objetivo imediato (carnavalesco), como é o caso das comemorações de aniversários, casamentos ou das celebrações de atos religiosos em que se festeja o seu santo padroeiro ou se vela um defunto. (To be part of a Samba School is first of all, to share an activity that expresses an identification with the context in which the school emerges - i.e., the neighborhood - and that is a spontaneous product. Often the Samba School becomes the centre of communitary social expression and on multiple occasions it serves as a stage for social events that transcend their immediate goal (carnival), as is the case of the celebrations of birthdays, weddings or celebrations of religious acts when patron saints are worshipped or candles are placed around a corpse (Leopoldi, 1978, p. 98).

Within the samba schools, there are often a number of social projects including an *escola mirim* (kids' samba school), which is free to those from the *favela*.

Aside from these, there are a number of independent social projects working with dance and music as a method of education. Maísa works with some of these that are based in the *favela* Cantagalo and shares thoughts on the importance of them:

Social projects come into the community, transform people and you keep learning. The teachers develop the projects and the government supports them and with this money they buy instruments, uniforms etc. They give the classes for free, they do it with love because they like it too and to give the young ones the possibility to learn. [For example] for my son to learn how to develop his talent, so that one day I won't end up crying because my son was put in prison, or because he is dead, but I'll be smiling because he learnt something when he was a child in these social projects [and] he developed a talent that he already had. I think it is very important that they participate, because it gives them the opportunity to learn and to develop their talents, which will generate income for them. I think they learn a lot in the social projects, not just what the teacher teaches them, but they learn to get along together, work together in a group. They learn many things, time limits, space limits. Like not to invade the space of others. Like how to arrive early, on time. Learning how to work in a team. You can leave your community to work in a big company because you learnt how to work as a team. I was a very

young mother. I was 17. And now I am 34 years old and have 6 children. I try to pass on everything that I learn on to my children. I like them to have culture, to be part of the social projects. Sometimes they belong to two or three social projects at the same time, so I know all the teachers, so that makes it like a big family (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

A very successful social project within Cantagalo *favela* is *Afro-reggae*. This project works with the development of musical and dance talent and produces shows of a very high calibre. Within Cantagalo they also have the *Afro-Reggae* circus, which incorporates capoeira and Brazilian dance forms into the traditional circus performance. In September his year, UNESCO Brazil gave a seminar on identity, culture and resistance in marginalized communities. In regards to *Afro-Reggae* and other such social projects, they concluded that:

They 'compete' directly with drug traffic by offering an alternative way of life. Their actions and interpersonal supporting structures protect against marginalization and are essential conditions for social integration. They make use of art, culture, imagination and creativity to subvert stereotypes, connect urban spaces, rendering the culture of favelas visible and attractive in the eyes of the city, the country and the world. The efficacy of those organizations derives from the wisdom, culture and identity present at the communities they belong to and represent. Their projects fulfill multiple functions and offer lessons that must be heeded. (UNESCO, 2012).

Smaller social projects obviously don't have the same structural support and funding as 'Afro-Reggae' but aim to provide the same benefits to the children, this being a safe family environment, where self-esteem and cultural identity are strengthened and important life lessons are taught.

The benefits of dance on the psyche and the concept of using dance as an educational tool is discussed in this statement of Boas (1972), which could also be applied to the samba social projects:

The possibilities of dance as a mental therapy must be explored just as, until now, it's uses in physical training have been emphasized. The

psychological implications of dance and the methods of using it as a broadening educative medium on a par with other arts must be widely understood and propagandized.

Monarco talks about the way the social projects of Portela samba school

function:

The kids come into the samba school and see it like a school of life, and I think that is cool. This is beneficial for the community and society. Even to get the kids off the street who are just hanging around. They come here to learn an instrument. To me, this is all worthwhile. The intention of the social projects of the samba school is to get the kids off the streets, they come here, stay here, learn an instrument or work. Because today we [the school] are full of money, there is no need to be lying in the streets. These days the school gives costumes to the needy people of the community who don't have costumes. We get sponsorship, so these days the costumes are free. But they have to come to the rehearsals and become familiar with the school to be able to get a costume. They have to go to the rehearsals, they have to fulfil that promise to the school, they come here to learn samba and get a costume. The priority is the community, the people who live here (Monarco, 2012).

Monarco's words are supported by literature on the subject:

Samba Schools also are committed [to] helping their communities.... Furthermore, the State Secretary of Culture of Rio de Janeiro provides R\$50.00 (about US\$25.00) a month for each child who belongs to one of the Escolas Mirins (Childrens' Samba Schools) to teach the child how Samba Schools function and how to construct everything related to it. People who are involved with the project say that children are able to learn about their own culture, and this cultural involvement in turn helps to enrich the regular school learning (Hufferd, 2007, p. 67).

The samba schools therefore do have a social conscience, which is encouraged financially by their sponsors and the government. Just as they receive huge amounts of support from their community, they also give back to their community in many ways.

4.3 Samba as a symbol of national identity.

This section builds on the previously discussed topic of samba's transformation from an Afro-Brazilian cultural expression to representing Brazilian identity. Mention of this metamorphosis seemed to provoke two things simultaneously in my interviewees: a pride in samba having transcended prejudice, conquering all Brazilian social strata, and an utter distaste for the 'bleaching' and commercialization of samba, which fails to give recognition for the Afro-Brazilian contribution to the formation of this culture and gradually removes traditional Afro-Brazilian elements from the *carnaval* parade.

Samba is no longer seen as something black. It's seen as something Brazilian. Even a samba school, which is something from the [*favela*] community, the population of the samba school is no longer black. You have a large part of them that are not black. I think the prejudice is in negating the African heritage in samba. It's not believed that this dance belongs to the African culture. It's believed that it belongs to Brazil. [However] samba is afro-Brazilian. (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012)

In this quote, Zeca highlights the growing trend in Brazil to claim popular cultural manifestations, such as capoeira and samba as their own with great national pride, seemingly oblivious to the struggle that Afro-Brazilians historically had to keep these art forms alive.

The base of samba is African; the rhythm, the dance and the playfulness. Samba stopped being associated with black Afro culture and became something 'made in Brazil'. So we started to bereave the Afro culture... What is currently associated with Afro-culture is Candomblé whereas we perceive that samba is Afro. Brazilian culture takes everything for itself and pushes to the side the ethnic connotations, which value our African Brazilian heritage (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012).

The problem does not lie in the fact that Brazil has embraced these art forms, the dilemma is that it is an extension of the Brazilian governments desire to 'bleach'

the Brazilian population. Zeca Ligiéro (2012) refers to this issue in the following statement:

Our own emperor wanted to bring over more Europeans to transform Brazil into a white country over many generations. I can see that this African heritage is in the body of the Brazilian, in the way he walks and the food he eats. We have a bodily exuberance, which I believe is inherited from the African culture. There is always prejudice against afro-Brazilian culture. We owe a lot to the African culture remembering that in the 18th Century, two thirds of the population were black. Now we have a very reduced and mixed black population, however, our nation was built by the hands of the black people. So it's a strong heritage that we have yet it is not graced with the respect that it should be (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012).

Dona Sônia, an Afro-Brazilian woman who was born in the 1940's and experienced the persecution first hand, supports Emílios claim: "It was our insistence, and that of many who have already died [and] who have never seen how wonderful it has become (Oliveira, 2012).

Emílio, although very aware of samba's Afro-Brazilian heritage, seemed to view the transformation to Cultural Heritage as a victorious outcome after many years of struggle:

From the moment samba became cultural heritage, and became part of society, it started to reduce differences and barriers. So samba today, is not just associated with black people, it is incorporated in Brazilian society. Everyone sambas. There is a phrase: 'Who doesn't like samba is not a good subject, he is either sick in the head or ill in the foot'. (Domingos, 2012).

Bolacha also spoke about this with pride: "The flame, that is samba, was always lit in Brazil. To have this recognition that samba today is cultural heritage, makes samba dancers very happy because they know the real value of samba" (Bolacha, 2012). Dona Sônia, remembers with disgust the way they were treated in her early days of samba and spoke passionately about samba's "leap from

infamous outcast to (virtually official) national emblem” as Vianna (1999) phrased it.

In the old days, samba wasn't well known... only people who were 'vagabonds' and 'criminals' went out in *carnaval*. Many people during the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's were put in jail during *carnaval* because anyone who celebrated carnival was considered a tramp. They didn't want to know that it was culture, that we were fighting for our culture. *Carnaval* that offers jobs and everything. Many people went to jail. (Oliveira, 2012)

Dona Sônia didn't mention the fact that the Afro-Brazilian culture has been bereaved of its ownership of samba. Perhaps this is because she has not critically analyzed the treatment of samba in quite the same way as Zeca the academic and Emílio the social scientist have done. Perhaps she does not believe it to be true. Perhaps it does not worry her because what the Afro-Brazilian members of the samba world have to deal with today is nothing compared to what they suffered in the past. Dona Sônia celebrates the success of samba:

Everything has changed. *Carnaval* now, you can see that the great artists want to celebrate *carnaval* and be part of it. Why? Because it became culture. Before it was only the people from the *favela* that participated. To get to where we are now, we suffered a lot. It's music, it's race, love. Because this comes in our blood. It was our thing. From the black culture. Because carnival started with the black people. That is why we went to jail. These days everyone is into samba but it started with us. Today I feel happy to see samba in this way. These days people pay top dollar to see a samba school pass, in the olden days, you'd see the police hitting people in the streets (Oliveira, 2012).

Although Dona Sônia states clearly that the origins of samba are from Brazils' African heritage, she welcomes anyone into the samba community, reinforcing the points made in Chapter two, that samba creates a democratic space and all are welcome:

Carnival is culture, you don't need to be from the [favela] community. It's culture. Whoever who likes samba can come, as the house is ours (Oliveira).

When reviewing literature on the subject of race relations in *carnaval*, I found that Leopoldi aptly suggests that the samba school parade constitutes an idealized representation of the social structure, meaning that the social differences that really separate individuals are momentarily uncharacterized, permitting a flux of social relations on an egalitarian basis. So the carnival tries to create an ideal universe in which social differences don't exist (Leopoldi, 1978, p. 135).

With the money flooding in through sponsorship and government funding, the samba schools continue to increase in size and the parades continue to become more and more elaborate, with a higher percentage of foreign participation. In regards to the gradual expansion of samba schools, Leopoldi comments that while they achieve the size of a true national symbol, they also marginalize the samba dancers, especially the older ones, who continue to look for social and cultural meanings that they offered (Leopoldi, 1978, p. 133).

4.4 Samba as an industry

There are two sides to the coin regarding the industrialization of samba. On one hand it can be seen that culture is being exploited by capitalist forces, yet on the other hand the result of these commercial endeavors is that jobs are provided to those in the *favelas* who need them. The samba world, most notably *carnaval*, remunerates either directly (to samba musicians, performers and teachers) or indirectly (to those working behind the scenes of *carnaval* production) for up to the entire year.

Both Dona Sônia and Monarco, who have been involved in samba schools for over fifty-five years and are members of the *velha guarda*, were able to provide information regarding the industry of a samba school. Dona Sônia talks of the job opportunities offered through the samba school as a result of *carnaval*:

Carnival, apart from being culture, gives employment to people for half the year, there are people that live off the work in the barracão [production hanger]. For you to arrive in the *Sambódromo* all beautiful and tidy, there were lot's of people working. First you have to have the iron makers make the cars, [then] the carpenters, so how many people are involved there? Then comes the decorators. They start in the middle of August right through till February and they earn their salary. [These are] common people, they are people from our *favela* community and others. Many people at the time of *carnaval* earn money through the samba schools. Painters, decorators, sewers. *Carnaval* these days is visual. Visual means decoration. You make a costume but then it goes to the shed to be decorated (Oliveira).

Mestre Monarco and Emílio Domingos also verify this fact:

The big samba hangers are full of people working. Young girls and guys earn their money (Monarco, 2012).

There are people that live off samba. Samba ended up generating an industry with the samba parades and this industry moves many people (Domingos, 2012).

This is a recent luxury, which has only come about since the major samba schools began to receive government funding and private sponsorship. Smaller or less well-known samba schools still rely greatly on their community as they did in the past. This was discussed in a scholarly article (Raphael, 1990) and confirmed by Dona Sônia in her interview:

Members gave from their own near-empty pockets to meet the schools' needs, and artisans gave freely of their skills to build the schools' floats. Female school members sewed costumes, men made their own instruments, the children caught the cats whose skins covered the homemade drums used in the rhythm section (Raphael, 1990)

Some earn, but others don't. They do it for the love of it. I prepare a *feijoada* (traditional feast) and don't earn, why? Because I am a founder and I have a love for this school. Some make the food, others clean [and] others set the tables. It's a group of people coming together. (Oliveira, 2012)

Although Dona Sônia mentions that it takes nearly an entire samba community of volunteers to make an event like *carnaval* or a *feijoada* (traditional feast) happen, there are paid people, who are particularly skilled at their work.

And there is the industry of the school, you know that the flag bearers earn, the composers earn, the director of the band earns, the lead dancers of the *comissão de frente* earn...so a samba school earns a lot. The *velha guarda* (elderly group) also earns. There are wings of the big schools that earn when they travel. A samba school earns, it's a way for you to earn (Oliveira, 2012).

In support of these claims, the same information and more is found in the book *Carnaval in Brazil, samba schools and African culture* (Hufferd, 2007, pp. 68-69):

In Brazil, Carnaval provides jobs in many different fields...In this way, everything that is connected directly, such as Samba Schools, hotels, etc. and indirectly, such as manufacturers of shoes, costumes, hats, etc., provide jobs year-round. Also, many manufacturers and stores sell products throughout the year for regional and folkloric parties. In doing so, jobs are provided to many Brazilians who are connected to Carnaval.

Maísa, whose family has been involved in samba schools for generations and whose father and grandfather were both composers, confirms that:

Anyone, who wants to make a living from Samba, can. It is difficult but they can. There are a lot of people who earn from samba, the composers..... and there are people who dance in shows, like Julia does, for the tourists (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

Maísa's daughter of thirteen years Júlia, belongs to a team of professional dancers, who are hired to perform for tourists. This is an opportunity for them to earn through their talent and passion for dance. There is a range of professional opportunities for samba dancers outside the *carnaval* season. In the area of *samba de gafieira*, young male dancers are hired by elderly women for an evening of dance, as these women would otherwise struggle to find a dance partner when the competition is so high. Whilst earning, these male dancers, training to be dance professionals, often learn important leading skills, which are then incorporated into future classes. Carlos Bolacha spoke of the changes he has experienced over his years in the dance world:

Today samba is a profession. Today dancers manage to live professionally off samba. It gained professionalism. Today you can work with samba, give classes. In the olden days it was just danced, not taught. It has become a way to earn and survive, a way for you to work, to have a profession (Bolacha, 2012).

Dona Sônia reflects that people do not always work as samba dancers or musicians because they are following their passion for samba. Sometimes it is the desperate need for work within the *favela* that makes people consider developing their natural talent in order to be able to earn from it:

I think there is more music in the *favela* than on the *asfalto* (outside the favela)...because they don't have money, so they say 'oh I know how to sing or dance'. People learn things from necessity. Sometimes they sing and dance without having studied but they write beautiful lyrics or sing beautifully. It's necessity. They learn out of pain. If you

don't have the material to do something, you make your own. It's through pain that people learn how to do something (Oliveira).

The samba industry has grown so large that it has gone beyond the borders of Brazil, as Emílio emphasized:

Nowadays samba has transformed into something that goes beyond the community. The favela has already expanded globally. The samba parade is a worldwide event (Domingos, 2012).

Zeca also spoke to this new phase of samba's existence:

There is an interesting thing happening now, with new middle class composers of the new generation taking up samba and playing it in various places. So there is a rebirth of samba outside the communities. There is also an international interest in samba, so during *carnaval* there are a lot of people from Japan and Sweden. So there is an internationalization of samba, which proves that samba is not only in the favelas, it is going through a new moment. (Zeca Ligiéro, 2012)

One of the main criticisms of the commercialization of *carnaval* is that the main focus of the samba world is aimed towards the annual *carnaval* festivities.

People are not creating samba, without the motivation that it may be selected for *carnaval* and earn them money or fame or both. Something of a culture is lost when financial gain becomes the motivation, as Mestre Monarco mentioned:

In the olden days we used to create more samba, at least here in the Portela.... about problems with love lives, everyday life, we created more. I call the young guys and say: "let's create". Some just want to write samba *enredo* [for *carnaval*] and I pull their ears for them to create. The samba from our school, that we created, comes from the heart, it's a beautiful thing that can't die. I fight for this and continue making my samba (Monarco, 2012).

Maísa also mourns the stronghold that *carnaval* has over the samba world:

People make samba for *carnaval*. That thing of people gathering together in a bar to write is kind of over, it exists, but not a lot. Before there used to be twenty men in a bar writing samba and discussing samba. Nowadays, you might have ten (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

4.5 Current threats to samba culture

Despite the persecution of samba culture in its early days, samba was kept alive within the safety of the *favelas*. Nowadays, changes are occurring in the *favelas* that pose a new threat to the perpetuation of samba. One issue is that today's youth of the *favelas* are more interested in *funk carioca* culture than samba. Samba has traditionally been passed down from generation to generation yet could the fact that the new generation are not enamored by samba mean that samba rests dangerously with the older generations, whose numbers are only reducing with time? With the installation of the PPU (Police Pacification Units) within the *favelas*, comes the second threat. Samba, along with *funk carioca* are suffering a less aggressive, yet damaging persecution similar to what samba suffered over one hundred years ago.

4.5.1 *Funk carioca*

Funk carioca (Rio funk) is a relatively recent Brazilian music and dance form, which derived from the American music genre *Miami bass*. Some variations incorporate the drumbeat of the Candomblé religion. Maísa explains the connections to the Afro-Brazilian culture:

The beat of *funk carioca* is the rhythm of Candomblé, which was developed by the slaves. It's black. Funk is culture, which comes from the past. So all these rhythms, whether or not they want to, are part of black culture (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

Funk carioca was established in the 1970's by those in the poorer Afro-Brazilian neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro and by the 1990's *funk carioca* had spread from the lower to the middle class and from Rio to the rest of the country. Funk MC's often sung about controversial topics such as crime, violence, and sexuality, which are all factors of daily life in the *favela* (McGowan & Pessanha, 2009, p. 225). In this way, *funk carioca* has become the voice of the *favela* as samba once was prior to the Vargas regime. It is considered by many to be very overtly sexual in both lyrics and dance moves. However social scientist Emílio Domingos believes disapproving attitudes may change. During the interview, he alluded to the power that funk has in today's society, similar to that of samba in days gone by:

I think that funk today has a similar representation to what samba had at the beginning. Funk is a contemporary thing that attracts the youth of today in the *favelas* and in the whole country. People thought that samba was too absurdly sexy in the beginning, like people think funk is today...now people don't think samba is very sexy. Only time will tell if funk will become more accepted (Domingos, 2012).

Dona Sônia talks about the friction between the samba and *funk carioca* communities as she sees it:

Funk dancers don't really like samba dancers. But samba artists accept the funk, because they are a bit older. There is rivalry between funk and samba (Oliveira, 2012).

Despite the huge attraction that funk carioca has on today's Brazilian youth, many samba enthusiasts don't seem to believe it will weaken samba's hold on the country. Both Dona Sônia and Emílio attest to this:

Samba won't die. Funk might grow, but samba will never die (Oliveira, 2012).

I think Funk is what samba used to be. Samba has not lost any strength, it has a huge strength. The two genres that dominate the culture of the city are samba and *funk carioca* (Domingos, 2012).

4.5.2 PPU intervention

This section discusses the recent installation of the Police Pacification Units within the *favelas* and the negative effect they are having on the production and enjoyment of music and dance culture. In order to understand their presence, one must first understand what came before them. For this reason I would like to provide a little background, as to their existence and the changes they have brought about within the *favelas*. In 2001, twenty percent of the population of Rio de Janeiro was living in *favelas*, which were controlled by drug traffickers and this number increases every year. Prior to 2008, the manner in which the authorities dealt with drug trafficking and violent outbreaks was to storm into the *favelas* heavily armed, often killing innocent bystanders in their attempt to control gangs. As part of a recent study conducted by UNESCO Brazil within a number of favelas including Cantagalo, it was noted that:

The police is the main representative of the State, seen by favela-dwellers as a persecutory and aggressive, making no difference between the mere inhabitant and the drug smuggler, the criminal. People in the favelas hardly talk about their right to public security. They report frequent abuse from the police and they know they are often seen as criminals. (UNESCO, 2012).

In an effort to bring order to these communities long ignored by the state, the first Police Pacifying Unit (PPU) was installed in the *favela* Dona Marta in 2008. Motivated by the upcoming World Cup and Olympic games, by 2011 the UPP had taken control of thirteen *favelas* and aim to occupy another twenty-seven *favelas* by 2014. The pacification began in Rio's south zone, which is the home to the majority of the upper class. Establishing police headquarters within the *favela* aims to rid the shantytown of armed gunmen, and provide a 24hour police

service, which deals with any unrest in the community, as well as providing social service. The idea is that working from within the *favela* will reduce the hatred and aggression towards the police force after so many years of violent attacks (Baena, 2011; Economist, 2010; Megan, 2010; Riding, 2010). Dona Sônia recalls how it was the *favela* Cantagalo three years ago, prior to the new era of PPU pacification. She talks of the drug trafficking and violent police invasions:

People died because of the drugs, people lost their children. There were people who lost three children in one day, so it was very hurtful to see all these things happening in the *favela*. The police that used to enter in the *favela* before the PPU, they would come in and kill many people, who had nothing to do with it. [Now] there wont be that thing of the police invading your house. My house was invaded many times, my own! Sometimes your son was humiliated because they didn't know who was who, so they just humiliated everyone. So the PPU improved that (Oliveira).

Dona Sônia explained, that previously no one knew the policemen that came up into the *favela* guns blazing. Now, everybody gets to know the police who are based within the *favela* and are accustomed to their constant presence. A report by UNESCO (2012), states that the PPU: "(Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora – UPPs) represent change in the relationships between favela residents and the police. There is a renovated dialogue between the police and the community, bringing forth a new sense of security".

Maísa, also an inhabitant of the *favela* Cantagalo, admits that there have been some positive changes with regards to the drug trafficking, but expresses what I found to be a common attitude within *favelas*. It is felt that the state is putting great efforts into reducing the violence (possibly mostly for the benefit of tourism to Rio) but not focusing on other areas that need support, such as culture:

Culture is lacking since the PPU set up here, because they don't give space, they don't let people do what they used to do. Before, there used to be samba in the samba school's space, now not anymore. There used to be funk there, there isn't anymore these days. There used to be samba in the bars, that traditional thing of my grandfather playing samba in the bars.... But not anymore. Why? ...they prohibit everything... You see the samba school's space there, empty. Those from the samba school have to go down onto the *asfalto* (outside the *favela*) to play, which is difficult because we have to pay transport, and some don't have money to get there so they can't go. But here it was free, you could just go in and play (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

It appears that as a result of police intervention in the *favelas*, culture is the new innocent bystander that is taking a hit in the name of peacekeeping. The police are suddenly imposing rules and regulations, curfews and time limits on areas of life that have not had restrictions for over a hundred years. Inhabitants who value their culture are afraid that these changes may mean the end of culture production within the *favela*. As sound-control aims to create a peaceful environment for all living in the favela, it also chases out of the favela those who have music and dance central to their lives. At 65 years of age, the police might suppose that Dona Sônia would want to sleep peacefully but in reality she would prefer to keep the noisy '*bailes funk*' (funk carioca dances) within the favela because that way she knows that her grandchildren are safe close-by:

Mothers, grandmothers like the PPU because we don't want any harm to come of our sons and grandsons but the young generation don't want them here because they want to dance their funk and the police don't let them. There used to be *funk carioca* dances here but the police reduced the amount, so the youth don't like them. Young people like their dance. I think that a Funk dance within the community for me is good, because I know my grandson is here within the community, because if he is not here, he is going to look for a party somewhere else. And you don't know what is going to happen (Oliveira, 2012).

Maísa spoke passionately about her fear that music and dance culture, that has always played a vital role in the *favela*, might die out:

Police pacification is changing the life of not only samba players, but everyone; hiphop, samba, *funk carioca*, you don't have the freedom anymore. The PPU came in to improve things [and] no one can say that things didn't get better because they did. A great deal. The 'parallel power', the power of the drug traffickers got better. In the *favela*, if the kids don't have culture, they won't have a future. I think that the PPU should bring more of that, not just the repression of crime and drug trafficking and those things because they prohibit so many things that people are left with no room to develop. Cultural things that we used to have, don't exist anymore. Samba and *funk carioca*... *Funk carioca* in Rio de Janeiro is a cultural thing... Samba is tradition. It is culture. *Carnaval* is culture but it can't develop because they either limit the space or prohibit it. Here it's not just limited space, it is forbidden. If the children don't have culture, what will be left for them? Nothing. If I don't encourage my children to have culture, they won't have any. If the *favela* doesn't have culture, it will die out. People might come here and not find any more samba. It's like trees. You go on killing them, soon there won't be any left. Culture is the same thing, if you don't plant culture within the community, it won't develop (de Souza do Nascimento Penha, 2012).

A very similar point of view of another inhabitant of Cantagalo *favela* was noted in an article in 2010. The reoccurring theme is that efforts should be put into encouraging culture within the *favela* instead of only focusing on reducing violence.

One morning I visited Pavao, Pavaozinho and Cantagalo, a three-community *favela* overlooking Copacabana and Ipanema, which has been peaceful since this past December. First settled a century ago, the *favela* has a population estimated at 10,000 to 15,000. A cable car built in the 1980s takes residents up the slope and returns with garbage in cans. It has a primary school, running water and some drainage. For years, it was also a drug stronghold... Today, heavily armed police stand at the *favela*'s entrance, while others patrol its narrow alleys and steep steps... My visit began with a rooftop performance by Acme, the stage name of a local rapper and Museu (museum) founder. "We don't need more cops," he told me, "we need more culture, more rap, more graffiti, more dance." The Museu sees social exclusion, not violence, as the problem in the *favelas* (Riding, 2010).

When I interviewed a police officer based in Cantagalo, to get his point of view, it was obvious that they had the communities' best interests in mind. Officer Daniel said:

The PPU has been here for two years. There have been a lot of changes, mainly the drug trafficking that doesn't exist anymore... As a policeman I see that samba is an integral part of the community... We hear samba 24hours a day in the community... We have funk too, that is a rhythm, a form of expression. The parties in the *favela* happen in an orderly and controlled form. In the past, they were controlled by the drug traffickers and they were out of control. Now the community celebrates and socializes and has parties but always with order. And it's cool that they respect each other. They know that they can't stay too late because the neighbor doesn't like the music and wants to sleep and is going to work the next day. So they have time limits and respect them because we live in a community like the name suggests (Celestino, 2012).

However, rules that work for the rest of Brazilian society do not necessarily function within the subculture of a *favela*. In an attempt to control cultural expressions within the *favelas*, the police may end up dampening and possibly extinguishing the flame that managed to survive years of state enforced repression in the past.

Once again, this time perhaps unwittingly, police repression of Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions poses a real threat to not only samba but other art forms. Even more dangerous is the fact that this time, the *favela* cannot act as a safe haven for these cultural forms. The state's control is now within the *favela*.

Chapter Five – Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the relationship between samba and the Afro-Brazilian community of the *favelas*. My findings show that *favelas* have played a key role in the perpetuation of samba culture and samba has also played a variety of significant roles in the lives of *favela* inhabitants. Among these are: samba the political voice; samba the catalyst for social change; samba the unifier; samba the entertainer; samba the educator; samba the provider; samba the recorder of history and most importantly, samba the community. The very nature of the *favela*, being a close-knit, densely populated and largely ignored community, offered the perfect breeding ground for early samba culture. Browning (1995, p. 169) suggests that it is this “closure of the community” that gives one the strength to reject boundaries of identity.

The Afro-Brazilian community is responsible for the creation and for the main part, the perpetuation of samba. Although samba flourished and became more sophisticated once embraced by white middle-class, highly trained musicians, it deserves to be called Afro-Brazilian rather than Brazilian. The purposeful removal of any ethnic connotations connected to the art form was considered by some interviewees to be another example of racism. Hufferd (2007, p. 104) acknowledges the African roots of samba in the statement: “Carnaval in Brazil would not be what it is today if not for the African culture, including music, dance, religion, and instruments” and points out that “by recognizing the elements of African culture, the poor people living in favelas and other poor neighborhoods were empowered”(Hufferd, 2007, p. 105).

As the famous Brazilian singer Vinicius de Moraes wrote in the lyrics of the song 'Samba da benção':

Se hoje ele é branco na poesia (If today [samba] is white in poetry)
Ele é negro demais no coração (it really is black at heart)
(Barroso & Santos).

Throughout this thesis I aimed to convey the importance of samba schools within not only the *favelas* but the wider Brazilian society. McGowan and Pessanha (2009, p. 45) summarized perfectly the value of samba schools:

Escolas de samba [samba schools] have many talented members, old and young, traditionalists and revolutionaries. They exemplify the creative power of a carioca [Rio] population that in general lives in poor socioeconomic conditions. The escolas are often their community centre, and samba a source of spiritual sustenance.

This research was a qualitative study, which examined the responses of six participants from the samba world in Brazil. I found that regardless of their differing heritages, educational backgrounds and sources of information, the interviewees unanimously agreed on a number of points. Among these were the fact that samba is Afro-Brazilian, that Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions have endured endless prejudice, that the recognition of samba as cultural heritage is well overdue, that the industry created around samba offers employment for those in the *favela* and that the commercialization of *carnaval* has both positive and negative effects on the *favela* community.

On the positive side, through the use of both literature and personal interviews, I have argued that samba and *carnaval* unify people of differing heritage, age and social status, confirmed by the words of Hufferd (2007, p. 1): "Carnaval is a democratic festival; everybody is included." McGowan and Pessanha (2009, p.

56) rightly argue however that: “One doesn’t need to wait for Carnaval to see how samba brings people from all social classes and races together and keeps them in harmony.” However, *carnaval* is, without a doubt, a public event, which presents to the world once a year, the democratic environment that samba offers to Brazilians throughout the entire year. “Culturally, Samba Schools in Rio de Janeiro bring Brazilians together from different social classes, races and backgrounds.”(Hufferd, 2007, p. 42)

On the negative side, I argued that the commercialization of *carnaval* has altered the motivation for and the essence of samba, sidelining those from the *favela* from their own cultural celebration. Supporting my argument is the comment: Many in Rio argue, however, that the Carnival has lost its authenticity, its spontaneity- its popular flavor. At the center of the argument are the Samba Schools, which have undergone important changes since the first school was founded in 1928. (Raphael, 1990, p. 73)

Whilst immersing myself in the literature, I discovered that due to the high levels of illiteracy amongst Afro-Brazilians, “...the expression of one’s identity and feelings in public tends to be more through body movements in dancing and performing than through language”(Ribeiro-Mayer M.A., 2008, p. 178). This is how they passed on their history and culture to the next generations. Samba then acted as a mediator between low class Afro-Brazilians recovering from years of slavery, and middle-class whites. As Emílio confirmed in our interview: “Samba is important for the black culture to assert themselves within the Brazilian society. Samba is an identity that ends up generating a positive image of black people for the rest of society”(Domingos, 2012).

The most interesting theme that came out of the interviews for me personally, were the current threats to samba. The fact that *funk carioca* has a huge influence on the youth of the *favela* and the rest of Brazilian society has been

documented, however there seems to be a gap in literature regarding the effect that this may have on the perpetuation of samba culture. Future research could be done on the effect of removing nearly an entire generation from the tradition of samba. If today's children are not interested in learning the skills to play or dance samba, the possibility exists that it would never be passed on to future generations.

Little has been written about the effects of the Police Pacification Units on culture within the *favelas*, however from my interviews and from an onlookers' perspective when spending time in the *favelas*, I can see that this may be an issue worth researching more deeply in the future.

In conclusion, I feel that this thesis has shown that samba forms an integral part of *favela* life and that the relationship between samba and the *favela* has always been and continues to be, incredibly strong.

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