

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

New World Songs for Catholic Saints: Domestic Performances of Devotion and History in Bahia, Brazil

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3p63w5g2>

Author

Iyanaga, Michael Zenryu

Publication Date

2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

New World Songs for Catholic Saints:
Domestic Performances of Devotion and History in Bahia, Brazil

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology

by

Michael Zenryu Iyanaga

2013

© Copyright by

Michael Zenryu Iyanaga

2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

New World Songs for Catholic Saints:

Domestic Performances of Devotion and History in Bahia, Brazil

By

Michael Zenryu Iyanaga

Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Anthony Seeger, Chair

This dissertation is about historicity. It is an inquiry into how individuals creatively layer personal and collective memories to shape socially shared cultural practices. It is also about how such pasts are employed to understand and negotiate the present. To address these issues, this dissertation focuses on the *reza*, an annual Catholic patron saint ritual that is practiced in private homes all over the northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia. The religious celebration includes Catholic Church texts intoned in local melodies, samba dancing, and group feasting. Explicitly, this musical ritual plays a vital role in solidifying social relationships and affirming Catholic identity, while also providing the spiritual means to confront quotidian life. Implicitly, the *reza* gives participants a means of remembering their own spiritual journeys and evoking a collective Black Atlantic past. Despite the fundamental socio-religious value of this tradition, it has largely been neglected in both English- and Portuguese-language academic scholarship. Consequently, this dissertation, based on over four years of ethnographic fieldwork and historical research (2008-2013), introduces the *reza* and, at the same time, uses it to develop a broader theoretical perspective about the way in which history plays out in contemporary cultural practices.

The dissertation of Michael Zenryu Iyanaga is approved.

Lauren Robin Derby

Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje

Steven Loza

Anthony Seeger, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures, Examples, Tables, and Recordings.....	vii
Abbreviations.....	x
Note on Orthography.....	xi
Note on Transcription.....	xiii
Note on Recordings.....	xvi
Acknowledgments.....	xvii
Agradecimentos.....	xxi
Vita.....	xxiii

INTRODUCTION: Late to the Party.....	1
1. My Arrival at the Party.....	5
2. Locating the Party.....	11
3. Novelistic Realism and Ethnography.....	22
4. Music, History, and Memory.....	27
5. Rethinking Popular Catholicism in Brazil.....	32
6. The Reza in the Black Atlantic.....	38
7. Scholars Who Left the Party.....	46
8. Who Else Was at the Party?.....	51
9. Party Prep.....	53

PART I: ETHNOGRAPHY

<i>Party Interlude One</i>	55
CHAPTER ONE: The Reza	62
1. What?.....	63
2. How?.....	67
3. Who?.....	73
4. When?.....	83
5. Where?.....	85
6. Why?.....	91
7. Concluding Thoughts.....	103
<i>Party Interlude Two</i>	105
CHAPTER TWO: The Altar	111
1. Beginnings: From <i>Imagem</i> to Altar.....	115
2. Altar Aesthetics: What Constitutes Beauty.....	120
3. Altars as Memory Clusters.....	131
4. Photography and Altars.....	146
5. Keeping Altars Up to Date.....	150
6. Nothing to Hide: Putting Altars in Context.....	151
7. Toward a Holistic Ethnomusicology: Sight as Sound.....	153
8. Concluding Thoughts.....	156

<i>Party Interlude Three</i>	158
CHAPTER THREE: The Novena	163
1. The Term “Novena”.....	165
2. The Novena: Values and Aesthetics.....	167
3. The Rezadeira.....	181
4. The Novena: Liturgy in Melody and Text.....	192
5. Block A: Invocation.....	201
6. Block B: Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.....	209
7. Block C: The Patron Saint.....	217
8. Block D: Lord God.....	229
9. Song as Sacrifice.....	234
10. Concluding Thoughts.....	237
 <i>Party Interlude Four</i>	 240
CHAPTER FOUR: The Samba	246
1. Samba.....	249
2. A Central African Inheritance.....	250
3. Between the Sacred and the Profane?.....	254
4. One Samba Among Many.....	257
5. Samba in the Reza Context.....	263
6. Samba as Rhythm.....	266
7. Samba as Song.....	274
8. Samba “Ownership”.....	282
9. Samba Modalities: Performance and Style.....	288
10. Samba as Emotion.....	292
11. Towards an Ethnomusicology of Emotion.....	299
12. Concluding Thoughts.....	302
 <i>Party Interlude Five</i>	 304
CHAPTER FIVE: Religious Identity in the Recôncavo	313
1. Catholicism as a Religious Identity.....	315
2. Evangelical Christianity in Brazil and the Recôncavo.....	317
3. The Caboclo in the Spiritual Universe of the Reza.....	324
4. The Caboclo in Historical Perspective.....	336
5. Rezas and Race.....	349
6. Concluding Thoughts.....	358

PART II: HISTORY

CHAPTER SIX: “Catholic Samba” in the Bahian Home (c. 1739-1950)	360
1. Central African Dancing in 17th- and 18th-Century Brazil.....	364
2. The Appropriation of Catholic Saints in Brazil and Africa.....	378
3. Catholic Samba in the 19th century.....	381
4. Catholic Samba in the 20th century.....	386
5. Rethinking Resistance and Assimilation.....	393
6. The Field of Black Empowerment in Bahia.....	397
7. Concluding Thoughts.....	400
CHAPTER SEVEN: A Micro-History of a Black Atlantic Devotion	402
1. Bringing Gods Back in.....	404
2. A Note on Afro-Atlantic Micro-History.....	407
3. Maria Porciana dos Passos (1853-1915).....	409
4. Anna Portella dos Santos (1895-1933).....	417
5. Emília Vieira dos Santos (c. 1921-1993).....	427
6. Concluding Thoughts.....	446
CONCLUSION: Leaving the Party Early	450
1. The Writing of a Musical Ethnography.....	452
2. The Reza as Part of the Black Atlantic.....	456
3. Historicity: Doing History and Ethnography.....	458
4. Concluding Thoughts.....	459
APPENDIX ONE: Ethnographic Description of an Animal Sacrifice at a Reza	461
APPENDIX TWO: Emília Vieira Dos Santos e São Roque	465
GLOSSARY	498
BIBLIOGRAPHY	502

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures

0.1. Map of Brazil	12
0.2. Research locations in the Bahian Recôncavo	14
1.1. A ritual feeding of the children during a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian	72
2.1. Bahian oratory and dresser from the second half of the 18th century	114
2.2. Dona Meire's altar for St. Roch in 2010	117
2.3. Dona Meire's altar for St. Roch in 2009	118
2.4. Dona Cleusa's altar for Sts. Cosmas and Damian	118
2.5. Dona Carminha's altar for St. Anthony	119
2.6. Dona Sinhá's altar for St. Anthony	120
2.7. Close up view of Dona Tânia's altar for St. Anthony	129
2.8. Images that grace the apex of Dona Ivone's altar to Sts. Cosmas and Damian	137
2.9. Dona Ivone's altar to Sts. Cosmas and Damian	138
2.10. The preparation of Dona Ivone's altar	144
2.11. Images that sit on the middle tier of Dona Ivone's altar	145
3.1. Dona Dé preparing to lead a prayer in Muritiba, Bahia	184
3.2. Dona Coleta preparing to lead a prayer in São Félix, Bahia	187
3.3. Dona Maria leading a samba after the novena in São Félix, Bahia	188
3.4. The Vieira dos Santos family singing a reza in Cachoeira, Bahia	191
3.5. Prayer book	202
3.6. "Novena em Louvor a Santo Antônio"	216
4.1. The Filhos de Nagô, a samba-de-roda group from São Félix	262
4.2. Illustration of a "cantiga-de-roda"	270
4.3. A participant saluting St. Anthony	285
6.1. Musicians in the Kingdom of the Kongo during the 1670s	368
6.2. "Coronation of a Black Queen on the Day of Kings"	371
6.3. Pair dancing during a reza for St. Anthony in Salvador, c. 1930-1950	390
7.1. Photograph of the city of Cachoeira in 1860/1865	412
7.2. Photo of a young girl conducting a <i>missa pedida</i>	420
7.3. Maria de Lourdes' <i>carteira de trabalho</i>	430
7.4. Emília, sitting in a chair at her home, c. 1975-1990	432
7.5. Boa Morte celebration in Cachoeira during the mid-20th century	435
7.6. Ritual feeding of children for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Salvador	437
7.7. Pedra da Baleia, Cachoeira, Bahia	440
7.8. The author with Emília's two living daughters in 2012	446

LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example

3.1. Comparison of “Deus in adjutorium” and “Glória ao Pai”	204
3.2. Partial transcription of Block A from Novena 1	205
3.3. Partial transcription of Block A of Novena 2	206
3.4. Partial transcription of Block A of Novena 4	207
3.5. Repeated four-beat melodic phrase recurrent in Novenas 1, 2, and 4	208
3.6. Three-bar phrase of the “Ladainha” in Novena 2	210
3.7. Eleven-bar phrase of the “Ladainha” in Novena 4	210
3.8. Transcription of the opening strophe of the “Incense” from Novena 1	220
3.9. Comparison of secondary Benditos for Novenas 1, 2, and 3	228
3.10. “Bendito” for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, as performed during Novena 4	228
3.11. Partial transcription of “Bênção” from Novena 1	229
4.1. Partial transcription of instrumental samba-de-roda introduction	267
4.2. Samba time-line (S-1)	268
4.3. Common interlocking rhythm in S-1	268
4.4. Samba rhythm (S-2)	268
4.5. Clapped rhythmic variation in S-2	269
4.6. Congo time-line	271
4.7. Clapped variation in Congo time-line	272
4.8. “Dois-dois viageiro”	276
4.9. “Dá Fulô”	276
4.10. “Abalê”	277
4.11. “A sua casa cheira,” in S-2, from Cachoeira (2009)	279
4.12. “A sua casa cheira,” in S-1, from São Félix (2008)	279

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.1. Sequence of events at a typical reza	68
1.2. Sequence of events at a typical reza for St. Cosmas and St. Damian	72
3.1. A comparison of four different novena liturgies	194
3.2. Basic performance structure of the novena in “thematic blocks”	196
3.3. Comparison of two Church celebrative liturgies and that of domestic reza	198
3.4. Official Catholic Church text of the “Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary”	211
3.5. Comparative chart of the melodic organization of the “Ladainha”	213
3.6. “Salve Rainha” text for St. Roch at Novenas 1, 2, and 4	218
3.7. Text for a “Bendito” for St. Roch in Portuguese and English	222
3.8. Text for a “Bendito” for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Portuguese and English	223

LIST OF RECORDINGS

PI_1a.mp3 – Ritual feeding of seven children, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

PI_1b.mp3 – Novena and saints' samba, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

PI_1c.mp3 – Samba-de-roda, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

PI_2.mp3 – Novena and saints' samba, reza for St. Roch

PI_3.mp3 – Novena and saints' samba, reza for St. Anthony

PI_4.mp3 – Novena, reza for St. Roch

PI_5a.mp3 – Novena, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

PI_5b.mp3 – Saints' samba and samba-de-Caboclo, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

PI_5c.mp3 – Samba-de-roda, reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian

ABBREVIATIONS

APEBa	Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador, Bahia
AC	<i>A Coisa</i> (Salvador, Bahia)
AO	<i>A Ordem</i> (Cachoeira, Bahia)
AT	<i>A Tarde</i> (Salvador, Bahia)
BI	<i>Bahia Illustrada</i> (Salvador, Bahia)
CM	<i>Correio Mercantil</i> ([Salvador?], Bahia)
ES	<i>Echo Santamarense</i> (Santo Amaro, Bahia)
FTFC	Fórum Teixeira de Freitas, Cachoeira, Bahia
FPV	Fundação Pierre Verger, Salvador, Bahia
OA	<i>O Alabama</i> (Salvador, Bahia)

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

This is an English-language dissertation. Therefore I have translated to English all of the Portuguese-language citations, whether scholarly or not. Furthermore, wherever possible I have used English to substitute for Portuguese-language terminology. In some instances, where I deemed lyrics to be more important than their semantics, I offer the Portuguese in the text and provide the English translation in the respective footnote.

While I have no intention to offer here a reflexive meditation on the complicated and problematic issue of translation, I do feel it necessary to justify the way in which I have translated the spoken Portuguese. The majority of the non-academic sources I cite come from people who live in the Recôncavo, and their spoken Portuguese is often quite different from normative forms of Portuguese grammar. Indeed, the Portuguese used in the Recôncavo is highly idiosyncratic to the region, such that not only are specific vocabulary terms uniquely expressive in this context, but so too are grammatical structures and pronunciation. Still, I do not use English equivalencies. Thus a phrase one might commonly hear in the Bahian Recôncavo is “*ele me disse a mim*,” literally “he told me to me,” or “*nós vai*,” which might accurately translate as “we goes.” In this dissertation, I put these phrases into normative grammatical English structures, such that the former would be “he told me,” and the latter, “we go.” My goal is to facilitate understanding for the reader, not confusingly call attention to colloquial structures of speech, however theoretically accurate such a reproduction might seem.

Where I do provide Portuguese words, particularly for song lyrics, I do not attempt to represent faithfully pronunciation. In other words, many scholars have transcribed interviews or song lyrics in accordance with the pronunciation habits of the interlocutors. Thus words like “*não*” and “*sambar*” become “*num*” and “*sambá*,” respectively, for this is indeed how many

Bahians in the Recôncavo pronounce such words. I do not do this here. Again, this is an English-language dissertation and my primary interest is in communicating ideas; I do not want to get bogged down, or bog the reader down, with irrelevant details.

Where I feel it necessary, I include my English translation with the original Portuguese word in parentheses. The exceptions to this are general designations for events, genres, musical instruments, and personal names. Therefore, although I often provide literal translations and English-language descriptions, terms like “reza” and “samba” are used in their original Portuguese. I do the same with instrument names such as “cavaquinho,” “pandeiro,” and “viola.” For help with such terms, I have included a glossary.

Finally, in polite Brazilian conversation, people’s first names are typically prefaced with the honorific term “Seu,” for men, and “Dona,” for women. For the most part, excluding cases of youthful interlocutors, for example, I use these titles here. Therefore, a woman named “Maria” is referred to as “Dona Maria,” just as a man named “Manuel” is referred to as “Seu Manuel.”

NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTIONS

The second decade of the 21st century is a unique time to be writing about music. The accessibility of audio-visual media is changing the practicality of how music can be discussed and represented. Yet my dissertation employs many transcriptions, and mostly in that “antiquated” standard Western staff notation. So I feel I should explain. I possess audio recordings, and in many cases miniHDV cassettes, of every one of the transcriptions I offer in this dissertation. Some might say this makes the transcriptions pointless. After all, most of these transcriptions are of human voices, and it is impossible to do justice graphically to a human voice, which radiates with overtones, sounds somewhere between the staff lines, and moves in microrhythms. But the point is not to do it justice per se. A transcription is not a human voice; nor can it ever claim to be. Instead the transcriptions here serve analytical purposes that can be pinpointed and demonstrated in ways that recordings would in fact make more difficult.

My transcriptions sit somewhere in between prescription and description, while leaning toward the description end of the spectrum (see C. Seeger 1958). However, my goal is not to depict the melodies’ note-for-note performance. For example, in some multi-voice (though not multi-part) singing, there may be discord rhythmically (one person lags more than another) or harmonically (creating minor seconds or tritones), but because none of this is intentional, I do not notate it. Nor do I insist on the notation of “mistakes,” where the individuals repeat a stanza in order to adjust what was incorrectly performed, or where individuals pause mid-phrase—thus altering the rhythm—to remember the lyrics or find their place in their prayer book. I often comment on these issues in the text, but I find no need to include them in the transcriptions themselves.

Furthermore, I do not painstakingly indicate the microtonal changes that often result in a key change (often by a semitone or more). This, again, is because an “ideal” performance does not necessarily include these aspects. While this is no doubt an interesting aspect of performance, I see no need for its inclusion in the transcriptions. My goal in transcribing is to present “rough sketches” of the melodic lines, which is generally how performers themselves think of melodies, and which will help me discuss different motifs and melodic ideas that tell something more about the performance than simply “how it sounded.” Therefore most melodic lines are transcribed only as performed by the lead singer (*rezadeira*) and the principal group response, when it exists. Unlike some early ethnomusicological approaches, my transcriptions are not designed to be ends in themselves. My transcriptions are simply tools for making points about what they claim to represent.

In this dissertation, I rely primarily on Western staff notation. The contentions to this style of notation notwithstanding, it is nevertheless, as Kofi Agawu (2003: 66) insists, “pragmatic.” Agawu further observes that “[n]otations are read by communities of readers, so in order to consolidate African practices that can eventually gain some institutional power, it makes sense to use the existing notation, however imperfect” (Ibid.). In a similar vein, I do not see why notation of *rezas* should be any different. Still, in some cases I *also* employ time-line notations in a style advocated by Gerhard Kubik (1979) for African and African Diaspora musics, by which a cycled pattern is represented graphically in “x”s and “.”s, according to which a “.” indicates an unsounded elementary pulse and an “x” indicates a sounded accent. I use this notation in conjunction with Western notation, particularly for handclapped rhythmic cycles, in order to emphasize *rhythmic* contrasts. My decision reflects a desire to dialogue with the increasing

amount of Brazilian scholarship that opts for this method of notating Afro-Brazilian rhythms (see Parés 2007; Pinto 1999/2000/2001).

When text is my emphasis, I provide the strophes and verses in Portuguese with English as a footnote. The most problematic thing to notate is timbre and scholars still lack, as Travassos (2008) points out regarding the human voice, any coherent system of dealing with it. I thus rely on the age-old technique of description and metaphor. I provide the lyrics in Portuguese. That is to say, even when the lyrics are considered Latin—either by the performers themselves or by an outsider—they are notated as they are sung, following Portuguese (and specifically the Bahian dialect) rules of pronunciation. In some cases practitioners themselves notated the lyrics in this fashion, while in other cases I based my transcriptions (of the lyrics) on performers' pronunciations either in context or in interviews.

NOTE ON RECORDINGS

My field recordings, portions of which are included with this dissertation, were made as .WAV files on two different portable recording devices, an Edirol R-09 and a Zoom H4n. Each recording was made with one of four different microphones, the stock microphones which came with the recording devices, an Audio Technica X/Y Stereo Field Recording Microphone, or a Rode NT4 X/Y Stereo Condenser Microphone.

My use of recordings in this dissertation is somewhat unorthodox. Instead of editing short clips to accompany the examples I transcribe in the text, I use recorded examples only as part of the five “Party Interludes.” In these texts, I indicate the accompanying .mp3 and the minute (and second) mark for the musical moments I describe. These realtime recordings only have cuts (with fades) at the introductions and the ends. The only other producing done to the recordings regards volume levels. Moreover, for the sake of file size, the recordings have been compressed rather heavily, from 32-bit .WAV files to 96 kps .mp3 files.

My goal is *not* to use the recordings to make a *specific* point regarding the captured sounds. That is the purpose of the transcriptions within the text. Instead I use sound to give the reader (and listener) a sense of how activities unfold during rezas. For instance, I never edit breaks during which people chat, tune instruments, or stand silently. This impractical use of sound is part of my larger argument regarding the way in which the religious musical event is entangled in a broader social and historical context. Musical moments flow into each other, are abruptly halted to entertain banal (non-sacred) conversation, surge with little to no warning, and are often quite disorganized. Rezās are as social as they are musical. Thus editing out the laughter, confusion, arguments, negotiating, and teaching would be akin to removing a large part of what makes these events meaningful in the first place.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I am grateful for the financial support provided by a U.S. Department of State Fulbright-Hays Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship and a TIAA-CREF Ruth Simms Hamilton Research Fellowship, as well as funding from the UCLA Graduate Division, UCLA Burkle Center for International Relations, Faucett Family Foundation, and Herb Alpert School of Music Student Opportunity Fund. Lastly, the dissertation was completed with the generous financial assistance of a UCLA Graduate Division Dissertation Year Fellowship. Interviews with research subjects were approved for this study by the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at the University of California, Los Angeles, as study number G10-06-024-01.

This research would have been quite impossible without the help of the people whose lives I discuss and whose words I cite in the pages of this dissertation. They are brilliant musicians, caring mothers/fathers/sons/daughters, eloquent practitioners of their tradition, and admirable human beings. I continue to search for ways I can truly repay their generosity, knowledge, and kindness. Overwhelmingly, these individuals do not read English, and thus rather than acknowledge them in English here, I have written my “Agradecimentos” (to them) in Portuguese (pp. xxi-xxii).

This dissertation could not have come to fruition were it not for the indefatigable support and encouragement of my advisor, Tony Seeger. With thought-provoking questions, necessary critiques, and his own example as a scholar, Tony stimulated my intellectual development and helped me think in new ways about music, ethnomusicology, and life. A better advisor seems quite impossible to imagine. I am grateful also to my dissertation committee: Robin Derby, Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, and Steven Loza. Each has contributed in her or his own way through conversations, suggesting readings, draft comments, and stimulating seminars to make

this a richer and more thoughtful scholarly investigation. Thanks also to A.J. Racy who offered his expertise during my prospectus defense and in the seminars I took with him. I also owe special appreciation to the “informal” members of my dissertation committee: At the Universidade Federal da Bahia, Pablo Sotuyo Blanco and Angela Lühning helped guide my work and scholarly development with their insights, knowledge, and support; and Ralph Waddey, with his experience, generosity, and wit, has been a crucial interlocutor and mentor.

I am grateful to Brian Brazeal, Sonia Chada, Donald Cosentino, Suzel Reily, and Carlos Sandroni, whose early interest in my project was instrumental in my decision to pursue it to completion, and whose suggestions for research perspectives, consultation sources, and individuals to meet leave me forever indebted. For reading chapter drafts and offering transformative suggestions, I thank Lisa Castillo, Martha Ellen Davis, and Nicolau Parés. Additionally, I wish to thank Timothy Taylor, Timothy Rice, Helen Rees, and Sherry Ortner for their influence on my intellectual development while I was a student at UCLA.

I am also grateful to Wlamyra Albuquerque, Andrew Apter, Katharina Döring, Hendrick Kraay, Elizabeth Travassos, Xavier Vatin, Manuel Veiga, and members of the *Escravidão e Invenção da Liberdade* research group at UFBA, all of whom, at one time or another during this research, offered counsel, interrogation, or dialogue that no doubt altered for the better the end result. I am eternally indebted to Randal Johnson for introducing me to Bahia and for helping me navigate through the hoops of Brazilian bureaucracy more times than I can count. Similarly, I am grateful to Ana Paula Ferreira and Fernando Oliveira for their commitment to my growth as I cultivated my passion for the Portuguese language and Brazilian literature. Finally, I wish to thank Robert Garfias, for it was he who was largely responsible for convincing me that

ethnomusicology was the right field for me. And even now, nearly a decade later, Professor Garfias continues to inspire me through his teaching and scholarship.

The colleagues and friends I have met at UCLA and UFBA, or through some other turn of events, have been fundamental to my completion of this project. I thank Nolan Warden for his camaraderie, his attentive reading of—and incisive suggestions about—drafts, and the stimulating dialogues about music, ethnomusicology, and the Black Atlantic. I also thank Jennie Gubner, Mike Silvers, and Veronica Pacheco for the discussions and lively debates on Latin America, Brazil, and social theory. I extend my gratitude to Cassio Nobre, the consummate bi-musicologist, for his friendship and help in locating contacts in Bahia. I have appreciated also the friendship and guidance of Laila Rosa, whose research group on feminism and music scholarship, “Feminaria musical ou epistemologias feministas sobre música no Brasil,” has been nothing short of invigorating, eye opening, and exciting.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many others who contributed to this project in ways that would be difficult to articulate in words: Aaron Bittel, Sérgio Brito, Julius Carlson, Luciano Caroso, Ron Conner, Flávia Diniz, Rebecca Dirksen, Kariann Goldschmitt, Loribeth Gregory, Wlamir Júnior, Ann Lucas, Raiana Maciel, Shannon McCabe, Amalia Mora, Rudy Nguyen, Andy Pettit, Lauren Poluha, Katie Stuffelbeam, Bernardo Rozo, CedarBough Saeji, Emilena Santos, Adisa Septuri, Jessie Vallejo, and Kate Wiens.

I am grateful to the staff in the UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology, who often went above and beyond to help me meet deadlines, take care of necessary paperwork, and access equipment. Specifically, I wish to thank Sandra McKerroll, Donna Armstrong, David Martinelli, and Loren Nerell. I would also like to thank the librarians and archivists at the Biblioteca Pública do Estado da Bahia, Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia, Fórum Teixeira de Freitas,

Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, and the Fundação Pierre Verger, for without their help I would probably never have found so many archival treasures.

I must of course thank my family. They always supported wholeheartedly my decision to pursue ethnomusicology and my distant research project even though they were not always *quite* sure what it was that I did. Without their encouragement and support I would never have made it this far. And last, but certainly not least, I am grateful to Fabiana. Fabi, your contributions continue to be far too many to enumerate here, as you ran the gamut of roles ranging from assistant, informant, interpreter, and editor to muse, inspirational speaker, teacher, and wonderful distraction. But above all else, Fabiana, you have been a storybook companion on this colorful journey.

AGRADECIMENTOS

Nada desta pesquisa teria sido possível sem a ajuda das pessoas cujas vidas descrevo e cujas palavras eu cito nas páginas desta tese. Decerto, continuo procurando maneiras através das quais poderia realmente devolver a sua generosidade, conhecimento e gentileza. As pessoas me deixaram entrar em suas casas, me deram seu tempo e me apresentaram a outros sem segundas intenções. Eu espero poder um dia retribuir-lhe em dobro.

Eu quero começar por agradecer aos descendentes de Anna Vieira dos Santos no Caquende, que me fizeram sempre sentir que tenho uma família cachoeirana. Dentre destas pessoas, destaco a minha profunda gratidão às minhas “tias/madrinhas”, Dona Lenia e Dona Gaída, além dos outros e outras da minha família adotada no Caquende: Dona Cleusa, Dona Vera, Dona Val, Quelzinha, Jaci, Édison, Maria e Jorge. Agradeço a tod@s vocês tanto pelo seu carinho por mim e Fabiana quanto pelas aulas dadas a mim sobre a linda tradição da sua família. Também sou grato a Charles Chaplin (Nino). Nunca poderei esquecer a sua tremenda amizade e a sua grande disposição a acolher-me. A Neide e Reginaldo (e a família toda) no KM 25, agradeço com todo o meu coração pela sua ajuda e hospitalidade. Sempre pude contar com vocês. Quando eu ia a Muritiba, o meu destino certo era a casa de Seu Bole e Dona Adélia, duas pessoas que foram, além de acolhedoras excepcionais, sempre dispostas a ensinar-me sobre a música e os mistérios do mundo espiritual do Recôncavo. Agradeço também a Santo e Dona Maria, em cuja casa na zona rural de São Félix eu passei tantas tardes conversando, almoçando e aprendendo. Dona Maria, a sua eloquência ao falar sobre o seu dom e a tradição que pratica com tanto amor e tão bela voz nunca deixou de impressionar-me.

Eu sou eternamente endividado às rezadeiras que tomaram seu tempo para explicar-me sobre o seu dom e que sempre tiveram tanta disposição em levar-me junto às suas rezas. Em

particular, agradeço a Dona Coleta, Dona Maria e Dona Dé. Além das rezadeiras, também tenho tremenda gratidão pelos grupos de samba cuja música ainda me enche de felicidade, os Filhos de Nagô, a Esmola Cantada, o Samba de Suerdieck, a Sensação do Samba e os Filhos do Caquende. Em particular, são inesquecíveis a ajuda e carinho de Mário dos Santos, César do Samba, Meire da Esmola Cantada, Dr^a Dona Dalva e Any, Dona Bibi da Casa da Cultura, Seu Toninho do Pilar, Vianna e Danilo Sacramento.

Da mesma forma, sou grato às pessoas que abriram para mim as portas de suas casas, deixando com que eu gravasse e documentasse as suas devoções, não raramente repetidas vezes, e que também tomaram o seu tempo para depois conversar comigo sobre as suas rezas e suas vidas. Em São Félix, Dona Meire e Nega, Seu Zé Rurbânio, Dona Tânia, Dona Irá e Dona Dora; em Cachoeira, Dona Ivone, Dona Sinhá e Dona Filhinha; no KM 25, Dona Cecília e Dona Carminha (e Seu Kiko); a família de Sérgio no Pilar; Seu Rezinho no Dinheiro Velho; Dona Maria Reis em Itaberaba; Dona Martinha em Muritiba; Dona Zelita em Saubara; Seu Messias em São Braz; Dona Cilú na Opalma; e Dona Maria em Salvador. Por último mas certamente não menos importante, quero agradecer às pessoas que, com disposição e carinho, compartilharam comigo as suas experiências com o divino: Dona Dezinha em São Félix, Dona Adélia no Quilômetro 25 e Dona Augusta, Dona Marilza e Seu Délcio em Salvador.

Peço desculpas às pessoas que não mencionei aqui. A invisibilidade do seu nome não diminui a minha gratidão por você.

VITA

Name: Michael Zenryu Iyanaga

EDUCATION

- 2009 M.A., University of California, Los Angeles, Ethnomusicology
M.A. paper: “The Music, Performance, and Embodied Space of a Brazilian ‘Imagined Non-Community’ in Los Angeles: Theorizing a Model of Structure Maintenance.” Advisor: Anthony Seeger
- 2006–2007 Visiting Student in ethnomusicology and historical musicology at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), Salvador (Bahia), Brazil
- 2005 B.M., University of California, Irvine, Music (guitar and lute specialization) with a Portuguese minor, *magna cum laude*
Honors thesis: “The *Son Jarocho* Movement and the Culture of the *Son*.” Advisor: Robert Garfias

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2009-2010, 2012 Teaching Assistant/Associate, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2008–2009 Graduate Student Researcher, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2007–present English/Portuguese translator
- 2003–2006 Dog Trainer, Your Dog Trainer, Santa Ana, California

PUBLICATIONS

- 2012 “O homem no lar? Questões de gênero nas festas domiciliares aos santos católicos” [“Men in the home? Questions of Gender in Domestic Parties for Catholic Saints”]. *XVII Simpósio Baiano de Pesquisadoras(es) sobre mulheres e relações de gênero* (Caderno de Resumos):224-226. (Published abstract in a conference proceedings.)
- 2011 “Basic Bossa Nova Rhythms, Chord Progressions and Chord Shapes.” *Just Jazz Guitar* 68:52-56. (Accompanied by recorded sound demonstrations.)
- 2010 “O samba de caruru da Bahia: Tradição pouco conhecida” [“Bahia’s Caruru Samba: A Little Known Tradition”]. *ICTUS* 11(2):120-150.

- 2009 Review of James Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé* (Princeton: Princeton University Press). In *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* 14 <<http://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/pre/Vol14/Vol14html/V14Iyanaga.html>> (1284 words).
- 2007 Co-authored with Pablo Sotuyo Blanco. “Os ‘Programmas de Studio’ da Rádio Sociedade no contexto político baiano desde 1939 a 1942” [“The ‘Programmas de Studio’ of the Society Radio within Bahia’s political environment from 1939 to 1942”]. In *Anais do XVII Congresso da ANPPOM*. (available at <http://www.anppom.com.br/anais/anaiscongresso_anppom_2007/musicologia/musicol_MIyanaga_PSBlanco.pdf>) (3572 words). (Conference Proceedings of the National Brazilian Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Music.)

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- 2012 “Why Saints Love Samba: A Historical Perspective on Afro-Brazilian Agency and the Africanization of Catholicism in Bahia, Brazil.” 57th annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM), New Orleans. (Joint meeting with the American Musicological Society and Society for Music Theory.)
- 2012 “O homem no lar? Questões de gênero nas festas domiciliares aos santos católicos.” 17th annual Bahian symposium of researchers on women and gender relations, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.
- 2011 “Santos católicos na Bahia: Reflexões sobre a resistência negra”. 3rd biennial Bahian Congress of Black Researchers (CBPN), Santo Antonio de Jesus, Bahia, Brazil.
- 2010 “UCLA’s Contributions to the Development of the Field of Ethnomusicology.” 55th annual conference of the Society of Ethnomusicology (SEM), Los Angeles.
- 2010 “Old Saints in the New World: Towards an Afro-Brazilian Folk Catholicism.” University of California, Riverside, Conference “Crisis and Opportunities in Latin America,” Latin American Studies Program. Winner of the Honor Award Certificate.
- 2009 “International Politics and Intangible Heritage: UNESCO, Religion, and the Brazilian *Samba-de-Roda*.” 54th annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM), Mexico City.

- 2009 “Fighting Crime with Classical Music: Questions of Ethos and Identity.” 43rd annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawaii Chapter (SEMSCHC), Los Angeles.
- 2007 “Os ‘Programmas de Studio’ da Rádio Sociedade no contexto político baiano de 1939 a 1942: Reflexões sobre a sua utilidade e necessidade.” 17th annual conference of the National Brazilian Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Music (ANPPOM), São Paulo.
- 2005 “Son Jarocho: Music and Culture.” 12th annual University of California, Irvine Undergraduate Research Symposium, Irvine, California.

SERVICE

- 2012 Co-advisor (*tutor*), “Feminaria Musical ou epistemologias feministas sobre música no Brasil” (Musical Feminary or Feminist Epistemologies about Music in Brazil), research group of the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil
- 2012 Member, Scientific Commission of the joint 1st Regional North Meeting and 3rd Regional Northeast Meeting of the Brazilian Association of Ethnomusicology (ABET) at the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil
- 2010–present Member, Ethnomusicology Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) at UCLA
- 2010 Member, Ethnomusicology at UCLA 50th Anniversary Committee, Los Angeles
- 2009–2010 President, UCLA Graduate Student Association Arts and Architecture Council
- 2009–2010 Guitar instructor, The Hollywood Boys and Girls Club in collaboration with the UCLA Music Partnership Program, Los Angeles
- 2009 Member, Local arrangements committee for the 43rd annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawaii Chapter (SEMSCHC), Los Angeles
- 2008–2009 Treasurer, UCLA Graduate Student Association Arts and Architecture Council
- 2007–2010 Executive Board Member, Ethnomusicology Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) at UCLA

- 2007–present Editorial Board Member, *Ethnomusicology Review* (formerly *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology*), Los Angeles
- 2007–2008 Jazz, guitar, and trumpet instructor, Roosevelt High School in collaboration with the UCLA Music Partnership Program, Los Angeles
- 2006 Instructor and organizer of a 5-week seminar on the fundamentals of jazz at the Pracatum School of Music in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

INTRODUCTION

Late to the Party: Introductory Notes on the Field, the Questions, and the Frameworks

“A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb ‘to be’ but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, ‘and...and...and...’”

–Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

This dissertation is about historicity. It is an ethnographic and historical inquiry into the implications of Marshall Sahlins’ (1981) claim that history is sequential and consequential. The present is a product of the past in very concrete ways. Yet this *past* rarely surfaces as a coherent whole; it tends to be fragmented and selectively remembered by its heirs. The past, after all, comprises a number of intertwined historical narratives of which some emerge explicitly in discourse and remembrances while others remain veiled in the non-discursive realm of embodied memories and ritual protocol. I posit that sacred musical performances, which typically adhere to highly codified *modus operandi* but are nevertheless always consciously rationalized and justified, articulate seamlessly these various histories such that any given performance simultaneously communicates both discursive and non-discursive memories. As such, an ethnographic study of a sacred performance can also act as a type of historical analysis.

My dissertation will illustrate these concepts in its investigation of the music and practice of the *reza*,¹ a domestic patron saint celebration realized by individuals living in the maritime Recôncavo region of Bahia, Brazil. Not only does the reza serve as a means of attending to broad questions of historicity, but it is also a subject of research that has been neglected in scholarly research, whether Brazil- or U.S.-based. By way of an ethnomusicological investigation of *rezas*, then, this dissertation aims to rectify this scholarly lacuna while also exploring the musical

¹ The term literally translates as “prayer.” The pronunciation of the “R,” as this is Brazilian Portuguese, has the sound of the English-language “H.” Thus “reza” is represented diacritically as \‘ xɛza\

elements of the tradition in detail, understanding its development as a “creole” institution, implicitly delineating a methodological approach to historical ethnomusicology, and addressing larger claims of historicity in musical performances.

Individual and family devotions to Catholic saints—personal patron saints—are a common part of life in Bahia’s Recôncavo region. And the most common way a person (or family) celebrates this devotion is through an annual *reza*. For the realization of a *reza*, the family (or individual) opens up its private residence to host a musical celebration for its particular patron saint. The families that sponsor these celebrations decorate their homes with balloons and paper streamers, adorn altars they have erected for the saint(s) being honored, prepare symbolically meaningful food for guests, and invite friends, neighbors, and extended family. As night falls, and the attendees begin arriving, everyone stands together facing the altar to sing the *novena*, which comprises hymns and Catholic prayers performed a cappella. After about an hour of Portuguese- and Latin-language sung texts, the mood shifts. People begin clapping the samba rhythms and dancing. If by chance a member of the family (or a close friend) has an Afro-Brazilian *caboclo* spirit, the deity may manifest itself in the individual and possession trance dancing ensues. The purpose of this magnificent musical performance is explicitly devotional; the saint is the focus of the night. After the singing ends, food is served to the attendees in order to thank them for having made the night a success. This is a *reza*, a night of celebratory musical prayer. It is always a party.

But why, some environmentally conscious individuals might ask, should I waste the paper to dissertate on this topic. Just as birthday parties and family Christmas dinners are invaluable to social life in the U.S., at the most basic level, the *reza* is worth writing about because it is important to the people who practice it. And very few scholars (as I detail below)

have taken the time to write about the topic. Rezas bring people together—neighbors, family, friends—on an annual basis and are, for many, an important means by which individuals maintain and construct their Catholic identity in the face of the increasingly influential evangelical Christianity movement and also in relation to other religious traditions such as Candomblé or Umbanda.² Also, rezas are expressive, ritualized modes of remembering collective and familial pasts, and articulating historical continuities via “universal” (i.e., Catholic) symbols. In particular, I am interested in the Black Atlantic past that is activated in rezas. In other words, as I will discuss at length, this study suggests that Catholicism-inspired practices might serve as fertile sites of Black Atlantic historical memory in ways that are too often disregarded by scholars of the African legacy in the New World.

But rezas go beyond the social world. After all, they are a vital part of keeping cosmological balance with patron saints. And these patron saints are an integral facet of day-to-day human social life as believers construe it. In other words, rezas are socially valuable (in materialist terms) and spiritually indispensable (from a phenomenological perspective). These reasons alone might be sufficient in justifying the merit of an extended research project. But there is more, particularly from an analytical point of view. Rezas are performative instantiations of a largely undocumented past. This past not only includes the Catholic Church and individual devotions to patron saints, but also that of how Africans and Afro-Brazilians constructed their world under the conditions of slavery and its aftermath.

In this context, my dissertation asks two expansive questions: How and Why. “How” is primarily a question that requires *descriptive* answers, based mainly on observation and inquiry: *how do people practice the reza? how do people sing? how does it sound (i.e., what does it sound*

² It should be noted that in this dissertation, I employ the term “evangelical Christianity,” following that of practitioners of rezas, as an umbrella term for a variety of Protestant denominations, as a form of Christianity distinct from Catholicism.

like?)? how do they prepare for it? how is it executed? The other question, “why,” mainly searches for *analytical* responses that are rooted in interpretation and history: *why do people hold rezas? why are they important? why do they sing in that way? why not do it another way? why that saint and not others? why not just play soccer?* As such, my study, concerned as much with description as with analysis, aims to be both a musical ethnography and an anthropology of music (see A. Seeger 1991a).³ To do this, I rely on historical material, including archival documents, newspapers, periodicals, travelers’ accounts, and oral histories; ethnographic research such as interviews and participant observation; and the analysis of text and musical structures. After over four years of research (2008-2013), nearly three of which were in the field, my dissertation is thus my best effort to explain how and why people sing sacred songs for Catholic saints in the Bahian Recôncavo during this moment of the 21st century.

LAYOUT OF THE INTRODUCTION

The dissertation’s seven chapters cover a number of different topics that are all grounded in an interest in the larger issues I will address in this “Introduction.” I will therefore present a number of broad theoretical frameworks beyond simply “introducing” the research topic in general form. I begin with (1) a party metaphor, which helps direct how I am thinking about fieldwork, my topic, and culture in general. Next (2) I discuss the Recôncavo as a geographical, political, and human space. I outline not only where and how I conducted my research, but also the complex question of race in Bahia. I then (3) confront the difficult issue of conceptualizing and representing in a normative way this tradition that, because of its domesticity, offers variation from one family’s celebration to another. I follow these more methodological issues

³ As Anthony Seeger (1991a: 346) explains: “The anthropology of music is the application of a particular set of theories about human action and history to musical processes; the ethnography of music is the writing down of ideas about people’s musics without any required theoretical referent—except for the postulate that writing about music is possible and desirable.”

with the presentation of some of the core theoretical frameworks that guide the research. I discuss (4) musical performance and/as history, (5) the reza's relationship to "popular Catholicism" in Brazil, (6) the reza's relationship to the Black Atlantic and terms such as "syncretism" and "creole." I follow with a (7) brief review of some of the relevant literature that has previously discussed the Bahian reza, followed by (8) an abbreviated reflection on my work as a researcher in the field. Finally (9) I close with a short overview of the dissertation's chapter layout.

1. My Arrival at the Party: Parties, Fieldwork, and Culture

Arriving late to a party may evoke a number of emotions, for while some find it fashionable, others find it quite embarrassing. Generally speaking, though, the most adequate characterization is probably some given period of awkwardness, especially when arriving alone. The late arrival generally walks through the door unsure of what to expect. After quickly analyzing the scene he realizes that the guests have already nestled themselves into ad-hoc cliques. Thus he searches for anyone he might know and latch onto her/him just to survive those first moments of liminality. Knowing this is no place for a *tête-à-tête*, he uses his human life preserver to drift toward a group conversation. But he's still in risk of drowning into social oblivion. Whether his newly found interlocutors are strangers or old friends, he's an outsider to *their* already established conversation.

As he listens to them discuss some apparently fascinating topic about things he doesn't quite understand, he tries desperately to piece together the fragments just to stay afloat in the confusing banter. Then come the jokes that he couldn't tell were jokes until his new friends cried out in laughter. He probably feigns comprehension with a smile or a chuckle. Or, if brave enough, he might ask someone to explain the humor. His "informant's" half-hearted attempt to

explain why the joke was funny probably makes as much sense as the joke did in the first place. While the bewilderment during these initial moments is overwhelming, things gradually shift. As the night rolls along the late arrival is no longer just trying to understand what is happening at *their party*. He begins to engage earnestly in their topics and he even finds himself laughing hysterically at their jokes. Soon enough, he might even be the one telling the jokes, bringing up fascinating topics, and welcoming those whose tardiness exceeds his.⁴

I imagined myself in the place of the unnamed “late arrival” in the above paragraph, for I feel I know the awkward experience of arriving late (and alone) to a party more intimately now than ever before. I have relived it innumerable times—at perhaps its most uncomfortable extreme—over the past four years as I “crashed” parties (at which I often knew nearly no one) in order to conduct the research that fills the pages of the dissertation you are currently reading. After all, this dissertation is about sacred *parties* for Catholic saints. I write about festive events during which people in the northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia perform sacred songs for Catholic saints. This is because Catholic saints, as I was repeatedly told, adore parties. In particular, these divine “party animals” include the twin saints Cosmas and Damian, St. Anthony, St. Roch, St. Barbara, and even Our Lady of the Conception. And this reasoning largely motivates people’s decisions to hold these celebrations, during which family, friends, and neighbors sing, dance, and eat in the name of their martyred guest of honor. Translating literally as “prayer,” a *reza* is—in Turino’s terms—a “participatory” musical event during which song is used to express a confluence of individual and collective memories along with interpretations

⁴ “Late” is of course an entirely subjective adverb. After a party’s “official” start time, every subsequent arrival is technically a late arrival. However, it is a rarity that a host clearly demarcates a party’s start time (even if the invitation makes it clear). Typically, as the guests arrive they tacitly reach a general consensus that the party has begun.

about the cosmos, society, history, and the future.⁵ Admittedly, my “tardy-to-the-party” metaphor is more a conceptual trope than an accurate depiction of my activities in “the field.” After all, although I did occasionally arrive late to a given *reza*, I generally arrived well before the other guests. In some cases, I was even responsible for party preparations, which included cooking, cleaning, and decorating.

In the broader perspective, however, I “arrived” considerably late to a practice that has probably been occurring for centuries. In this sense, I showed up to the “party” well after everyone had already established their own cliques, jokes, and practices. Thus I am still working my way through the experience of gaining insight into *their party*. But my experience was hardly different from that of other anthropologists and ethnomusicologists who have come before me. Might fieldwork itself be defined as the art of skillfully arriving late to the party? After all, we researchers are always unnervingly struggling—as Geertz (1973: 13) put it—to find our feet. Unless one is writing an autobiography, ethnographers—insiders and outsiders alike—are always dealing with *others*. To a large extent, then, fieldwork is the art of making sense of other people’s jokes—and their explanations of those jokes.

CHOOSING MY PARTY

My interest in Brazil began while still in high school, when I “discovered” the guitar playing of João Gilberto. After a brief visit to the country in 2002, I began studying the Portuguese language. Since 2003, I have spent at least a month per year in Brazil, almost exclusively in Bahia. This has included, beyond my fieldwork projects, a three-month study abroad program in Bahia during 2003 and a thirteen-month stint as an *aluno especial* (loosely

⁵ For Turino (2008: 26), “*participatory performances* is a special type of artistic practice in which there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants performing different roles, and the primary goal is to involve the maximum number of people in some performance role.”

translating as “visiting student”) in the graduate program of the Federal University of Bahia School of Music from 2006 to 2007, as well as nine years in an amorous relationship with a Bahian native to whom I will soon be married. Thus in 2008, when I discovered rezas for the first time, I already spoke Portuguese fairly fluently (though my rural Bahian dialect was rather poor) and felt relatively acclimated to Bahian culture (i.e. gustatory delights, general conversation topics, family relations, etc.). I therefore approached my new field of study not so much like a “child,” as some ethnographers might feel,⁶ but rather as a terribly disoriented adult without the adequate social skills to interact with the other partygoers. I was, quite literally, a guest who was arriving alone and extraordinarily late to the party.

In retrospect, it was precisely this confusion that sparked my interest in rezas. I do not personally identify with any particular religion, nor had I ever felt any intellectual impulses to study religious practices. Furthermore, I am a guitar player with a remarkably poor singing voice. So how was I drawn to a Catholicism-inspired practice in which musical expression is principally a cappella singing? I had, since 2007, been researching a type of Bahian-style samba known as *samba-de-roda*, which had become a hot academic topic since it was declared a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005. While doing samba research one rainy August night in 2008, I accompanied a *samba-de-roda* group to my first reza. What I witnessed there—group sung prayer, possession trance dancing, *samba-de-roda*, and collective feasting—left me bedazzled. And more importantly, it filled me with questions. Finding no in-depth answers to my questions in the existent scholarship, I immediately recognized the topic’s scholarly worth. This academic value together with my own curiosity about a practice that aggregated my interests in participatory performances, *samba-de-*

⁶ Anthony Seeger, for instance, employs the apt metaphor of a “child in the world” in describing his first experiences with the Suyá (Seeger 1980a).

roda, domestic spaces, the Black Atlantic, and the rural Bahian quotidian, I decided to pursue rezas for my PhD research.

CULTURE, TOO, IS A PARTY

At the risk of belaboring a metaphor, I would like to broaden my party imagery. Social life, I posit, is a party to which each individual always arrives late. Everything is already in place (the decorations, the party guests, the food, the system by which to get the drinks, etc.) before we turn up on the scene to reproduce, restructure, rearticulate, and/or innovate things for contemporaries, our subsequent party guests, and ourselves. Otherwise put, these are the directly encountered circumstances under which Karl Marx's "men" make their own history (Marx 1954 [1852]: 10) and it is each person's task to figure out, with varying degrees of orientation, how to survive at the party. In this sense, rather than making our own history, our primary concern is always in making our own present, which we piece together by *interpreting* the circumstances we encounter. Thus despite Marx's eloquent assertion, people do not in fact *make* (i.e., control) their "own history"; history is made in the future. It is the future interpretations of the circumstances we create in the present that will in fact make *our* history. This is because culture, like a party, is constructed and processual.

The idea of culture, still largely regarded as the bedrock of anthropology, has morphed significantly over the years. Without delving into the infamous "culture debate,"⁷ I will point out just a few broad changes. In the human sciences the clearest shift has been from culture as a closed "system" (of thoughts, practices, symbols, etc.) to culture as an open field of contestable symbols signified by action through time.⁸ Furthermore, a concern for power—whether in

⁷ See Ortner (1984, 2006) and Sewell (2005) for historiographic views of the changes in the "culture concept."

⁸ The "systems" approach is vivid in British structural-functionalism (à la Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown), the French structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, and the "American school" of Mead and Benedict. But "systems" are also very

Marxian, Gramscian, or Foucauldian terms—has shattered culture’s uniformity. In sum, culture has come to be understood as “a historically situated, historically unfolding ensemble of signifiers-in-action, signifiers at once material and symbolic, social and aesthetic” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 27). The point is simply that culture never simply exists; it is constructed and interpreted over time. My understanding of culture is eloquently articulated by Sewell (2005): “culture . . . should be understood as a dialectic of system and practice . . . and as possessing a real but thin coherence that is continually put at risk in practice and therefore subject to transformation” (p. 169). This “thin coherence” is “variable, contested, ever-changing, and incomplete” and “to the extent that it exists, is as much the product of power and struggles for power as it is of semiotic logic” (p. 173).

I highlight this culture-as-party metaphor to emphasize my understanding of culture. If culture is incomplete, at risk, ever-changing, and contested, it is—to say the least—unpredictable. Thus I am approaching culture, and rezas are certainly part of culture, as something that necessarily *should* change. But the fact is, not everything always does. How then to deal with this issue? Unlike earlier anthropological approaches to culture, which assumed stasis, I ask why something *did not* change, as well as why it did.⁹ In other words, I take as seriously the issue of stability as I do change. In cases where I discuss cultural activity over time, then, I am explicitly interested in examining which things changed or did not, and why. Placed in my party terms, why don’t the newly arrived guests change the party decorations? As I demonstrate throughout the dissertation, stability and change in reza practice are mediated as much by respect for the Catholic Church as by the valorization of social and family obligation.

much a part of the more progressive American “symbolic” anthropology of Turner and Geertz (Ortner 1984: 127-132).

⁹ In a similar approach, though with a slightly different question, Witmer (1991) examines what he calls “Stability in Blackfoot Songs.”

These two institutions (i.e., Church and family) can sometimes intersect but can also clash, allowing cultural actors to adjust in innovative ways.

2. Locating the Party: The Bahian Recôncavo in Space, Time, and Numbers

My research project focuses on the state of Bahia, in northeastern Brazil. The state's capital, Salvador, was also the Brazilian capital from 1549 to 1763 and is today the country's third most populous city. More importantly for present purposes, Salvador is nestled in the profoundly significant Recôncavo maritime region of Bahia, and this area is the focus of my dissertation (see Fig. 0.1). Consequently, while my project's theoretical assertions and methodology may be applicable in other geographic contexts, the ethnographic and historical data are particular to the Recôncavo. This region, a 6009 sq. mile geographic area, comprises 33 municipalities encircling Todos Os Santos bay, with a majority Afro-Brazilian population.¹⁰ While the Recôncavo occupies only 1.7% of Bahia's total area, its rich agricultural soils (esp. for the cultivation of sugar, manioc, and tobacco), strategic location between the bay and the interior of the country, and history of plantation slavery have made it central to Bahia's economic, political, social, and cultural formation (Barickman 1998: 9-16; Hutchinson 1957: 9-24; *Recôncavo Baiano* 1970; Sandroni and Sant'Anna 2006: 17). The Recôncavo is a region that, while encompassing the metropolitan city of Salvador (the state's capital), is also primarily an "interior." And each municipality of the "interior" is also broken up into urban and rural districts. Thus I conducted my dissertation research in three different geo-socio-economic "systems": the capital, the urban interior, and the rural interior. I will explain.

¹⁰ The Afro-Brazilian (and African) majority seems to have been the case since at least the late 18th century (Reis [1991] 2003: 23-24).



Fig. 0.1. Map of Brazil. The state of Bahia (BA) is demarcated in green. The red oval indicates the location of the Recôncavo. (Map by Ronald Conner)

Brazil comprises twenty-six states and one federal district (totaling twenty-seven Federative Units), and the Brazilian population—including most major commerce—is concentrated in the capital cities of each Federative Unit. Thus in any given state, a city that is not a “capital,” is generally designated as part of that state’s “interior.” Interior cities are generally smaller in territory and in population, and are less economically, technologically, and commercially developed. In terms of land, Brazil is mostly a country of “interior municipalities,” though populations tend to be concentrated in state capitals. Largely for this reason, most research has been carried out in capitals, rarely exploring cultural manifestations and social life in the interior. Those living in the capitals often view interiors with nostalgia, in part because many people migrate from the interior to the capital in search of jobs and education, but also because of a stereotyped belief that the interior is “the living past.” Often a state’s artistic expressions, traditional foods, antiquated forms of transportation, and other aspects are alive and well in the interior while entirely absent in the capital. This is probably a combined result of

social interactions that have deteriorated in state capitals and a discourse of “tradition” that circulates through small town governments, but I will not analyze this here. The point is simply to note that while interior cities (i.e., *The Interior*) offer tangible differences from capitals, these differences are sometimes more exaggerated than real.

Compared with any given state’s capital, its interior has a much smaller population and is generally impoverished economically and technologically, with fewer opportunities for employment and education. However, the culture of the capital continually alters the social and economic landscape of the interior via economic markets, media, and migration. And of course migrants from the interior dramatically affect the economy, culture, and demography of the capital. Furthermore, the interior (like the capital) is organized in municipalities, which include the urban center (city) and rural districts. Like capitals, urban centers in the Bahian interior often have paved roads (though usually of cobblestone), Internet access, running water, electricity, schools (sometimes including universities), churches, and employment in non-agrarian sectors. Rural districts, on the other hand, which might be 30 minutes by car from the municipality’s urban center, usually have electricity and might have some system of water, but have dirt roads, no Internet, no schools, no Churches, and their inhabitants typically work in agrarian sectors. These three different geographical contexts—capital, urban interior, rural interior—offer significant contrasts vis-à-vis socio-economic patterns of life.¹¹

In general, one can find strong community ties in the interior (more so in rural than urban areas), in which neighbors know each other and each other’s families.¹² Furthermore, there is

¹¹ It is worth noting that so-called Popular Neighborhoods (*bairros populares*) in Salvador often strike me as reminiscent of life in the Interior. For instance, people know each other on personal levels, including where neighbors are at any given moment and knowing who is related to whom.

¹² People often know each other on such personal levels that references are related to bloodlines in personal ways. Last names, for instance are rarely used. Instead, people are referred to as part of a family. For instance, someone named Pedro Santos, whose mother is Maria, might be known as “Maria’s Pedro” (*Pedro de Maria*).

less crime, fewer drugs, and less agitation in the interior than in the capital. I should note that not only do I enjoy life in the interior much more than in Salvador but doing research in areas away from the capital was also much easier. People were less suspicious of me (as an outsider), were more willing to share their stories, knew about each other's rezas, and appreciated my presence. Thus I spent more time in the interior than in the capital, focusing my dissertation research in both urban and rural districts in five municipalities: Cachoeira, São Félix, Muritiba, Santo Amaro, and Salvador (see Fig. 0.2). By far Salvador was my least successful ethnographic field site. While I was able to meet a number of people who used to hold rezas or used to participate in them when living in the interior, I attended only one reza in Salvador.¹³ As such, my Salvador-based research was limited to oral histories and archival investigation, for most of Bahia's archival records are stored in Salvador.



Fig. 0.2. Research locations in the Bahian Recôncavo.

¹³ It is worth noting that except for Santo Antonio, saints are celebrated slightly differently in Salvador than in the rest of Bahia. That is to say, Sts. Cosmas and Damian are typically commemorated with only a food offering of *caruru*, and St. Roch is rarely—if ever—celebrated in the Bahian capital.

My contact with the municipality of Santo Amaro was limited to just two districts, rural Quilômetro 25 and the small “urban” fishing village known as São Braz. In the urban center of the municipality of Muritiba, I restricted myself to a single extended family with which I developed quite a close bond and whose many rezas I attended. My principal ethnographic focus, however, was centered in the twin municipalities of Cachoeira and São Félix, in which are two of the best-known and most historically significant urban cities of the Recôncavo.¹⁴ From the 16th to the mid-20th century, Cachoeira in particular was one of the most prosperous and economically vibrant cities of Bahia (second only to Salvador). It was, in the words of Sebastião Heber Vieira Costa (2008: 11), the “main center of redistribution of slaves in the region . . . [and] was the port to the backlands [*sertão*], beyond serving as access in the direction of Minas Gerais [towards the south].” It boomed in tobacco and “was also a leader in the war of independence” (Costa 2008: 11). Widespread recognition of the city’s historical value resulted in Cachoeira’s 1971 federal recognition as a Monumental National City (Castro 2006: 34).¹⁵ In Cachoeira, I attended a significant number of rezas all in the city, never venturing into the rural districts. In São Félix, I attended rezas in the city and rural districts, particularly in an area known as Boca do Rio (River Mouth). These experiences gave me a depth of perspective on different ways of life, among a variety of people in a diverse array of contexts.

¹⁴ Based on 2010 statistics from the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), Cachoeira has 31,630 inhabitants, São Félix 13,819, and Muritiba 28,656. Cachoeira in particular is one of the largest cities of the region, but it is still less populous than its eastern neighbor, Santo Amaro, which boasts 56,971 residents, and absolutely pales in comparison to Salvador’s 2,480,790 inhabitants. Data accessible at http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/censo2010/resultados_dou/BA2010.pdf. (accessed on June 11, 2012).

¹⁵ It is worth noting that this federal recognition is quite a bother to a great many residents. To make any changes to buildings—be they homes, schools, or hotels—one must get approval to alter the architecture. In June 2011, I heard a story of a school that, some years prior, was being robbed nightly because the windows, which were simply openings in the walls, could not be closed. The director thus fought for months in order to get approval to change the architecture of the windows.

My headquarters was Salvador. I would venture to the interior (a bus ride ranging from an hour to two hours depending on my destination) on day trips at least once a week—if my interest was in conversations with people or archival work at the Fórum Teixeira de Freitas—and extended stays (lasting anywhere from a few days to a week)—for festivities or extended sets of interviews—during which time I would typically stay at people’s homes.¹⁶ Staying (including sleeping, eating, showering, etc.) in private residences and becoming a familiar face at a number of families’ homes was essential to my fieldwork, for it helped me understand family life in an intimate way and allowed me to build relationships with individual families. Being something of a “transient fieldworker” also allowed me to move freely among different families—in a variety of different neighborhoods and cities—without being restricted to a single group, thus permitting me not only exposure to different contexts (facilitating a comparative approach), but also to avoid some of the politics that can arise in small town social exchange.

Furthermore, unbeknownst to me when I happened upon my “transient” field method, I fit somewhat into a cultural mold that has been shaped by many men who have families in the interior. Because economic opportunities are more readily available in Salvador—usually in manual labor—men often work from Monday through Friday in Salvador and return to their homes in the interior only on weekends or special occasions. While in Salvador, I spent much of my time in the archives, mainly the Public Library (Biblioteca Pública do Estado da Bahia), the Geographic and Historical Institute of Bahia (Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia), and the State Public Archive (Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia), though I also consulted the Municipal Archive (Arquivo Histórico Municipal de Salvador) and the church archive of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia.

¹⁶ Only very occasionally did I stay in *pousadas* (hotels).

In my ethnographic research, I employed participant observation. But more than a “participant observer,” I was a party guest. I did what the other guests did: cleaned, cooked, moved heavy pots, talked, laughed, ate, and drank. Then when it was time for the party, I sang. Usually I had an audio recorder and a video camera rolling while I took still photos. In *all cases*, I gave the reza hosts copies of what I had documented. Sometimes we would then discuss what I had filmed and how the recording could have been improved. Generally speaking, people paid little attention to my audio recordings. Though I suffer from no dearth of recorded interviews, my conversations tended to be informal and unrecorded. After all, my primary interest was always in understanding and building a relationship with my interlocutor, which I always felt my recorder inhibited to some degree. The method I typically employed, therefore, was to turn the recorder on, set it at a slight distant from us as we talked, and hope for the best. It was a risky way of documenting, but it always allowed for more intimate conversations. Immediately following the discussions, I would write copious notes regarding our conversation topics. Often I would then listen to the recordings at home and, whenever possible, return to ask follow-up questions.

Rezas are domestic, and primarily family-based affairs. Thus my initial experience in finding them was something of a crapshoot, and usually I just followed someone I already knew. Every contact I made, whether the person participated in rezas or not, could potentially lead me to another reza. In the end, I attended nearly three dozen rezas between 2008 and 2013, including rezas for St. Roch, Sts. Cosmas and Damian, St. Anthony, and St. Barbara. There were occasions, particularly in the months of August and September, when I had to forego my attendance at one reza in order to participate in another. Besides rezas, I also participated in a number of large Catholic processions, Catholic Masses, and Candomblé ceremonies. I am a

terrible singer—with surprisingly poor intonation—yet I participated in rezas with increasing vigor as I progressively improved my knowledge of the melodies and texts. I learned this with a bit of practice at home, but mostly it was through participation in rezas. As such, my participant observation was *also* a bi-musical approach. One thus wonders if Mantle Hood’s “bi-musicality” is really a distinct method when the traditions being studied are participatory rather than the presentational Asian musical traditions Hood studied. In fact, I got an organic sense of *how people learn* from going through the process in a way that could probably never have been explained to me.

RACE IN THE RECÔNCAVO: BLACK, WHITE, OR NONE OF THE ABOVE?

My dissertation does not *focus* on race. However, race (or ethnicity) is part of the Bahian/Brazilian reality in ways that affect all aspects of life. And this is especially true for the practice of the reza, which, I argue, is a direct result of the Atlantic slave trade. Consequently, I offer here a few words on how I have dealt with the complicated issue of race in the Recôncavo. As already mentioned, the Recôncavo is home to a significant statistical majority of Brazilians of African descent. And though I do not have statistics for the Recôncavo region, I do have numbers for the Greater Metropolitan Area of Salvador from the year 2000, which give a rough idea of what the percentages might be for the Recôncavo—though I suspect the number of “white” Brazilians would be slightly lower moving away from Salvador. The census of 2000 shows a total population of 2,998,304 for Greater Salvador, in which 658,156 (22%) are white, 1,702,815 (56.8%) are *pardo* (brown/mestizo), 605,199 (20.2%) are black, 9,128 (0.3%) are yellow, and 23,006 (0.8%) are indigenous (Sansone 2003: 23).¹⁷ These are numbers based on self-identifications and are therefore affected by socio-cultural notions of “color” (I discuss this

¹⁷ Due to rounding, the percentages add up to 100.1%.

below). Still, if we combine the number of black and *pardo* Brazilians—most of whom would likely be of African descent—we see a 77% majority. The imprecision of these numbers is infamous, but they do give us a rough idea of the demographic situation in Bahia and the Recôncavo.¹⁸ And these numbers certainly suggest I am working primarily with black Brazilians; but numbers are only half the story.

Born and raised in the midst of late-20th-century U.S. racial categories, I would hesitate little in labeling the overwhelming majority of the people with whom I worked Afro-Brazilian,¹⁹ that is to say *negro* (i.e., black).²⁰ But, as researchers continue to note, the issue of race/ethnicity is never quite that simple in the Brazilian context.²¹ Taking one example, the title of anthropologist Louis Marcelin’s dissertation on family and kinship in Cachoeira, Bahia, is “The Invention of the African-American family.” And as his subtitle insinuates, his “informants” were *negro* (black), *whether they claimed to be or not*. Still, Marcelin is not blind to the reality:

¹⁸ See Sansone (2003: Ch. 1) for a discussion of these statistics in the context of the Brazilian nation.

¹⁹ I use the term “Afro-Brazilian” rather than another possible term, such as African-descendent Brazilian or Brazilian of African descent, in keeping with the academic nomenclature common in Brazilian literature.

²⁰ In Bahia, much like in the U.S., the term Afro-Brazilian (or African-American in the U.S.) is used rarely in colloquial contexts.

²¹ The literature on this topic is dense and expansive, and I will offer just a brief review. Historian Wlamyra Albuquerque (2009) has recently written about what she calls the process of “racialization” that grew out of the abolition movement in the late-19th century. Hence the official policy of “whitening” resulted from a twofold problem: “First, Brazilian thinkers worried about their past—they asked themselves whether heavy miscegenation and the resulting racially mixed population had predestined them to perpetual third-class status as a nation. If so, then they were caught in a determinist trap. . . . If, however, the future left room for maneuver, if ethnic ‘redemption’ were somehow possible, then social policies might be devised to accelerate national development through economic modernization” (Skidmore 1990: 7; see also Skidmore 1998 [1974]). These whitening policies continued through to at least the 1920s (Skidmore 1983: 105), when the ideology of racial democracy, exemplified particularly clearly in the *oeuvre* of Gilberto Freyre, assumed a dominant role (see, for example, Freyre 2006 [1933]). Since then there have been various approaches to de-masking this “myth” of racial democracy. Liv Sovik (2009), analyzing that national racial exclusion occurs on two levels, differentiates between public and private discourse. Sovik argues that in private, the elite upholds the ideal of whiteness (*bracutude*). In the public sphere, however, the ideal is that of “mestiçagem,” or racial mixture, which she explains as a national discourse of racial mixture. In many ways, Barros (2009) points out, this discourse undermines the cause for racial equality, for it causes indifference vis-à-vis race. Barros, in the spirit of the Unified Black Movement (MNU) of the later half of the 20th century, argues for the *recognition* of “difference,” instead of an “inconsideration of difference,” which leads to an “inconsideration of inequalities” (p. 213). In other words, if race in Brazil is *mestiço*, then racial differences do not exist. But because the racial reality is otherwise, Barros argues for the importance of first recognizing blackness in order to fight for equality. The multidisciplinary conversation is of course much denser than these summaries. See, for instance, the different points of view in Fry (1996/1997), Goldstein (2003), Moore (2007), and Telles (2004), among many others.

[T]he terms *negros* [black identity] or *pretos* [black color],²² and their derivatives, are rarely used categories, with the exception of certain contexts. . . . The terms used among agents to designate color, not only varied according to context, but also participate in the dynamic of self-image construction for each individual. I witnessed social circumstances in which the same individual would designate him-/herself variously as *moreno*, *pardo* [i.e., mestizo], *moreno-escuro* [dark moreno], or *more or less dark*. (Marcelin 1996: 211)

The point here is that identity/color is malleable and situational. But the issue goes beyond that.

In many cases, not only might people adjust their categories depending on their interlocutors, but they also frequently “whiten” themselves through their discourse.

Livio Sansone (2003: 38) notes that in Bahia, “[t]here is generally . . . a tendency to classify oneself as white than one would be classified by an observer.” While Sansone’s term “observer” might be qualified with an adjective like “academic,” “analytical,” or “foreign,” the point is nevertheless a crucial one: people tend systematically to deemphasize their own blackness. In this sense, Bahia (and Brazil generally), like so many other geographical contexts, suffers from the ramifications of its colonial past. Fanon powerfully expresses this situation:

Every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards. *He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle.* (Fanon 2008 [1952]: 9, emphasis added)

But in my experience, the issue is less about color than it is about identity.

Often I would ask reza hosts and attendees, people I would unequivocally consider *negro*, if they were in fact “negro.” The answers were always a potential surprise. Some responded fairly quickly that “yes” they were *negro*. Others hesitated before affirming their (or anyone

²² Sansone (2003: 47) explains that “[t]he term *negro* has very different connotations from the word *preto*—generally speaking, the former refers to the Negroid phenotype and the latter to the actual black color.” But the differences go beyond this, as Sansone elaborates: “In my research *negro* is used by only a minority of those interviewed. . . . In the self-identification of color, the term *negro* connotes black pride and is an implicitly or explicitly political category, which can include physical types that other interviewers would above all label with the following terms: *preto*, *escuro*, *sarará*, *mestiço*, *Moreno*, and even *moreno claro*. . . . In other words, the term that people use to indicate their own color can indicate a particular social position and cultural stance” (p. 48).

else's) blackness. In some rare cases, people—without denying their own dark color—saw the term “negro” as derogatory. And still there were those who treated the subject much more ambiguously. As Dona Adélia, a reza host, put it, “Everyone thinks that people with color like mine are *negro*. People don't say anymore, ‘I'm light brown [*moreno-claro*], dark brown [*moreno-escuro*].’ No, nowadays everything is *negro*! *Negro* in the old days was someone who was really, really dark and had that really kinky hair [*cabelo duro*]. Not anymore, now everything is *negro, negro*; black or white!”²³

Salient in Dona Adélia's sentiments are an emphasis on skin color and hair type in defining a person's racial/ethnic identity, markers of blackness that are common throughout the African Diaspora (see Candelario 2007; Patton 2006). But more importantly, we should note that Dona Adélia implicitly acknowledges she is black (complexion) by insisting that her color *would be considered* “negro,” but she appears to be uncomfortable *calling herself* “negra.” In other words, Dona Adélia negates her negritude (identity) while affirming her blackness (complexion). One might argue that she is expressing—however reluctantly—her African ancestry while challenging the term “negro.” This could certainly be true, and in her case it seems to be. But she, like many others throughout the Recôncavo, also emphasizes her indigenous ancestry. She explained that her father was darker than she but had hair with not a single curl. In this case, hair is the marker of identity, trumping skin color. And thus one cannot rush to the conclusion that the self-identification of blackness (color) is *necessarily* the same as recognizing African ancestry.

²³ This is from a conversation with Dona Adélia, at her home on in Muritiba on November 21, 2011.

The topic of racial/ethnic identity and race relations in the Recôncavo could undoubtedly be—and most certainly should be—a dissertation on its own.²⁴ But this is not the place for an extended discussion on the topic. I have raised the point simply in an attempt to situate my dissertation and its contents. I have no vested interest in calling people what they say they are not, and it furthermore seems unethical to inscribe identities on people without their approval. I certainly emphasize the importance of Africans and their descendents in the *creation* and *articulation* of the reza tradition, but those who practice it today may or may not see themselves as Afro-Brazilians. And my goal throughout this dissertation is to discuss people, not populations. Thus I make it clear throughout the dissertation who is doing the racial categorizing. If it is my opinion, I state it and if it is the opinion of the individual (or a family member), I indicate that. In the historical cases, I pull my designations from the documents themselves or from deductive reasoning. Although the way in which people identify themselves (or others) is sometimes interesting for my discussion of the reza, it is not always. At any rate, each case will be discussed with as much ethnographic/historical precision as possible.

3. Novelistic Realism and Ethnography: Religion as Art

Throughout most of my graduate school training I had considered myself a fairly staunch post-structuralist. It seemed to me that the reduction of cultural actors to structure-bearers was both dehumanizing and ultimately fatalistic. For the most part, I still find this to be true.

²⁴ Sansone (2005/2006) has written on how social attitudes have changed in conjunction with larger industrial transformations in the city of São Francisco do Conde (in the Bahian Recôncavo). Sansone's focus tends toward economic and class issues, but not necessarily by design. The author asserts that "[t]he terminology of color, the form by which the informants self-defined and defined others, was one of the research foci. In the interviews and conversations documented during the participant observation, color, despite the insistence of the researchers, presents itself almost as if exogenous: it does not come up spontaneously, not even when one speaks of culture. . . . There is, in peoples' opinions, a near equivalence between popular culture and the black being—to be a person of color is normal—normal to the extent that no one even needs to designate that person as such" (p. 246). This observation is interesting, but it seems to treat lightly the nuances of *how* blackness can be pejoratively employed by people in everyday conversation. Still, this highlights the importance of the issue for future research.

However, I never quite realized what the absence of structure could look like until I began to investigate the reza tradition. In rezas, things happen according to *individual* histories, preferences, and logics. How then, can one generalize? Each reza is in fact different. While I now recognize some constants, the repertoires are varied, the liturgy can be ordered differently, performances can be realized in myriad ways, and aesthetics are often personalized. The confusion I initially felt upon attending rezas was tantamount to that of someone trying to understand the sport of baseball by analyzing games in which each one had different rules according to the will of the players: sometimes it is three strikes, others one; sometimes there are four bases, or maybe thirteen. The structure of a reza is largely defined by *its apparent lack of structure*. It took me a while to understand that this ostensible fluidity in practice is really part of a more coherent deeper structure that recursively revises *particular* symbols and practices in order to preference personal (and family) history, group negotiations, and cosmological interpretations. But how to frame this?

CONCEPTUALIZING NON-STRUCTURE

It seems to me that one of the most promising approaches to understanding this apparent non-structure should comprehend the individual *artistry* and *creativity* exerted in the production of these divinely inspired performances. In looking specifically at religious art, Steven Loza (2009) suggests an epistemological shift for ethnomusicology. In a critique of Alan Merriam's still dominant positivistic design for the discipline, Loza theorizes an approach to music that he generalizes as a theory of "religion as art." Grounded in a study of artistic representations of Mexico's Guadalupe, the author emphasizes that we can find belief, meaning, and experience *in the art itself*. Extrapolating, Loza points out that "[t]hrough a plethora of world religions, past and present, humankind has participated in the ingenious act of achieving belief, hope, and faith

by creating art” (p. 83). In short, we can find religious experience *in art*; that is, we might do well to study music as spirituality instead of music as a scientific fact. Loza’s suggestion is surely a novel and provocative one. However, it should be noted that what he is advocating is not as much a theory of “religion as art” as it is of *art as religion*. The inversion is subtle but crucial. The approach foregrounds *art* while taking its epistemological reference points from notions of religious worship. Certainly Loza’s suggestion allows one to understand the reza’s song as religion. But what about the contrary? What are the benefits of treating “religion as art”? In other words, rather than treat art *as if it were religion*, as Loza suggests, what if one were to treat religion *as if it were art*? In this way, I suggest that the plurality in the reza tradition is best understood as an artistic expression.

The backbone of Loza’s philosophical arguments is Benedetto Croce’s musings on aesthetics, and I will use a similar starting point for my thoughts on “religion as art.” Croce begins his *Breviario di estetica*, originally published in 1913, with the grand question “What is art?” Using visual art as his reference, Croce (1995 [1913]: 8) explains that “art is *vision* or *intuition*.” Armed with this idea, I turn now to religion. While no definition of religion is uncontested, I find helpful the simplicity of Jack Eller’s (2007) thoughtful and synthetic postulation: “religion is the discourse, the language and practice, or the means by which human society and culture is extended to include the nonhuman” (p. 9). If religion is indeed art, then Eller’s “discourse” and “means” (or language and practice) *are intuition*. And intuition manifests itself primarily in aesthetic or sensory terms, what “looks good” or “feels right.” This is why a religion (as art) is brought to life by what practitioners understand as *commonsensical* (i.e., intuitive) behavior.

Still, aesthetics cannot be divorced from social interaction and cosmology. That is to say, while differences arise among people, there tends to exist *only so much variety*. Thus what is “pretty” to one person tends likewise to be pretty to another. There are underlying social structures and cosmological beliefs that in many ways *dictate* what people do. In other words, there *are* “rules.” Just as Leonardo da Vinci’s Mona Lisa is simultaneously unique *and* representative of the period’s aesthetics, rezas are individualized religious expression that is embedded in a particular socio-historical context. The universe of practical choices within which people perform rezas is, like Bourdieu’s habitus, “infinite yet strictly limited . . . by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production” (Bourdieu 1990 [1980]: 55). Indeed, the “logical” differences witnessed at each reza are typically the result of particular histories. However, while each cultural “cast” of actors might perform its reza in a distinct way, socio-culturally shared sets of actions are always present. Theoretically the possibilities are endless, yet in practical terms, commonalities prevail.

If religion is art, then we can conceive of rezas as *works of art*, rooted in the culturally and historically informed “intuition” of particular individuals (or groups of individuals). But the end product, the reza, is not always just the result of “intuition.” The act of creating the “masterpiece” is spontaneous, political, and dependent on material resources. People must act in the moment, in agreement, and with what they can afford or obtain, resulting in a final product that may or may not resemble the original artistic endeavor. Thus I should emphasize that differences among rezas are not only individual, but also practical. That is, decisions are not rooted solely in aesthetic judgment, but also in social and material negotiations. As such, the same “artists” may produce wildly different masterpieces from year to year, even if their *intuition* remains constant.

REPRESENTING NON-STRUCTURE

Since much of this dissertation is ethnographic, how shall I confront the slippery question of representing the non-structure of creativity? Is there a way to generalize without squelching diversity's vigor? How, in other words, can one talk about the brilliance of the Mona Lisa while also using it to understand "renaissance art"? In a 1986 essay, anthropologist Renato Rosaldo (1986: 103) notes that "much ethnography tells more about forms of activity *in general* than about how any *particular instance* was carried out" (emphasis added). This is a contrast between what Rosaldo calls "novelistic" realism and "ethnographic" realism, the division of "the dramatic potential of particular events and the programmed routines of generalized accounts" (p. 102). The normative, generalized, or "ethnographic" produces composite accounts based on particular events that illustrate implicit rules, patterns, and logics, while the particularistic, specific, or "novelistic" treats events as *novel*, emotional, and varied. While "ethnographic realism" might dehumanize its "subjects" by reducing individual human emotion to structure, "novelistic realism" offers little more than confusing fragments of narrative that are meaningless for readers unfamiliar with the context in which such particular activity occurs. Consequently, the approaches are mutually dependent if they are to construct a vibrant ethnographic narrative capable of offering a glimpse of the emotional and experiential, while dialectically illustrating the "artistic palette" from which such lived and improvised moments are created.

This dissertation thus attempts to navigate a middle ground between the particular and the normative. While "normativity" in and of itself might be nothing more than an unattainable pipe dream, it seems to me that pretending there is no (malleable) logic that comprehends the particulars is both misleading and unfaithful to the cultures which ethnographers hope to describe. My "normative" categories are drawn from the practitioners themselves either as they

describe them (in cognitive terminology) or as they perform them. In Bahia, each “reza” is recognized as such because it shares traits, logics, and performative attributes with other so-called “rezas.” However, the variation from one home to another is substantial and sometimes—for the researcher—quite frustrating. Therefore my writing bounces between composites and particulars, aiming not only to portray the unity and seemingly infinite variety in both behaviors and motivations, but also to draw out some of the emotions and sentiments that inspire people to continue devoting their time, energy, and material resources to celebrate Christian martyrs.

In order to develop this approach, I present my “data” in myriad ways. Each ethnographic chapter (Ch. 1-5) is, for the most part, an attempt to distill diversity into generally recognizable cultural patterns of logic. Separating each chapter, however, is an ethnographic (i.e., particularistic) “Party Interlude,” case studies taken from individual parties. And accompanying each of these are extended recordings of the events. My historical chapters (Ch. 6 and 7) are structured a bit differently. Chapter Six is a macro-historical reading that is primarily interested in individual action only insofar that it elucidates a more generalized picture of social and cultural activity. On the other hand, Chapter Seven is an exercise in historical specificity and individuals. Thus the narrative in many ways dances between particulars and composites in an effort to construct an interpretation that is both robust and sensitive to the individuality that arises from and creates cultural patterns.

4. Music, History, and Memory

History is a vital part of this investigation. But this is not a historical study, *per se*. While at least two chapters (Ch. 6 and 7) rely extensively on written historical documentation, the majority of my engagement with the past comes through the investigation of memories. In the social world, memories can be divided roughly between the individual (personal) and the

collective (social). Rezas, it should be remembered, are personal obligations to collectively remembered Catholic saints in which individuals celebrate their chosen saint by way of a socially shared form of musical devotion. As such, these devotional practices serve as lively points of articulation between collective and personal memories. The debate regarding collective memory in the articulation of personal memory—and vice-versa—can be traced back at least as far as Durkheim,²⁵ but suffice it to say that the robust interaction between personal and collective memories is a constituent aspect of rezas. Through *personal* devotions to Catholic saints, reza hosts intertwine collective memories (of Catholic saints, Church teachings, forms of artistic expression, cosmologies, cultural practices, etc.) with individual memories (of parents, children, friendships, experiences with the divine, etc.) in such a way that one set of memories necessarily indexes the other. Consequently, saints and the social practices associated with them are often as personal as individual memories. Through rezas, then, individual memories are *externalized* and collective memories are *internalized*; the personal is made collective and the collective is made personal.

²⁵ See, for example, Connerton (1989), Halbwachs (1992), Misztal (2003), Nora (1989), Ricoeur (2004), and Crane (1997). Certainly the first important study on collective memory was that of Maurice Halbwachs (1992), who convincingly argued that collective memory is *necessary* for the creation of individual memory. In the author's words: "No memory is possible outside frameworks used by people living in society to determine and retrieve their recollections" (p. 43). Halbwachs further insisted that "individual memory is . . . an aspect of group memory, since each impression and each fact, even if it apparently concerns a particular person exclusively, leaves a lasting memory only to the extent that one has thought it over—to the extent that it is connected with the thoughts that come to us from the social milieu" (p. 53). More recently, Susan Crane (1997) has argued for returning the individual into the transmission of collective memories. As Crane emphasizes, "each individual, as a member of many collectives, holds and expresses personal memories of historical significance as lived experience. They might produce histories in which they claim their historical subjects as part of their own memories" (p. 1383). Ricoeur (2004) has further argued for a "threefold attribution of memory," in which beyond the individual and the collective, are close relations, "to whom we have a right to attribute a memory of a distinct kind. These close relations, these people who count for us and for whom we count, are situated along a range of varying distances in the relation between self and others" (p. 131).

ORAL AND EMBODIED HISTORY

In this dissertation I am interested in two types of memory: discursive/oral and embodied/practical. And I use each of these differently. I treat the concept of “discursive memories” (i.e., conscious remembrances) as equivalent to the more typical “oral history.” The treatment of memories *as* history has its well-known pitfalls (see Grele 1998; Vansina 2006 [1961]), particularly apropos of “forgetting,” or the “uses and abuses of memory” (Ricoeur 2004: 68-92). Some scholars have even argued that the writing of history encroaches upon and distorts collective memories (see Crane 1997). But my interest here is not in “history” as an objective category, nor is it on the *writing* of history. My dissertation deals primarily with how memories affect the present. In other words, I am less concerned with “history” as an abstract category than with the historicity of discursive memories. I have expressed the goal of employing historical memory in an effort to understand how people construct their present in accordance with *the way in which they remember* their past. I am interested, in other words, in “people acting on history-as-reported” (Tonkin 1992: 114) more so than whether this “report” was the same as another’s. As such, veracity, as far as objective reality is concerned, matters far less than the memories people use to construct and interpret their present. This is particularly the case given that I am using oral history—discursive memories—to understand personal histories, things that individuals themselves lived. With the exception of Ch. 7, in which I cross-reference written documents, I do not use oral accounts to understand pasts that extend beyond individual experiences.

While my use of discursive memory is primarily a means of understanding the present, I use “embodied” memory—as contemporary practice—as a source for understanding the past. As Rosalind Shaw (2002) has argued, regarding what she calls “practical memory,” fragments of the

past are often “embedded in habits, social practices, ritual processes, and embodied experiences” (Shaw 2002: 7). Rituals, in other words, can serve as storehouses of history. But this history is neither linear nor complete; it is a *performed* past that is as anachronic as it is fragmented. Thus the past must be understood “not only as a timeline—accessed as a leap backwards, and forward to the present again—but also as a multilayered sedimentation, a form of vertical density rather than a horizontal sweep—not an either/or but a both/and” (Taylor 2006: 83). For this reason, through the “excavation” of performances, we can encounter “hidden substitutions, embodied historical memories, and unofficial pasts” (Apter and Derby 2010: xxiv). In other words, however absent collective memories might be from discursive memory, “unofficial pasts” can be communicated and re-presented through performance. In this dissertation, I examine the myriad ways in which the performed present embodies the past. My interest is concentrated on the ways in which Africans and Afro-Brazilians have constructed the reza tradition over time, through practices and cosmologies. Yet I also look at specific melodies and texts (Ch. 3) that offer a fragmented index of Bahia’s Iberian past. Consequently, my dissertation, with historicity as its guiding theoretical motif, bounces back-and-forth along the ambiguous frontier that separates the past from the present and historical inquiry from ethnographic investigation.

HISTORICAL ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

My quasi-archeological approach to the reading of embedded histories in musical performances is not new to ethnomusicology and has appeared—if somewhat unsystematically—in the literature that might be subsumed under the designation of historical ethnomusicology. No doubt the definition of historical ethnomusicology, as a sub-field of ethnomusicology, is controversial. The broadest boundaries encompass cultural histories of music and musicians,

iconographic analyses, archaeology, and archival documents.²⁶ To be sure, “history” was a concern for some of the earliest turn-of-the-20th-century comparative musicology, as Wallaschek, Stumpf, and Hornbostel searched for “what they considered to be the world’s simplest musics,” for these were seen as “perhaps representative of the world’s earliest music” (Nettl 2010: 112). After moving away from these genealogical and evolutionism-inspired approaches to the documenting of “living history,” ethnomusicology has, with but a few notable exceptions,²⁷ been shy to breach explicitly the divide between ethnography and history.

Kay Kaufman Shelemay (1980) is generally recognized as having coined the term “historical ethnomusicology.” In her work on Falasha ritual music, Kaufman demonstrates that contrary to the “official” historical record, the “Black Jews” of Ethiopia have shared an intimate history with Christians and Christian practices (1980: 242; see also Shelemay 1986). Building explicitly on Shelemay’s study, Lorna McDaniel (1995) shows how many Trinidadian Spiritual Baptists appropriated “foreign” songs from black soldiers from the U.S. who traveled to Trinidad in the 19th and early-20th centuries. Both Shelemay’s and McDaniel’s work relied largely on a written record to flesh out their musical information, but, as Anthony Seeger (1991b) demonstrates, written documents are not a requirement for this type of performance-as-history historical ethnomusicology. Utilizing an analysis of Suyá cultural patterns, Seeger explores how this Brazilian indigenous group incorporates outside (i.e., foreign) cultural practices as a form of solidifying group identity. As such, the Suyá musical repertoire *displays* its history; song acts as a historical record.

²⁶ It is quite questionable where the boundaries should be drawn regarding what should constitute “historical ethnomusicology.” See Hebert (2010) and Stone (2008: 177-194) for discussions on the topic.

²⁷ For instance, ethnomusicological interest in linking the musical present with the past is available in Merriam (1967), as well as many of the essays in Wachsmann (1971).

With such an abbreviated overview of this select group of ethnomusicological studies, I have no intention to explore the profundity of “historical ethnomusicology.” My aim is otherwise. Each of these studies explores in one way or another the boundary line between performance (in the present) and the past, and it is this form of historical ethnomusicology I conduct in this dissertation. I analyze in detail each aspect of the performance of the reza and then consider how it brings the past to life, whether that means personal memories, collective history, and/or tacit, embodied history. In other words, the musical performance of the reza elucidates oblique references to the past, however this might be understood. My dissertation thus highlights the value of historical investigation (based on the oral or written record) as it interacts with ethnographic analysis. While I have no desire to argue for a rigid “methodology,” my overt engagement with the past and the present through a plethora of source material, offers—I believe—an implicit methodological approach to doing ethnomusicology that is decidedly historical.

5. Rethinking Popular Catholicism in Brazil

When discussing the reza, scholars describe it as a “popular” (Jesus 2006, Waddey 1981: 252) or “folk” (Lima 1961: 23) Catholic practice.²⁸ Such designations presume a dichotomy in which there also exists an “elite” or “orthodox” Catholicism.²⁹ But to relegate the reza to the realm of the “popular” is not merely, as Primiano (1995: 38-39) passionately argues, “residualistic” and “derogatory” for presuming a “contamination” of the pure elements of religion. The label also obfuscated the power dynamic implied in the term itself. In other words, it neglects to ask who has what stakes in defining what “popular” is. In Brazil, certainly,

²⁸ The Portuguese term used by Jesus is “*catolicismo popular*” and Lima’s is “*católico-folclórico*.”

²⁹ The point is equally well proven by substituting any other problematic binary: lay/clerical, local/distant, and so on. See Eire (2006) for an extensive historiographic exploration of these terms and binaries.

particularly since the 19th century, it has been the “official” side of the binary that cultivates the division in the first place.

The flourishing of “popular” Catholicism in Brazil is often attributed to two general factors: an insufficient number of well-trained clergy and geographical remoteness of populations from ecclesiastical authorities (Dawson 2007: 11; Reily 2002: 211). Indeed, Gilberto Freyre (2006 [1933]: 36) has famously argued that given these factors, Brazilian Catholicism developed primarily as a family affair on the plantations, whereby the chaplain was subordinate to the *pater familias*. Hoornaert (1979a) posits, on the other hand, that because the family patriarch was busy with tasks outside of the home, religious education was chiefly left to the “white woman” (p. 370). Whatever the case may be, scholars have tended to accentuate the “contrast between the people’s Catholicism and that of the institution” (p. 369). While it seems evident that many aspects of quotidian Catholicism in the Colony developed without an overtly dominant Church presence, I think authors have sometimes exaggerated the dimension of the gap between the “popular” and the “official.” Furthermore, if popular Catholicism is the result of poor training and geographical remoteness, why have these practices *also* developed in historically urban centers such as (in Bahia) Salvador and Cachoeira?

Somewhat contrary to this theory, which pins the emergence of “popular Catholicism” on a lack of ecclesiastical attention (whether due to insufficient well-trained clergy or geographical distance), evidence suggests that precisely due to this shortage of clergy, unorthodox practices were often appropriated by local authorities in order to facilitate catechizing efforts. Thus rather than imagining two separate historical trajectories in Brazil—one of Roman Catholicism and the other of popular Catholicism—it is perhaps more accurate to view these as aspects of the same intertwined history. In other words, like the holistic view of world history so eloquently

presented by Eric Wolf (1982), so-called “popular Catholicism,” to the degree to which it exists as a coherent set of unorthodox practices, was actually part of the development of the Catholic Church in Brazil, just as the Church helped shape—by way of dogma, symbols, and values—its popular offshoot. This is clear even from the earliest catechization efforts in the Americas. The first diocese was erected in 1551, fifty-one years after the Portuguese first landed on Brazilian shores. But the Jesuit priests, led by Manuel de Nóbrega, arrived two years prior, in 1549. And in 1553, this mendicant order began the “famous experiment in the villages” (Hoornaert 1979a: 46), utilizing indigenous cultural forms—particularly language—to proliferate their Christian message. And indeed this successful technique later spread to other parts of the Americas (see Andrade 2002; Mann 2010a, 2010b; Stevenson 1964; Veiga 1981: 162-176).

In 16th-century New Spain, for instance, Kristin Mann (2010a: 340) notes that “[m]embers of the community were encouraged to process from their homes to the church patio to the beat of indigenous percussion instruments and the sound of Christian responsories” (see also Mann 2010b). Hardly antagonistic toward what might be regarded as “popular” practices, the Jesuits embraced these as effective tools in conversion. In José Ramos Tinhorão’s powerful terms, the indigenous “language and music came to be used in the first years of Catechism precisely as weapons in the annihilation of their culture” (Tinhorão 2000: 24).³⁰ This is a case of what Hoorneart (1979b: 50) insists was “repeated innumerable times” during the colonial period: “the culture that considers itself central takes from the culture that is judged as peripheral the atomized elements and integrates them, allowing the manipulation of the dependent culture.”

Although the situation changed dramatically during the Inquisition, the divide between popular and official remained nebulous. Take, for instance, the 18th-century Bahian case of the

³⁰ Hoorneart (1979b: 50) introduces, for example, Cristóvão Valente, who “composed ‘songs in the language,’ with the expressed goal of attracting mainly children and removing them from their own cultural world toward the Portuguese cultural world.”

clergyman, Friar Alberto de Santo Tomás, who denounced himself to the Inquisition for the modified exorcism techniques he was using to combat the work of African sorcerers, for he believed he might have been committing heresy. The decision he received from the Inquisition, after extended deliberation by four theologians, was that his actions were neither heretic nor superstitious, and did not demonstrate a demonic pact. He was only asked to conduct exorcism in accordance with Roman Ritual in order to “maintain the homogeneity of Catholic ritual” (Mott 2010: 38). In other words, these unorthodox Catholic practices were seen as little more than deviations from “standard” Catholic ritual.

One might argue that the amicable Church-lay relationship reached its apex during the baroque period, particularly with the boom of Catholic brotherhoods. After all, the Church, still trying to figure out ways to deal with its inadequate distribution of clergy amongst the population, approved of and even cultivated the theatrical spirit of competition among the brotherhoods (Andrade 2002: 126). And, as Riolando Azzi (1978: 89) notes, it was only during the Republican phase that “this type of religious association became marginalized by the official Church, which began to value a new type of religious association more linked to the clergy.” Indeed, it was precisely during the 19th century when the Catholic Church in Brazil experienced a major crisis, for it was officially separated from the State according to the 1824 constitution, while also being expected to respond to harsh criticisms regarding its practices. In Maristela Oliveira de Andrade’s (2002: 151) words:

In the midst of the Brazilian crisis of Catholicism during the 19th century, in which the Church debated openly with the State, it turned against the misrepresentations it had generated within itself, originating in spurious religious practices, no longer recognized by the official Church. In an exercise of self-critique, motivated by the arrival to Brazil of religious foreigners, the Church broke with the “primitive” forms of Catholicism that it had in fact cultivated during all of the colonial period, thus beginning to distinguish clearly two strands of Catholicism: the popular and the institutional or official.

As I have argued, this break from “popular” practices was something of a historical precedent. For the Church’s history up to then—ranging from the employment of indigenous music and language to the approval of exorcisms and the encouraging of brotherhoods—was marked by an ecclesiastical reliance on these unorthodox forms of worship to help teach Catholic doctrine. The *invention* of a designation such as “popular Catholicism” is therefore not only relatively recent, but it is also a top-down creation that is a rupture in the history of Catholicism in Brazil.

TOWARD A CATHOLICISM-INSPIRED PRACTICE

It is worth noting that the discursive disapproval, by the Church, of unorthodox practices has never been a cogent practical reality. After all, as Martha Ellen Davis (1976: 52) aptly notes, “[i]t is not the populace, rather the Church, which defines the two levels of Catholicism by excluding certain beliefs and practices which continue to thrive outside the Church.” Put otherwise, the *concept* of popular Catholicism is not something that “popular Catholics” emphasize or embrace. For example, I once posed a question to a group of three Bahian women regarding whether the reza they annually sponsored for St. Roch was an example of “popular” Catholicism (*catolicismo popular*). Their response surprised me: “It’s not completely popular, because at Mass the priest speaks about St. Roch’s day. August 16th is dedicated to St. Roch. In other words, if it were popular, we wouldn’t go to Church Mass, right?”³¹ This illustrates a paradox observed by Suzel Reily (2002: 213): “[W]hile popular Catholicism stands in opposition to the centralized official church, it is also conversant with it.”

How to deal, then, with “popular” religion, particularly given the reality that “there is a process of continual assessment and reassessment of these [popular religious] forms by the institutional Church” (Scribner 1987: 44)? Some scholars have suggested the use of the modifier

³¹ This is taken from a conversation with Dona Marlene, Dona Margarida, and Dona Cleusa, which took place at their home in Cachoeira, Bahia on September 3, 2010.

“lived.” Advocated convincingly by Robert Orsi, “lived religion” situates “all religious creativity within culture and approaches all religion as lived experience” (2002 [1985]: xix). The “study of lived religion” moves us away from problematic dichotomies by directing attention “to institutions *and* persons, texts *and* rituals, practice *and* theology, things *and* ideas” (Orsi 2002 [1985]: xix; see also Hughes 2010: 14-15). While certainly the reza could be called a form of “lived Catholicism,” this reconceptualization lacks *agency*. Rezas are not Catholic because they are *lived*; they are Catholic because they are affirmed as such. To *live* something rather than, say, profess it, implies a certain lack of reflexivity that is completely antithetical to how practitioners understand their own reza tradition. Indeed, in the context of the Recôncavo and the Bahian reza, *discourse*—not symbols or practice—often acts as the primary marker of identity. After all, people define their own practice as Catholicism, while their actions might—consciously or not—contest that assertion.

The solution I propose in this dissertation is to understand and refer to the reza—and its appropriate constituent parts—as “Catholicism-inspired.” I borrow the modifier—which appears to originate in African-American academic scholarship—from Matory’s (2005) use of the term in reference to African Diaspora religious practices. And while it remains to be seen how applicable the term is to other so-called “popular Catholic” activities, it is particularly cogent in the present case. I believe this subtle lexical revision is a helpful tool in grappling with the reza’s apparent eclecticism. It is practitioners themselves who call rezas Catholic. These are *discursive* and *consciously embraced* political positions that individuals use to define themselves and their actions. Their practices are “inspired” in Catholicism for they feel their actions connect them first and foremost to the *global* Catholic community. Thus “inspired,” more so than other adjectives such as “derived” or “influenced,” emphasizes the discursive and practical agency of

the practitioners while also leaving analytical room to conceptualize, for example, how possession by a West African *orixá* can still fit into the rubric of “Catholicism.” *To do* is not necessarily *to say*. This approach also allows me freedom from solutions that more complicated—though perhaps more historically accurate—such as Omari’s (1979: 70) use of the term “Yorùbázations.”³²

The “Catholicism” in Catholicism-inspired refers specifically to Roman Catholic dogma, teachings, and practices. Rezas are always, at this point in the 21st century at least, inspired explicitly in Church activities. Often, therefore, as the Church institutes changes, so do people at rezas. People look to the Church for “inspiration” and might consequently make significant changes to their realization of the reza in an effort to align themselves continually with the Church. But the Church is certainly not alone in accounting for transformations. Indeed, it is but one part of the equation that, when supported or contested by other family, cultural, and/or material structures/institutions, can produce interesting results and unexpected modifications.

6. The Reza in the Black Atlantic: Syncretism versus Creolization

While the reza may be discursively Catholic, many of its most normative practical aspects—possession by ancestral spirits, ritual chicken sacrifices, Central Africa-derived samba dancing, Afro-Brazilian culinary arts—lie distant from the Church’s European roots. Thus at the most fundamental level, the reza is a Bahian social institution.³³ In other words, it possesses its

³² Though Omari focuses her research on the Bahian devotions to St. Cosmas and St. Damian, a similar “Africanization” argument could be made—in varying degrees—for devotions to many other saints in Bahia. I call this possibility more historically accurate because it indicates the likely origins of particular transformations in accordance with, in this case, logics of Yoruba-speaking culture areas. However, such an affirmation, that Catholicism has been “Yorubanized” takes away from the specific Catholic Church-related reality of the practitioners of “Yorubanized Catholic” traditions. In other words, I think most practitioners would find it hard to understand why their practice is “Yorubanized.”

³³ I use the concept of institution following Sidney Mintz and Richard Price (1992 [1976]: 23): “We are defining ‘institution’ as any regular or orderly social interaction that acquires a normative character, and can hence be employed to meet recurrent needs. Thus broadly defined, a particular form of marriage, a particular religious cult, a

own localized logic and historical trajectory. Moreover, as is the case with most Bahian institutions, the *reza* is *fundamentally* a part of the Black Atlantic. Consequently, I would like to suggest that, if only for heuristic purposes, the *reza* be conceived of as a “creole institution.” This terminology is not designed to dismiss the value of the Iberian (or Amerindian) contribution. Instead I aim to emphasize both the New World-ness of the practice and the *crucial role Africans and their descendents have played in the creation and articulation of the reza*. And this is a central argument running through the dissertation. But why *creole*? After all, Brazilian institutions that appear to “mix” religious practices are typically called—as much in Brazilian scholarship as in day-to-day non-scholarly conversation—*syncretic*. So why is the *reza* not “syncretic,” or “incomplete syncretism,” as Martha Ellen Davis (1981: 76) suggests for the *reza*-like Dominican *velación*? In order to answer this question, I will explore “syncretism” in the Brazilian context.

“In Brazil, when one speaks of Afro-Brazilian religions one immediately thinks of syncretism, as *indigestible agglomerates* of rites and myths” (Ferretti 1999: 114). Syncretism in Brazil is based largely on a myth of religious purity, in which each “indigestible” part can be sifted out intact. It is worth remembering, furthermore, that in Brazil, syncretism has been associated almost exclusively with religions of African provenance, particularly Candomblé (see Ferretti 1999). In fact, the *idea* of syncretism has been among the most important frames by which to understand Afro-Brazilian religions since Raymundo Nina Rodrigues first established them as a field study in the 19th century. While Nina Rodrigues (1945 [1905]) never used the term “syncretism,” he noted what he considered to be the “illusion of Catechism” among Africans and their descendents, in which African deities were *fused* together with Catholic saints,

particular pattern for establishing friendships, a particular economic relationship that is normative and recurrent—all would be examples of institutions.” In other words, I consider the *reza* an institution because it is a recurrent and normative social interaction.

such that Catholic iconography became a representation of the African deity (Ferretti 1995: 41-43). In other words, one *was* the other. Melville Herskovits noted a similar process of “syncretism/acculturation” vis-à-vis African-inspired *loa* deities in Haiti: “Legba is believed by most persons to be the same as St. Anthony, for the reason that St. Anthony is represented on the *images* as an old man, poorly dressed, carrying a wand which supports him as he walks” (Herskovits 1937: 637). This early-20th-century view treated syncretism as a set system of identifications and equivalences between a specific Catholic saint and a given African god.

Roger Bastide, perhaps one of the most important theorists on Afro-Brazilian religion, suggested a deeper reading of the saint-Orixá relationship, one which emphasized resistance over acculturation. For Bastide, saints and Orixás were not so much related through equivalences as they were through analogies. Thus St. Anthony was not *the* Orixá Ogum; he was *like* Ogum. They were similar, not the same. Bastide felt there existed a rigid underlying structure that allowed for a division between Catholicism and Candomblé. Expressing this view eloquently, Pierre Verger once wrote that “Candomblé and Catholicism are like water and oil—they can sit in the same cup, but they do not mix” (Ferretti 1995: 57). Ferretti (1995: 57) explains that this is a vision “of a compartmentalized world and whose compartments do not fit within each other.”

The Bastide-inspired interpretation reached its apex in 1983, when a group of Candomblé priests and priestesses publicly declared the *end of syncretism*. Well-known priestess Mãe Stella said of the syncretic relationship between Saint Barbara and Iansã: “We are not going to stop believing, for example, in Saint Barbara. . . . But we know that Iansã is a different energy, she is not Saint Barbara” (Consorte 1999: 73). For Mãe Stella, Catholic saints were not *fused* to African gods, nor were they even equivalent; they were *entirely different*. Each deity had its own energy. It is important to underscore that this argument played into the era’s re-Africanization

politics, for renouncing syncretism made it clear that Candomblé was “a religion of African origin, thus existing before slavery, having been constituted by way of the religious repertory brought by Africans from their homelands, prescinding, then, Catholicism in order to exist as a religion” (Consorte 1999: 73). In other words, Candomblé was no longer *dependent* on Catholicism for an elaboration of its symbolic universe. Candomblé could thus ideally begin to exist as if it had never been associated with Catholicism. But the reality was otherwise.

Anthropologist Josildeth Consorte observed some of the ritual activities in Salvador in the period following the “end-of-syncretism” declaration:

Accompanying, even at a distance, the way the religious festivals played out in Salvador, it seemed that nothing had changed. . . . [T]he presents of Iemanjá continued to be offered on the day consecrated to Our Lady of Candeias . . . [T]he Monday Masses at St. Lazarus Church, syncretized with Omolu, continued to be frequented by a large population of ritual white clothing, and that is without mentioning the presence of popcorn all over the place; the festival of St. Roch, syncretized with Obaluaiê, preserved its traditional characteristics[.] (Consorte 1999: 81)

The point is quite clear: the discursively non-existent “syncretism” continued to exist in practice. Practical reality is not something that can be altered solely through discourse. As Sousa Júnior (2004: 268) notes, “[t]he theory of symbolic incompatibility between the two religious systems [Catholicism and Candomblé] is dissolved to the extent that the relationships begin to occur.”

The syncretic relationship between a given Catholic saint and a particular Orixá—St. Anthony/Ogum, St. Roch/Obaluaiê, St. Barbara/Iansã, etc.—goes beyond superficial correspondences. *The syncretic relationship is fundamental to the identity of both.* In other words, they are mutually constitutional. In the Bahian imaginary, St. Anthony is St. Anthony *because of his relationship* to Ogum. Discourse cannot undo this relationship because it is part of the historical construction of the deity itself. The two belief systems are integrated into what Sidney Mintz (1974: 269) noted in Haiti as “a single ideology.” Thus ripping an Orixá away

from his/her Catholic counterpart does more than simply change the present; it rewrites history. “Wishing away” syncretism was no doubt an admirable attempt to empower Candomblé, but it denies a certain historical and contemporary reality in which pairs of deities are fused by centuries of practice. This is not, however, a simple one-way relationship of dependence; it is one of interdependence. The saint is *as dependent on the Orixá* (in practical terms) for his/her existence as the Orixá is dependent on the saint. This is a quite understandable consequence when one considers that both were elaborated within Bahia’s socio-historical context as a site in the Black Atlantic world.

So I return to the question: Why not “syncretism” to characterize the reza? While using the term would conveniently locate my study in the contested discourses on black resistance, coercion, and enslavement that “syncretism” evokes, the term is itself of little use. As Ferretti (1999: 114) notes, “[A]ll religions are syncretic, for they represent the result of large syntheses integrating elements of various origins that form a new whole.” In this sense, the term “syncretism” to explain a reza is less inaccurate than it is unhelpful. Furthermore, the real problem is that “syncretism” implies, particularly in the New World context, a type of pre-contact purity; a myth if ever there was one. Especially apropos of the Brazilian context, *syncretism* seems to suggest fusion; not creation, not rebirth. Therefore, I favor the term “creole,” which, though bearing its own problematic weight, seems to make clear my interpretive stance: the reza is a New World *creation* that serves as a site for African and African-descendent collective memory. Still, it is important to remember, as Keith McNeal (2011: 326) puts it, “leaning upon the discourses of creolization and syncretism . . . is but a heuristic move and does not substitute for empirical and comparative analysis.”

CREOLIZING THE REZA

Bahian rezas are the product of Iberian Catholic, Western African, Amerindian, and North American (via French Spiritism) traditions. But they are much more. Rezas are their own unique, localized practices and should be comprehended in their specific socio-historical contexts. Rezas are thus not a simple case of, as art historian David Brown phrases it, “new wine in old bottles.” Instead, “[t]he historically situated performances of agents creatively change the shape of the bottles themselves into new, ‘creole’ forms which ‘resemble,’ but do not reduce to, their multifarious ‘sources’” (D. Brown 2003: 43). In light of this conceptualization, I suggest the reza be understood (if only heuristically) as a “creole institution” whose characteristics are not so much “European” or “African” but rather *Bahian*: Bahian hymns (*benditos*), Bahian cuisine, Bahian samba song and dance, Bahian aesthetics in song style and decoration, Bahian saint devotions, etc.

As I mentioned above, the term “creole” is not without its problems. Furthermore, scholars of culture have tended to apply the term “creole” to Caribbean cultural expressions that are markedly African-derived. My designation of a Brazilian Catholicism-inspired tradition as “creole” therefore needs some discussion. The first documented uses of the term *criollo* (the Spanish root-word from which creole derives) are in the New World during the second half of the 16th century. Between 1562 and 1599, a total of fifteen attestations of the word have been located.³⁴ The polysemic lexical primarily referred to people (black or white) or things (calves) from the New World (Baker and Mühlhäusler 2007: 84).³⁵ And indeed this definition, though

³⁴ It is worth noting that these details concern the word’s “print existence,” suggesting that the term and other possible usages probably existed sometime prior to this period (Mintz 1996: 301).

³⁵ According to Baker and Mühlhäusler (2007: 85), of the fifteen different uses, eight refer to New World born blacks, three to blacks born elsewhere but not in Africa, three to white born in the New World, and one referring to locally born calves. Therefore the definition was quite malleable though never veering from a meaning that revolved around an offspring born in a place in which its parents were not.

never entirely static, remains dominant today: “[S]omething of the Old World, born in the New” (Mintz 1996: 301). This American-born term was eventually expanded, as Palmié (2006: 443) notes, by linguists who “plucked the term creole from New World vernaculars and aimed to operationalize it as the designation of an analytically identifiable class of phenomena.” The term has thus often been used to describe other “languages developed by subaltern colonial populations” (Palmié 2007: 180; see also Baker and Mühlhäusler 2007), such as Cape Verdean Creole, Macau Creole (Macanese), or Papua New Guinean Tok Pisin. However, as Mintz (1996: 301) passionately argues, “language is not culture, only a part of culture; it is not organized ‘just like culture,’ but differently; and the linguistic model of creolization is a model for languages, not a homology with culture itself.”

Therefore, there seems to be a disjunction in the recent efforts of some scholars to employ “creolization” as a quasi-synonym of globalization (see Hannerz 1987). After all, designating something—such as the reza in this case—a “creole institution” or a “creole culture” evokes a geographically, historically, and politically specific vernacular New World context that cannot simply be divorced from the historically trajectory of the concept of creole itself (Mintz 1996; Palmié 2007).³⁶ If in fact “[c]reoles were people who moved beyond the cultural and conceptual confines of their migrant parents, and became, for better or for worse, hemispheric Americans of a new sort,” as Mintz (1996: 302) claims, then their “creole institutions” would bear the same characteristics. And since in Brazil the use of the term “crioulo” was widely used

³⁶ For Mintz (1996: 301), “Caribbean creolization began five centuries past, with migration and resettlement, forced transportation, the stripping of kinship and community, the growth of individuality on a new basis, and the appearance of the first true creoles—things of the Old World, born in the New.” Similarly, though with more politically charged terminology, Palmié (2007: 194) defends the use of “creole” in the Caribbean context: “Creolization theory will surely be with us for considerable time . . . But beyond all current fascination with things Caribbean and ‘creole’ we need to keep matters in perspective lest we fool ourselves into believing that slavery was a great chance to be creative, that extreme poverty and hyper-exploitation are conducive to enviable authenticity, or that the Caribbean region’s truly dreadful colonial history ‘somehow’ prefigures our existential condition as cosmopolitans economically empowered to pursue hitherto unprecedented forms and degrees of consumptive eclecticism.”

to refer to Brazil-born blacks, the adjective further racializes the reza, making it hemispherically not only *American*, but specifically *African-American*. Indeed, David H. Brown (2003: 44)—following Karl Reisman (1970)—insists that 19th-century Cuban *cabildo* kingships were “‘creole’ not only because they were ‘island born’ and locally elaborated over time, *but also because they were shared and relatively standardized, like a lingua franca, among the quite heterogeneous African nations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*” (emphasis added). In keeping with this conceptualization, the reza, which was developed locally as a lingua franca (i.e., a socially codified means of celebrating patron saints), could certainly be considered a “creole institution.” And although it is not “island born,” the Bahian context—largely defined by the Atlantic slave trade—is in some ways closer to the socio-economic history of the Caribbean than to many other parts of Brazil.

Beyond allowing me to dip into the dense history of theoretical musings associated with the term, my employment of the word “creole” serves another purpose. As Luis Nicolau Parés (2005: 88) points out, “an attempt to place the Afro-Brazilian problematic into the conceptual parameters of a broader international discussion [on creolization] . . . might in fact be a fruitful challenge.” Engaging this challenge, I am deliberately emplacing my Brazilian research in these Afro-Atlantic parameters by using a lexical that seems immediately to conjure that which is—in Brown’s phrasing—“island born.” While this dissertation is not the fruit of a transnational research project, it relies on literature from a variety of geo-historical contexts—Haiti, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and the U.S., etc. These diverse contexts are of course inherently localized, but are, at the same time, related not only by their shared histories as colonial societies constructed via the brutal institution of slavery, but are also connected as part of a larger system of transnational movement of people and ideas.

Furthermore, an Afro-Atlantic perspective seems to me a productive way of beginning to rethink synthesis as an approach to understanding the Americas. African Diaspora religions have always been a target for synthetic works, but while authors like Arthur Ramos (1937), Pollak-Eltz (1972), and George Simpson (1978) had commendable intellectual bravura, they were not working with the depth and detail available to 21st-century researchers. Nor did they give due consideration to the importance of cultural creation (over retention) or to the inter-American transit of people and ideas. My dissertation does not approximate a synthesis. But by placing my local research in a “creole” frame I hope to suggest a macro-perspective that obviates the potential for comparative scholarship.

7. Scholars Who Left the Party

While no one (as far as I know) was researching rezas concurrently with me, people had done some research on the topic before my metaphorical arrival at the party. And while there is no cogent “reza literature” of which to speak, there are brief sections in MA theses and PhD dissertations, along with short descriptions in articles that address the topic. Throughout the dissertation, I will offer literature reviews of the reza’s constituent parts as the topics arise, Colonial brotherhoods, the veneration of African-inspired gods (such as Orixás and Caboclos), samba-de-roda, Catholic logics of exchange, etc. Still, I believe it is more pertinent to address here the short list of authors who have dealt with the topic of rezas in Bahia.

Some of the first authors to address rezas did so in a way that might be understood as tangential, for they looked at *carurus* for the twin saints Cosmas and Damian. As will be detailed in depth (see in particular Ch. 1 and 7), *carurus* for these twin saints present a slight deviation from—or rather an addition to—the way rezas for other saints are conducted. And these *carurus*, with their ritual feedings, were interesting to early researchers because they offered—in Roger

Bastide's (1978: 194) words—"traces of African origin." I offer only some brief notes as they relate to the broader question of rezas. One of the earliest detailed assessments comes from folklorist and psychologist Arthur Ramos (1940 [1934]), who was a copious and thoughtful armchair scholar. Citing two different newspaper descriptions of the carurus for Sts. Cosmas and Damian (and one of these makes clear the importance of a Catholic Church visit), Ramos elaborates an analysis that interprets this cult of twins as a symbol of extreme narcissism,³⁷ while offering little else on the topic.

Although Afrânio Peixoto (1947) offered some interesting notes on the foods served at carurus (as well as the extreme popularity of the twin saints), the first detailed ethnographic account of a caruru comes from American anthropologist Ruth Landes (1994 [1947]). The author includes no mention of a Catholicism-inspired liturgy, but does offer a number of translations of the samba songs performed for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. Based on participation in the same event, Édison Carneiro, in 1948, published a similar account to that of Landes (Carneiro 1978 [1948]). In 1950, journalist Odorico Tavares published, in the monthly variety magazine *O Cruzeiro*, a description of carurus for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, which included a summary view of the Masses that preceded the ritual feasting (Tavares 1964: 143-152). These sources offer little more than ethnographic descriptions. But, as I have already mentioned, none truly addresses *a reza* in Bahia. As I will emphasize throughout the length of the dissertation, primary sources indicate that rezas existed—in a form similar to those of the 21st century—since at least the late-19th century. Despite this fact, however, the first scholarly descriptions of Bahian rezas do not appear until the late-20th century.

³⁷ While the word "cult" in English has, over time, aggregated significant pejorative connotations, my use of the term here and throughout the dissertation follows academic convention in literature on Catholic saints. See, for example, Peter Brown's (1981) foundational work on the "cult" of the saints during Late Antiquity.

The first discussion of a reza in Bahia comes in the form of a short section of an article interested in “samba de viola” music in Salvador and Santo Amaro. In a subheading entitled “The Occasion,” ethnomusicologist Ralph Waddey (1981) astutely observes that “[s]*ambas* are held on special occasions of either direct or indirect religious significance . . . The former . . . are days dedicated to one’s saint” (p. 264). The music of the *novena*, described as being “European in all respects” (p. 265), is summarized in a single paragraph, while the details regarding the samba are less abbreviated (nearly four pages), and include transcriptions, song texts, and details regarding the musicians’ behaviors. The value of Waddey’s contribution is in the attentiveness of the descriptions, which are three decades old. For my purposes, though, more important than Waddey’s ethnographic notes are his recordings. In an act of great generosity, Waddey shared with me all of the six rezas he recorded between 1978 and 1983 on reel-to-reel tapes. He has also taken the time to explain, using notes and his memory, the details of each recording.

Apropos of recordings, an important *samba-de-roda* recording—conducted in Cachoeira and São Félix—was released in 1994 by Funarte (Brazilian National Foundation for the Arts), which included a single field recording of sambas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian (Travassos et. al. 1994). In conjunction with the recording was a pair of articles written by members of the research group (Travassos 1997; Zamith 1995). Neither focused on rezas, though Zamith (1995) notes that the “semiprofessional” samba musicians who perform at various Catholic Church related events have increasing “mercantile expectations, in the context of the ‘folklore category’” (p. 61). In other words, though the author does not address rezas, she adds a somewhat anecdotal note regarding the growing notion of “cultural tourism” that is clearly a reality in the 21st century and has been an interesting aspect to how samba has changed in recent decades.

The first truly interpretive approach to the reza comes in the form of a dissertation chapter, written by anthropologist Louis Herns Marcelin (1996: Ch. 5). In a study on “the Afro-American Family” in Cachoeira, Marcelin includes a dense and deeply interpretive description of a reza for St. Benedict the Moor. However, the anthropologist never actually uses the term “reza” to designate the party he describes in such detail, an omission largely due to his interpretive frame. In what Droogers (2006: 78) has designated as a “reductionist functional approach,”³⁸ Marcelin sees the reza as an almost exclusively social event, ignoring the importance of the devotion to the divine. The reza is, in his words, “the celebration ‘of the’ family ‘by the’ family” (Marcelin 1996: 248-249), thus justifying his decision to refer repeatedly to the celebration as a “family party” (*feira de família*).

The anthropologist sees these family parties as “ruptures” in the routine of daily life, during which “agents dramatize . . . their conditions of existence and their cultural philosophy” (p. 249). Marcelin accepts that rezas reinforce socially structured notions of family hierarchy, but sees them chiefly as Turnerian anti-structural vehicles, or as similar to what John Blacking (1969, 1973) called “worlds of virtual time.” Thus, explains Marcelin, “[i]n the fraternization of the celebration, the agents would like it if the world were inaugurated in that instant and if a new day arrived, with the humanity that philosophers say exists in all people” in which “every human being, independent of socio-economic structures, would be equal” (Marcelin 1996: 287). But this utopian moment is only a “fleeting desire” (p. 288). Marcelin sees the reza as an expression of revolt against race-based social injustices that, not unlike ritualized relief valves, have no apparent consequence outside of that peculiar moment.

³⁸ Droogers (2006) sees the reductionist approach as the polar opposite of a “religionist” one. Thus rather than look at experience, the reductionist view treats *only* the social, psychological, or economic roles of religion.

Two years later, Charles D'Almeida Santana (1998) published an interesting study on rural Bahian life from 1950 to 1980. The study is expressly motivated by the belief that this history is a constituent part of metropolitan life yet has largely been neglected. Santana's study is hardly about rezas, covering them in only a short four-and-a-half-page analysis (pp. 61-65). But the brief coverage is interesting nonetheless. Santana introduced some valuable ethnographic details and prints some of the recollections of his research collaborators. Santana's interest in the saint festivities (particularly for St. Cosmas and St. Damian) is in understanding their relationship to the rural quotidian. It is thus a mixing of the mundane and the sacred, which demonstrates how "religiosity lived side-by-side with private life" (p. 63). But it is a different religiosity, the author contends. It is celebratory and festive, offering an interesting counterpoint to religion as sacrifice and self-flagellation. This is a form of Catholicism, Santana claims, which "was flipped on its head" (p. 61). Unfortunately for our purposes the author does not go into depth regarding any of these issues, for, as the author readily concedes, "Such observations indicate issues not explored in this study" (p. 64).

In more recent years, the most detailed work to deal with Bahian rezas is an MA thesis by historian Elivaldo Souza de Jesus (2006: Ch. 1), which seems to build directly on both the perspectives and interests of Santana's study. Attempting to explore the social history of rural workers in the municipality of Santo Antonio de Jesus, Jesus focuses his oral historical investigation on residents' memories of their devotional practices between 1940 and 1980, with one chapter dealing exclusively with the reza. Although primarily a descriptive effort, Jesus' thesis ventures into some interpretive territory. Firstly, the reza is portrayed as a "hybrid space," where *discrete* African, European, and Indigenous elements converge along ambiguously sacred and profane lines. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly for his implicit revision of Marcelin's

argument, Jesus understands rezas (and other devotional practices) as important in constructing social identity, creating a space for sociability, and constituting the religious lives of the practitioners. In other words, the value of rezas is not in reinforcing pre-existent structures or inverting them temporarily, but rather it is in allowing for a potentially transformative space.

This leaves me alone at the party. My dissertation not only aims to add ethnographic and historical depth to the topic of rezas that has yet to be explored in academic work, but it also seeks to establish a more complex interpretation of these events which are so much a part of individual beliefs and social life in the Recôncavo. These are not ruptures in the quotidian, as Marcelin would have it. Agreeing with Jesus, I see rezas as an integral part of social and devotional life. Furthermore, they help construct, reinforce, and modify individual interpretations of how the world works in the quotidian. But rezas are not “hybrids,” comprising elements that can be parsed out like slices of bread; they are—I repeat—localized Bahian creole institutions. But I explore all of these elements throughout the dissertation. For now, since I have already noted who was at the party before me, let us take a brief look at who was there with me.

8. Who Else Was at the Party?

As Anthony Seeger (2008: 280) has recently pointed out, “[e]thnomusicologists’ descriptions of fieldwork all too often fail to mention other actors and agencies working in the same community.” In fact, the Recôncavo, particularly after the construction of its Federal University (UFRB) in 2006, has become a magnet for researchers. And since the Recôncavo has found a “niche market” in publicizing its “traditional culture” (i.e., Afro-Brazilian culture), I often bumped into, or heard about the concurrent work of historians, anthropologists, journalists, sociologists, documentary filmmakers, etc. Thus people in the region seemed quite comfortable with the idea that I was doing “research.” But my topic was perplexing. People often assumed I

was a historian or a photographer and that I was researching Candomblé, *capoeira*, or samba. Indeed, I had a foot in each of these camps, but none was ever my sole focus. And unlike the palpable value many people placed on these other practices, people seemed to value little their rezas. Thus while individuals were often eager to discuss their capoeira experiences or their sambas, they were frequently uninterested or reluctant to talk about something so “banal” as a reza.

Once, while riding on a motorcycle taxi in São Braz, I had an enlightening conversation, which began with a curt question: “Research?” We had already begun our trip, so I kept my response equally short: “Yes.” The driver then proceeded to the next question on his seemingly pre-prepared list: “Candomblé or *capoeira*?” I had the option of answering honestly or just ending the rather difficult wind-filled motorcycle conversation. I chose honesty: “Rezas.” He remained pensive for a moment. “What?” I was certain he had heard me, but my response struck him as odd. “Rezas, for saints. St. Anthony, St. Cosmas.” He still seemed incredulous: “Oh really?” I nodded, unconcerned whether he saw or not. The wind eventually silenced our exhausting conversation, but this was not the first or last time a conversation ensued in this way. While my effort to find rezas often seemed like a search for the legendary Fountain of Youth, people often informed me about Candomblé ceremonies for no particular reason. And I was on more than one occasion introduced to strangers as a “photographer” who “liked culture.”

My point is that these things happened because I was at a “party” that others, some of whom were in fact photographers who liked culture, had attended prior to my arrival or were in attendance concurrently with me. They helped construct my party; inevitably their actions influenced how people received me. In some cases, this was probably to my advantage. After all, people were usually eager to invite me into their homes simply because I had a camera. Other

times, unpleasant past experiences may have created resistant toward me in ways that I only learned about much later, or may never even know. I even met some foreign scholars doing fieldwork in Cachoeira, though their projects seemed never quite to intersect with mine. There is certainly much more that can be said about the others who were at the party with me—for example, the land surveyors and doctors for whom I was often mistaken—but I will leave the issue for now.

9. Party Prep: The Dissertation's Organization

Beyond the introductory and concluding chapters, this dissertation is organized into seven chapters, which are subsequently aggregated into two sections: (1) Ethnography and (2) History. The former, encompassing the first five chapters, makes up the bulk of the dissertation, and while not devoid of historical inquiry, is primarily an the exposition of ethnographic observations and interpretations. The latter section explores the reza in a specifically diachronic frame, with an effort to historicize the reza within its Black Atlantic context. Chapter 1 is a presentation of some of the basic motivations and practices vis-à-vis the reza. In Chapter 2, I explore the artistic mantling of the altar, illustrating the domestic altar's meaning and value for participants. Chapter 3 is a presentation and deconstruction of the melodies, texts, and contexts of the novena's liturgy. I furthermore emphasize the importance of social participation as a guiding determinate for choices regarding repertoire and aesthetic judgments. I analyze the reza's samba in Chapter 4, focusing primarily on the importance of "happiness" as a constituent element of this sacred performance practice. To conclude this "Ethnography" section, in Chapter 5, I focus on religious identity in the Recôncavo. My chief interest here is to understand the discursive boundary between Candomblé and non-Candomblé practitioners of the reza. As such, I explore the conception of the Afro-Brazilian Caboclo deity in the reza context.

The second section, History, comprises two historical narratives, one micro and the other macro, which emplace the reza (as an institution) in its Black Atlantic context. I begin with a macro-history, in Chapter 6, that traces the historical development of domestic “Catholic samba” from the 17th century to the mid-20th. My aim is to demonstrate that the samba practiced at the reza embodies a black New World experience of empowerment. The dissertation’s final chapter, Chapter 7, is a micro-history of one family’s devotion to St. Roch which has spanned over a century. Using archival documentation and oral historical accounts, I reconstruct the way in which Black Atlantic “motifs,” such as ancestral spirit possession, West African-derived Orixás, modernization via the railroad, and the transnational tobacco market, weave in and out of the family’s relationship to its patron saint. My brief conclusion looks to reiterate some of the primary objectives of the dissertation, highlighting my aims as they pertain to Brazilian studies, ethnomusicology, and social theory more generally. Like a reza, this dissertation is arranged around a central theme in which each fairly autonomous constituent part is designed to make sense on its own, while also providing a complete picture when viewed as a whole.

PARTY INTERLUDE ONE
Dona Cleusa and Sts. Cosmas and Damian
(Accompanied by PI_1a.mp3, PI_1b.mp3, PI_1c.mp3)

Tuesday, September 27, 2011. Cachoeira, Bahia.

September 27 is the day consecrated by the Catholic Church to the twin saints Cosmas and Damian. September 27 is also the birthday of Dona Cleusa's husband, Seu Tico. And, as is not uncommon in the Recôncavo, instead of a birthday party to celebrate himself, Seu Tico holds a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. I arrived at Dona Cleusa's house in the late morning, around 10am. After a rushed greeting, I followed her to the back patio, where about ten women—family and friends who had been there since about 6:30am—were seated and dicing okra for the *caruru* which would serve as the main dish for the night's reza. With some prior caruru-preparing experience, I procured a chair, a knife, and a small plastic tub, and joined in the okra dicing. By about noon, the cutting up of the thousands of okra had finally ended. Along with caruru, a number of other dishes were prepared: *vatapá* (a manioc flour, shrimp, and palm oil paste), *xinxim-de-galinha* (palm oil stewed chicken), white rice, and *farofa-de-Xangô* (manioc meal flavored in palm oil and dried shrimp). Throughout the morning, more and more people had arrived to help prepare the food. During this process, it was primarily women who conducted the affairs, as the few available men did little more than stock beverages. I had the principal task of stirring and carrying the heavy aluminum pots of food.

The food was just about ready by 5:00pm, and the atmosphere at Dona Cleusa's home became increasingly chaotic. A number of the helpers rushed out so they could go home to shower and make themselves up. Others were racing around the house trying to decorate the home with balloons. Still others were putting the finishing touches on the food. Time was

running out. Mass was going to begin at 7:30pm and they had yet to feed ritually the kids or sing the novena. Throughout the Recôncavo and much of Brazil, Sts. Cosmas and Damian are popularly regarded to be twin boys. Therefore, at most rezas for the twin saints, the children are served first, and in a ritual fashion. Dona Cleusa's reza was no exception.

At about 6:00pm, seven children were ushered in, four boys and three girls. These sons and daughters of neighbors were between five and twelve years old. The kids stood positioned around a rectangular table which had one side flush up against the wall. In front of each child was placed a cup of soda, a fork, and a plate with the food we adults had been preparing all morning. But the kids were not allowed to eat just yet; they had to wait for the ritual's official beginning. Meanwhile the fifteen or so adults in the room stood behind the children, chatting.

Addressing the discontent one of the children who had not been included amongst the seven positioned around the table, Dona Cleusa explained, "They're going to eat and then afterwards, the others will eat too." She then looked to her cousin, "Shall we sing?" Seconds later, one of the guests, accompanying her singing with handclaps, began the sacred samba for St. Cosmas and St. Damian:

Venha cá, meu menino
Eu te dou de comer
Eu te dou de comer
*Eu te dou de beber*¹ (PI_1a.mp3, 00:09)

Within seconds, all of the adults present joined in with unison vocals and handclaps. The stanza was repeated four times. As soon as the singing began, the seven children began eating. Some ate with forks while others seemed to find it easier just to eat with their hands. While the adults were still singing the third repetition of the samba, Dona Cleusa began singing another, which everyone subsequently followed:

¹ "Come here, my child / I'll give you something to eat / I'll give you something to eat / I'll give you something to drink."

*São Cosme mandou fazer
Duas camisinha azul
No dia da festa dele
São Cosme quer caruru*

*Vadeia Cosme, Vadeia!
Tô vadiando na areia!
Vadeia Cosme, Vadeia!
Tô vadiando na areia!*² (PI_1a.mp3, 00:48)

After one repetition, and with no break, the group flowed into yet another samba led by Dona Cleusa:

*Dois-dois de ouro, vem cá
Quem tá dormindo, acordar
Quem tá dormindo é Doú
Ah levanta Doú pra comer caruru*³ (PI_1a.mp3, 01:08)

Next, a family friend decided to lead the group. He belted out a new samba, and though to my ears he was quite out of tune, no one seemed to mind:

*Abalé um
Abalé dois
Abalé a familia
De dois-dois*⁴ (PI_1a.mp3, 01:37)

This recurrent improvised trading of leadership roles continued for another twelve minutes of so, during which time the adults sang twenty-three of these short, repetitive sambas.

There was no set liturgical order and no official leader. Anyone who could think of a samba would sing the first few lyrics alone and was then accompanied by whoever recognized the lyrics and melody. The explicit goal, even if it meant repeating sambas that had already been

² “St. Cosmas sent a request for / Two little blue shirts / On the day of his party / St. Cosmas wants caruru / Play around, Cosmas, play around! / I’m playing around in the sand! / Play around, Cosmas, play around! / I’m playing around in the sand!”

³ “Golden two-two [Sts. Cosmas and Damian], come here / Whoever is sleeping, wake up / It’s Doú who’s sleeping / Wake up Doú to eat caruru.”

⁴ “Shake one / Shake two / Shake the family / Of two-two.”

sung, was to sing continuously until the children finished eating. After the children were done (and the adults actually had to help a few of the children finish their food), one of the adults interrupted the final samba with an exclamation which she repeated three times: “Long live St. Cosmas and St. Damian!” (*Viva São Cosme e São Damião!*) To which everyone responded: “May they live long!” (*Viva!*). All of this was accompanied by vibrant applause. “Long live the birthday boy!” “May he live long!” (PI_1a.mp3, 13:55). The same was repeated in honor of the children, the elderly, and all those who were present. The atmosphere was playful, and filled with laughter and cheer.

Immediately following the children’s ritual feeding, the adults began shuffling to and fro as they tidied up the house and finished getting ready, for now the reza “proper” was about to begin. At around 6:30pm, ten of Dona Cleusa’s female family members congregated in the home’s front room, where the altar stood. Someone called out, “What time is it?” “It’s 6:40. Should we begin?” With that, the ten women closed in facing the altar. Dona Cleusa stood closest to the altar, along with two of her cousins, who each had their handwritten prayer books in hand. Most everyone seemed to know the liturgy by heart yet it was the three in the front who led the novena. The novena began with a unison oration and the Sign of the Holy Cross: “Through the Sign of the Holy Cross, from our enemies, deliver us, our God. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen” (PI_1b, 00:02). The unison singing to follow reverberated through the home, making the small congregation sound quite formidable. The novena lasted just under forty-five minutes. And by the end of the liturgy, the number of participants had nearly tripled, and I could now count a few children and adult men among the group.

The novena ended with a few short group orations, which were immediately followed by applause and shouts for the life of the saint, the birthday celebrant, and the participants: “Viva!” (PI_1b.mp3, 33:35). This seamlessly led into just under ten minutes of sacred sambas. Except for the added dance, the sambas were performed in much the same way as they had been during the children’s feasting that had taken place only an hour or so before, and with the same laughter and cheer. Individuals would randomly sing whichever sambas they chose, and they would accompany themselves with clapping. The congregants, who had stood huddled around the altar, now spread apart to form a semi-circle into which one-by-one the family members and neighbors would enter and samba dance for several seconds before harkening someone else into the circle. Part of the samba dance included approaching the altar and making the Sign of the Holy Cross in a salutation to St. Cosmas and St. Damian. The singing began:

*Senhor São Cosme que tá no altar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*

*Me dê licença pra eu sambar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*⁵ (PI_1b.mp3, 37:49)

Though some of the sambas were different from those that had been sung during the earlier ritual juvenile feast, the repertoire was generally the same. However, because Dona Cleusa’s family also has a strong devotion to St. Roch, after six short sambas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the group sang, clapped, and danced four additional sambas for St. Roch. The sacred samba ended with group shouts: “Long live St. Cosmas! Long live St. Roch!” As the effervescence subsided, someone suggested they embark on the next part of the ritual: “Ready for Mass?”

As occurs every year on September 27, the local Catholic Church was holding Mass in the name of St. Cosmas and St. Damian. And as Dona Cleusa had planned, the children’s feast,

⁵ “Lord St. Cosmas / who’s at the altar / Give me permission / That I might samba / Give me permission / That I might samba / Give me permission / That I might samba.”

the novena, and the sacred samba dancing all ended just in time for the Mass that began at 7:30pm. The Church, which is located less than ten yards from Dona Cleusa's home, was quite full by the time we arrived. I stood outside the Church while the female family members participated in various moments of the Mass, leading songs and reading short texts. Toward the end of Mass, Dona Cleusa's son began releasing celebratory firecrackers into the air, which also announced to those not attending Mass that the *real* party was about to begin. Immediately following the hour-long Mass, I witnessed what appeared to be droves of people, including the two Catholic priests, heading to Dona Cleusa's house. Indeed, by 9pm there were over one hundred people packed into the home's back patio, where plastic tables and chairs had been arranged. A long line had formed in front of the table where food was being distributed. Beer, liqueur, and soda flowed freely for the guests. And the samba had not yet begun!

As the guests enjoyed their food and drinks, the members of the Filhos do Caquende, one of the most well known samba-de-roda groups in the city, finished setting up their microphones and amplifiers. The ten-person ensemble, wearing colorful matching shirts, comprised plucked string instrument players, percussionists, and vocalists. One of Dona Cleusa's son's was both a member of the group and its manager, so the group was more than happy to play at the reza for little or no pay. But they would of course be guaranteed free food and drink. About 45 minutes passed before the group finally began to play. After a few short warm-up instrumentals, the group kicked off its performance with three short sambas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, which began with the following:

*Meu São Cosme, meu
Você vai me ajudar
Meu São Cosme, meu
Você vai me ajudar*

*Ô viva senhor São Cosme
Paro ano eu festejar
Ô viva senhor São Cosme
Paro ano eu festejar*⁶ (PI_1c.mp3, 00:15)

Soon enough, however, the repertoire switched to what can be called “profane sambas,” which is to say sambas with texts unrelated to the saints. And it was these “profane sambas” that were performed the rest of the night. Indeed, the samba went well into the night, ending at 1am. Many of the reza guests stayed seated while others samba danced the whole night.

Sometime before midnight, while the samba was still playing, a handful of close friends and relatives were invited inside the house (where few people were) to sing “Happy Birthday.” Seu Tico’s birthday cake was decorated with a colorful image of St. Cosmas and St. Damian. The lights were turned off and everyone sang the Brazilian birthday song (“Parabéns pra você”), after which Seu Tico blew out the candles. The cake was then served to those present and everyone returned outside to where the samba was taking place. As soon as the Filhos do Caquende played their final samba, Dona Cleusa and a couple of close relatives went back to the altar for some good-bye sambas to St. Cosmas:

*Adeus, adeus
São Cosme
Até paro ano
São Cosme*⁷

I left the party shortly thereafter, accompanying Dona Cleusa’s second niece, at whose home I slept.

⁶ “My St. Cosmas, mine / You’re going to help me / My St. Cosmas, mine / You’re going to help me / Oh, long live St. Cosmas / Next year I’ll celebrate you / Oh, long live St. Cosmas / Next year I’ll celebrate you.”

⁷ “Good-bye, good-bye / St. Cosmas / Until next year / St. Cosmas.”

CHAPTER ONE
The Reza: Performing Devotion, Divine Exchange, and Memory

“You know, there is no closure. I think that the best that we can do is remember.”
–Dave Isay, Founder of StoryCorps¹

“Obrigada por lembrar da gente!”
Thanks for remembering us!
–Marlene Bispo dos Santos²

“Tá vivo, que a festa dele chama!”
He’s alive, for his party calls him!
–Dona Irá³

It was a sunny June morning in Muritiba and I was seated in a tiny bar. I was drinking coffee that had been sweetened with what seemed to be a kilogram of sugar and discussing—among other things—the importance of a man keeping his word. Engaged in a conversation with four men, my principal interlocutor was Seu Bole, a samba musician and devotee of St. Anthony. “Some people think that money is everything, but they’re wrong. What matters is our word. If we say we’re going to do something, we’ve got to do it. Like you—” He looked at me penetratingly, making it clear to all of us that I was this “you.” He then looked to the others: “He took a picture of me last year and he brought it to me. I didn’t even remember that he took the photo! That’s what I’m talking about, keeping your word!” I silently smiled. It was nearing noon and Seu Bole invited me to his home for lunch. While his wife, Adélia, prepared food for us, I got Seu Bole talking about rezas. As was typical, he had interesting and insightful things to say. But one of my questions stumped him. “Why,” I asked, “do people conduct rezas?”

Rezas are largely about the musical performance of words. But rezas are also about the keeping of words (i.e., the honoring of vows). These prayer rituals are performances of social cooperation, family responsibility, and divine obligation. In conducting a reza, an individual is fulfilling an obligation to his/her past, present, and future in ways that, paradoxically, seem entirely concrete and utterly esoteric at the same time. And this obligation is realized in words,

¹ Available at <<http://www.npr.org/2011/09/08/140262272/saving-the-stories-of-loved-ones-lost-on-sept-11>>. Accessed on August 21, 2012.

² Dona Marlene is a resident of Cachoeira, Bahia.

³ Dona Irá, a resident of São Félix, Bahia, holds a reza for Santo Antonio every year.

including keeping one's word through verbal—sung—expression. But rezas function to “lembrar,” a Portuguese-language verb that simultaneously evokes “recalling” and “reminding.”

This chapter treats the reza panoramically. My aim is to discuss the questions related to the event *in general*, as well as to lay down some of the contextual terrain that will be more thoroughly explored throughout the dissertation. Following Anthony Seeger (1980b), I structure my presentation in a journalistic fashion, organizing my “data” into aspects of *How, What, Who, When, Where, and Why*. As with any such analytical venture, none of these questions is entirely self-contained, nor is any fully answerable without missing some of the nuances involved in the question itself. My goal is thus not to be conclusive, but rather to be efficient and informative about subjects I will more thoroughly analyze in later chapters. I will present the basic information here and treat the rest of the dissertation as a forum for extrapolation. Let the party begin!

1. What?

One of my primary obstacles when I began my research was locating the events that I call, throughout the dissertation, “rezas.” It is not that these musico-religious events are not designated locally as “rezas,” but the term is so imprecise that without the appropriate context, its meaning can easily be misconstrued. In Bahia, the Portuguese word “reza” translates literally as “prayer,” and it can mean just that. It can be a spoken or sung prayer, but does not necessarily refer to the *event* during which people sing prayers to patron saints. In fact, the same musical event often receives other names, including (but not limited to) “novena,” “caruru,” and “samba.” Each of these terms, just like the term “reza,” is derived from a portion of the event (or a facet of the complete event). Thus when someone tells a neighbor, “Tomorrow I’m going to have a reza at my house,” s/he could easily substitute any of the other three aforementioned

words without risking semantic confusion (e.g., “Tomorrow I’m going to have a caruru at my house”). Though all “rezas” have samba, as I have mentioned, rezas tend only to be called “sambas” if an extended samba is expected to take place.

What this means is that if one were searching for “rezas” at which there were caruru (for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, for example), one could ask people if there would be any “carurus” occurring. These may or may not succeed in helping one encounter what I am calling here a “reza.” In other words, a “caruru” can easily refer to an okra stew party at which no music is performed.⁴ But “caruru” is not the only food acting as a nominal reference for events. I have heard rezas for St. Roch referred to as a “mugunzá,” which is the name of the white corn porridge associated with this French saint of pestilence. Still, the term “reza” can also designate the set liturgical song cycle of Catholicism-inspired prayers that is more commonly called a “novena.” Again, this is because the lexical “reza” means “prayer.” This equivocal taxonomy underscores the fact that all of these aspects are intimately linked: that the *same phenomenon* (i.e., the patron saint celebration) can be referred to as a “reza,” a “samba,” or a “caruru” only further emphasizes the important relationship samba and gastronomy have to Catholicism-inspired prayer in the domestic sphere.

“Reza” is the most widely applicable designation for the musical event with which this dissertation is concerned. But what is a reza? If one were to travel to the Recôncavo and ask a “native” what a *reza* (event) is, the likely response would be that a *reza* is a “devotion” (*devoção*) or, less commonly, a penitence (*penitência*). Overwhelming in its simplicity, this definition eliminates all of the concerns for “non-structure” that I outlined in the “Introduction.”

⁴ The term “caruru” is fairly widespread. In fact, even patron saint festivities at which caruru is not served might be referred to in passing as a “caruru.”

REZA AS DEVOTION

What exactly is a *devotion*? While this ambiguous “native” nomenclature necessarily implies a personal or family devotional *act* (and not just a sentiment, for example) that is carried out specifically in the name of a Catholic saint, it does not necessarily imply the act of singing.⁵ I once asked prayer leader Dona Maria, as I asked most everybody, why people sing for the saints instead of play soccer. Her answer surprised me: “You could play soccer, if that’s what your devotion is. It’s only important that you keep your word.” While I have yet to witness or even hear of a soccer match in a saint’s name, the point is that *devotions* can be as creatively elaborated as a devotee wishes. In this way, devotions are like blank canvases on which divinely inspired and socially structured masterpieces are elaborated.

To understand the variety among “devotions,” one must comprehend their additivity. Rezas are part of what can be “added on.” One of the simplest devotions to a saint is the lighting of a candle in his/her name. However, this does not preclude the hosting of a reza *in addition* to the candle. Dona Sinhá, who hosts a reza for St. Anthony every year, has assured me repeatedly that before passing on, she will lead at least one procession for her Portuguese patron saint in addition to her annual reza. I know of another reza practitioner who, as a master (*mestre*) of the sport/martial art known as *capoeira*, holds a *capoeira* gathering every year as part of his reza.

Reiterating, devotions to saints can be carried out in whatever way one chooses, as long as the basic devotional obligation is fulfilled. This is why what is ostensibly a “non-structure” is such a fundamental part of the reza’s underlying structure. Devotions *can* be anything, but they

⁵ Suzel Reily’s (2002: 139) affirms that “[i]n popular Catholic communities devotion is understood as a declaration of one’s subservience to the moral superiority of the saints, and it affirms one’s commitment to uphold their divine truths.” While this definition indicates some of the core facets of a “devotion” in the Recôncavo, particularly regarding the ideal of subservience, it is unclear to me what Reily means in her insistence on the importance of upholding a “divine truth.” And indeed, I would augment this understanding of devotion by emphasizing ritual action on the part of the devotee.

typically are not. There are basic patterns of logic that guide not only how people satisfy their devotions, but also how they make them in the first place. Although devotions, like other creative endeavors (painting, musical composition, or architecture), are theoretically boundless, they are rooted in the social structures of the “artist’s” particular place and time. This is why rezas are so often a means of realizing one’s devotion to a saint. People sometimes told me that nowadays (in the 21st century) paying for a Mass at the local Catholic Church is a more popular means of realizing one’s devotion to a patron saint than holding a reza. Given this information, I offer the following working definition: a reza is a socially structured event within which one creatively expresses his/her devotion to a saint.

REZA AS EMBODIED MEMORY

As I will discuss later, rezas are events during which people remember their personal, familial, and collective pasts in a way that is discursive and a conscious part of their intentions. However, rezas are also performative embodiments of a far more distant and discursively occulted past. One could certainly argue that a number of distinct pasts are involved in the reza—and at different points of this dissertation I will address different ones—but the one that is perhaps most interesting to me, because it is the most discursively marginalized, is that of the Black Atlantic. The reza is a vessel for Black Atlantic memories, the “fetishized past” that Apter and Derby (2010) assert to comprise “hidden substitutions, embodied historical memories, and unofficial pasts” (p. xxiv).

As I will address in Chapter 5, in Bahia’s competitive field of institutional religions, rezas are explicitly associated with Catholicism, leaving discursive memories of African magico-religious knowledge to Candomblé and Umbanda. And among the 21st-century Christianities, Catholic adepts are fighting an uphill battle for religious followers against the increasing number

of evangelical Christians. Rezas practitioners have certain discursive agendas (whether conscious or not) by which they emphasize aspects of the reza that are least ostensibly African. This translates into two actions, the discursive marginalizing of aspects that strike believers as not “pure” Catholicism as well as the gradual elimination of practices common just a generation or two ago, such as animal sacrifice and the use of palm oil (see Ch. 5). However, occulted Black Atlantic pasts (and the consequent legacy of slavery) remain vibrant in unexpected places, ranging from hagiological interpretations (Ch. 3) and samba performance (Ch. 6) to the selection of patron saints (Ch. 7).

2. How?

There is notable variation from one *reza* to another. But what unites all rezas, making possible the recognition of a social institution, comprises structural patterns vivified in practice. To acquaint the reader with these practices, and give me a ground on which to begin constructing my theoretical orientations, I offer a *composite* description of “the *reza*.” It is helpful to treat the reza as something analogous to a birthday party (in the U.S. or Brazil). After all, rezas, like birthday parties, are usually celebrated annually, occur on or near a specific (repeated) date, are designed to be celebratory and social, usually take place in private homes, are widespread in society such that people generally know what to expect, and yet can differ wildly in accordance with the person/group hosting the event.

The reza (party) may have an official start time, but it in fact begins far earlier than the *event* itself. After all, decisions must be made concerning dates and decorations, then family, friends, and neighbors must be informed, decorations must be purchased, and food must be prepared (or ordered from an outside source). But I will focus specifically on what I would call the “event proper,” the moment during which all of the decisions and preparations are brought to

fruition. As shown in the table (Table 1.1), rezas, which can last for anywhere from forty-five minutes to eight hours, unfold through a succession of discrete (chiefly) musical events.

REZA	
EVENT	OCCURRENCE
Animal sacrifice	<i>Dependent on host</i>
Novena	<i>Always</i>
Saint's samba	<i>Always</i>
Caboclo's samba	<i>Dependent on host</i>
Group feasting	<i>Always</i>
Our samba/Humans' samba	<i>Dependent on host</i>

Table 1.1. Sequence of events at a typical reza.

Rezas sometimes begin at dawn, with an animal sacrifice (see Appendix 1). However, this is increasingly less common and is not generally (emically) thought of as *part* of the reza, but rather an obligatory action similar to purchasing food or decorations. Sometime after dusk, around 8pm, the guests start to arrive at the private home. When the host feels there are a sufficient number of the appropriate guests, s/he invites the prayer leader (*rezadeira*) to begin. The guests congregate around the altar, which is usually set up against a wall in the front room (*sala de estar*) of the house, and begin to sing the *novena*. The *novena*, which will be described in detail in Chapter 3, is a series of a dozen or so self-contained texts that are intoned with local melodies. Some of these texts, such as “The Lord’s Prayer” (*Pai Nosso*), “Hail Mary,” (*Ave Maria*), “Hail Holy Queen” (*Salve Rainha*), and the “Incense” (*Incenso*), are identical to those recited or sung in weekly Catholic Church Mass or festive Masses. Other texts are in Latin, such as “Deus in adjutorium” or “Litaniae lauretanae,” and appear to derive from past eras of Catholic Church liturgy. And finally, the *novena* contains hagiological hymns (known as *benditos*) recounting the lives of the saints. These tend not to appear in Catholic Church liturgy; both the melodies and texts appear to derive from non-Church sources. The *novena* is followed by

celebratory “Vivas,” or group exclamations wishing a long life to the saint being honored at the party. Firecrackers can accompany the entirety of the novena (including before and after), but are especially abundant during the “Vivas.”

Immediately following the novena is the performance of samba. There are three different types of samba (they occur in this order): the saint’s samba, the *Caboclos’* samba, and the humans’ samba. I provide only a summary here. The saint’s samba always comes first and is the most intrinsically linked to domestic saint veneration. This is samba in which the text pertains explicitly to the saint and celebrates his/her life, presence, and/or characteristics. The saint’s samba, which the guests sing, dance to, and clap, can last anywhere from a few minutes to about half an hour. If by chance the host of the reza also has a devotion to a Caboclo, something that is increasingly rare in the 21st century, the *samba-de-Caboclo*, or Caboclos’ samba, comes next. The host incorporates his/her deity at this time. Following the divine sambas (the saints’ and Caboclos’ sambas) is the samba often termed “our” or “human” samba (*samba da gente*). This is samba that is performed on a variety of plucked-string and percussion instruments, and can last until daybreak. This type of samba is almost always performed by a *samba-de-roda* performance ensemble. “Our” samba is much more specialized than either of the other two types of samba. Therefore, although all guests are expected to participate in “our” samba through handclaps, dancing, and responsorial singing, only participants who have demonstrated prior musical competence play the musical instruments and *lead* the singing.

The gustatory aspect of the *reza* is central to its realization. In the name of the patron saint, the host serves his/her guests with drinks and food that is symbolically associated with the saint. The food shows the host’s (and the saint’s) gratitude for the presence of the guests. Moreover, food sometimes draws guests to the event while also ensuring that they remain at the

event longer, thus extending the celebration of the patron saint. The choice of which foods to serve is not whimsical. The three most popular saints have food associated with them: St. Roch, white foods such as white corn, coconut, and popcorn (also called the old man's flower, or *flor do velho*); St. Cosmas and St. Damian, okra stew (*caruru*) and candy; St. Anthony, bread and beans; etc. Drinks are less culturally coded; at any given *reza*, one is likely to find beer and fruit liqueur (*licor*), in addition to soft drinks and hard alcohol (esp. distilled sugarcane [*cachaça*], whiskey, and brandy). The moment of collective feasting occurs after the saint's samba or, if there are Caboclos, after the *samba-de-Caboclo*. Using plasticware, family members and close friends serve—on platters—the foodstuffs and drinks to the guests.⁶

Foodstuffs need not be extravagant; they need only to be served. I have been to rezas at which I ate exceptionally large plates of *caruru*, while I have attended others where I received only a small handful of popcorn. Generally speaking, for larger celebrations more money will be spent on food. But the amount of money, time, and energy a host spends on food is regarded positively. In other words, both social and supernatural logic encourage abundant amounts of food. In social terms, food that is plentiful and tasty shows one's desire to please others (i.e., charity) and demonstrates one's financial means of doing so. Good food ensures that guests will return the following year and helps increase the host's social capital. From the supernatural point of view, the saint is believed to appreciate the investment because it is being done in his/her

⁶ There are likely a number of reasons that hosts choose to serve their guests rather than allow them simply to serve themselves. One is of course a concern for space. Eating in the back patio, in the front yard, or in the living room allows people the room to sit and engage in conversation with friends and family. Another reason is to control the quantities of food being served. If everyone served themselves, they might take too much of one thing, thus leaving an insufficient amount for subsequent guests. A third reason is the socially appropriate behavior of serving others when they are at your home. Just as one would not ask a guest to wash his/her dish or serve him-/herself at lunch, the same rules apply during a *reza*. A final reason concerns the privacy of the kitchen. Kitchens are in fact quite private places, reserved for family and close friends. According to Louis Marcelin (1996: 86), "The agents agree with the fact that the kitchen is the location of sociability *par excellence* of the home. Despite its modest dimension, in the majority of cases, it is at the same time a common space—to all those of the home—and 'preserved' (to outsiders) . . . it is not good if others, neighbors, even *certain* members of the same 'home configuration', know what is being eaten . . . nor how it is being eaten."

name. And the more people one brings to the reza the better. Indeed, many devotees proudly spend large amounts in the saint's name because they believe they will receive the saint's good graces. As one devotee of St. Cosmas and St. Damian told me, "the more you give, the more you receive."

THE ST. COSMAS AND ST. DAMIAN EXCEPTION

As mentioned in the discussion about foods, a reza for one saint is distinct from that of another. This is true as much for food and decorations (see Ch. 2) as it is for the performance of specific prayers and sambas (see Ch. 3 and Ch. 4). But the most distinct reza is that which is held for the twin saints Cosmas and Damian. The reason a reza for one saint is different from that of another is because each saint has his or her own peculiarities, predilections, and pasts. As such, because St. Cosmas and St. Damian are viewed as child saints, human children also command a privileged role during rezas for the twin saints. During a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, children are served prior to singing the novena (see Table 1.2). I offer a specific case of this ritual feeding in Party Interlude 1 (pp. 55-61), but here I provide a normative description. Sometime near (but before) dusk, seven baptized children between the ages of 3 and 12 are brought into the host's home and seated on the floor around a large shallow plastic basin. Inside the basin is placed the okra stew (*caruru*) which is symbolically linked to Sts. Cosmas and Damian in addition to a number of other traditional foods.⁷ The children are expected to eat the food with their hands while the adults, who are standing in a circle around the children, sing and clap sambas for St. Cosmas and St. Damian (see Fig 1.1). Although I have attended one reza at

⁷ While many different foods—yam, banana, candy, etc.—can accompany *caruru*, the most typical are a flour paste of shrimp and palm oil (*vatapá*), palm oil-stewed chicken (*xinxim de galinha*), black-eyed peas (*feijão fradinho*), and white rice.

which this ritual feeding did not occur,⁸ the feasting of the children is largely what defines a devotion to Sts. Cosmas and Damian.⁹

REZA for St. Cosmas and St. Damian	
EVENT	OCCURRENCE
Animal sacrifice	<i>Dependent on host</i>
St. Cosmas' and St. Damian's samba while children feast	<i>Always</i>
Novena	<i>Always</i>
Saint's samba	<i>Always</i>
Caboclo's samba	<i>Dependent on host</i>
Group feasting	<i>Always</i>
Our samba/Humans' samba	<i>Dependent on host</i>

Table 1.2. Sequence of events at a typical reza for St. Cosmas and St. Damian.



Fig. 1.1. A ritual feeding of the children during a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. The reza was held at Dona Martinha's home in Muritiba, Bahia, on October 9, 2011. Notice the seven children on the floor while the adults stand singing and clapping. Rather than use bare hands and a basin, the children eat with plastic utensils off of plates.

⁸ Instead of feeding the children on the ground, the reza host called all of the youth (children and adolescents) to the kitchen to eat first using plates and utensils. There was no singing.

⁹ In many homes, particularly in Salvador, people do none of the musical activities following the ritual feeding (novena and samba). Thus the children are fed, sometimes with song and sometimes without, and then the adults are served. In these cases, the event is called a "caruru" and not a "reza."

3. Who?

Anyone may hold a reza. While women are more typically the “owners” (*dono*) of devotions to saints, I have met quite a few men who also host a yearly reza. Even for these, however, women are nearly always the ones who take care of decorations and prepare the food. And the larger the party, the more likely men are to be actively involved. Some people are devotees of particular saints because they were born on the saint’s day. Others are devotees because their children were born on the saint’s day. Some people have made a promise to the saint in exchange for a favor while others simply enjoy celebrating a given saint for they feel s/he has provided continual blessings. In many cases, however, devotions are little more than family obligations, passed down by generation. In this way, devotions are treated as material possessions. A person is the “owner” of a *devotion*, while generally the “owner” of the *reza* (i.e., the event) is the Catholic saint. It would be quite accurate to think of devotions as family heirlooms. When discussing their devotions to saints, people often described how a devotion belonged to a mother or father and was, like an inheritance, “left” for them. The treating of a devotion as a material inheritance reflects an intrinsic connection that devotional practices have to the saint’s “image” (i.e., statuette or lithograph). These images, along with the accompanying devotions, are often passed from one generation to the next (see Ch. 2).

Although essentially anyone can take up a reza, there are some interesting restrictions. Children do not assume rezas. This is due to a core understanding about rezas in general: rezas are a “responsibility.” Indeed, this was one of the key points people emphasized to me as I conducted my fieldwork: rezas are a lot of responsibility. This is because the realization of the reza has ramifications that extend far beyond the individual him-/herself. *Not* doing one’s “obligation” can result in dire consequences for oneself and, more importantly, for one’s family members (particularly the children). As a general rule, one is only ready to take on the

responsibility of a devotion *after* marriage.¹⁰ This is because marriage marks the moment by which a child becomes an adult. And with adulthood comes responsibility. In an insightful analysis of marriage in the northeastern Brazilian village of Santa Lucia, Maya Mayblin (2010) notes that matrimony constitutes a distinct rupture with pre-marriage life:

When a couple marries they undergo a literal overnight change in status. A young woman goes from being referred to as a *moça* (girl) to a *mulher* (woman) and switches from living in her parents' house under their authority to living in her own where she is the *dona da casa* (female head of house/housewife). A similar change in status is experienced by the husband who turns from a *rapaz* (boy) into a *homem* (man) and becomes the *dono da casa* (head of house). . . . The responsibilities of married life descend immediately upon a couple the day after their wedding, and once they have descended, they are with the person for life. (Mayblin 2010: 55)

Devotions, too, are with the person for life, unless of course time stipulations are placed on the obligation.¹¹ It is for this reason that marriage is largely synonymous with one's capacity to assume an annual obligation to a saint.

ATTENDEES (ADULTS)

The congregation of a reza most typically comprises humans (men, women, and children), but gods can also participate. I begin with the former. Women are the most active participants in rezas. The number of women present at a given reza is nearly always significantly higher than that of men; women are also more likely to lead the novena and participate in the samba singing and dancing. This is in addition to the role women play in preparing the food and decorating the home and altar. For the most part, men are responsible for providing the samba when musical instruments are involved, as well as providing—because they are often the sole breadwinners of the family—the financial means of executing the reza.

¹⁰ I use the term marriage as a translation of the Portuguese *casamento*, which, in colloquial use signifies both legal and common law marriage. Indeed, it seems increasingly common (in Bahia at least) that people equate legal marriage with cohabitation.

¹¹ If reticent to accept a lifelong commitment, a person may stipulate that the reza, procession, or other act of devotion is only a one-time thing or that it will only be repeated for a five-year period.

Anyone is welcome to participate, ranging from immediate family to strangers and ethnographers. Generally, though, attendees are expected to be family, friends, and neighbors. Indeed, while an unknown guest would certainly be treated with hospitality (i.e., be invited inside, receive food and drink, and be allowed to participate in all activities), his/her presence would be no doubt discussed amongst the hosts with curiosity and probably some distrust. There is a clear distinction between family/friends and guests. Family and friends are welcome into the most private areas of the home, away from the main room of the event (see Marcelin 1996), and might also be invited to stay the night (if needed) after the affair has ended. This more intimate category of attendee might also help serve the other guests, might have had a hand in preparing the food prior to the event proper, would generally stay for the entirety (or close to the entirety) of the event, and would in many cases be permitted to serve him-/herself. The guest, on the other hand, is generally an individual who lives in the neighborhood or in another part of the city. These guests typically arrive after the event proper has already begun and are likely to leave early, after eating and socializing a bit. These less cherished attendees would avoid entering the intimate areas of the home, restricting their movement to only those areas in which the event is occurring.

Among the most important attendees are those who lead the music of the night: the prayer leaders (*rezadores* and *rezadeiras*) and samba musicians. Although people informed me that the lack of male prayer leaders had not always been the case, certainly prayer leaders presently are nearly exclusively female. Indeed, men led only two of the three-dozen or so rezas I have attended. *Rezadeiras* are women who have previously demonstrated the ability to lead a novena, a role which includes knowing the liturgy and being capable of singing clearly and loudly (see Ch. 3). Sometimes family members lead their own novenas, but usually *rezadeiras*

are members of the community whose services are requested. Rarely does a *rezadeira* receive payment for her services. Some *rezadeiras* even insist that it would be sinful to accept payment for a responsibility God has bestowed upon them. Still, I have met other *rezadeiras* who are quite happy to receive some form of gratuity (*agrado*).¹² Often in lieu of a monetary recompense, the host of the reza provides the *rezadeira* with transportation to and from the reza.

The attendees who play samba can organize themselves in ad-hoc or prearranged groups. Some musicians—whether professional or amateur—attend rezas on their own accord, offering to play an instrument (usually percussion) if needed, on an ad-hoc basis, either for the Caboclos’ samba or to provide general accompaniment.¹³ Other musicians are invited as part of a group. Thus the host of the reza may contract—for money or barter—a local *samba-de-roda* performance group to play (usually only during the “our samba” portion) for the guests. Often members of the invited group will join in the ad-hoc samba for the Caboclos in order to facilitate the possession dancing. After all, the musicians who perform professionally in *samba-de-roda* groups tend to be among the best musicians, and not infrequently good musicians are a requisite for the up-tempo possession dancing of the Caboclos.

Attendees who form ad-hoc groups may or may not know the people with whom they are playing. But this does little to impede the production of a cogent sound. Simply being a person “who plays” samba assures that one is familiar with a basic repertoire of rhythms and melodies, allowing the performer to recall common songs (*cantigas*) and quickly learn new ones. Even without a formalized *samba-de-roda* group, individuals might plan to play together beforehand,

¹² For the cases of which I am aware, the *rezadeira* received a small monetary tip of R\$10 to R\$20. At an exchange rate of about 2 to 1 in 2012, this tip is equivalent to something like US\$5 to US\$10.

¹³ I specify percussion as the elective instrument category because chordal instruments often require much more preparation. After all, to hear a *viola*, *cavaquinho*, or *guitar* over the sound of the percussion, amplification is typically required. As such, in the 21st century, plucked string players only infrequently perform without amplification of some sort (which of course requires much more planning to transport gear, etc.).

ensuring that the appropriate instruments, instrumentalists, and equipment (microphones, amplifiers, etc.) will be available at the reza. Virtually any instrument can be used. I have seen people perform with expensive store-bought instruments just as I have seen others employ plastic buckets and plates. Ad-hoc groups chiefly include percussion instruments—*pandeiros*, triangles, “marking” drums,¹⁴ and *atabaques* (or *timbaus*)—which may be owned by the reza host or brought to the reza by the attendee. Though certainly not the rule, the use of plucked string instruments—*violas*, *cavaquinhos*, and guitars—tends to demarcate more professional groups.¹⁵ The performance of “our samba” is primarily a male activity, just as is accompanying the Caboclos’ samba. Indeed, the only musical instruments I have seen women play are wooden clappers (*tábuas*) and a small shingle-less tambourine (*tamborim*). Female participation is typically restricted to singing (leading or responding), clapping, and dancing. I will further address gender later.

ATTENDEES (CHILDREN)

For the most part, children go unnoticed at rezas; their presence is generally *less* important than that of adults. After all, children do little singing, are usually incapable of playing musical instruments, do not contribute monetarily, and do not serve or prepare food. However, at rezas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the value of children is revised; they are fundamental to the execution of the devotion. The reason is quite simple: they are innocent. When asked why children—and not adults—were invited to eat from the basin on Sts. Cosmas and Damian’s day, devotees were generally in agreement, “Children are sinless.” This lack of sin, or innocence, is

¹⁴ A “tambor de marcação” is generally a loosely strung membranophone struck with the hand. The low-pitched tone this class of drum produces is said to “mark” the beat, which is typically on beats one and two, with 16th-note variations.

¹⁵ As Wadley’s (1981) report makes clear, professional groups have not always exercised such a prominent role. Indeed, there appears to have been quite a change vis-à-vis the role of performance groups in the past few decades.

an essential part of why children are seen as incapable of assuming a devotion while at the same time necessary at a reza for the twin saints. This “problem of innocence,” as Mayblin (2010) calls it, is apparent in Dona Adélia’s explanation regarding the appropriate age for a child who participates in a ritual feasting:

The right age is up to 7 years old. Because the kids older than 7 are already...today the kids are all grown up [*sabido*]. They’re all sinners! So that’s why we say up to 7 years old. Because they aren’t those kids who are already rebellious, already talking back, who already know everything about life. So we try to get kids who are more...more foolish [*besta*]¹⁶

Dona Adélia’s comments were with laughter, both her own and that of her daughter, but she was simply expressing an already well-recognized paradox regarding innocence and knowledge. Children who know too much, those who are too “grown up,” are considered sinful. And the children who know very little, who are *still* foolish, are innocent and free of sin. Mayblin explains:

The type of knowledge that is perceived as most morally dangerous is knowledge about *gente* (people). People claim that it is when children begin to “know about people” (*saber de gente*) that little sins (*pecadinhos*) start to occur. Very much linked to morally dangerous knowledge about *gente* is carnal knowledge associated with *desejo* (desire). (Mayblin 2010: 151)

Thus children, not yet taking part in the sinful world that accompanies responsibility and adulthood, remain innocent enough to approximate the divine. In this way, children are earthly representations of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, child saints who are, Dona Adélia explained to me, “knowledgeable but are not sinners.” While children are not *the same* as St. Cosmas and Damian, they act as mortal representatives.

Although Dona Adélia established 7 years as the appropriate age of a “child,” others have told me that any age up to 12 would be fine. This is the age that most clearly marks the move from childhood to adolescence, the realm of youth, which is the stage preceding marriage (see

¹⁶ Interview with Dona Adélia conducted at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

Mayblin 2010). And while people differ regarding their judgments of what the age limit is for “innocence,” most people agree that the children must be baptized.¹⁷ This stipulation not only assures that the child is in the grace of the Christian God, but also further affirms the practitioners’ Catholic identity (as distinct from evangelical Christian) concerning a tradition that can often be mistaken by outsiders as a sort of Candomblé ceremony.¹⁸

The broader point of interest here, regarding the role of children and marriage in rezas, is that the way in which these “rules” for human-divine interaction play out is clearly integrated into more general societal notions of appropriate social behavior and the importance of family units. As such, rezas reflect social norms while also helping recreate them. But there is more. To include “children” in a ritual, one must decide exactly what a “child” is. And this decision can certainly permeate realms of social activity outside of the reza. In executing a ritual feeding for St. Cosmas and St. Damian, then, participants are not only replicating society’s norms. They are also creating a space that harbors the potential to revise pre-established social standards by confronting questions regarding the “appropriate” participants (i.e., deciding what a “child” is).

ATTENDEES (GODS)

The last category of attendee I will examine here is gods. The two distinct emic categories of god to attend rezas are saints and Caboclos. Yet saints “attend” rezas in a way quite distinct from Caboclos. I begin with the former. A saint attends a reza in the way that Christ is present at Catholic Mass, which is to say metaphysically. As explained in the 1963 “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” of the Second Vatican Council:

¹⁷ Mayblin observes the value of a baptism, for “[h]enceforth, the child is enabled to grow into a moral human being capable of returning the *respeito* it has been shown. In confluence with ideas about baptism providing the child with a point of entry to the Christian faith, people regard baptism as setting the child’s soul on the correct path—toward God as opposed to away from Him” (Mayblin 2010: 155).

¹⁸ Celebrations for Sts. Cosmas and Damian are widespread in both private homes and Candomblé terreiros. And given that the ritual sometimes includes offerings closely resembling African-derived forms of worship, it may be especially important to affirm a Catholic identity for those who do not participate in Candomblé.

Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister . . . but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, . . . He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings.¹⁹

The Eucharist is viewed as one of the most important moments of a Catholic Mass precisely because it is part of experiencing the presence of Christ.²⁰

Saints are regarded as present by way of their “images” (*imagens*), iconographic representations (statuettes, chromolithographers, paintings, etc.), which are placed on the home altar (see Ch. 2). Although people acknowledge that these are only *representations* of the saints, the images are treated as if they were in fact the saints themselves. Consequently, human attendees often approach the altars to “greet the saint” or “talk to the saint,” during which time they might also recite a brief prayer. At one of the first rezas I attended, unaware of the correct protocol, I was approached by one of the hosts: “Have you already greeted St. Roch?” When I responded negatively, she encouraged me, “He’s right over there.” Aside from interlocutors, saints are also included into most of the reza’s liturgy. All of the guests face the saint (on the altar) when singing the novena, which is therefore sung, quite literally, *to* the saint. It is furthermore by way of the novena (and particularly the hagiological hymn) that the saint is symbolically *brought to life* (see Ch. 3).

¹⁹ From the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* Sacrosanctum Concilium. Accessed on September 3, 2012, at <http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html>.

²⁰ As described in line 1374 of the “Catechism of the Catholic church” (accessed on September 4, 2012, at <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/___P3Z.HTM>), “The mode of Christ’s presence under the Eucharist species is unique. . . . In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist ‘the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained’ [cites the Council of Trent, DS 1651]. ‘This presence is called “real” – by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be “real” too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present’ [cites Paul VI, MF39].”

The saint is also (meta)physically incorporated into the “saint’s samba.” As briefly mentioned, samba in Bahia is largely characterized by the *closed* ring of participants in the middle of which people samba dance. In the case of the saint’s samba, rather than formed entirely of human participants, the altar is also included. In this way, the saint is included—by way of the altar—as if s/he were part of the ring itself. The saint also becomes a focal point for the samba dancer. Since the ring includes the altar, the person in the middle of the ring often samba dances up to the saint and makes the Sign of the Holy Cross or motions with a curtsy or bow. In this way, the saint is a silent and motionless participant throughout the reza. Indeed, the only time the saint sings, dances, or converses aloud is when s/he arrives in the form of a Caboclo.

I will explain Caboclos in greater detail in Ch. 5, but a brief introduction to the topic is necessary here. Although attendance of Caboclos at rezas is increasingly rare in the 21st century, when they do show up, their participation is impossible to ignore. Unlike saints, Caboclos physically command the party—through their human mediums—by dictating which sambas will be performed, dancing in the middle of the samba ring, and leading group orations. In the literature on Afro-Brazilian religions, Caboclos are usually defined as Afro-Indigenous deities who ritually incorporate their adepts.²¹ The term Caboclo, however, can designate a more generalized category of “spirit” (see Boyer 1996). Indeed, at rezas, the term “Caboclo” can refer to “indigenous” gods, such as Indians, cowboys, and sailors, but can also include West African-derived Orixás or Catholic saints. In this non-Candomblé context, Caboclos are said to be, like devotions, inheritances from ancestors. Caboclos are often characterized as “guardian angels”

²¹ The symbolic relationship Caboclos have with Indians has, until more recently, been the primary point of emphasis. Ruth Landes, for example, explained that “‘Caboclo’ refers to the Indians of Brazil, and these cults worship Indian spirits which they have added to the roster of African deities” (Landes 1994 [1947]: 37). See an extended discussion in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

(*anjos de guarda*), for they “accompany” their mediums and offer unwavering protection. But these spiritual beings too enjoy a good party.

Caboclos generally only attend rezas at which their presence is expected. And when they are invited it is because the reza host (or a member of the host’s family) has one or more Caboclos and has a vested interest in allowing his/her gods to party. If in fact a guest begins to go *unexpectedly* into possession at a reza, the other participants take the necessary actions to inhibit the Caboclo from taking hold of the medium’s body. Caboclos tend to arrive in groups, thus as soon as one person goes into trance any attendees who also have Caboclos tend to follow suit. And quite differently from Caboclos in Candomblé contexts, at rezas, a single medium often receives a number of different Caboclos over the course of the night.

Caboclos generally begin arriving during the saint’s samba (indeed, the first Caboclo to arrive is usually the saint of honor).²² The gods announce their presence with songs of arrival, thus initiating the Caboclos’ samba. Anthropologist Brian Brazeal explains:

These songs may detail the deity’s journey across the mystical landscape from their *aldeia* (Indian village) to the space of the festival or call down the blessings of God and the Orixás on the participants in the ceremony. These songs create and maintain an indexical relationship between certain gods and certain songs. This relationship is ratified by spectators who recognize a Caboclo’s typical songs and identify him according to them.²³ (Brazeal 2003: 648)

Using their human mediums, the Caboclos sing their songs (*cantigas*) and samba dance until they are ready to leave, at which time they sing what Brazeal calls “a song of leave-taking” (p. 664). Although everyone is encouraged to sing along and clap with the *cantigas* chosen by the Caboclos, only a few select guests—or none at all—may dance in the ring with the gods. Much to the chagrin of many of the reza guests, Caboclos can often stay for hours. Therefore, much

²² When the Caboclos arrive at a reza, unlike in a Candomblé setting, a change in clothing is optional. Some mediums use special symbolically representative clothing, others use simple alternatives, such as a white cloth and headband, and still other mediums make no sartorial adjustments whatsoever.

²³ Regarding the repertoire of the Caboclos, see Garcia (2008).

like the American stereotypical “drunk uncle” at a family gathering, Caboclos are frequently regarded by the other (human) guests as obnoxious for their lack of self-awareness; Caboclos seem not to know when they have overstayed their welcome. When the Caboclos finally leave, not only do they relinquish the bodies of their mediums, but they also surrender control over the party, and the human guests celebrate wildly and delight in a samba party that can extend into the early hours of the following morning.

4. When?

Rezas are typically annual affairs. However, this is a somewhat misleading affirmation, for during my fieldwork many people would insist they held rezas “every year” while never in fact realizing them any time over the four-year period during which I researched. Having an annual reza does not necessarily mean it actually takes place *every year*. Rather an annual reza is *intended* to occur every year. Put otherwise, people *intend* to hold their rezas on a yearly basis but are occasionally dissuaded by poor health, financial troubles, or even home renovations. This constation seems to challenge popular discourse, which insists that “[t]o refuse to fulfill one’s obligation to the saints can have perilous consequences, for the saints are thought to be vindictive” (Reily 2002: 181). I have indeed heard quite a few tales of divine reprimand, ranging from bad luck and financial hardship to health scares and even death. But it should be noted that it is an obligation about *devotion*, not about *rezas*. Intention—which presumes remembering the obligation—is in itself quite valuable to the saint. Therefore if one *decidedly refuses* to fulfill a vow without a “legitimate” justification (usually money or health), one is expected to suffer the due consequences.²⁴ However, if one had every *intention* to hold the reza but simply could not, the characteristically spiteful saint is actually quite understanding.

²⁴ One of the most common reasons people refuse to fulfill their devotions is conversion to evangelical Christianity.

Rezas tend to fall on or near the day the Catholic Church has officially consecrated for the given saint. In Brazil, the three most common saints for domestic celebration are St. Anthony (June 13), St. Roch (August 16), and Sts. Cosmas and Damian (September 27).²⁵ While practitioners overwhelmingly agree that rezas, which celebrate life, should never occur during November, the month of the dead,²⁶ people hold a variety of idiosyncratic beliefs concerning the appropriate time of year an individual should or should celebrate a saint.²⁷ Still, there are periods of time during which a particular saint's rezas are most common: the first half of June "belongs" to St. Anthony (the second half is usually associated with the non-sacred celebrations of St. John the Baptist), St. Roch is celebrated throughout the month of August, and the twin Sts. Cosmas and Damian are commemorated during September and October.²⁸ If none of these months is convenient, an individual might plan on having his/her reza in December, before "closing the year," thus guaranteeing that the devotion was completed within the calendar year. A reza's date might also be chosen in accordance with an individual's birthday,²⁹ independent of whether the date falls near the Catholic Church-consecrated day to that saint.³⁰ I have known of or attended rezas for St. Roch in August and September, for St. Anthony in June and July, for St. Barbara

²⁵ There is often discrepancy regarding the day for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. It seems that after 1970, the official date was moved to the 26th of September, rather than the 27th. Thus the twins saints' day can be different depending on what source is consulted. Jesus (2006: 30), for example, cites the 26th as the day for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, while people in the Recôncavo generally celebrate the twin saints on the 27th of September.

²⁶ The exception to the rule is November 1st, which is All Saints' Day.

²⁷ Some people feel rezas should occur on the saint's official day. Others insist that the reza can be held during the month of the saint's official day, either anytime during the month or only after the official day has passed. That said, the majority of people generally agree that anytime of year—save November—are fine times of year for any saint's reza.

²⁸ So strong is the association between months and saints that older Bahians often refer to months according to the saint. For instance, in the month of August, an individual might ask a neighbor, "What month is it?" and the neighbor might respond, without any semantic confusion, "the month of St. Roch." (*o mês de São Roque*).

²⁹ It seems that celebrating a patron saint on one's birthday has been a common practice at least since the 19th century. Regarding Bahian family life during the 1800s, historian Dain Borges (1992: 54) notes that "[e]ach plantation had a festival on the day of its own patron saint, usually the birthday of the master."

³⁰ Some people are born on the day of the saint and therefore take him/her as a patron saint. Others, however, choose to celebrate their favorite saints, or those of symbolic importance, even when their birthdays are nowhere near the saint's official date.

and Our Lady of the Conception in December, and for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in September, October, December, and January.

For pragmatic reasons, people tend to prefer holding rezas on Saturday nights. For most, Saturdays and Sundays are non-work days. This means, among other things, that relatives who live in other cities can attend, more people can assist with preparations, and guests can remain at the celebration for a longer period of time because they are free the following day.³¹ The reza proper (novena, samba, food) always begins at night. In many cases, people only arrive at rezas after the end of whatever soap opera (*novela*) happens to be on in the 7:00pm timeslot of the Globo television network.³² Indeed, I have attended rezas at which, even with enough guests present to commence, the host waited to begin because the soap opera had yet to end.

Rezas for most saints typically never exceed a single night's prayer, but rezas for St. Anthony can last anywhere from one night to three nights (*triduo*) or even thirteen nights (*trezena*). Thus for each of the thirteen nights of St. Anthony's *trezena*, or, in the case of a *triduo*, three nights, someone—the same individual, various members of the family, or members of the community—furnishes the candles and flowers for the altar as well as the food that is served to guests after the novena. Usually on the final night, the party extends longer than the prior nights.

5. Where?

Rezas occur in private homes. Generally speaking, the novena and the divine sambas are held indoors while the humans' samba takes place in the back patio, garage, carport, or other

³¹ Of course this does not impede those who prefer to celebrate on the saint's official day from holding their rezas on whatever day of the week it happens to be (“*caia no dia que cair*”), nor does it inhibit those who commemorate their birthdays by celebrating their patron saint.

³² This is often referred to as the “*novela das sete*.” And though this translates to “the 7 o'clock soap opera,” it usually begins at around 7:20pm or 7:30pm.

ample space within the confines of the home's property. The humans' samba is often a larger affair than the other moments, requiring quite a bit more space (for the musicians, their instruments, the participants, and the dancers). Interestingly, this spatial organization offers an insightful means of comprehending the reza,³³ particularly when framed within an emically inspired work/play binary (Szwed and Abrahams 1976).³⁴ Indeed, the indoor activities—novena, samba for gods—are seen as the “work” portion of the reza. The humans' samba, on the other hand, is the non-obligatory “play.” There is thus a clear distinction between indoor obligation and outdoor fun.³⁵

WORK AND PLAY, WOMEN AND MEN?

I begin by examining the “work-play” framework that John Szwed and Roger Abrahams have suggested in the analysis of Afro-American culture:

Work tends to be identified with family and, by extension, with home with its relative privacy. Work is learned within the home as the most important feature of extended family living, and is identified with the maintenance of the familial order of the household. . . . Work is thus defined as a cooperative activity. Conversely, play, which is used to refer primarily to performance in this context, is learned from one's peers, commonly outside the home, and comes to be *the* activity by which Afro-American individuality is asserted and maintained. Thus, *playing* or performing is associated with public places, while work begins in the home and remains a kind of private or at least guarded range of behaviors. (Szwed and Abrahams 1976: 224)

One of the primary aesthetic—and cosmological—values of the novena is togetherness. This means that (ideally) no one sings louder than another, no one gets ahead of the beat, no one sings the wrong lyrics, and everyone sings in unison (or occasionally parallel thirds). Except for the rezadeira, there is no focus on individuality. And even the rezadeira's role as a would-be soloist

³³ It is of course tempting to use categories of sacred and secular to understand the spatial moments of the reza. However, as I argue in Chapter 4, it is hardly appropriate to label the humans' samba as “profane” simply because of its location or textual content. The context of the human's samba is the reza, after all, and this is not forgotten by the party guests.

³⁴ In Portuguese, this might be phrased as a distinction between *obrigação/trabalho* and *brincadeira*.

³⁵ For the African Diaspora in the Americas, Davis notes this as putting “what is obligatory before what is enjoyable” (Davis 2012: 165).

is minimized by the pervasive antiphonal singing. The humans' samba, on the other hand, is designed for, as Szwed and Abrahams phrase it, "Afro-American individuality." Although the samba performance is no doubt a collective experience, personality is a necessary part of making it meaningful. Musicians each add their own audible style (in percussive accents, lyrics, singing styles, chords, etc.), as do dancers. After all, only one dancer usually occupies the ring at a time, leaving the other participants focused on what dance moves the occupant performs during her/his time in the spotlight. Indeed, the novena emphasizes "cooperative activity," while the samba stresses individuality. Ritual time is more strictly structured in the novena's liturgy, while the samba "play" can often be an all-night affair.³⁶

Divine sambas rest somewhere between "work" and "play." In other words, while these are generally regarded as obligatory, there is no strict ritual order (as is the case with the novena). This is because although divine sambas are "work" for the performing humans, they are "play" for the deities. The saint's sambas are typically said to comprise a total of *at least* seven sambas, though often it extends beyond this because the humans begin to *enjoy* their "work." But it is rare to see the saint's samba extend beyond a half hour. Humans quickly tire of the saint's samba and when the humans stop, the samba also ceases. After all, the saint does not perform his/her own samba, being thus forced to rely on human devotees. Caboclos, on the other hand, perform their own samba through the voices and bodies of their human mediums. And in almost every case I have witnessed, the Caboclos don't know when to quit. That is to say, humans grow weary of entertaining the Caboclos, whose samba can last for hours. In fact, I have heard more than a few outbursts of frustration from human participants as they wait for their work to end

³⁶ Interestingly, McAlister (2002: 33) notes that "[a]n important aspect of Rara (and also of Vodou dances) that links it to Anglophone Caribbean play practices is its all-night quality. . . . Since their days of enslavement in the colonies, African peoples throughout the Caribbean have engaged in wakes, dances, and holidays that last all night." And although this is common in many different cultures around the world, one wonders to what degree this type of behavior represents a pan-African American Colonial experience.

before their own fun can begin. As such, these divine sambas are “work” for humans but “play” for the gods.

If indeed women are primarily responsible for the novena (held indoors) and men for the humans’ samba (held outdoors), there appears to be a striking division of gender that maps quite conveniently onto the classic feminist private/public dichotomy (see M. Rosaldo 1974; Weintraub 1997), such that women are responsible for the “*private*” work while men care for the “*public*” play. Is there thus a gender division between work and play? Furthermore, pushing the interpretive envelope a bit more, given that it is primarily women who lead the Catholic Church-inspired novena, might one conclude that women—following a “hidden transcript”—are somehow subverting the male hegemony of the Catholic Church? Performance, as Michelle Kisiuk (1998) has argued regarding the Central African Republic, can be a powerful means of undermining gender inequalities.

Such an analysis seems to me a bit superficial and perhaps overly idealistic. In other words, looking with a closer ethnographic lens, it becomes clear that there is neither such a clear division of gender roles nor the existence of a performative subversion. In this regard, it is worth considering what Carole Pateman (1989: 132) has called a “feminist alternative” to the private-public dichotomy, in which “the ‘separate’ liberal worlds of private and public life are actually *interrelated*, connected by a patriarchal structure” (emphasis added). Similarly, all moments of the reza are dynamic negotiations between female and male participants. As I will discuss at length in Chapter 3, the novena is largely designed as a recreation of Catholic Church liturgy, and thus the participants often try explicitly to mimic the repertoire, orations, and liturgy as taught to them by Catholic priests in local parishes. Therefore that which appears to be an

inversion of gender inequalities (i.e., the redistribution of power) is really little more than a reproduction of the Church's male hegemony (see Iyanaga 2012).

The seemingly male dominated humans' samba, on the other hand, is often a continual compromise between the instrumentalists and the other attendees. For example, attendees (both male and female) often request *cantigas* they would like to hear or complain about the samba being too slow, thus leading the musicians to play at a faster tempo. Furthermore, although men sometimes samba dance, it is primarily a female role. And the dancer exercises a fundamental role in contributing to the *sound* of the samba. Not only can particular foot movements sometimes be heard, but also the instrumentalists and dancers are always engaged in a musical dialogue during which the dancer might suggest sounds through specific movements (esp. spinning) or vice-versa.

A SOCIOLOGY OF THE HOME

In a society that treats the home as one of the most—if not the single most—intimate social spaces, it is noteworthy that rezas are held in private homes. Indeed, the study of the home has been a topic of interest in Brazilian scholarship at least since Gilberto Freyre first suggested that the roots of Brazilian society could be found there (Freyre 2006 [1993]). Later, Freyre published a number of works in his attempt to consolidate a “sociology of the Brazilian home” (Freyre 1971, 1979). His argument was based on the idea that “[i]t was with mainly this type of family, based on a social organization and economy more private than public, that Brazil was formed” (Freyre 1971: 40). While Freyre's work is no doubt valuable, Roberto DaMatta's analysis of the home as symbol in Brazilian society is of more interest to our topic at hand.

Building on Freyre's argument, if only tangentially, Roberto DaMatta (1997) has assumed a slightly different vantage point in analyzing the home, treating it as a the central

institution by which Brazilians delineate space in their society. Viewing Brazil as a dichotomous society divided between the home and the street (*rua*), DaMatta argues that the home is to civility, harmony, and family what the street is to incivility, discord, and individualization. The only way these “enemies,” as he calls them, can be united is through ceremonies, rituals, and parties. DaMatta notes that in traditional domestic ceremonies, such as births, baptisms, and birthdays (and *rezas*, I might add), people “open the home to the street, transforming the domestic living space into something public, an area where strangers can circulate freely” (DaMatta 1997: 44). Corroborating this interpretation of the transcendent quality of festivities, Ordep Serra (2009), in an analysis of public celebrations (*festas de largo*) for saint’s days in Salvador, notes that “in the two symmetric spaces [the Church and the public square] where they occur, these ‘fields’ are brought together by the homology of the ‘aberrant’ use, by diverging from the normal configuration of each of these” (p. 77).

To what degree, then, does the *reza* offer what DaMatta (1997: 44) calls “a temporary utopian union of spaces rigidly divided in daily life”? Certainly, the home is opened in a way that it never would be in the quotidian: the front door and all of the front windows are wide open, people are permitted into the home without invitation and often without formal introduction, and people all feast together in the main living room and the front or back patios. But the *reza* is hardly a *utopian* union of spaces. After all, guests do not go into the kitchen unless it is the only means of passage through the home, they do not serve themselves, they do not enter the bedrooms, and they are not invited to sit at the dinner table. Furthermore, lewd or excessively drunken behavior is not tolerated, as it would be in the street. Is this truly an example of a harmonious union between the home and the street? To some degree, it would be difficult to argue that it is not. After all, the usually calm home becomes a bustling party atmosphere and

strangers are welcomed *almost* as if they were family. But the home hardly *becomes* the street; the basic social rules of domestic conduct continue to serve as the norm.

6. Why?

Why hold rezas in the first place? What are the social and cosmological motivations behind rezas? Ralph Waddey somewhat answered these questions years ago:

[Rezas] are days dedicated to one's saint: the patron of one's birthday, or the one whose name one shares, or the one whom one has chosen as protector or of whom one has requested intervention. . . . In summary, these occasions are one's *promessa* (promise, vow) or *obrigação* (obligation). This *obrigação* is in effect part of a personal religion which the individual chooses and assumes and, to a certain extent, for which he chooses the time and manner of the fulfillment of that religion's obligations. (Waddey 1981: 264)

To call a reza a "personal religion" largely overstates the case. After all, such an assertion implies that each person acts according to his/her *own* rules rather than, as I have already discussed, in a *creative interpretation of a socially shared set of rules*. But is the reza more than an obligation? Why take on the obligation at all?

THE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE

The *promessa*, or vow, is often treated as a cornerstone of Catholicism-inspired traditions throughout Brazil (Brandão 1981; Gross 1971; Maués 1995; Pierson 1966 [1951]; Reily 2002; Zaluar 1973, 1983).³⁷ Authors have often favored case studies to illustrate the logic of vows work.³⁸ I begin, however, with Donald Pierson's more general description:

On occasion of a personal crisis, especially when concerning an accident or grave sickness, often vows are made to a particular saint. By way of prayer, it is promised that if the afflicted person is able to relieve him-/herself of the difficulty, a certain act will be

³⁷ Alba Zaluar (1973), for example, underscores one of the primary characteristics of Catholicism in Brazil as a preoccupation with illness, which she sees as a system of worldly suffering. The author explains that promises, miracles, and divine punishment are all "interrelated to the conception of blight as a form of divine punishment, which forms the base to the comprehension of the system" (p. 178).

³⁸ For a number of interesting case studies from northern Brazil, we can turn to Maués (1995: 333-341), while Pierson (1966 [1951]: 357-362) offers examples from the country's southern region.

carried out in the saint's honor. The vow can be made by the afflicted person, or by someone in his/her name. It can be the sole means employed to deal with the crisis, or a supplemental precaution that is taken, beyond searching out the help of a benzedora [blessing giver], curandeiro [healer], or doctor.³⁹ (Pierson 1966 [1951]: 356)

Salient in Pierson's characterization of Catholicism-inspired vows are a number of factors: (1) vows are personal; (2) vows are ad-hoc rather than socially scripted (though a generalized pattern of logic clearly exists); (3) vows are directed toward specific saints;⁴⁰ (4) a vow involves a specific *act* of reciprocity (i.e., it is a *performative* contract); and (5) vows often work in conjunction with other solutions.

I present an example of this from the Recôncavo. It is a story told to me by Dona Maria, who lives in a rural area of São Félix. As Dona Maria explains, when two of her brothers fell ill to an incurable disease, St. Roch came to their rescue:

My brother had a cough. It was a cough that was very difficult for people to cure at that time. If people didn't take good care they couldn't get rid of it, no way. So he—well, they both got sick. It was a cough that was so, so strong, that they started to vomit blood, and two pockets of blood formed in the eye of one of them. So my father said, "My children have been raised without ever going to the doctor. If St. Roch were to help me to make my sons well, so they didn't go blind and this pocket of blood were to leave my son's eye, I wouldn't take them to the doctor, and my doctor would be St. Roch, then I would pray for him every year of my life and after my death, my sons would do the same." The next day, they woke up cured.⁴¹

³⁹ Using ethnographic data from southeast Brazil, Suzel Reily contests Pierson's affirmation, and that of others (Maués 1995), that the "afflicted person" may make a vow on his/her own behalf. The author says that "[t]hrough it is said that people can make promises for themselves, very few people claimed to have done so . . . Promises made on one's own behalf are not to be taken seriously, and when they are made they are generally directed to saints associated with match-making (*santos casamenteiros*) or, alternatively, they are made to request luck in gambling or other trivial matters" (Reily 2002: 181). The author further notes that "[b]y structuring the promise in this way a set of relationships is created among all three parties involved in the contract: the divinities, the promisor, and the recipient of the grace, and these links articulate mutual obligations on both vertical and horizontal axes" (Ibid.). Reily's observations regarding the triangular nature of vows among *foliões* seems not to apply to Bahian rezas. In the Recôncavo, people rarely—if ever—make judgments regarding the importance of another's vow. A promise is a promise independent of whether one is in search of a husband or a miraculous cure for a disease. Furthermore, people only infrequently discuss, without prior inquiry, another's vow.

⁴⁰ Zaluar (1973: 178) points out that by asking particular saints for specific things, in a way that is relatively well patterned socially, devotees "establish the specialization of the saints in specific tasks." Maués (1995: 352) notes that in northern Brazil, "[w]hile vows are normally directed toward saints, they can also be directed toward other entities: to God, to the little angels, and to the souls."

⁴¹ Although Dona Maria dos Santos has told me this story a couple of times, I recorded this version at her home on September 10, 2009. I have done some editing to the phrasing and exact terminology for the reader's clarity.

At this moment of crisis, Dona Maria's father turned to St. Roch, a saint who, being the patron saint of pestilence, might have seemed an obvious choice. With the offering of an annual prayer ceremony and St. Roch's miraculous intervention, the divine contract of reciprocity was ratified.

This humans-to-gods reciprocity might best be characterized, to use Marcel Mauss's terminology, as "contract sacrifice" (Mauss 2002 [1923]: 22). And indeed, as Reily (2002) keenly observes, "[p]romises to saints who are associated with collective ritual traditions . . . typically involve payment through a 'sacrifice' that contributes to the saint's celebration" (p. 180). *Sacrifice* is no doubt a major part of the execution of any reza, no matter how small.⁴² While some sacrificial actions may be less burdensome than others, all require going beyond the day-to-day expenditures of time, energy, and money.

Each of the three categories of sacrifice associated with the reza—time, labor, and money—might be considered to be what Hubert and Mauss (1964 [1898]: 12) called "victims."⁴³ However, since all of these are part of the execution of the reza, we might do better to consider the reza itself as the primary "victim."⁴⁴ If in fact a sacrifice is, as Hubert and Mauss suggest, "a religious act which, through the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the moral person who accomplishes it or that of certain objects with which he is concerned" (p. 13, original

⁴² The time invested in planning the event can, in some cases, take the whole year. This might include inviting family and friends who live in distant cities (e.g., São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro), stocking food stuffs, picking the adequate month to begin fermenting the fruit for liqueur, remodeling one's home, and of course the time put into hosting the event itself. The physical body is sacrificed in a number of related ways, including harvesting certain foods (for those who work with crops) either to fund the reza or to use at the reza itself, going to the market to buy the foods, expending one's bodily energy in singing and dancing, designing the altar, and getting ready for the affair. With all of these issues, money is involved. Some may spend only a few hundred *reais* while others may spend in the thousands. (As a reference, for most of 2012, one Brazilian real (R\$1) was roughly equal to fifty cents (US\$0.50)).

⁴³ A "victim," Hubert and Mauss (1964 [1898]: 10) explain, is that which is sacrificed.

⁴⁴ In thinking about ritual and performance, it is hardly abstract to consider the object of sacrifice as what Hubert and Mauss call the "victim." After all, like the destruction by fire or slaughter of an object (its sacrifice), the execution of a performance brings about its demise. When a performance has ended, only fragments of its visual existence are left; there are no more sounds, no more motions, and no more sentiments. In other words, the elements that bring a performance to life are vanquished through the very performance itself.

emphasis removed), then rezas clearly harbor morally transformative powers. Taken as such, the execution of a reza *morally elevates* the individual for yet another year. Not only is the indebted person cleared of his/her obligation to the saint, but also the accomplishment serves as proof of his/her capacity and will to keep his/her word, thus giving him/her “surplus credit,” so to speak, guaranteeing the saint’s protection for yet another year. This exchange of *debt* and *surplus*—within a system of obligatory giving, receiving, and reciprocating (Mauss 2002 [1923])—might be viewed as what I call “spiritual capital,” which is transferred between devotees and their patron saints.⁴⁵ But rezas are not just a means by which people accumulate “spiritual capital” in their relationships with their saints. Rezras can also act as convenient vehicles by which to accrue social capital within the community. Whenever possible, people excitedly boast that their rezas are “talked about” (*falada*), for their rezas attract a lot of people, have good music (and goes all night), and offer good food and drink. Furthermore, social and spiritual capital are positively correlated. The saint’s primary joy comes from being celebrated by as many people as possible and for as long as possible. Thus a large annual party with lavishness and abundance generally

⁴⁵ My use of the term “spiritual capital” represents a departure from the anthropocentric analyses offered by many social theorists, and is something of an embrace of a more phenomenological interpretation. Bourdieu first suggested, in 1971, that religion could be understood in social terms, such that there is a “religious capital” that is exchanged between “specialists and laypersons on the basis of different interests, and the relations of *competition*, which oppose various specialists to each other inside the religious field” (Bourdieu 1991: 17). In other words, capital was primarily in the hands of the “specialists” and used to compete for followers. In a divergent approach, taking the family unit as a point of departure, economist Laurence Iannacone (1990) introduced “religious human capital,” which is the mastery of religious knowledge and the friendships formed with fellow worshippers, to explain how “rank-and-file church members . . . invoke their own skills and experience to produce religious satisfaction” (p. 299). Revising these theories, Stark and Finke (2000) suggested that “religious capital” is the combined accumulation of the cultural and affective ties one creates with a religious community. Verter’s (2003) is perhaps the most sophisticated rearticulation, having suggested the term “spiritual capital” in an effort to move away from the institutional implications of the term “religion.” Using Bourdieu to critique Bourdieu, Verter offered a view of “spiritual capital” that includes an embodied state (mastery of a religion’s tastes, ideologies, etc.), an objectified state (material and symbolic commodities), and an institutionalized state (the power exercised by religious institutions). Although Verter’s is among the most interesting analyses, it remains focused on the social aspects of activity in “the religious field,” ignoring the phenomenological aspects that make religion different from other social institutions in the first place. Indeed, none of these approaches considers the importance of the relationship an individual constructs with the spiritual, what I am terming “spiritual capital.” After all, the relationship a Bahian devotee has with his saint is one of recursive conflict and harmony, “paying” the saint with devotional activity in order to be freed of moral debt and acquiring spiritual capital to be “spent” over the course of a year, like divine insurance, on the saint’s intercession.

ensures that guests will return year after year in significant numbers. And this inevitably increases spiritual capital, for happy to see charity and celebration in his/her name, the saint is believed to bless the host (with health and wealth) over the course of the year, facilitating yet another large party the following year.

Although individual vows to saints continue to be a principal interest for scholars interested in Catholicism-inspired traditions, the importance of *continuity* remains much less explored. By “continuity,” I am referring to an “obligation” which might also be understood as a family (rather than individual) vow, a vow that a relative (usually a parent) has made to a saint that must be maintained by succeeding generations.⁴⁶ It is a form of inheritance, perhaps one of the most precious among people with few material resources. Indeed, it seemed that the majority of rezas I attended were continuations of vows a relative made in the past, and *not* a divine contract the reza host him-/herself had established. As Zaluar (1973: 177) notes, “[t]he obligations to the saints, especially the payment of vows, continue even after the individual’s death, for close relatives are required to take them.” The hereditary nature of the reza is clear in Dona Maria’s story. Her father promised St. Roch not only that he would pray every year, but also that his sons would do the same. In fact, many individuals expressed to me their fear that their descendents, who “aren’t interested in ‘this stuff,’” will let *their* devotion and *their* saint “waste away” (*deixar à toa*). In these cases, people make arrangements to leave their “saint,” by which they mean the iconographic representation, at the local Catholic Church. As Dona Dezinha, a devotee of Sts. Cosmas and Damian explained to me regarding the devotion she inherited from her mother, “since my kids don’t want it, I’ll leave my saint at the Catholic Church. What the priest does with it is up to him, but I know I’ll have done my part.”

⁴⁶ Mott (1997: 166) notes that in Colonial Brazil, saint iconography, “whether they were of the Holy Christ or of saints of personal devotion, were preserved, not infrequently, over the course of generations.” One might furthermore conclude that if the iconography was preserved, so too were the associated devotions.

Dona Margarida, whose family's reza for St. Roch is explored at length in Ch. 7, received her reza while her mother was on her deathbed:

She died speaking a lot. She said to me, "Margarida, where is my St. Roch?" I said, "Oh, mom, it's on top of the china cabinet." "Oh, dear, since you're the one who is here, don't leave St. Roch. You can't stop. Do it however you can. It's important that you pray [*rezar*]; just do something. Don't let St. Roch go un-prayed." I said, "What are you talking about, mom, you're not dying yet, you still have a lot of time to pray." "No, but I'm telling you, mind to him with care. You know it was your grandmother's." So how can we forget it? We have to do what she asked, right? So there you go, it's what we do. We do it the way we can.⁴⁷

As demonstrated here, Dona Margarida's vow to her mother (and more indirectly to her grandmother) is realized by way of a devotion to St. Roch. In other words, for Dona Margarida, the devotion is embedded with a layer of vows, one directed toward her mother, another to her matrilineal family, and finally to the saint who encapsulates all of this.

The concept of continuity can be found even in those rezas that are not directly "inherited." And this continuity can help explain, if only in part, the perpetuation of particular saints in the Recôncavo region while other Christian martyrs remain marginal or unimportant. People choose their patron saints based on their efficacy and often this is rooted in childhood experiences. Dona Adélia holds a reza for St. Roch every year because of a promise. Hoping I could learn a bit more about her vow, I once asked her, "Why do you pray to St. Roch every year?" Her answer surprised me: "My father was very devoted to St. Roch and St. Anthony. He always prayed for both of them." She then went on to reminisce about her father, who had passed away while she was still a young girl. Immediately following his death, Dona Adélia remembered, her family endured an extended period of financial hardships. Only sometime later did I learn that her vow involved a daughter's illness. Unlike Dona Margarida's inherited

⁴⁷ Interview with Dona Margarida on November 14, 2011, at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia.

devotion for St. Roch, Dona Adélia did not receive her obligation from her father, so why did my question provoke such a profound reflection about him?

Devotions to saints are built on much more than a particular saint's attributes, divine specialty, connection to the Christian God, and hagiography. A given saint is important because s/he transcends time, thereby collapsing it and seamlessly linking parents to children and grandparents to grandchildren such that they form a *single lifetime*, that of the saint. Every generation of devotees creates its own histories by relating to the saint in personal (and often innovative) ways, holding rezas—as Dona Margarida's mother put it—*however they can*, and passing the devotions down to the next generation. And by relating to the “same” saint who aided their ancestors, people are able to evoke the power of the past in order to cope with and understand the present.

Rezas become palimpsest performative vehicles for making sense of the present and maintaining cosmological harmony while retaining a clear reference to the past. Carrie Viarnes makes a similar point vis-à-vis spirit dolls in Cuba:

Put simply, people remember who they are by making spirit dolls; they remember their ritual and blood ancestors (who were often practitioners of different religions) in order to make sense of a complex and traumatic past, and to establish control over their present and future. Significantly, a spirit doll represents a practitioner's specific spirit guide that belongs only to them and at the same time embodies the ritual knowledge transmitted by these spiritual ancestors over generations. The dolls embody a historical memory that is at once personal and collective. (Viarnes 2010: 320)

It is for this reason that when I asked Dona Adélia why *she* prayed to St. Roch, she told me about her father. Her saint is her father's saint and thus encapsulates her father's memory along with her own. By celebrating a saint every year, people are able to revisit their own pasts to celebrate their lives and that of their ancestors. In some cases, like Dona Margarida's, the connection is less abstract. For her (and her family), celebrating her mother's St. Roch is a direct celebration of

her mother's life and spiritual existence. For Dona Adélia, on the other hand, her choice to appeal to St. Roch at a time of crisis instead of some other healing saint (e.g., St. Lazarus or St. Sebastian) is guided in large part by the capacity of St. Roch to index her father and the carefree childhood she had prior to his death.

What these examples underscore is that for devotees, the historical memory embodied in devotions to saints (and the performance of the *reza*) is built not just around the devotee's personal relationship to saints and collective memories of these Christian martyrs (hagiographies, characteristics, modes of celebration, etc.), but also to the ways in which loved ones interacted with the saints. This "intermediate level of reference," as Ricoeur (2004: 131) calls it, "is the level of our close relations, . . . these people who count for us and for whom we count." Ricoeur further explains that "[t]he tie to [close relations] cuts crosswise and selectively through filial and conjugal relations as well as through social relations dispersed in accordance with multiple orders of belonging or respective orders of standing" (p. 132). These close relations offer a means by which to penetrate the collective memory of society (and the community) in a highly intimate way even without having access to the *specific* memories of those concerned.

Rezas offer multiple levels of meaning and memory, what Diana Taylor (2006: 83) calls a "multilayered sedimentation," to which new layers of memory, like earth, can continually be added. Like the altars I will explore in Ch. 2, devotions bring memories to life in vivid ways. In attempting to comprehend the persistence and continuity of Catholicism-inspired practices, then, one should look beyond what Carlos Rodrigues Brandão initially isolates as a system of exchanges based on Mauss' (2002 [1923]) theories on gift exchange:

To paraphrase Mauss and return to what was said about the Folia, at heart it is all exchanges. They are acts of community commitment just as those of St. Gonçalo that make possible the collective dimension of popular religion . . . In the Folia, St. Gonçalo and other religious festivals . . . contracts of *personal* exchange of commitment, skills and

services *between man and the sacred*, engender *collective exchange among men*.
(Brandão 1981: 91)

As I have shown, rezas are not just about exchanges; they are also about memory. They are the ritualized remembering of ancestors—in more or less explicit terms—that extend beyond promises to be kept. In fact, Brandão makes an astute observation, albeit under slightly different conditions. In a meditation concerning why some debtors die before making good on a vow, the author explains that is incapable of finding “another response except that the dead *forgets* the vow to the saint so that the living *remember* him because of the vow. ‘The dead’ debtor, what he wants is, in fact, to remain alive and vibrant in the memory of the living” (Brandão 1981: 92). While memory by way of a vow to a saint has clear contractual overtones, the primary impetus is quite distinct: rezas are obligatory and ritualized forms of remembering.

By turning the memorial into an ambiguous and polysemic event, however, rezas are made meaningful for all attendees. In other words, for the hosts and close family members the celebration may be a means by which to celebrate the saint, fulfill an obligation, and remember loved ones (though not necessarily in that order). For others, however, the reza offers an entirely different experience. As Reily (2002) points out for the folia tradition, “The participants are differentially involved in the proceedings, and they bring their distinct biographies with them, such that they experience the ritual from different vantage points” (p. 131). Over the course of the event, there are moments that appeal distinctly to the participants, sometimes in collective “scripted resonances” and others in individual “personal resonances.” These types of resonances work together, such that “there are scripted resonances that are specifically designed to promote personal resonances, linking personal memory to the collective memory of the community” (p. 132). Similarly, rezas engage each individual in a distinct way at different points of the event.

Rezas are much like memory itself, which, Diana Taylor (2003: 82) has argued, “links the deeply private with social, even official, practices.” In this way, memories that might be of little relevance to people outside a host’s close relations are made meaningful by weaving them into the collective memory of a Catholic saint. As such, a single “scripted” event can have as many “personal resonances” as there are people, and thus a single individual or family (or memory of them) can be socially shared without it harboring the negative connotations of a self-aggrandizing celebration. This largely explains why birthdays so often become rezas, and why “birthday” cakes are inevitably decorated with a picture of the saint. Instead of guests celebrating one individual, they can celebrate *their* saint. I do not intend to suggest that rezas are not also about divine contracts. But I am insisting that they are much more. The reza is a collection of memories such that in practice (i.e., by executing the reza) the memories of divine contracts, Catholicism, ancestors, children, and an infinity of other issues are evoked in a “highly efficient” way, as Diana Taylor (2003: 82) suggests, “operating in conjunction with other memories, ‘all of them *pulsing regularly, in order*’” (emphasis added).

Why then, do people host and attend rezas? There is no single answer, for rezas resonate with individuals on a variety of levels. Ostensibly, and most immediately, people host rezas because the events are fun and are reasons to bring family, friends, and the community together. And people attend rezas for similar reasons: to dance, to have fun, and to eat free food. In cosmological terms, people host rezas because they believe in their patron saint, appeal to him/her for protection against the trials and tribulations of quotidian life, and *owe* him/her this reza. On a deeper, personal level, however, rezas are about remembering. People host rezas to remember ritually their own pasts as part of a family and a community, while celebrating these pasts with people who also believe in the effectiveness of the Catholic saint in human social life.

THE SAINTS' PERSPECTIVE

If indeed a devotion could just be a soccer game, why go through all of the hardships involved in a reza? Simply put, it is what people believe the saints prefer. But why? As implied in the second epigraph of this chapter: remembering is something for which to be grateful. The primary reason to pray for a saint is to remember him/her. This not only assures the continued existence of the saint—kept alive in the memory of as many devotees as possible—but also the continued ability for him/her to serve his/her devotees (Maués 1995: 355-356).⁴⁸ But it goes beyond just the saint; annual festivities are about *remembering to be* Catholic. This is why contemporary Catholic Church prayers and songs often substitute “traditional” prayers from past generations and the liturgy emphasizes the presence of God and the Virgin Mary, a specific marker (along with saints) of Catholicism (as opposed to Christianity in general). It is worth further mention that saints are little more than intermediaries, advocates to God who work on behalf of humans (see Ch. 3). Thus although *the saint* is the guest of honor, so to speak, it is in fact his father, God, who is actually the focus of the reza. Indeed, devotees would emphatically remind me that nothing happens without God’s approval. Revisiting Seu Bole’s narrative, which I used to open this chapter, I eventually received a response to why saints, whom he designates as apostles, enjoy rezas:

Why does he want a reza? Because from the beginning until the end, we’re calling for his father, that man, the Lord up there above. He commanded all of them. So he feels good because we’re calling his name, that of the apostle, and the Father, who is Our Lord Jesus Christ. From the beginning, it’s almost two hours of reza, but it’s from the beginning until the end, calling out, basically, for the twelve apostles. And in the end, the reza is offered to St. Anthony, and on top of that, for the father and the mother, who are Our

⁴⁸ Raymundo Heraldo Maués makes the interesting point that though saints appear to be acting out of selfish motivations (i.e., to stay alive in the memories of devotees), “it happens, ultimately, from human motivation, for, if [the saints] act this way, it is done, in fact, to benefit their devotees, those who constantly direct toward them prayers and supplications and who, annually, organize their festivities or some type of homage in their honor” (Maués 1995: 356).

Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lady. My goodness, who is the son who wouldn't want to have his father and mother praised?⁴⁹

Resounding in Seu Bole's remarks is the significance of "calling." Not only does the saint wish for himself and his family to be remembered, but he also appreciates that it be done *aloud*. The aloud-ness of the reza largely guides the novena aesthetics that I will address in Ch. 3, but it is at least worth noting that, according to the logic of devotees, if one person calling a saint's name is important, then one hundred is inevitably more so.

For many reza practitioners, forgetting a person is a metaphorical equivalent to causing his/her social death. The saint extends his/her divine protection as gratitude for the effort his/her human devotee has invested into "reminding" the community that the saint exists and that Catholicism is an important religion. In this way, the Portuguese verb "lembrar," meaning both to recall and to remind, most accurately characterizes rezas. Rezas are ritualized activities during which people recall their own pasts and that of their family and community, while also serving to remind others about the saint and the value s/he has in everyone's lives.

Before concluding this chapter, I wish to address briefly one final aspect. Why the big party instead of something more ostensibly (to Western eyes) reverent? In other words, why would the saint prefer a social gathering at which people drink alcohol, might use profanity, and almost certainly will dance? To answer such inquiries, as I demonstrate with regards to samba in Ch. 6, a historical perspective would surely be quite fruitful. And this is particularly true when considering the trajectories of Brazil's primary constituent cultural progenitors (medieval and early-modern European, Western African, and indigenous Brazilian), all of which were largely characterized by elements that have come to be recognized, in the post-Enlightenment period, as

⁴⁹ The interview with Seu Bole was conducted at his home in Muritiba, Bahia, on June 4, 2011. The citation contains slight edits.

“profane.”⁵⁰ But it is not the tradition’s objective historical trajectory that motivates individuals to hold their rezas year after year. How, then, do people at the beginning of the 21st century justify their festive mode of celebration? Put simply, saints are believed to like parties (*festas* or *farra*). Catholic saints, reza practitioners insist, delight in seeing the exuberance of their devotees, which is manifested in the happiness, dancing, socializing, and drinking that is so much a part of the reza tradition. Furthermore, these are celebrations of life, the life of the saints (for not having been forgotten), the life of ancestors who remain alive in the memories of celebrants, and the life of the host who is alive and healthy enough to hold yet another reza.

7. Concluding Thoughts

There is little to say in conclusion, for the party is only just beginning. Thus I offer but a recap of the introductory data I have presented here. *How?* Rezas begin with decorating the home and preparing the food. At nightfall, guests arrive and sing the novena, after which they perform the saint’s samba and (if necessary) the Caboclos’ samba. After or while eating, the humans’ samba begins, which is usually performed by a samba-de-roda performance ensemble. *What?* A reza is the creative elaboration of a devotion in accordance with shared social logics. Rezas are also embodiments of occulted memories of the Black Atlantic past out of which they were constructed. *Who?* Rezas are held by married adults, and attended by anyone who so desires, including family and friends, close relations and strangers, adults and children, humans and Caboclos. *When?* Rezas, which typically occur annually, on or near the Catholic Church-consecrated date, are nocturnal affairs. For St. Anthony, rezas can last one day, three days, or even thirteen. *Where?* Rezas are held in private homes, with the doors and windows opened in

⁵⁰ A list of relevant works would require something quite more extensive than a footnote, but some exemplary works do exist. For instance, for a cursory view of medieval and early-modern Iberian religious festivities, see Christian (1981), for religious celebrations in Central Africa (specifically the Kongo), see Thornton (1998), and for festivals of indigenous populations, see Mann (2010b).

symbolic embrace of the community. The “work,” the novena and the obligatory sambas, happens indoors while the “play,” the humans’ samba, tends to ensue outdoors. *Why?* Rezas, because they are collective memorials, are saint-approved methods of fulfilling vows. But they are also individually important because they recall histories linked to close relations. Rezas offer their hosts a malleable means of remembering the past and bringing it to bear on the present.

PARTY INTERLUDE TWO
Dona Raimunda and St. Roch
(Accompanied by PI_2.mp3)

Friday, August 14, 2009. São Félix, Bahia.

Dona Raimunda lived in Santo Amaro, but her mother, Dona Meire, had a small house in São Félix. Every August 14th, Dona Raimunda traveled to her mother's home, where she hosted her annual reza for St. Roch. Dona Raimunda initiated her devotion in her son's name in 1987, when he was two years old, simply because his birthday happened to fall near (two days before) St. Roch's day. When I attended her reza the first time in 2009, I was accompanying Dona Coleta, who is one of the most well-known and well-respected prayer leaders in São Félix. We arrived at the home after nightfall; it was about 8pm. Present at Meire's home was a small handful of people.

Just as the women gathered in front of the altar, ready to begin the novena, the prayer leader commented to Dona Meire, "It's pretty tight in here, huh?" "Yeah, this house is really small," the homeowner responded. The conversation lasted nearly a minute, as the participants all exchanged ideas regarding the size of the homes in that area. And while everyone was still talking, Dona Coleta—without warning—began the novena with an oration, "Through the Sign of the Holy Cross, from our enemies, deliver us, our God. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen" (PI_2.mp3, 00:32). The rezadeira, who already had her handwritten prayer book open, leapt right into the first sung prayer of the night, "Deus in adjutorium." Everyone followed along in unison. The "Litany," which was the fourth prayer Dona Coleta sang, went a bit less smoothly (PI_2.mp3, 05:07). As Dona Coleta sang one of the Latin-language verses, she realized she was singing the wrong one and immediately stopped. After a

pause of no more than a few seconds, she reinitiated and the group accompanied her as if nothing had happened.

Just before Dona Coleta led the small congregation in St. Roch's "Bendito," she instructed Dona Raimunda on the ritual protocol: "Now you take a little bit of popcorn and shower the rooftop and then the people so that they can clap for St. Roch." Dona Raimunda's mother then chimed in, "first you throw it toward the house." "Yeah, exactly," Dona Coleta agreed (PI_2.mp3, 13:38). Dona Raimunda went to get the popcorn while the congregation involved itself in some chatter about quotidian affairs. As they were bathed in popcorn, the participants clapped fervently and Dona Coleta began St. Roch's "Bendito." The arrhythmic handclaps took a rhythmic shape in order to accompany the sung prayer (PI_2.mp3, 14:15). The singing was interrupted with some laughter as the light bulb went out. "It's out." "Is it out?" "Oh well, let's go on anyway." Dona Coleta explained, "Now I need a candle to read here." The prayer leader subsequently continued the novena with only the flame of the candle to light the pages of her book. Before finishing the sung "Offering," Dona Coleta interrupted her own singing to tell Dona Raimunda that she would need something on which to kneel for the final prayer. This led to a minute-long discussion amongst the elderly women of all of their health problems.

As Dona Coleta began the final prayer, "Senhor Deus," I was called over to try to fix the burnt out light bulb (PI_2.mp3, 20:58). While the congregation sang the prayer, I discussed the light bulb situation with Dona Raimunda. "Tighten it," she told me. "It doesn't look like that's the problem." I said. But she insisted, "I'm sure that's the problem." "OK, let me look. Hold on." I was still working on the light bulb by the time the novena was over and everyone decided it was futile. "That's OK; just leave it. We already prayed for St. Roch anyway," Dona Meire

assured me. After another moment of toying with the light bulb, I acquiesced. This parallel occurrence of sacred and non-sacred activities during a reza is in fact quite common. In other words, while some participants are conducting the liturgy, others might be chatting about unrelated affairs, watching television, or trying to fix light bulbs.

As the novena progressed, a few more people arrived and stayed only briefly before exiting. There were no more than twelve people present at the whole affair, which primarily included women and female children, but also two adult men and two male children. After the relatively short, 25-minute novena ended, Dona Coleta led the group in singing “Derrama, Senhor” (Bathe us, Lord):

*Esta casa será abençoada
Porque o Senhor vai derramar o seu amor
Derrama, Senhor
Derrama, Senhor
Derrama sobre ela
O seu amor¹ (PI_2.mp3, 25:39)*

Although not everyone sang, the majority joined in. Here Dona Coleta asked the Lord to bless the homeowner (*dona da casa*), the children, herself, the visitors, me, and everyone else she could think to include in receiving blessings. When this ended, Dona Coleta shouted a number of “Vivas” (“Long lives”), to which everyone responded “Viva!” with handclaps: “Viva senhor São Roque!” (“Long live Lord St. Roch!”) And it continued:

“Long live the homeowner!”
“Viva!”
“Long live the birthday boy!”
“Viva!”
“Long live the guests!”
“Viva!”
“Long live the children!”
“Viva!”
“Long live St. Anthony!”

¹ “This home will be blessed / For the Lord will bathe it with His love / Bathe it, Lord / Bathe it, Lord / Bathe it, Lord / With Your love”

“Viva!”
“Long live everyone!”
“Long live...what’s his name?”
I laughed and responded timidly, “Michael.”
“Huh? My-co?” she repeated rather unsure. “Long live him, too!”
“Viva!”
“He came to film, but the light went away.”
“But that’s how things go,” Dona Meire lamented (PI_2.mp3, 28:47).

Subsequently, those who could find a place to sit in the small room, took a seat. When there was nowhere left to sit, people leaned up against the walls.

After a minute or two of rather routine conversation about nothing in particular, Dona Raimunda, who was in the kitchen preparing the symbolically important white corn porridge (*mugunzá*), began singing alone: “Meu senhor São Roque!” (My Lord St. Roch!) This apparently struck a chord in one of the attendees, “What about St. Roch’s samba, aren’t we going to sing it?” Dona Raimunda responded, again from the kitchen, “Yes we are!” With that she proceeded to sing a number of samba strophes alone with no response from the other attendees. Another minute passed and Dona Coleta looked to one of the guests encouragingly, “Go ahead and sing a *cantiga* if you’d like.” Meanwhile, Dona Raimunda, still singing by herself, was joined by a guest’s rather timid rhythmic handclapping. Then Dona Coleta jubilantly joined in, as did Dona Raimunda’s mother, Dona Meire:

*Meu glorioso São Roque
Que está nos pés do altar
Ajuda a dona da casa
Que está em primeiro lugar*

*Ajuda eu, São Roque
Ajuda eu sambar
Ajuda eu, São Roque
Ajuda eu sambar*² (PI_2.mp3, 30:50)

² “My Glorious St. Roch / Who is at the foot of the altar / Help the homeowner / Who is the most important / Help me, St. Roch / Help me samba.”

They repeated these strophes four times, with Dona Coleta's loud and confident voice dominating the small room. After finishing this samba, she complained under her breath, "Nobody sings..." The hyperbole notwithstanding, it was indeed true that only four of the dozen guests were actually participating.

Dona Coleta then led another samba, which received a bit more participation from the attendees. Dona Coleta sang the first few words alone, but was soon joined by the others:

*Quem diz que São Roque é velho
É velho mas tem valor
Ele hoje recebeu
Incenso e pipoca e flor*³ (PI_2.mp3, 32:04)

After repeating this samba seven times, Dona Coleta paused for a few seconds and then began another one:

*Senhor São Roque que está no altar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*

*Me dê licença pra eu sambar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*⁴ (PI_2.mp3, 33:02)

This samba was repeated four times. Then Dona Meire decided she would lead one, but this one was for the Obaluaiê. For this one, only Dona Coleta and Dona Meire sang, while Dona Coleta clapped the Congo time-line:

*Ô dá fulô
Engenia, dá fulô
É Obaluaiê
Engenia, dá fulô* (PI_2.mp3, 33:38)

After the tenth repetition, Dona Coleta, apparently inspired to sing about Obaluaiê, also led one directed to the Orixá, though with no accompanying handclaps:

³ "Who says that St. Roch is old / He's old but is valuable / Today he received / Incense and popcorn and flowers."

⁴ "Lord St. Roch / Who is at the altar / Give me permission / To samba."

Obaluaiê
de caboco
Quem manda (brinca) com ele
*Fica louco*⁵ (PI_2.mp3, 35:07)

Dona Coleta sang this nine times before continuing with another one, which she sang twice—nearly alone—and this time she partially accompanied herself with handclaps:

Meus filho, você nunca me viu
Meus filho, você não me conhece
Meus filho, você nunca me viu
Meus filho, você não me conhece

Vocês chamam Abaluaiê
Flor do paraíso, Dono da peste
Vocês chamam Abaluaiê
*Flor do paraíso, Dono da peste*⁶ (PI_2.mp3, 35:56)

She ended abruptly, explaining that she likes to sing to her “velho” (old man) every year, because “he protects all of us every year.”

The performance of these six sambas lasted a total of six minutes. Besides a few brief steps in the middle of the circle, there was nearly no dancing at all. It was a very subdued affair. There were very few people in attendance, and even less attendee participation. After conversing some, sipping the porridge, and eating the popcorn, I left with Dona Coleta and one of the other participants.

⁵ “Obaluaiê / Of *caboco* [?] / Whoever goes (plays) with him / Goes crazy.”

⁶ “My children, you’ve never seen me / My children, you don’t know me / You call Abaluaiê / Flower of Heaven / Master of plague.”

CHAPTER TWO

The Altar: An Artistic Aggregation of Memories

“Se eu tivesse todos os santos, o altar virava igreja!”
If I had every saint, my altar would become a church!
–Dona Maria dos Santos¹

I arrived late to Dona Dora’s house. The reza for Saint Anthony had already ended and the guests tarried in the narrow hallway chatting and munching on the snacks the hosts had been distributing. There seemed to be a lot of people present, or maybe it just appeared that way due to the cramped space. But either way I decided to avoid what would have been the exhausting task of shoving myself through the crowd to the living room, where the reza had taken place. Within a few minutes we were all ushered out. “Mass already started! Let’s go!” Nearly all of the attendees made their way over to Igreja Deus Menino, the Catholic Church located just a few doors down. So I followed the crowd on the one-minute pilgrimage. After Mass, a woman came up to me. “Did you already get your bread?” She was of course referring to Saint Anthony’s bread, the distribution of which is a vital part of celebrating the Portuguese saint. Puzzled, I could do no more than look at her blankly. Who was she? “We were distributing bread at my house, did you get any?” I now thought I knew the identity of my anonymous interlocutor. “Oh, are you Dona Dora?” “Yes,” she smiled. I lifted up my plastic bag full of about a dozen or so little baguettes. “Yes, I got my bread, but unfortunately I got there after the reza had already ended.” “Well, if you want, I can take you there now so you can take a picture of the altar.”

In a hurry to attend another reza that was to take place directly after Mass, I ultimately declined Dona Dora’s offer to photograph the altar. But her proposal is revealing. Altars, whether elaborate or humble, are essential in praying for saints. It is the primary visual element of the reza and necessary if singing is to take place at all. Altars are where people place their “images” (*imagens*), which are chromolithographs and statuettes of saints. People “dress” their altars with cloth, flowers, perfumes, and balloons, as well as illuminating them with candles and incandescent or florescent light bulbs. Often a saint’s gustatory offering is also placed upon the altar. But the altar is more than just a place to gather “things.” It is its own aesthetic masterpiece; it is a place where the saint comes to life during the reza. It is where all song is directed. And it is

¹ Dona Maria dos Santos, born in 1947(?), is a resident of Fazenda Pilar, a rural region of São Félix. With her magnificent voice, she is the most well known *rezadeira* (prayer leader) in the region. The quote here was her response, delivered amidst her own laughter, to why she only has certain saints on the altar of her home.

a material cluster of fragmented memories, both collective and personal, strung together as a coherent spiritual lifetime.

As a musician and music scholar, I began my research with no noticeable interest in altars. But in following the wise words of Dr. Anthony Seeger, my dissertation advisor, I let *them* tell me what was important. The altar is uncompromisingly essential to rezas. Thus the “altar”—its use, decoration, importance, expressivity, etc.—deserves its own chapter. In the Recôncavo, altars (in one form or another) are an integral part of home decoration among those who consider themselves Catholic in some capacity. This includes Candomblé practitioners as well as non-practicing, nominal Catholics. Without an altar, one cannot truly celebrate a saint. Furthermore, the altar is a vital part of the Catholic identity and a point of immediate contention for evangelical Christians who feel the cultivation of an “image” is, if not blasphemous, certainly illusory.² In this chapter, I rely heavily on iconographic interpretation and work by art historians to embark on an ostensible tangent from “sound.” While this might raise a few purist ethnomusicological eyebrows, it behooves me to remind the reader that the altar *is* also *music*.

I think of altars as music not because they offer a distinct sound (besides the echo bouncing off of them). Rather, they are phenomenologically inseparable from the singing. The altar serves as the primary visual sign of the room’s sacred ethos, and it provides a necessary physical “target” for the sung prayers. The saint on the altar thus participates metaphysically and, some might argue, even interacts *physically* via the altar in a way that *creates* the sound one hears at a reza. After all, the importance of altars in Brazilian Catholicism-inspired domestic

² According to many Evangelical Christians themselves, the problem is not so much the iconography, but rather the logic behind it. God should be worshipped “directly,” not by means of appealing to “lesser” entities. After all, saints, they contend, were once human. Both Catholics and Evangelical Christians treat the *imagens* as metonyms of the recognition of the general importance of saints. Thus Catholics will often complain that the Evangelical Christians want them to get rid of their *imagens*.

singing practices is certainly centuries old. Writing about his experiences in Bahia during the early 1700s, Brazilian priest and traveler Nuno Marques Pereira noted:

I met a married black man, named Manoel, in a certain Vila, who being enslaved, had his house on his Master's farm, very clean, and neat; and on the veranda he had a niche made, and in it an altar, where were placed an image of Christ, and another of Our Lady of the Rosary, with other Saints. And every day he sang the Rosary of Our Lady with his wife and children. (Pereira 1939: 152)

Implied here, with the use of a semi-colon, is that the singing took place in conjunction with the altar, probably in front of it. Thus residential music-making for Catholic gods has been linked intrinsically to altars in Brazil since at least the 18th century, and probably much earlier.

Indeed, today's domestic altars are but an extension of an old tradition of private oratories in Brazil. As Mott (1997: 166) explains, in reference to the Brazilian northeast, "On the wall of the hall of many colonial homes, outside of the room, were the pictures or 'registers' of the saints of chief devotion of the homeowners for veneration and salutation[.] . . . The wealthier families had a special room, the *saints' room*." In Minas Gerais, to Bahia's south, people not only had large oratories, but also built miniature, two-palms high oratories. Oratories worked in a way similar to reliquaries, for in addition to "eventual 'real' relics of the Sacred Wood, of the column where Christ was whipped," were small pieces of a saint's bones and "even a modicum of the powdered milk of Our Lady!" (p. 167). Many of these oratories have been restored and are preserved in Brazilian museums. The image in Fig. 2.1, for instance, portrays an exhibit at the Museum of Art of Bahia (see Mott 1997 for more images). This oratory, it appears, was part of the individual's bedroom furnishings.



Fig. 2.1. Bahian oratory and dresser from the second half of the 18th century. The 19th-century crucifix is by Domingos P. Baião. The benches are from sometime between the 17th and 18th centuries. (Photo by Sergio Benutti)

Domestic Catholicism-inspired altars in the Recôncavo are generally much less elaborate than those found in African-derived religious cult houses. But this is typically a result of the number and kinds of individual histories involved in altar construction, not of a difference in construction technique. In other words, the logics guiding the construction of altars, whether in an Umbanda terreiro or a humble Catholic home, are essentially the same. Furthermore these logics appear to be found throughout the Black Atlantic. Thus one can look to literature from a variety of American cultures—Cuban, Haitian, Puerto Rican, Dominican, etc.—for an understanding of Brazilian altars to Catholic saints. My principal argument is that altars artistically exhibit a lifetime of memories and experiences. Altars are window mosaics comprising achronistically-arranged shards of an individual’s past. These “shards” are typically Catholic saint statuettes, chromolithographs, and written names that—for the altar owner—immediately index real people, real places, and real things that go far beyond the mysticism of the saints themselves. In this way, the altars simultaneously embody the collective and the individual, as well as the spiritual and the human. Each *imagem* (literally “image”), as any

iconographic representation of a saint is called, is a reference to a culturally shared body of knowledge about Catholicism and the given saint. However, *how* the saint was chosen for placement upon the altar is nearly always a dynamic story in itself, remembered fondly by the altar-maker, about a pilgrimage, a gift from a dear friend, or some other noteworthy experience. In other words, as Karen McCarthy Brown notes for the Haitian context, “[a]ltars breathe. Altars tell stories. Altars reveal the state of being of individuals and communities” (K. Brown 1996: 67).

While the present chapter is designed chiefly to illustrate my point regarding memories and histories, I also take the opportunity to address other aspects of the altar as it is used in rezas. I begin by describing the construction of an altar. This is based on a number of disparate cases that illustrate some of the generally important elements in altars. I then describe, through case studies, how an altar is created, emphasizing the importance of memories, additivity, and aesthetic choices. I further offer some brief notes on Catholicism-inspired altars in the context of other religious affiliations (i.e., Candomblé and evangelical Christianity) before concluding with a note on how this chapter on altars is part of a holistic approach to the study of music.

1. Beginnings: From *Imagem* to Altar

Very little is necessary to construct an altar. In fact, the only requisite for a “working” altar for a reza is an image, or any representation of the saint. One devotee of Sts. Cosmas and Damian explained to me that when it came time for her first reza for the twin saints, she did not yet have an “image” of the saints. And since one cannot have a party for an absent guest, she found a neighbor willing to lend her a Sts. Cosmas and Damian for the night of the event. She has since acquired her own statuettes and chromolithographs that remain displayed in her home. The point, of course, is that some sort of material representation—a statuette, a

chromolithograph, a written name, etc.—of the saint must be present on the altar if it is truly an altar for the saint. As Brazilian psychologist and folklorist Arthur Ramos (1940: 378) noted, “The couple that has twins has to ‘trade’ (that is, buy) the saints Cosmas and Damian.”³ But the use of the term “trade” as a euphemism for “buying” is not isolated to the twin saints. Indeed, no image is ever “purchased”; they are always “traded” (*trocado*). This vocabulary underscores an implied contract that relates explicitly to the contractual nature of the *reza* itself, suggesting furthermore that one can never *buy* a saint for his/her protection is based on a deeper (even explicitly anti-capitalist) connection of favors and exchanges.

Before making its way to an altar, the image must first be “baptized” by a Catholic priest. Images, particularly statuettes, are generally sold packaged in plastic and devotees leave them wrapped up until they are taken to a Catholic Church to be blessed by a priest with Holy Water and a prayer. The act of going to the Catholic Church to bless the image that will soon grace one’s altar is an explicit assertion of a Catholic identity. Not only is the altar “Catholic” because it is adorned with Catholic saints, but it has also effectively been Church approved. This is the case even if the Catholic saints are used to represent a memory of spirit possession or other activity frowned upon by the Church, such as Candomblé.⁴

Returning home with his/her baptized saint in hand, the individual is ready to create the altar. Altars themselves come in all shapes and sizes. As a general rule, they are erected in a home’s living room, usually facing the front door,⁵ to be thus seen and appreciated by all

³ Citing Ramos, Bastide (2001 [1958]: 195) points out that “this expression is more significant than the translation offered by A. Ramos of ‘to buy them.’”

⁴ I would be curious to know if Candomblé priestesses also take their Catholic saints to be blessed by Catholic priests. My guess is that most do, but some may not. This is, after all, an ideological statement as much as it is a shared cultural practice.

⁵ In a study on family life in Cachoeira, Bahia, anthropologist Louis Macelin (1996: 251) explains this positioning, which he identifies as directed toward the “house’s east,” as a symbolic gesture. This orientation, he argues, is “in the direction of the street, the symbolic point where the sun rises; while [the altar’s] back is oriented in the direction of the symbolic west, the back patio [quintal], the woods [mata], in other words, the point where the sun sets.”

visitors. As will discuss later in this chapter, the explicit presentation of the saints also acts as an ideological statement: a Catholic identity is not something that should cause embarrassment. Simpler altars are arranged on cloth-covered flat wooden slabs or glass panes that are secured to the wall (Fig. 2.2, Fig. 2.3), or embedded into pre-existing furniture (Fig. 2.4). More elaborate altars are placed on tables, sometimes with ascending “steps” (Fig. 2.5). Those who have the resources sometimes even construct concrete altars that are built into the home’s architecture (Fig. 2.6). Some altars are permanent, while others are erected solely for the night of the reza.



Fig. 2.2. Dona Meire’s altar for St. Roch in 2010. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)



Fig. 2.3. Dona Meire's altar for St. Roch in 2009. This photo was integrated into Dona Meire's 2010 altar for St. Roch. I reproduce the photo in its unaltered form (as I had originally given it to her) to emphasize its poor quality. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)



Fig. 2.4. Dona Cleusa's altar for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)



Fig. 2.5. Dona Carminha's altar for St. Anthony. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)



Fig. 2.6. Dona Sinhá's altar for St. Anthony. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

2. Altar Aesthetics: What Constitutes Beauty

As I indicate throughout the dissertation, the *reza* in general is characterized by what might be considered an aesthetics of ostentation; altars are no exception. Quality *is* quantity. Scholars typically associate this Bahian—and Brazilian—penchant for opulence with the influence of the baroque period (see Reily 2006; Reis 2003 [1991]). In particular, this became a profound aspect of the Colonial church architecture that remains a vibrant part of 21st century Bahian socio-religious life. As Biancardi (2001: 46) notes, “[C]hurches adopted audacious and

sumptuous construction plans” that were marked by baroque characteristics such as a preference for the monumental, a desire to impress, an exhibition of material wealth, decorative superposition, and a preference for the unimaginable and the singular. And, as Colombo Filho (2001) observes, these aesthetics of ostentation were no doubt reproduced on a small scale in domiciles throughout the Colony. In fact, it is this predilection for opulence that continues to mark domestic altars in Bahia more than three centuries later.

In the 21st century, the altars considered most beautiful are large, towering, dense, lustrous, and elaborate. It would be difficult to overemphasize the significance altars represent for both homeowners and guests. The energy put into constructing the “perfect” and “most beautiful altar” is substantial, for each detail is meticulously calculated. And these details do not go unnoticed. I first learned this in conversation with Délcio, a man in his 60s who complained to me that the reza tradition was disappearing. “In the old days,” Délcio explained, “people always held rezas. Nowadays, you just don’t see them anymore. I remember one reza for St. Anthony that I always used to go to. It was in Liberdade [a borough of Salvador], and it was absolutely beautiful. It had a beautiful altar that came down like a waterfall.”⁶ As grandiose and infinitely variable vertical masterpieces, the waterfall serves as a particularly apt metaphor.⁷ Like a breathtaking waterfall, a beautiful altar inspires awe and “roars” with visual splendor. And these altars can often lead to louder and merrier (and consequently more beautiful) singing during the reza. Expectedly, then, for Délcio the altar became an immediate index of the beauty of the entire reza. Altars—to say the least—are big deals.

⁶ This informal conversation took place in Salvador, on July 19, 2011.

⁷ It seems hardly coincidental that musician David Byrne has characterized Black Atlantic altars as “frozen waterfalls” (Cosentino 1998: 22).

CANDLES, FLOWERS, AND LUMINOSITY

As a “rule” (indeed, I have yet to see an exception), flowers and candles are used to decorate the altar on the night of the *reza*. Candles are no doubt an integral part of many religious traditions, though their symbolic value varies. For Christianity, candles have traditionally represented divine light. After all, “when Jesus spoke again to the world,” the apostle John explains in John 8:12, “he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”⁸ As Catholicism scholar Diane Apostolos-Cappadona (1998: 71) emphasizes, candles represent divine light and Christ more generally. The veracity of this claim is clear in affirmations made by the practitioners themselves, as well as in the texts intoned during the *reza*. Yet because the use of candles is related specifically to the *light they emit*, and not the candles (i.e., wax sticks) in and of themselves, I have—on more than one occasion—seen the use of colored bulbs (like Christmas lights) on altars. Though it would be unlikely to see candles *substituted entirely by* colored lights on the night of the *reza*, the light sources can certainly sit harmoniously on the altar, and, on a day-to-day basis bulbs might substitute candles (for they are safer than fire-causing candles).

Flowers, in contrast, have a less esoteric value. Simply put, flowers are pretty. One St. Anthony devotee phrased it to me quite matter-of-factly when I asked why she used flowers on the altar: “We all want to get flowers, don’t we?” The type of flower is relatively variable, and sometimes diversification is actually part of the logic of altar decorating. Thus on a yearly basis a devotee might purposely change the flower genus simply for change’s sake. Flower arrangements almost always include daisies (*Bellis annua*) and bundles of greens. In cases where people are unable to afford *live* flowers (or, more rarely, do not have the time to buy them), fake

⁸ I utilize the 2011 New International Version of the Holy Bible, published by Biblica and accessed online at <<http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-International-Version-NIV-Bible>>.

flowers are used. On one occasion, in the absence of—real or fake—flowers, I even witnessed the use of a “flowered” picture frame (see fig. 2.2). The flowers serve the single purpose of making the saint’s altar as *pretty* as possible. Thus although flowers are *not necessary* in *cosmological* terms, they are a socially shared mode by which an altar can be made more beautiful. People furthermore feel saints indeed enjoy floral arrangements.

The significance of candles (and light in general) on altars underscores the value of illumination. But simply “illumination” seems to understate the case; altars ideally exhibit brilliance and radiance. As with candles, light “typifie[s] divine power and holiness” and light is seen as a contrast to the “evil and ignorance of the darkness” (Apostolos-Cappadona 1998: 213). As I illustrate in Party Interlude 5 (pp. 304-312), before beginning a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian one night, the electricity went out. Even with the impatient demands of the large number of already arrived guests, the reza host refused to begin. How can one sing the novena without being able to see the altar? After an hour or so, with the lights still out, the host finally acquiesced, bringing in a profusion of candles to provide as much light as was possible. Partway through the novena the lights came back on and the participants erupted in roaring applause.

Luminosity is more than important for rezas; it is necessary. The house lights are always left on for rezas and often altars are constructed where lights can shine directly on them. These are aesthetic creations designed to be awe-inspiring. But lights and candles are typically not enough. Therefore the cloths used to drape and decorate the altars are often quite reflective. Furthermore, altars are often decorated with a shiny aluminum foil. This is designed to attract and reflect the light in the room. Luminosity is a primary characteristic of Catholic saint altars in Bahia. Indeed, even the humblest altars emphasize brightness. For David Hilary Brown (2003: 250) in the Cuban Regla-de-Ocha context, this “resplendent baroque aesthetic of ‘ornament’ . . .

embodies the *orichas*' status, their wealth, and the virtually unlimited devotion of their priests to them" (also see D. Brown 1996). In a similar way, the splendor of Bahian altars seems to represent the illustrious status of the Catholic saint. But Brown takes his interpretation a magnificent step further: "The luminosity or translucency of cloth brings heaven down to earth, while the material richness and density of layered cloth figures heaven in terms of legible signs of high earthly status, wherein the *orichas* occupy the apex of a sumptuary hierarchy" (D. H. Brown 2003: 250). Candles, brilliant cloths, aluminum foil, and incandescent bulbs act together to help reza attendees experience the glory of divine presence.

THE SAINT'S CLOTH(E)S

Another indispensable aspect of the altar is the saint's clothing (*roupa do santo* or *pano*). This specifically refers to the cloth materials used to decorate the altar. For simpler altars this means a cloth draped over the altar's base. In most cases, these cloths are designed in typically Bahian embroidery (see Fig. 2.4) and cut patterns (see Fig. 2.2). The more splendid the altar, the more lavish its cloths. The grandiosity of an altar is partly defined, after all, by its ostentation. While certainly much of this has been inherited from a long history of "theatrical" baroque aesthetic devices (D. H. Brown 2003: 231; see also Jarrard 2003), there are other more contemporary concerns at work. If indeed opulence is a socially shared sign of beauty, then people are more likely to approve of cloths that are brilliant and "outrageous." As such, investing in sumptuous material for one's altar is an investment in social capital. More impressive altars, after all, are more memorable and represent a step toward assuring that people return the following year. Yet the investment in expensive cloths goes beyond the domain of human social relations. As David Brown (2003) notes vis-à-vis Cuban *oricha* thrones:

[T]he act of throne building is a performance in itself, the primary audience of which comprises the *orichas as subjects*, who must be aesthetically content with their presentation, physically comfortable in the space, satisfied with the appropriateness of the iconography selected to represent them, and fully respected by a worthy amount of work and elaboration. (p. 245)

In the same sense, Bahian altars for Catholic saints are designed to be beautiful for their human party guests *and* for their patron saint. Thus the cloths are chosen with care and concern.

Significantly, this includes prudence regarding the selection of the cloth's color.

The most common color on altars is white. This is likely because white, significant in any number of traditions, offers an unparalleled symbolic polyvalence. "In the Roman Catholic context, a pure white linen cloth, covering the top of the altar table and extending down the sides, symbolizes the shroud of Jesus" (D. H. Brown 2003: 227). From a Black Atlantic perspective, the use of white may largely derive from a shared history of Kardecian Spiritism (see Ch. 5), and may refer to Allan Kardec's initial teachings of what is termed, in both the Caribbean and Brazil, a "white table session" (Bettelheim 2005: 314; Brazeal 2003: 651-652). And in a more abstract and undefined sense, as Lorand Matory (2005: 247) notes, the color white "often conveys the idea of spiritual essence when worn by black Atlantic people." Here white is as referential to spirituality as it is to peace and purity. Thus the widespread use of a decorated *white* cloth on altars, rather than a cloth of another color, seems rooted in a variety of socio-historical Christian and non-Christian notions of spirituality and purity.

The non-white colors chosen for altars typically correspond to culturally coded symbols of the saints themselves. Thus an altar's colors, particularly concerning the cloths, are hardly aleatory. In a fairly homogeneous way, people throughout the Recôncavo associate Catholic saints with specific color combinations: St. Roch (white, red, yellow); Sts. Cosmas and Damian (blue, white, rainbow); Our Lady of the Conception (blue, white); St. Anthony (blue); and St.

Barbara (red). Other saints also have color associations, but the above list includes only the saints/colors typically found in Bahian rezas. These colors are expressed in the cloths that hang behind the saint iconography and drape over the base, while also serving as the color scheme for other decorations such as balloons or paper streamers. But there appears to be no pre-Brazilian precedent for such color associations. Indeed, non-Brazilian iconographic representations of St. Roch, St. Anthony, or St. Barbara do not use these color schemes. In other words, these are locally elaborated color schemes.

It is well known that West African derived *orixás* also have specific color associations that in many cases cross national boundaries. For example, Xangó in Brazil is associated with red, just as is Changó in Cuba. In a study on Bahia's African-influenced art market, Crowley and Ross (1981) point out the importance that products' color schemes have for buyers in identifying Orixás, explaining that "again it is the color of the beads that provides the identification: dark blue for Ogum; red, black and white [and also yellow] for Omulu; and red for Iansã" (Crowley and Ross 1981: 59), and "crystal white and crystal blue or green" for Iemanjá (Omari-Tunkara 2005: 149).⁹ This is where the question of syncretism creeps into the discussion. As addressed in the Introduction, the debate regarding Bahian "syncretism" is sticky, to say the least, but it seems undeniable that some of the basic tenets for saint-orixá relations are generally true. Thus for a majority of Bahians, specific Orixás (or groups of Orixás) are associated—iconographically, spiritually, gustatorially, etc.—with specific Catholic saints. And these are widely shared associations. For example, I have often heard people refer to an image of St. Anthony *as* Ogum. In a similar way, Omolú/Obaluaiê is "syncretized" with St. Roch, Iansã with St. Barbara, and Iemanjá with Our Lady of the Conception.

⁹ Of course it is not only colors that provide the identification of Orixás. As Omari (1984: 18) observes, "A complex symbolic system identifies each Orixá by songs, beads, colors, dance steps, leaves, and herbs."

Considering the color associations I have listed above, it seems clear that Catholic saints in Bahia share colors with their “syncretized” Orixás. Why? Why are both St. Anthony’s and Ogum’s colors blue? Some might say the orixás’ colors came first, while others might argue that the Catholic iconography is antecedent. But this “chicken or the egg” paradox seems restricting; what if the chicken developed *with* the egg? David Brown meditates on the topic in the Cuban context:

If Cuban Lucumí iconography borrowed from Roman Catholic prototypes, the latter were already overdetermined, locally elaborated versions of European baroque religious expressions. And, in many cases, *oricha* attributes did not so much *follow* from the saints’ accessories; for particular adornments of some saints and *orichas* historically emerged in roughly parallel fashion and formed symbioses at the local level. . . . In the minds of Regla’s *santeros*, these insignia “colors” (blue and white with silver) and attributes of the black Virgin [of Regla] have always been shared with Yemayá. (D. H. Brown 2003: 217-218)¹⁰

While one might be hard pressed to isolate exactly how these associations developed, it is worth noting that these color schemes in the Bahian religious landscape have become what in the Cuban context David Brown (2003: 222) calls “a kind of sartorial lingua franca.” The color schemes that characterize these Catholic saints have grown out of the creative decisions of local Bahian actors in negotiating the relationship they share with the Catholic Church and the unique conditions of the Black Atlantic. As such, today’s taken-for-granted “standard” colors of St. Roch, St. Anthony, and a whole host of other Catholic saints, are nothing less than signs of the innovative local articulation of global history.

THE SAINT’S *NEW CLOTH(E)S*

I would like now to offer an ethnographic foray into the value of cloth and colors, as well as of remembering the past (see Ch. 1). Every year, Dona Tânia holds a *reza* for St. Anthony. It

¹⁰ It is difficult not to revel in the similarities highlighted here between iconographic representations of Brazil’s the Virgin of the Conception/Iemanjá and Cuba’s Virgin of Regla/Yemayá, suggesting once again the fertile ground for geographically broadminded research.

is a devotion she inherited from her father, one which he had initiated long before her birth. In a magnificent stroke of luck—or if preferred, divine intervention—Dona Tânia was born on June 13th, St. Anthony’s day. Thus there was no better family member to assume her father’s devotion than Dona Tânia, who shared this special date with St. Anthony since birth. After marrying, she accepted her responsibility and began holding the reza at her home. Decades later, Dona Tânia still holds her annual devotion for St. Anthony. Dona Tânia adjusts her altar every year by systematically changing the flower genus that will grace St. Anthony’s sacred space. But she has learned the hard way that she has to be careful about changing facets beyond the flowers. Typically, the cloth (*pano*) is blue and white (Fig. 2.7). Blue, as already mentioned, is St. Anthony’s color, and the mixing into the color scheme of white—a color symbolizing spirituality and peace—is a common practice. Furthermore, because her family also had a devotion to Our Lady of the Conception (whose colors are white and blue), Dona Tânia’s choice to “dress” St. Anthony in blue and white appears to have been quite logical. This had been the color scheme for as long as she could remember. It had, in other words, become “tradition.” But, as people often do, she decided it was time to “change things up” (*variar as coisas*) by altering St. Anthony’s clothes for her 2010 reza. Rather than the traditional blue and white, Dona Tânia decided to go with a yellow *pano* to decorate the saint’s altar.



Fig. 2.7. Close up view of Dona Tânia's altar for St. Anthony. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

After substituting the blue and white with yellow, Dona Tânia suddenly fell desperately and inexplicably ill. But friends and neighbors seemed to suspect the reason for the unexpected sickness, and thus accusatorily asked her: “But why did you *change the tradition?*” Dona Tânia quickly restored the altar with blue and white and her health gradually improved. When we spoke in 2011, Dona Tânia repentantly affirmed to me with sincerity that she will never again mess with “tradition.” Tânia never explained to me exactly what she thought had happened, but it would have been superfluous for her to do so. The message was clear to anyone who understood the logics associated with human/saint relationships. Dona Tânia had “changed St. Anthony’s tradition,” as her friends had observed, and this irritated the saint to the degree that he decided to teach her a lesson. The two most common means by which saints are believed to manifest their ire is by attacking bodies or bank accounts. In Dona Tânia’s case, St. Anthony chose her body. And what was St. Anthony’s lesson to Dona Tânia? Simply put, don’t change the *pano*.

A number of issues raised here deserve some attention. First, it should be noted that the neighbors were not critical of her particular color selection. That is, it was not that *yellow* was a poorer choice than, say, *green* or *red*. The problem derived from the decision to discard the “traditional” blue and white. Why is St. Anthony perceived as being so attached to tradition? Part of this is related to the core value of continuity that I discussed in Ch. 1. It is important for people to continue doing things as “they always have” because the saint has “always” enjoyed it. However, stasis is not a necessary characteristic of rezas. And in fact Dona Tânia’s “tradition” vis-à-vis flowers involves annual change: the flowers are switched on a yearly basis. Indeed, she explained to me with great enthusiasm how in 2011 she had been inspired to choose a rather hard-to-find flower. Flowers, as I have already discussed, are used mainly for beautification and can be adjusted according to individual tastes. St. Anthony’s blue and white *pano*, however, exercises a much heavier symbolic role.

The saint *is* the color blue. The color sensuously embodies the entity in abstract but clearly communicable ways. If indeed the main purpose of the reza is to remember, to change the saint’s color is an *intentional*—even if unconscious—attempt at forgetting. Changing the saint’s *representative* color is to forget who the saint is. But the offense is more severe. Firstly, St. Anthony was Dona Tânia’s father’s devotion and to forget her father’s saint is, in part, to forget her own father. Changing St. Anthony’s history in the present has the unintended consequence of changing her own history in relation to her father. But St. Anthony is connected to a broader historical memory, that of St. Anthony’s history in Bahia (see Mott 1996) and the history of Ogum and the Black Atlantic context that spawned the Orixá’s cult in Brazil. After all, Bahia’s St. Anthony, though a Portuguese inheritance (see Bettencourt 1947), is also a product of the Black Atlantic.

For this reason, the historically prevalent association between St. Anthony and Ogum is mutually implicating. Elizabeth McAlister speaks to this issue in the Haitian context:

American cultures evolved through processes of creolization, wherein cultural tropes and symbols shift and reconfigure themselves within unequal power relations. Both the Afro-Haitian religion and the Catholicism that evolved in Haiti were constructed in dialectical relation to each other. To a significant degree, both Vodou and Catholicism have incorporated the other into its philosophies and practices. *Each tradition is constitutive and revealing of the other.* (McAlister 2002: 122-123, emphasis added)

For McAlister, a study of Catholicism is a study of Vodou and vice-versa. Not because they have the same particular histories but because they share a single, mutually constituted history. In the same way, because St. Anthony has historically shared with Ogum iconography (including the color blue), gustatory associations (*feijoada*, or beans), and—to a lesser degree—certain warrior-like characteristics, forgetting one is equally a forgetting of the other. Consequently, the historical and polyvalent weight of a single color makes changing it that much more significant.

Altering particular aspects of the tradition is akin to forgetting them. But it is not simply forgetting the “tradition” of a blue and white cloth. To give St. Anthony new clothes is to give St. Anthony a new history, one that distorts Dona Tânia’s own personal and collective past. This new, yellow St. Anthony is not her father’s St. Anthony, nor is it Bahia’s St. Anthony. Of course the point is not whether St. Anthony did, in some “objective” way, afflict Dona Tânia for her decision. In fact, whether saints exercise agency at all is relatively unimportant here. The central issue is that Dona Tânia and others *interpreted* the events to have resulted from her interference with “tradition.”

3. Altars as Memory Clusters

As illustrated in my interpretation of Dona Tânia’s sickness upon substituting St. Anthony’s blue and white *pano*, my primary argument is that altars are artistic mosaics of

personal and collective memories. Each item on the altar specifically or abstractly indexes a past person, place, or event. But they are not “memory machines.” The histories altars embody are highly personal while also overtly social. If “memory” is in fact, as Diana Taylor (2003: 82) asserts, “conjured through the senses,” altars act—particularly during the reza—as a highly “sensuous” mode of activating memories. Just as Cuban spirit dolls “represent[] a practitioner’s specific spirit guide that belongs only to them and at the same time embod[y] the ritual knowledge transmitted by these spiritual ancestors over generations” (Viarnes 2010: 320), altars, too, serve as “memory clusters” that simultaneously and achronistically index a whole host of intertwined histories. But how does this happen? I have already shown that altars have general aesthetic and spiritual “rules,” but how do these go from “cultural products” (i.e., impersonal) to personal memoirs? How do they go from things to art? To begin, it is necessary to understand that altars take on their own life because they are additive. Though the “base altar” may be relatively similar amongst devotees, altars are never planned. They are “inspired.” Altars, after all, are spiritual works of biographical art.

ADDITIVITY

Altars, like rezas and human lives, are additive. This means that altars progressively grow. From a piecemeal perspective, altars become increasingly meaningful and—to the outsider—increasingly fractured. For Sansi (2009: 150), “altars are the result of a continuous personal and social history, accumulated, in process. . . . [T]he elements that compose the altar are more indexes of the relationship between saint and devout than symbols of the orixá. As indices, their value is the material consequence of an event.” In much the same way, Catholicism-inspired altars index a relationship not only between the devout and the saint (represented by the “image”), but also between the devout and the event that resulted in the

acquisition of the image. Such an “event” might relate to individuals, a pilgrimage, or a spiritual experience. David Brown similarly points out that in Cuban Regla-de-Ocha, “It is possible to see beadwork, clothwork, and other created *orichá* objects as an associated/associatable, mimetic or indexical series, without the assumption that conceptual blueprints of extended abstract reflection upon ‘meanings’ intervene in their production. Some practitioners ‘associate’ more concretely, and others reflect more abstractly” (D. H. Brown 1996: 99).

This additivity became to me markedly salient on one occasion in particular. One day I decided I wanted to buy a gift for Dona Maria, a prayer leader I will introduce more thoroughly in Ch. 3. Since our relationship had been built around Catholic saint devotions, I resolved to purchase something for her altar. Noticing that her plaster statuettes of St. Bartholomew and St. Lazarus were in terribly weathered conditions, I determined I would find her replacements. I eagerly trotted into the Catholic iconography store and “traded” my money for two modest statuettes that I found to be particularly beautiful. Upon my next visit to Dona Maria’s house, I surprised her with my gifts. As she unwrapped the plastic, she meticulously analyzed the figurines. Identifying the distinctive features of each saint, such as St. Bartholomew’s shoulder cloth and St. Lazarus’ crutch, she said aloud, “Ah! Saint Bartholomew and Saint Lazarus.” She proceeded to thank me and beckoned her grandchildren so that they too could see the new acquisitions. Shortly thereafter, Dona Maria rewrapped the statuettes in the plastic and set both of them on her altar. It was a number of months before I was able to return to Dona Maria’s house, but when I did, I was confounded to see St. Bartholomew and St. Lazarus—still wrapped in their plastic—placed snugly next to the weathered St. Bartholomew and St. Lazarus! This to me was like seeing a lead and an understudy sharing a stage. Now she had two St. Bartholomews and two St. Lazaruses. Rather than *replace* her old saints, she simply *doubled* them.

In retrospect, I am unsure what I thought she was going to do with her timeworn saints; she certainly would not throw them away. Such an act would be blasphemous and symbolically violent. Furthermore, and much more importantly, the saints she received from me were not *just saints*. The saints were a gift from *that* odd young man (me) who seems to find her singing wonderful and her stories interesting. But the saints go beyond that. They also encapsulate the memories that linked me to her: the reza I attended with her, the photos I took of her that night, the interview I conducted with her afterwards, etc. Moreover, the images themselves carry their own *independent* symbolic value: they are pretty (I think), they are reminders of her Catholic identity, they “improve” her altar by making it *larger* and more aesthetically attractive, they are hagiographic lessons, etc. Thus two St. Lazaruses are not in fact two St. Lazaruses. Each statuette is aesthetically unique, historically significant, and emotionally charged. This logic of additivity helps explain why so many altars have what appear to “repeat representations” of the same saint. Indeed, they are never in fact identical. Each saint is a very *personal experience* encapsulated and materialized in a *collective* vessel. Thus like the number of individual life experiences, altars always grow. Altars, the central foci of rezas, are additive definitionally. But what’s more, altars are central *because* they are additive.

STEP 1: DONA IVONE’S AGGREGATION OF MEMORIES

But additivity is not a euphemism for haphazardness. Each altar is thought out with care and organized according to clear *personal* logics that relate as much to individual aesthetic choices as to socially shared practices. And the best way to understand this is accompany the construction of an altar. I do not intend, however, to offer a piece-by-piece archeological excavation of an altar. Rather I am going to look at the altar in fragments, just as it was created. In other words, as I present the description of how a woman constructed her altar, I will gloss

over some elements while exploring in-depth others, using her emphases as my guide. The altar I mine is that of Dona Ivone. Constructed over the course of more than four decades, Dona Ivone's altar is exceptional. While perhaps not any more so than anyone else's, her altar is no doubt exceptional because it is hers. When she looks at her altar she sees, hears, and remembers things that no one else could. It has a deeply personal logic rooted in the intricacies of her personal history. But who is Dona Ivone?

Dona Ivone was born and raised in the rural Faceira neighborhood of Cachoeira, just south of the city's urban center along the Paraguaçu River. Born in 1942, she currently lives as a widow with her daughter, son-in-law, and grandson, while some of her other grandchildren live just a few doors down. Dona Ivone considers herself a devout and religious Catholic, though she is self-admittedly a fickle churchgoer. She also comes from a long line of Caboclo mediums; both her mother and her father had Caboclos and she herself has two, though she does not "take care" of them (see Ch. 5). Dona Ivone has been a devotee of Sts. Cosmas and Damian for nearly half a century, and this devotion began soon after she began having children. Dona Ivone gave birth to *three* separate sets of twins: two boys, a boy and a girl, and finally two girls. Only the twin sisters—born on January 6, 1965—survived. Dona Ivone explains that no one in her family had ever given birth to twins before and thus she attributes to the supernatural her remarkable tendency to mother twins. And since in Bahia it is widely believed that women who have twins should celebrate Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Dona Ivone followed this cultural "mandate."

She began by "trading" two small images of St. Cosmas and St. Damian after her twin girls were first born and survived (see Fig. 2.8). Not long after, she occupied the house in which she currently resides. Interestingly, when I asked her to tell me about her altar, Dona Ivone began by telling me about her living conditions. She said she and her husband were only renters, and

the house needed a lot of work, facts that I soon learned had a lot to do with the genesis of the elevated marble tiers that today house the altar's many saints (Fig. 2.9). She explained it as follows:

So I said, "Oh Cosmas, if you were to give me this house, for me to have your party, I would remove this wall here." See, here was a corridor. So then the owner of the house decided to sell the house. My husband said he wouldn't . . . buy it because he'd have to fix it up. So there we were. And suddenly someone came along interested in buying it. . . . So I went before [Cosmas]. I said, "I guess it's true, Cosmas. I'm going back to the house I came from, huh?" So I promised, "if you were to give me this house, I'd open up this area for your samba." Then one day [my husband] went to bed and woke up to go to work. He told me to go talk to the owner of the house because he was going to buy it. . . . So he bought the house. Then I said "Oh Cosmas, if I can fix this house to knock down this wall, I would change the platform there . . . I would take off the plywood and replace it with marble. . . . So I replaced it."¹¹

While this description resounds a bit more like a home remodeling job than the fantastic tale of a supernatural experience, the relationship between St. Cosmas and Dona Ivone is one of intimacy and exchange. Notice that Dona Ivone never calls the saint by his honorific title of "saint." For her, St. Cosmas is a familiar being, he is simply "Cosmas." So Cosmas got a fancy marble platform on which to sit *in exchange* for having participated in the successful acquisition of Dona Ivone's new home. But there was still only one tier, not two as there are today.

¹¹ This information comes from two interviews with Dona Ivone at her home in Cachoeira. One was held on January 6, 2012, while the other was on February 10, 2012.



Fig. 2.8. Images that grace the apex of Dona Ivone's altar to Sts. Cosmas and Damian. The arrows indicate the first Sts. Cosmas and Damian images that Dona Ivone acquired. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)



Fig. 2.9. Dona Ivone's altar to Sts. Cosmas and Damian. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

Dona Ivone explained how the next tier came along: “Afterwards, St. Roch arrived and [there were] St. Cosmas and St. Anthony [all on the same tier], so I requested of him . . . ‘If he were to help me put in [the back patio], I’m going to put on another *piso* [tier] for you to be

alone,’ and that’s this one in the middle.” Dona Ivone pointed excitedly to the thin tier that occupies the middle of the altar. “Do you understand? It was this one in the middle.” And she repeated herself: “I told him, if he helped me put in the cement ground [in the patio], I’d give him a tier all to himself. So *that* is the objective of his being there alone. Do you get it? That each grace I request of him, I promise and he provides for me. I don’t just say it, I also do it.” Summing up, each higher tier represents another life conquest. And because St. Cosmas has been her chief collaborator, his likeness receives the recompense. He gets to sit higher up and is displayed more prominently than the other images on the altar. Dona Ivone then clarified the symbolism: “[Like] a person with the devotion . . . the person only wants to grow. . . . [W]e, too, are growing in our faith and something also is improving in our lives, isn’t it?” The movement *up the altar* for Sts. Cosmas and Damian is directly correlated with Dona Ivone’s move *up in life*, as she fixed up her house and improved her life.¹²

Over the last four decades, however, Dona Ivone’s altar has not only grown upwards. It has also grown in substance as it obtains an increasing number of saints and related adornments, each with its own set of stories. “There are some underneath there,” Dona Ivone explained, pointing to the lower tier. “Those are smaller ones that a person might give me as a gift. He [or she] says, ‘Look Ivone, I brought an image for you, since you like them. Then they bring them—there’s St. Joseph, Our Lady of Candles. Small ones are St. Benedict, there’s St. Francis, the Heart of Jesus . . . there’s a small St. Anthony, Our Lady of Graces. . . . So the family arrives and I just place them there. But St. Cosmas always has his own place.” The logic was the same vis-à-vis the rosaries that share the altar with the saints. “Ah, every time I go somewhere I buy them, or else lots of people give them to me as presents when they go to [Bom Jesus da] Lapa, or any

¹² It is worth remembering that the term “altar” is itself a derivative of the Latin word for “high” (Apostolos-Cappadona 1998: 22).

place, you know, religious.” And the little ribbons? “[W]hen I go I bring them, [so does] Creuza, Lenia, Gaída. . . . They bring them to me as gifts Every place they go, they know I’m devout, that I’m religious, so they bring them. ‘I brought this back. Here, I brought a ribbon.’ They’re all like that.”

Nearly all of the items on the altar—saints, ribbons, rosaries, candelabra, etc.—arrived like this. Someone, and in some cases Dona Ivone herself, brought the item as a gift from somewhere. This “somewhere” may have been the religious site in the nearby town of Candeias, the nationally famous Bom Jesus da Lapa pilgrimage site in the Bahian *sertão* (backlands),¹³ or some other place. The point is that while Dona Ivone had to decide to place the image on the altar, the selection of *that* particular image over another—for example, St. Joseph over St. Peter—was not necessarily in her hands. Thus when the image is placed on the altar it acts as an immediate index to the person (i.e., “pilgrim”) who chose it for her and to the conditions under which s/he did so (i.e., a trip to Bom Jesus da Lapa, a birthday, etc.). Thus, like Candomblé altars, “[t]he choice of a particular object can be the result of intuition, or even of a summons by the object” (Sansi 2007: 39). Dona Ivone does not *need* two Our Ladies of Aparecida to complete what she calls her “family of saints.” But she was “summoned” by the objects in the sense that someone chose them and gave them to her. And each, with its own history, uniquely encapsulates a distinct set of memories.

But of course some images carry much more sentimental and historical value than others. When I asked about her image of St. Roch, Dona Ivone was quick to respond. “From my mother-in-law. See, she used to do the devotions for my husband. At the time I didn’t want to follow with the tradition because she would make a pilgrimage to a *cajá* tree (*Spondias mombin*) that was near a *macumba* [Candomblé house] that was very important and I didn’t want to keep the

¹³ For more on Bom Jesus da Lapa, see Gross (1971) and Steil (1996).

tradition. So she took the image and gave it to me.” The famous “macumba,” was the historically important Capivari Candomblé house, which was founded in São Félix during the mid-19th century (see Wimberly 1998). And the pilgrimage that Dona Ivone’s mother-in-law completed was related to a contractual agreement with St. Roch. The saint had apparently intervened on Dona Ivone’s deceased husband’s behalf in order to cure him of an illness earlier in life. Thus Dona Ivone’s mother-in-law would annually go on her pilgrimage and also hold a reza for St. Roch. But Dona Ivone had no interest in making the annual journey. Still, in accepting to house the image of St. Roch, Dona Ivone was also accepting the promise made in her husband’s name. For this reason, Dona Ivone today makes it a point to include St. Roch in the novena (by singing his “Bendito”). The statuette of St. Roch, then, became an important polyvalent index of individual memories—Dona Ivone’s deceased husband, her mother-in-law, the obligation she accepted as a good daughter-in-law—and collective memories—St. Roch’s divine healing powers, the value of devotion and obligation, the spiritual power of the historically significant Capivari Candomblé.

However, St. Roch serves as more than just an index of her *husband’s* past. The image is also able to aggregate new memories. One day, years ago, one of Dona Ivone’s daughters woke up with some sort of infection. Her right leg swelled up, engulfed in an unknown rash. Dona Ivone naturally rushed her daughter to the doctor. No doctor in Cachoeira or even Salvador or Feira de Santana (the two largest cities in Bahia) could cure her. Eventually, and reluctantly, Dona Ivone turned to a “powerful” non-denominational spiritual healer, or spiritist, in Cachoeira. When she entered the room to speak with this spiritist for the first time, Dona Ivone was shocked to be asked immediately about her daughter. So she responded in disbelief: “But I said nothing about a daughter!” “Yes,” explained the spiritist, “but I know you’re here because of what has

happened to your daughter.” Dona Ivone was advised to rub a black chicken on her daughter’s leg and then to release it in a designated spot somewhere down the Paraguaçu River. She was further instructed to send St. Roch’s “flowers” (unsalted popcorn) down the small stream that ran near her home, and also to bathe her daughter in “flowers” after dressing her in white. The final procedure was the distribution of “flowers” to the neighbors during St. Roch’s month, August. Dona Ivone assured me that even today, years later, she continues to distribute popcorn every Monday during the month of August.

Certainly this miraculous story about a saint’s powers to heal (both Dona Ivone’s deceased husband and daughter) could in itself be the focus of a long discussion. But for now I would like to the focus back to the St. Roch image that sits upon Dona Ivone’s altar. Both of these stories, with their depth and detail, are encapsulated in the little decades-old statuette. Though it originally became part of the altar because of a mother-in-law’s devotion, the statuette of St. Roch eventually came to embody the story of triumph against an incurable leg infection. The image also remains a reminder that popcorn must always be distributed in August. For Dona Ivone, then, the statuette is a polyvalent keepsake of a whole host of individual and culturally shared experiences and beliefs, ranging from St. Roch’s healing graces and a mother’s love for her offspring to the power of a local spiritist and the spiritual energy of popcorn. Furthermore, the image is a reminder about the importance of keeping one’s pact with a saint, and about devotion in general. These images—statuettes and chromolithographs—are never just *static* representations of the past. They are additive and mutable as their owners attribute to them new meanings and new memories, acting as *active* and *communicative* “receptacles” for the ordering of a person’s own histories and experiences. There is more I could say about the other images on

the altar, including a particular saint's associated with other relatives and offspring, but I will leave her memories dormant for now.

STEP 2: DONA IVONE ARRANGING HER MEMORIES

From an analytical point of view it is tempting to treat altars primarily as “memory clusters.” But that would be—as analysis too often can be—a warped distortion of reality. First and foremost, altars are installations designed to be beautiful for the saint. Thus while it is both informative and important to deconstruct *why* each material item is on the altar, the aesthetic value of this (specifically) Catholic masterpiece cannot be neglected. This is why Dona Ivone puts so much time and effort into preparing the altar for the night of her *reza*, while seeming to accept images and adornments rather indiscriminately. For instance, every year—strikingly differently from Dona Tânia—Dona Ivone *changes* the saint's *pano*. While it is always an embroidered white cloth, it is newly purchased (from the same vender) annually. Furthermore, I was present when she organized the altar for her 2012 *reza*. The flowers, which were wild flowers that year, were freshly bought the day of the *reza*. Her grandson meticulously put together the arrangements, prudently dusted each tier of the altar, and wiped clean each of the images (Fig. 2.10). The statuettes themselves are in beautiful condition, not only because Dona Ivone treats them with care but also because she occasionally has them touched up (i.e., painted). But Dona Ivone's grandson did not work alone. His mother, one of Dona Ivone's twin daughters, helped him while his grandmother worked as an “art director,” constantly evaluating the aesthetic decisions they were making and often directing them to make changes.



Fig. 2.10. The preparation of Dona Ivone's altar. Her granddaughter sits cutting okra for the *caruru*. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

I have already shown that a saint's position on the altar matters. St. Cosmas and St. Damian, for instance, "deserved" their own tier for all the assistance they had offered Dona Ivone. A lone image receives more attention for this, people believe, greatly pleases the saint. Furthermore, the higher up the images are, the more the saint is growing up toward God. Yet the way in which the saints are arranged may change depending on the day. So, explained Dona Ivone, "[t]oday is St. Barbara's day, so I'll arrange it, I put her in the middle, right? Or say today is St. Roch's day. I take her off, put her over here and put him in the middle, higher up. Each one has his [or her] place on the right day." Thus if the saint is to be honored on *that* particular day, his/her image is placed in the middle and higher up because this is seen as an aesthetic technique to draw an onlooker's attention. This explains why each saint is located where s/he is. St. Cosmas and St. Damian are located at the very top not only because it was their *reza* (when the photos were taken) but because they are Dona Ivone's principal patron saints. Fig. 2.11 shows

that Our Lady of Aparecida sits on a little foil-covered box. I asked why. The box was used to elevate the statuette and the foil was used “because it looks more decent.”



Fig. 2.11. Images that occupy the middle tier of Dona Ivone’s altar. From left to right: St. Anthony of Pádua, St. Barbara (larger statuette), Our Lady of Aparecida, and St. Roch. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

Each aesthetic decision, while rooted in a shared cultural logic, is an individual choice. While everyone uses flowers, what kind they are and how they are arranged will differ by household. Similarly, while altars will all be lit, how this illumination is achieved (candles, bulbs, spotlights, etc.) is up to the altar’s artistic director. The altar-maker chooses where each saint will rest just as s/he chooses how the altar will be constructed in the first place. Altars are, in Sansi’s (2011: 280) words, “a jumbling together of discrete parts or pieces” that “[are] something more, or something other, than the mere accumulation of these parts.” As I see it, this “something more” *is art* (see Introduction). Again, looking to understand people’s intentions in creating altars forces one to confront the fact that people organize altars in an attempt to make beautiful edifices for their patron saints to appreciate and for their human guests to admire. Thus

while one should understand that each image is its own discrete memory cluster, and their aggregation on the altar creates a larger “spiritual life history,” one cannot marginalize the altar’s uniqueness as artistic expression. As Kay Turner (1982: 320) notes for Mexican-American altars in Texas, “[T]he altar [is] a simultaneous sacred and artistic site. For in both religious experience and artistic expression we expect to experience the interlocking of cosmos and history, of space and time. This breaking down of orders and dichotomies . . . is the essence of art and religion.”

In this sense, altars are certainly much more than the “jumbling of discrete parts.” Just as a painting is not a “jumbling of discrete strokes of paint,” altars themselves take on their own meanings. They are divinely inspired works of art that are constantly being augmented and adjusted. Their meanings change over time not only because each image brings its own unique qualities but because each image—like the stroke of a paintbrush—alters the masterpiece. Altars are their own story. I consider altars to be masterpieces, but not because they aggregate memories. They are masterpieces because they thoughtfully weave discrete moments of an individual’s history into a unique and *self-contained* work of art. In other words, like any work of art, no prior knowledge is necessary to appreciate the altar, but the more one learns about its genesis (i.e., inspiration), the more beautiful it seems to become.

4. Photography and Altars

If indeed images of saints are *like* photos of dead relatives (and many people even use the analogy), why not place a relative’s photo on the altar? This is, after all, common in many other traditions, including some Catholic-inspired traditions.¹⁴ While I have in fact seen a photo or two of an ancestor on an altar, this is a rare practice. Photos, which are usually hung on walls or

¹⁴ Kay Turner (1982), for instance, notes that ancestral and present day family photographs are commonplace on Mexican-American Catholic home altars in Austin, Texas. The author interprets this as being “an obvious demonstration of the relation the altar maker assigns between her family and the heavenly family” (p. 320).

placed in frames on television stands, do not tend to make it onto altars. I would suggest that this is largely rooted in their purpose. These are Catholicism-inspired altars for saints, not Buddhist shrines for past ancestors. They are designed to be attractive “homes” for the *living* saints, not memorials for loved ones. The altars’ adornments certainly embody (and activate) memories and experiences, as I have already discussed, but these are abstract and oblique retainers. Dona Ivone’s image of St. Roch is, for all practical purposes, a representation of a French saint who miraculously cured people with the sign of the cross as he traveled through 14th-century Europe. For her, and those close to her, it is St. Roch *and* it is also a reminder about a pilgrimage, a deceased husband, an infected leg, etc.

In this sense, the statuettes and altar decorations encapsulate history without necessarily being what Naficy (1993: 151) calls “festish-souvenirs” to be “displayed and consumed over and over.” Far from it. In fact, these images are constantly part of the present. They, like altars themselves (and *rezas* in general), are additive; they accumulate history rather than congeal it. This is why Dona Ivone’s statuette of St. Roch, a constant reminder of her mother-in-law, was able also to aggregate a much later case of her daughter’s illness. While photos of individuals act only to freeze the past, images of saints seamlessly weave disparate individual and collective histories together, though always leaving room for another story. The value of the image is its ability to index memories in abstract ways, allowing histories to be retold, reconfigured, and even forgotten. Unlike a family photo, the saint is not the only story of the image. Rather it is an abstract representation of a number of (hi)stories.

With such an explanation, one might imagine my surprise when—on the occasion of a *reza* for St. Roch—I saw nestled on an altar a photo that had seemingly been taken in the dark with no flash and was tattered from what appeared to be age and humidity (see Fig. 2.2, at the

bottom left of the image of St. Roch). I asked Dona Meire what the photo was on her altar. “Do you mean the photo you brought?” Her answer confused me, so I clarified, “No, no. The photo on the altar.” She looked up to the altar, “It’s St. Roch.” Yes, I thought, I know it is St. Roch’s altar, but what about the photo? “But I’m talking about the photo,” I said, growing impatient. “Yes,” she responded quickly. Dona Meire clearly sensed my confusion so reached up and grabbed the photo off of the altar. “This here, right?” she asked. I nodded. She continued: “this is that photo you brought from last time.” “Ooooh!” The humidity spots had made the photo unrecognizable. Not only that, but the photo was so poorly taken that I doubted anyone but Dona Meire knew what it was (see Fig. 2.3). I had taken the photo when I attended her reza in 2009 and had given her a copy of it. My photographic work during the 2009 reza was difficult due to an electrical problem with the home’s lights as well as the fact that the camera I used had no flash (or adjustable manual settings). And this terrible photo was the only one I had taken. “I’m so happy to see that it’s on the altar,” I commented. “Yes,” she said, “It sits there at St. Roch’s feet.” I lamented its weathered condition and promised to print another copy of the photo. She looked at the picture and reiterated: “This one’s from last year. And the CD you brought is with my daughter.”

I relate this account for a number of reasons. First, I can use it to reemphasize how an image acts as an index for a larger memory. This poor, dark photo of St. Roch was hardly a representational “image” of the saint. However, Dona Meire knows it is St. Roch, that I took it, the year I took it, and that it came accompanied by what she called a CD (though it was in fact a DVD), on which she could watch the reza I had filmed that night. The photo, independent of how dark it is and how weathered it is, holds much more meaning than just *being* St. Roch. The indexed 2009 reza was the first year I attended Dona Meire’s reza and, though I returned the

following year, she must have thought that 2009 marked the visit “of that strange young fellow who took pictures and filmed my devotion” (a more detailed description of her reza is presented in Party Interlude 2, pp. 105-110).

Another thing worth mentioning, in regards to this case, is the use of photography in devotional practices. When I asked what the picture was, Dona Meire’s answer was “St. Roch.” In this way, the photo serves a purpose no different from a statuette or a chromolithograph, meaning that the photo acts as a “link” to the spirit world. In the 1970s, Michelle Houlberg noted that photography was increasingly being used to represent deceased Yorùbá twins that had until that time only been depicted in carved form: “The use of the photograph as such an active link with the spirit world is unprecedented in the history of photography as far as I know” (Houlberg 1973: 27). The prominence of this religious use of photography among the Yorùbá is evident in the 21st-century West African popularity of the so-called “double portrait” as a specific category of artistic production (Micheli 2011). While Dona Meire’s adornment of her altar with St. Roch’s photograph is rare, I would argue that her logic is not. The photo is a visual representation of her patron saint in beautiful form (i.e., decorated on the altar), so why not include him?

While I always take photographs of decorated altars, the practice is not common among devotees themselves. People do not tend to take pictures of their altars. What they do, however, is take pictures *with* their altars. At nearly every reza I have attended—when I have my camera in hand—I have been asked to take a picture of the reza’s host (and various members of the family) with the altar. And people marvel at how beautiful their altar is when I give them copies later. Only very rarely do people comment on the CDs I give them of the audio I record at events. After all, taking a picture of a person with his/her altar functions as would a picture of that person *with the saint*. As I mentioned earlier, Dona Meire referenced the photo as one of “St.

Roch.” Technically, the photo is not of “St. Roch,” but of his altar (not to mention the entire room in which the altar is erected). But this makes no difference; the altar *is* the saint. People will often say, “take a picture of me with St. Roch,” or “I’m so happy you’ve come to film St. Anthony.” This cognitive detail is hardly insignificant. The reason people work so hard in making the *altars* pretty is because they are decorating more than the physical edifice; they are also decorating the saint.

5. Keeping Altars Up to Date

A final (brief) point I would like to make regarding the additivity and creation of altars relates to change. I have explained a bit about how Catholicism-inspired altars in Bahia change with the times, but I will offer a brief description of a case that demonstrates how the socially shared Catholic present can be integrated into a domestic altar. On Sunday, May 22, 2011, Catholic nun Beata Maria Rita de Sousa Brito Lopes Pontes, endearingly known as Irmã Dulce (Sister Dulce), was beatified in her hometown of Salvador, Bahia. During the period leading up to Irmã Dulce’s beatification, all of Bahia reveled proudly in *their* “saint.” Beatification is only the third of four steps in the Catholic canonization process—thus sainthood had yet to come—but that was a moot point. People eagerly celebrated their “Bahian saint” with posters, pamphlets, statuettes, and conversation. During the first two weeks of June 2011, I attended a number of rezas for St. Anthony (whose official day is the 13th of June). At a reza in Quilômetro 25, a rural district of the municipality of Santo Amaro, I saw on St. Anthony’s altar little black and white cutouts of Irmã Dulce (Fig. 2.5). I asked the altar’s creator, Dona Carminha, if Irmã Dulce always graced the altar. “No, usually I only use flowers. But this year I decided to use Irmã Dulce since she’s so important.” Dona Carminha then explained that she took a picture she received in the mail of Irmã Dulce and photocopied it to decorate the altar. With Dona

Carminha's pride in her Bahian "saint" and recognition of this Blessed Sister, it seemed clear to her that Irmã Dulce should be part of St. Anthony's altar. Whether Irmã Dulce will return to his altar again in the future is an artistic decision for Dona Carminha to make and only time will tell if other "artists" will also find inspiration in the Bahian Catholic heroine. Altars modernize because their artists live in the now.

6. Nothing to Hide: Putting Altars in Context

In her analysis of Caribbean Espiritismo, Judith Bettelheim (2005: 313-314) asks a simple, but revealing question: "How can one distinguish an Espiritismo altar . . . from other non-Christian altars assembled in the observance of the numerous Caribbean religions?" She argues that the distinctions are based primarily on what resides upon the altar (i.e., glasses of water, photographs, particular statuettes, etc.), the construction of the altar itself (i.e., vertical rather than horizontal), and how the altar is treated upon its owner's death. Considering the Bahian context, one may gain insight from asking if in fact different religious orientations and ideologies produce significantly different altars. Sansi (2007: 26) observes that "[t]he altars and shrines of Candomblé are the *assentos*. . . . The general structure of the *assento* consists of a dais full of pots. The pots are made of clay, porcelain or wood, depending on the *santo*. . . . The *assento* is concealed and veiled, closed in a pot, wrapped in cloth and locked in a room." This concealment insinuates that "[Candomblé] altars are not meant to be seen" (p. 35). This is perhaps one of the primary distinctions between Catholicism-inspired and Candomblé altars. In Sansi's words, "Popular Catholic altars in Brazil, which follow a baroque tradition, *are made to be seen*, to dazzle the devout in a sublime vision. However the power of the altars in Candomblé is not the result of their visibility, but rather their invisibility" (Sansi 2009: 151, emphasis added).

Indeed, this element of secrecy is a significant difference between Catholicism-inspired rezas and Candomblé. As I have already shown, reza practitioners take tremendous pride in their altars. People typically display their altars in the front living room, which is no doubt the first room a guest sees upon entering the home. And not only do people enjoy exhibiting their altars, but they also relish in hearing how beautiful they are. This *lack of secrecy* is largely linked to the self-affirmed Catholic identity of reza practitioners. On a number of occasions, upon asking individuals for permission to cite them in my work, I unexpectedly received the same answer: “Sure. I don’t have anything to hide. I do what everyone else does.” Although no one has ever expressed it to me explicitly, this seemingly pat answer relates in interesting ways to the historic secrecy of Afro-Brazilian religions. For while power through secrecy is certainly a facet of Candomblé, Lisa Earl Castillo is keen to remember that the extreme hostility with which Brazilian society has historically treated its Afro-Brazilian religions “could only have intensified the emphasis on the idea that certain elements of religious knowledge should circulate exclusively among the initiated” (Castillo 2010: 41).

In affirming they have nothing to hide, these reza practitioners diametrically oppose themselves to Candomblé’s inherent secrecy, while also implying moral superiority over the supposed “witchcraft” of Candomblé adepts who act in a socially marginal manner (see Ch. 5). As practitioners of an ideologically Catholic practice, reza practitioners have no reason to hide anything. Certainly in the realm of ideas, secrecy is not compatible with rezas. People pray openly, loudly, and unabashedly. In practical terms, however, people participate in activities they know (or at least think) do not comply with Catholic Church doctrine. For example, they might act as mediums for ancestors, conduct animal sacrifices, or leave offerings (called an *axé*) in a room with the door closed. But these would not be described as “secrets” per se. They are

typically seen simply as “unnecessary details.” These are aspects left unsaid. For instance, though people knew of my interest in Caboclos and possession trance dancing, people rarely told me outright: “tonight there will be Cabolcos.” I would simply discover this by seeing it occur. Since rezas are built additively, then, these are seen as but additions to a devotion that is “Catholic” and *therefore* is surely not secretive.

In a similar fashion, altars also serve as badges of honor for Catholics in a socio-religious landscape that is increasingly populated by evangelical Christian denominations (see Ch. 5).¹⁵ As already emphasized, Catholicism-inspired altars sit in front rooms of homes as forthright displays of the homeowner’s veneration of images, something antithetical to evangelical belief. One of the first steps in converting to evangelical Christianity, whether from Catholicism or Candomblé, is the elimination of images. Evangelical Christians tend to argue that these statuettes and chromolithographs are illusory, for any spiritual relationship should be constructed directly with God. Thus devotees of saints will often tell stories of neighbors or relatives who, upon converting to evangelical Christianity, rid themselves of their saints only to suffer dire consequences. I have even heard of people who had truckloads of images taken from their homes. The underlying point is that these images and the altars on which they sit serve as distinct markers of Catholic identity.

7. Toward a Holistic Ethnomusicology: Sight as Sound

My explicit argument in this chapter has concerned altars as artistic embodiments of a range of private and public histories. But I am also making an implicit conceptual point regarding ethnomusicology that I will briefly discuss here. To address the entirety of a complex phenomenon such as the reza, it is necessary to explore in detail its “multiple media” (see Singer

¹⁵ Scholars have repeatedly noted that Brazil’s Evangelical Protestant population is one of the largest in Latin America, with over three-fifths of the total population, and rapid rate of increase (see Chesnut 1997; Stoll 1990).

1972; Tambiah 1981). This is not solely because the task of the ethnographer is to be as detailed as possible about *everything*. The multiple media typically play off of one another in revealing ways. Altars give life to the music (by inspiring and contextualizing song) as much as music gives life to the altar. As such, I would argue that just as an ethnomusicological study of rezas necessitates a close reading of altars, a study of altars from any other disciplinary view—art history, anthropology, or history—should also include details regarding music. Asking what role an altar plays in the production of sound is a question as embedded in acoustics as it is in phenomenology. As I have repeatedly emphasized, without an altar there *is no music*. The altar creates the ethos needed for the production of song. And it also affects what is sung and said during the rezas itself.

My vision here is somewhat similar to Steven Loza's (2009) unified approach to art. The ethnomusicologist's project looks at Mexico's Virgin of Guadalupe in her entirety, noting that "[t]he art signifying Guadalupe is primarily visual . . . but an extended repertoire of art is also closely associated and experienced through various practices, as in the case of musical expression. Hundreds of hymns performed by various types of folk ensembles exist in addition to a rich repertoire of sacred music composed for ecclesiastic purposes" (p. 79). His research project seeks to comprehend something much larger than sound alone. Interdisciplinarity is necessary, explains Loza, "[B]ecause of the intercultural relationships represented by [Guadalupe] and the interactive and diverse means and practices of individuals devoted to her" (p. 82). While I wholeheartedly agree, my interest is not in interdisciplinarity *per se*. Rather I insist that ethnomusicology—as far as it is a discipline—can, and in most cases should, extend beyond the study of those issues directly linked to sound. In this chapter on altars, for example, I have pulled chiefly from art historians and anthropologists to understand the value of altars in the

Recôncavo, for it is these scholars who write about altars. I could find no relevant ethnomusicological literature on altars, yet certainly ethnomusicologists have studied religious traditions which include the prominent use of altars. I suspect this is due to a reticence on the part of scholars to engage in profound discussions of so-called “non-musical” issues. Yet ethnomusicologists must also study altars, or any other “media,” if indeed ethnomusicology is to grasp musical practices as dynamic and embedded facets of the human experience. Ethnomusicology must explore *seemingly* tangential elements such as visual art, food, and odors. This is not because I advocate the deterioration of ethnomusicology into an amorphous disciplinary blob. Rather I am a believer in a holistic and robust ethnomusicology that comprehends the intrinsic value of these extra-musical aspects for the musicians and musical participants themselves.

Altars are not simply “part of” rezas. They *are rezas*, just as are song. After all, the event only exists in as much as things happen. A reza is an ensemble of things, including music, altars, and food. And although I address food in a less explicit way than I do altars, I could certainly also have devoted a chapter to food alone. My broad point is that there is no musical performance to analyze without an altar.¹⁶ Altars remind devotees why they are singing and to whom they are singing. Altars help create notions about the saints’ lives and the miracles these martyrs realized. As will be discussed in Ch. 3, “Benditos” *cannot* be sung without the presence of the saint (via an image) on the altar. Finally, altars construct the *requisite* Catholic ethos and phenomenologically allow participants to integrate themselves into *their* Catholic community. Anthony Seeger (1991a, 1997) has repeatedly suggested that it is “questions” which hold ethnomusicology together. If indeed these *questions about music*—such as how do people sing

¹⁶ Of course this line of thinking *ad absurdum* might be more than helpful. Without air, there cannot be a *reza*; without the moon, etc. The point is that the altars are *explicitly* important for the realization of the event.

for their saints—appear to lead ethnomusicologists to “disciplines” outside of ethnomusicology, perhaps this speaks more to the limited disciplinary purview of ethnomusicology than the interdisciplinarity of its practitioners.

Remember, rezas are, at base, devotions. These are spiritual responsibilities that, when realized, integrate the human senses in ways that go beyond anything that can be limited to aural experience. Yes, ethnomusicology is the study of music, but music is *at root* performance, and musical performance—as a human experience—does not exist apart from the smelt aromas, touched objects, and seen images. This chapter on altars should therefore not be seen as a “tangential” move *away* from understanding how and why people sing for their saints. This chapter on altars should be understood as an expression of my commitment to what I am calling a holistic ethnomusicology, a study of music that comprehends the value of human experience *in musical performance*, such that sight is sound, just as is smell and touch. One hardly thinks twice when an ethnomusicologist devotes intellectual energy on descriptions of dance, for the interconnection of dance to music seems quite natural.¹⁷ A more holistic ethnomusicology should feel equally comfortable with discursive explorations of odors, tastes, or—in this case—altars.

8. Concluding Thoughts

There is still much to be said about altars. This chapter only scratched the surface about Catholicism-inspired domestic altars in Bahia, a topic that still has quite a limited bibliography. Some scholars working on Catholicism-inspired ritual traditions from other parts of Brazil, such as Araújo (1967), Brandão (1981), and Lima (1961), have offered descriptions of altars, but always in passing. Thus there is still much to be discussed not only regarding Bahian altars, but also about how these relate to altars in other parts of the country (and world). There is still much

¹⁷ Clara Henderson (2012) makes the point that ethnomusicologists, and particularly the early founders of ethnomusicology in the U.S., have always been cognizant of the important relationship that music shares with dance.

to be said about a number of issues pertaining to these altars: saint specific gustatory offerings placed upon altars, the use of *assentos* in Catholicism-inspired events, the use of specific types of flowers for different saints, a discussion regarding different aromas—esp. frankincense and lavender—used on the altar, the upkeep of altars outside of the reza context, etc. Furthermore, much more comparison among other types of Bahian, Brazilian, and pan-American altars and shrines could be quite informative.

PARTY INTERLUDE THREE
Dona Tânia and St. Anthony
(Accompanied by PI_3.mp3)

Monday, June 13, 2011. São Félix, Bahia.

It was officially St. Anthony's day and the night's events were just beginning. Mass ended near 7pm with the priest leading the congregation in celebrative "Vivas." Soon after, a few women began to circulate around the pew distributing bread in a symbolic embodiment of St. Anthony's charitable work. I was standing at the back of the church, however, so by the time the platter reached me there was none left. I knew that Dona Tânia's reza for St. Anthony would soon begin, so I followed Dona Coleta up the cobblestone hill to Dona Tânia's house. I made my way through the narrow corridor, a difficult feat with a backpack full of recording equipment, and introduced myself to the homeowner. Those who had arrived before Dona Coleta and I were either sitting near the altar in the main room or busy in the kitchen with party prep. At the entrance to the dining room was an arch of blue and white balloons, and thus were symbolically representing the Portuguese saint. Those sitting by the altar were conversing, waiting for the rest of the churchgoers to arrive so the reza could finally begin.

Gathering in front of the altar were a group of about ten woman, many of whom were securing in their hands a stapled collection of papers that I would only later learn was a set of printed texts that a member of the Church congregation had prepared for distribution among the local community. Dona Tânia stood at the group's fore, directly in front of St. Anthony. This was the first time I had seen Dona Coleta, who typically leads rezas at others' homes, allowed someone else lead the reza. She stood a few steps behind Dona Tânia and simply followed along, singing from the same paper that everyone else was using (instead of her usual prayer book). Of

the three-dozen or so guests present I was one of only three or four male participants. A dozen or so of the guests were standing before the altar while the rest of us were spread out about the room. Several participants remained seated, others lined up against the wall, and still some, like myself, remained tucked away in the narrow corridor.

When Dona Tânia began, she did so in a way I had never heard at a reza, with a song I recognized from Catholic Mass:

*Em nome do pai
Em nome do filho
Em nome do Espírito Santo
Estamos aqui*

*Em nome do pai
Em nome do filho
Em nome do Espírito Santo
Estamos aqui*

*Para louvar e agradecer
Bem dizer e adorar
Estamos aqui, Senhor
Ao seu dispor*

*Para louvar e agradecer
Bem dizer e adorar
Te aclamar
Deus trino de amor¹ (PI_3.mp3, 00:00)*

This was followed by a text with which I was only vaguely familiar. The third sung text was one I recognized from the other rezas I had attended, “Deus in adjutorium,” though it was written “Deus me adjitorem” on the paper from which people were reading (PI_3.mp3, 01:38). This was followed by three repetitions of a cycle comprising the “Lord’s Prayer,” “Hail Mary,” and “Glory to the Father” (PI_3.mp3, 01:57). These were all melodies I recognized from Dona Coleta’s novenas. After these introductory prayers, the guests began to sing the “Litany of the

¹ “In the name of the Father / In the name of the Son / In the name of the Holy Spirit / We are here (2x) To laud and thank / Speak well and adore / We are here, Lord / At your service / To laud and thank / Speak well and adore / To cheer you / God trinity of love”

Blessed Virgin Mary.” But unlike the Latin I was used to hearing, everyone was singing in Portuguese! The initial melody was new to me, but I recognized their second melody. It was one Dona Coleta always sang:

Santo Antonio
Santo Português
Fiel passional
Rogai por nós
Defensor da Europa
Defensor da Pátria
Brasão da Lusitânia
Rogai por nós²
(...) (PI_3.mp3, 09:33)

Following this “Litany” was the “Salve Rainha,” a “Response” (Responso) that I had never heard, a short prayer, and the “Incense.”

When it came time for the “Benditos,” Dona Tânia had already decided that Dona Coleta was going to lead. After all, the “Benditos” are rather personal moments that cannot be prescribed on a stapled bunch of papers that Dona Tânia herself had not prepared. And Dona Tânia, whose mother was a devotee of Our Lady of the Conception, wanted the Virgin’s “Bendito” to be sung. And since these “Benditos” were not on the papers, the people in room could do little more than accompany the refrain (PI_3.mp3, 23:00). Dona Tânia was able to lead the next “Bendito,” which was sung for Saint Anthony, the patron saint of the night. Following a number of sung texts for St. Anthony that I recognized from Church but had never heard in the domestic reza context, the residential congregation concluded with spoken prayers: the “Lord’s Prayer” and two “Hail Maries.”

This was immediately followed by Dona Coleta leading three loud cheers: “Long live Saint Anthony!” “Viva!” everyone responded. “Long live Saint Anthony!” and once again,

² “Saint Anthony / Portuguese saint / True passion / **Pray for Us** / Europe’s defender / The nation’s defender / Coat of arms of the Lusitania / **Pray for Us**”

“Viva!” “Long live the homeowners!” “Viva!” “Long live her whole family and all of the guests!” “Viva!” (PI_3.mp3, 38:25). As Dona Coleta often did, she immediately led into the samba:

*Santo Antonio está no altar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*

*Me dê licença pra eu sambar
Me dê licença pra eu sambar*³ (PI_3.mp3, 38:42)

Although the many participants seemed rather reluctant to join in, enough guests partook to keep the singing and dancing going for a few more minutes. Indeed, Dona Coleta led three more sambas for St. Anthony before stopping. After the forty-minute novena, the samba lasted just under three minutes.

Now was time for food and birthday cake. Drinks and bite-size snacks made their way around the room and a number of the family members went into the dining room to prepare the cake. The cake brandished a big edible picture of St. Anthony with numbered candles indicating that Dona Tânia had just turned fifty-two years old. Indeed, Dona Tânia’s birthday is St. Anthony’s official day. The cake soon made the rounds as well and guests all just sat around socializing, discussing their immediate plans to attend Dona Irá’s reza, which was scheduled to begin around the time Dona Tânia’s was ending. Dona Irá lived just down the street, separated by—at most—ten homes. People began gradually to filter out of Dona Tânia’s home and down to Dona Irá’s home. I asked Dona Tânia if she would be going and she politely explained that she could not leave her guests and thus would not be attending. With that, however, I followed a friend of mine down to Dona Irá’s home.

³ “St. Anthony who is at the altar / Give me permission to samba / Give me permission to samba / Give me permission to samba”

On the way to the next reza, we passed by a home from which I heard emanating group a capella singing. I stopped to listen. “Is this Dona Irá’s house?” “No. It’s a little farther down.” So we kept walking. This means that on the same street, within a span of a dozen or so homes, there were three rezas for St. Anthony occurring nearly simultaneously! And this was in addition to the innumerable rezas occurring all over the city.

When we arrived at Dona Irá’s house, the song had already begun and the house was so full that people were pouring out into the street. Abounding with human bodies, I had to maneuver my way (as politely as possible) through the participants just to see Dona Irá’s grandiose altar. After I got settled I noticed that everyone was holding the same, stapled bunch of papers that I had seen at Dona Tânia’s house earlier. But perhaps this was no surprise. After all, not only were Dona Irá and Dona Tânia neighbors (and thus part of the same church congregation) but also many of Dona Irá’s guests were people who had just left my company at Dona Tânia’s house. I stayed at Dona Irá’s house just long enough to meet her and a few of her family members and take their pictures with the saint (i.e., standing next to the altar). Then, as if two rezas hadn’t been enough, I rushed off to my final reza of the night, which took place at Dona Sinhá’s house in the city of Cachoeira.

CHAPTER THREE

The Novena: Loudness, Liturgy, and Devotion

“The profane world was, if not silent, quiet. And if we think of ‘noise’ in its less pejorative sense as any big sound, the coupling of noise and sacred is easier to interpret”
–R. Murray Schafer

After attending a reza on August 15, 2010, I wrote the following in my field notes: “In my opinion, the reza was a mess, but everyone insisted it was done well.” The reza started about an hour and a half late. Including myself, there were only six participants at the reza and most were reluctant to sing a word. Indeed, the prayer leader, Dona Coleta, constantly rebuked the participants for failing to sing, insisting she could not sing alone. I struggled to accompany the rezadeira until the owner of the home and mother of the reza host, Dona Meire, began singing (though Dona Meire grumbled that a recent illness had made her voice weak). To add to the confusion, the prayer leader continually erred the text, and thus repeatedly interrupted herself in order to reinitiate the singing time and time again. At one point, with mounting frustration, she spent several minutes searching in her prayer book for the correct text to sing. When the liturgy called for the “Incense,” the incense cubes were not lit, and the novena had to continue without the sacred aroma that is usually such a vital symbol of this sacred event. The novena was marked by confusion, little guest participation, and noticeable errors. How could participants insist this was “done well”?

In Chapter 1, I introduced many of the central facets of the reza, including an abbreviated discussion of the *novena*. I explicated that the performance of the novena brings the saint to life. In Chapter 2, I explored the altar’s value in setting the physical scene and preparing the sacred ethos necessary for the liturgical performance. In both chapters, I emphasized not only the fundamental role of remembering, but also that different aspects, esp. performance in Ch. 1 and *imagens* in Ch. 2, embody particular kinds of memory, ranging from the highly personal to the collective. The past is no less significant in the novena, the focus of the present chapter. This past is again achronistic; the novena is a performative assemblage of distinct—though not necessarily discrete—historical trajectories, ranging from the highly personal to the collective, all of which are embodied in liturgical order, melody, and text. The novena is largely what defines the reza, giving it its designation and purpose. For although rezas are sometimes conducted with no

samba, they cannot exist without the fixed liturgical moment which is called a “novena.” My primary interest here is in the novena’s liturgy, in both aesthetic and formal (i.e., structural) terms. The guiding queries of the chapter are: *What does the novena sound like and why? How is the novena organized and why?* Answers to these broad lines of inquiry derive from a comparative analytical exploration of novenas both past and present.

The novena’s liturgical structures are fundamentally based on those of celebrative Catholic Church Masses. The texts also largely derive from the Church. As such, this chapter is partly designed to underscore the ambiguity of the boundary separating Catholicism from what is often called “popular” Catholicism. After all, as I explore here, the Church plays a decisive role in structuring domestic practice, though not primarily as a result of an encroaching ecclesiastical presence in the community as was the case in past centuries. Instead reza practitioners themselves favor bringing Church liturgies, texts, and melodies into the home. In this sense, then, the “official” Church has an *organic authority* in the domicile, belying the conspicuity of the presumed division between the home and Church in revealing ways. At the same time, novenas are in some regards localized with melodies and texts that derive from specific city, neighborhood, or family histories and ideologies. The point is that the reza’s novena, like its altar, is assembled within the fluid boundaries of a Catholic Church archetype. These liturgies, primarily derived from the Catholic Church, are personalized with local melodies and texts, while also incorporating important Catholic prayers, such as the “Lord’s Prayer” and the “Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

This chapter is preoccupied with detail. Yet, given the variety from one reza to another, I rely on a host of composite descriptions and observable patterns in order to discuss the tradition in a cogent way. While each and every participant would probably have a slightly different

impression and understanding of the reza, I am concerned here with offering a “general” view. The chapter is structured as follows: (1) the origin of the term “novena”; (2) a discussion of basic novena aesthetics (3) the prayer leader (*rezadeira*) in context; (4) a section-by-section breakdown of the liturgy; and (5) some brief concluding thoughts.

1. The Term “Novena”

According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, a “novena” is a “nine days’ private or public devotion in the Catholic Church to obtain special graces. . . . The novena is permitted and even recommended by ecclesiastical authority, but still has no proper and fully set place in the liturgy of the Church” (Hilgers 1911). Novenas for saints, particularly so-called “novenas of prayer,” became common during the earlier part of the Middle Ages (Ibid.). Evidence shows that in early modern Iberia, novenas were a regular part of public devotions to Catholic saints (see Christian 1989), and were furthermore an integral part of religious life in Colonial Brazil, often preceding public processions and festivities (Reginaldo 2011: 190; Sotuyo Blanco 2003: 105; Souza 2002: 238). Along with nine nights of consecutive prayer (i.e., Novenas), the Church also entertains prayer periods of three days (*tríduo*), five days (*qüinquos*), seven days (*setenário*), eight days (*oitavas*), and thirteen days (*trezena*) prior to major festivities for saints. It seems, however, that novenas have always been among the most popular in Brazil.

Historically speaking, the music of Catholic Church novenas were composed in the prominent Church styles of the era, and indeed composing novenas became a regular practice for many composers.¹ Daniel Kidder documents his negative impression of the execution of one such novena in 1845, in the northeastern Brazilian state of Pernambuco:

¹ See, for example, the novenas composed by José Joaquim Emerico Lobo de Mesquita (?-1805), Francisco Gomes da Rocha (1745-1808), and Damião Barbosa de Araújo (1778-1856).

One evening, accompanied by some friends, I visited a church in which they were chanting a novena connected with the feast of Santa Anna *mai da Mai de Deos*. The music was performed chiefly by a choir in the orchestra, to which a priest, standing in front of the chief altar, gave the responses of the litany. The body of the church was nearly filled with females, some of whom joined in the chant. I confess I could discern but little melody amongst the plentiful discords of this occasion. (Kidder 1845: 147-148)

It furthermore appears that, in the 19th-century at least, these Church activities were fully integrated into the community, such that individual households shared responsibilities with the local Catholic Church. This is particularly salient in Henry Koster's description from Olinda, Pernambuco, in the early 1800s:

Towards the end of the same month (November) it is customary for the vicar to determine upon those persons who are to sustain the expences [*sic*] of the nine evenings previous to the festival of Our Lady of Conception,—that is to supply the bon-fires, gunpowder, oil, etc. Each evening is provided for on all these occasions, by one or more persons of the immediate neighborhood, and a greater or less expense is incurred, according to the means and the inclination of the individuals who have been named. . . . The houses were illuminated with lamps, which were made of the half of the rind of an orange, each containing a small quantity of oil and cotton. . . . The church was crowded, and the noise of the people was great; . . . the musicians of the festival, with violins and violoncellos played within the church. (Koster 1816: 321-322)

The event, as it is described here, seems quite similar to 21st-century thirteen-night residential *trezenas* for St. Anthony in Bahia. For these, after choosing a home at which to conduct the thirteen nights of sung prayers, thirteen neighbors each agree to fund one of the thirteen celebratory nights. Each night, the participants sing the same cycle of Catholicism-inspired prayers for St. Anthony. It is unclear why only St. Anthony is celebrated by way of *trezenas*, but this has certainly been the case at least since the early-20th century.² Three-night *tríduos* are also sometimes held for St. Anthony. Oddly, despite the meaning of the term “novena,” domestic novenas in Bahia last only a single night. If in fact the term *novena* refers to the nine-night

² BI, June 1918 (no page number). The magazine explains that from June 1st through the 13th, St. Anthony is widely celebrated in all of Bahia.

prayer cycles that were common through the mid-19th century, why is the single night of domestic prayer also referred to as a “novena”?

Practitioners offer no clarification. Dona Dé, for instance, once reflexively commented to me, “Novena is nine nights, isn’t it? [At the reza] it’s called a novena, but it’s not really, right? Novena is nine.”³ Remember, the idea of the novena is a reproduction, on nine consecutive nights, of the *same liturgical structure*. Therefore, the term novena in the domestic context probably comes from the residential recreation of Catholic Church novenas. It is quite possible that even in the domicile, the so-called novena was at one time repeated for nine nights, just as St. Anthony’s “trezena” and “tríduo” are today conducted for thirteen and three nights, respectively. Given the financial and labor burdens of repeated nights of prayer, the “novena” may have progressively been reduced from nine nights to one, while never losing its initial designation. Even in church contexts, Pablo Sotuyo Blanco (2004) notes, financial instability insured that novenas were not always novenas nor tríduos always tríduos (see also Campos 1941: 130). A so-called “novena” was thus sometimes shortened due to a shortage of funds. Indeed, as I will show below, parallels in church and residential liturgical structures further support the hypothesis that the domestic “novena” originated in the church.

2. The Novena: Values and Aesthetics

“There is no such thing as a bad reza,” Dona Coleta told me. “It’s only bad when people don’t accompany the Benditos.”⁴ “Good” novenas are defined by little more than the performance of the liturgy. It is the correct (and complete) singing of each part of the liturgy. It is not about how fluidly it is carried out, nor how accurately the pitches are sung; it is simply about *doing* it. One can fumble with any part of the novena, but as long as it gets done, it is

³ Interview conducted with Dona Dé at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011

⁴ Interview conducted with Dona Coleta at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

satisfactory. But in order to get it *done*, as Dona Coleta's words make apparent, accompaniment is essential. A good reza is therefore *also* a social one. And this is why, as Dona Meire put it, "the more people there are, the better."⁵ But attendance also typically presumes participation, that is to say, singing. A good reza is one in which there are a lot of people who also accompany. This is marked in a rhetorical assertion once posed to me by Dona Margarida, "My reza is beautiful isn't it? That's because there is a whole bunch of people singing."

People are needed in part because many melodies are structured such that no individual would be capable of singing the overlapping responsorial melodic phrases. But people are also seen as necessary because they are an index of devotion. *Loudness equals faith*. During her 2011 reza for St. Anthony in Cachoeira, Dona Dalva, 82 years old at the time, was leading the novena with a microphone. However, she grew increasingly aggravated with the faintness of her own voice. At one moment she paused to reprimand herself: "Oh everyone, let's sing with more faith! I'm not doing so well here." With that, Dona Dalva pushed herself to sing the next prayer more loudly. Loudness equals faith such that singing quietly is either a sign of wavering devotion or illness. But it is not loudness for its own sake. After a reza one year, a few members of a family expressed to me their dismay regarding their sister's loudness during the novena. "She was off [*saiu do tom*], making it hard for everyone who was trying to accompany." While the term "tom" suggests a judgment regarding pitch, the criticism is chiefly about the sister's loudness, for this was seen as a hindrance to the social aspect of the singing. The aesthetic of loudness is only an important aesthetic because of the implied social harmony from which it presumably results. Put differently, a novena is never necessarily beautiful *because* it is loud; but a beautiful novena *is always loud*. Loudness therefore is designed to act as an aural index of the *voluminous* social participation. Concerns such as being "in tune" or "in time" are secondary to the "correct"

⁵ Interview conducted with Dona Meire at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

execution of the text. For this reason, people rarely commented on erred pitches or rhythms. They rather noted incorrect texts or weakness (in singing). Singing accurate pitches has little bearing on the quality of a novena, a judgment rooted instead in the correct communication of the liturgical text.

By why sing at all?⁶ After all, many of these texts are most familiar to reza participants in their recited (i.e., orated) form.⁷ Still, most people have affirmed to me that while oration is an option,⁸ singing is preferred. There are, it seems to me, two reasons: (1) it is more inherently social and (2) it is louder. Dona Maria helped me understand these interrelated concepts:

Song is better because by singing, everyone hears and sees, right? With everyone singing, the song comes out better for those who are watching, listening, and responding. And we, in words [as opposed to song], that's for ourselves. . . . I've recited many prayers in words, but what is sung is better because it goes out for everyone. Everyone hears; everyone sees. Sometimes those who want to help, accompany. And they learn the song, they learn the vocal lines. So that's why we sing.⁹

Singing is, for Dona Maria, louder and thus more inclusive, and vice-versa. It is for “everyone,” not just “ourselves.” Singing is a public activity, while praying is a private one. Song gives people a chance to join in who might not otherwise do so, and of course the effect of more active participation is loudness. Salient once more is the positive correlation of participation to

⁶ Contrary to Carolina Pedreira's (2010) observations regarding Benditos and rezas around the Chapada Diamantina area (located around 200 miles west of the Recôncavo), where people explain “rezas” as different from “music,” there seems not to exist such a distinction in the Recôncavo, at least not in the reza/novena context. Partly this may be due to the context of the studies. Pedreira's study relates to funerary rites, differing strongly from my study of novenas, which are designed to celebrate life. And, as the scholar notes, “To speak of distinctions among music, word, song, and prayer [*reza*] corresponds to thinking of which categories more or less successfully account for *the contexts* in which the acts, thoughts, and sentiments are immersed” (Pedreira 2010: 87). In other words, the term “music” might have something to do with celebration, as people have indicated to me. Reza practitioners practice their novenas with song because they are expressing happiness. This is distinct from the funerary rites investigated by Pedreira, which appear to carry a much more solemn air.

⁷ Practitioners themselves make it quite clear that they are singing and not speaking; the novena is “music.” Still, the line used to divide recitation (i.e., speech, oration) from singing is never discussed explicitly. The recognition of the difference is implicit and largely follows Western notions of song as being defined “melodically” (List 1963).

⁸ In Dona Maria's words, “those who want to, recite everything; those who don't, sing.” Indeed, I know of one individual who, when old age had made her too physically weak to sing, would recite (rather than sing) the texts (in liturgical order) every year to satisfy her vow.

⁹ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

loudness. Spoken prayers (i.e., words) do not encourage participation; sung prayers, on the other hand, are inviting and consequently facilitate the expression of more devotion (read: loudness). That the loudness of singing is associated with devotion seems also partly rooted in physiology.

Singing is, as many people told me, equivalent to praying twice.¹⁰ As Dona Margarida explained, “There you are singing with happiness, with love. *You’re dedicating yourself more.* You know that the song comes from within your heart, right? . . . Just by knowing that your voice is sounding.”¹¹ Dona Margarida’s comments suggest that the physical effort necessary in singing is part of what makes it a “double prayer.” A person knows that her/his devotion comes from the heart *because s/he* hears (and feels) it sounding. And this implies more “dedication” because of the physical investment; singing is no doubt more physically taxing than recitation. This, it seems, is something of a *sacrificing of the body* in the name of one’s saint. Perhaps for this reason, loudness is related to devotion; the more suffering a person’s body endures (i.e., the louder one sings), the more devotion that individual is expressing.

Remember, the primary evaluative factors of a novena are the execution of the liturgy and the participation of individuals. This means that though the melodic treatment is secondary to the text, the choice of melody must be strategic. People choose melodies that facilitate both the correct articulation of the liturgy and increased participation. As Dona Maria explained it to me: “Often when we go to a place to pray, we see which people can accompany that song, the parts, that melody, we see what they can accompany, and we sing the song that everyone can follow. And with [melodies] that appear too difficult for them, we switch to a different one.”¹² In other words, Dona Maria makes conscious decisions concerning which melodies will be utilized

¹⁰ In much relevant Catholic literature, the proverb is credited to St. Augustine (Amaral 2002: 22). However, I have yet to hear a reza participant cite the source of the proverb.

¹¹ Interview conducted with Dona Margarida at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

¹² Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, December 8, 2011

and which will not. And this is possible because texts operate independently of the melodies with which they are song. As Dona Maria elaborated on another occasion, “If I decide to sing [the novena] in three or four melodies, I will. . . . It doesn’t change the meaning of the words. It just changes the song.”¹³ Any melody can be put to any text. The congregation must only recognize and be able to execute the given text with the chosen melody.¹⁴

Lucid in Dona Maria’s explanation is that she adapts her singing to local populations, which typically have their own, localized melodies. Although melodies often differ from community to community (whether neighborhoods, cities, or municipalities), within a single community there is often little variation and in fact melodies *tend* not to change. After all, the more common a melody is, the higher the likelihood that people will know it and be able to sing along. And again, more participation is always desired at a reza. In other words, there is no local impetus to create new melodies or make major changes. Instead, the tendency is to repeat melodies generation after generation. Musically speaking, then, the reza tradition is locally “self-preserving.” The logics that guide its aesthetics (the big sound) predispose it to its own recursiveness, resulting in historical continuity. People value “old” melodies because it makes sense socially; more people are likely to know the melodies and texts (and can therefore participate with greater ease). But, particularly for texts, repetition also makes sense cosmologically. Divine “time” is not restricted to generations, and if texts and liturgical orders *worked in the past*, they should necessarily work today. Dona Maria, for instance, repeatedly emphasized to me that “the world doesn’t change; people do.”

¹³ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, May 5, 2011.

¹⁴ Not all prayer leaders are like Dona Maria. She not only has an impressive command of a vast repertoire of melodies, but also she often travels to remote rural regions that have not undergone extensive standardization by way of an intimate relationship with any Catholic Church, as is the case, for example, in more urban areas.

This does not mean melodies, texts, or liturgies do not remain unaltered. But changes tend not to stem from individuals; people do not compose new music for the novena.¹⁵ The modifications that occur at domestic novenas most frequently reflect decisions to incorporate contemporary Catholic Church liturgy, texts, and melodies. The Catholic Church is seen as the source *par excellence* for liturgical material. Devotees consider themselves Catholic, know that their saints are also Catholic (and embraced by the Catholic Church), and generally presume (not unjustifiably) that participants are also Catholic.¹⁶ Therefore, contemporary Catholic Church repertoire serves as an excellent substitution for time-tested texts and melodies. After all, not only is the material viewed as cosmologically sound, but also it is widely shared by a community of believers who will have less difficulty accompanying—and thus producing more voluminous aural devotion—the texts they are accustomed to singing at Mass, processions, and other celebrations. This repertoire thus serves as a convenient, church tested, and “official” common denominator among reza participants, facilitating text-melody recognition and subsequent participation in the singing. This, in particular, highlights the ambiguous division between domestic liturgical repertoire and that of the Catholic Church (see also Introduction). Indeed, melodies and texts from oral tradition are intertwined with those of the church, overlapping the so-called “popular” with the orthodox, “popularizing” the orthodox. And when a “lay” person enters the Church to lead a “Bendito” that she learned at a reza, as Dona Coleta often did, is she “orthodoxizing” the popular?

¹⁵ As with every part of the reza, there are exceptions to this “no new compositions” rule. On one occasion of a reza for St. Anthony in Salvador, a grandson of the reza’s host composed a number of songs for the event. To facilitate the group participation “logic” that is essential to all rezas, not only did he teach the song to his cousins so they could accompany him, but he also printed out copies of the lyrics so that all participants could sing along.

¹⁶ I do not mean to insinuate that participants might *only* be Catholic. In other words, a “Catholic person” might also be a Candomblé priestess. But in the overwhelming majority of cases even priestesses are raised in a Catholic tradition of Mass, baptisms, catechisms, etc. And while this would be the case for most individuals, the significant exception is the evangelical Christian population, which tends to disagree vehemently with Catholic practices.

The novena is performed a capella, with a tense voice and wide vibrato (again to facilitate loudness). The unison singing is either antiphonal (alternating “half-choirs”) or responsorial (solo “call” with choral response).¹⁷ The meter is typically quite loose, generating mostly *rubato* performances. The scales are primarily diatonic and harmonic, though modal melodies are not uncommon and some melodies utilize “ambiguous” sevenths.¹⁸ Melodic lines are generally sung in unison, though improvised thirds are common on extended and/or ending notes. Each text of the novena can be melodically distinct, but in other cases, repeated melodic phrases can create coherence among texts. The liturgy flows continually between harmonic and modal, the rhythmically free and the rhythmically defined. It is something of an achronistic, scattered, and incomplete history of Western music jumbled together according to local peculiarities and decisions by prayer leaders and reza hosts. Not unlike the altars examined in Chapter 2, the novena is something of a piece-by-piece cluster of personal and collective histories.

THE CASE OF THE MISSING THIRDS

Perhaps the most ubiquitous aesthetic in rural vocal genres throughout Brazil is the harmonization of melodies in parallel thirds. Therefore most researchers might be surprised to learn that these thirds are *absent* in 21st-century rezas (as well as in most Church services). I have heard thirds on many of Ralph Waddey’s field recordings from the 1970s and 1980s, but in

¹⁷ While people repeatedly assured me that instrumental accompaniment was welcome, I only saw two non-a capella performances. In one case, brass instruments were used at strategically planned moments while the majority of the novena was without accompaniment. On the other occasion, an electronic keyboard was used to accompany the singing.

¹⁸ These musical performance preferences share a striking resemblance to Dominican *salves*, which are executed in *tempo rubato*, are antiphonal, lack instrumental accompaniment, are sung with tense vocal production, and incorporates scales that tend to be non-diatonic (Davis 1981: 30). The apparent similarities between the *salves* of the Dominican Republic (extending to ritual practice more broadly) and the Bahian reza (and novena) suggest that a more profound comparative study would be fruitful. For now, though, I can at least offer an interpretation that the parallels are likely the result not only of the obvious medieval and early-modern Iberian foundations of both traditions, but also the early presence of Central African populations in both locations.

my four years of fieldwork, I have only once heard the systematic use of thirds.¹⁹ Yet when harmonic intervals are improvised, thirds seem always to be preferred. This furthermore suggests that indeed the aesthetic predilection for thirds is part of the novena tradition in Bahia, as it is all over Brazil. So have the thirds mostly *disappeared*?

In her study of the southeast Brazilian *folia* tradition, Suzel Reily notes the importance of the parallel third aesthetic:

One of the most characteristic features of southeastern traditional musics is the use of parallel thirds. Throughout the region, whenever someone begins to sing the first voice of a toada or a piece from the música sertaneja repertoire, another singer present is likely to join the soloist, placing his voice a third below—or a sixth above—the principal line. (Reily 2002: 97)

For Reily, the penchant for thirds is rooted in more than just aesthetics: “Far from being merely an aesthetic preference among southeasterners . . . parallel thirds have conceivably been so stable throughout the region precisely because this musical element provides a sonic means of reconciling the asymmetry of social relations with notions of essential human equality” (p. 98). Reily further contends that the use of the *viola*, whose five double courses of steel strings allows it to play a number of voices simultaneously, sonically compressing the vocal parts, such that “it is able to articulate the value placed on the muting of recognized hierarchical relationships” (p. 102). As I have already noted, rezas also prioritize social relations, so why have thirds not been “so stable” in Bahia?

In Reily’s analysis, the use of parallel voices, whether in sung thirds or played on the doubled strings of the *viola*, is the acoustic embodiment of a harmonious ideal, an attempt to create what she later calls an “enchanted reality” (p. 229). This John Blacking-inspired reading of the *folia* treats sound as an “iconic sign” of an egalitarian ideal, such that the polyvocal

¹⁹ In fact, the only time I heard the thirds was at a 2012 reza for the twin saints Crispin and Crispinian, held by Dona Zelita, one of Waddey’s close friends and research collaborators. It is worth noting that the singers I heard in 2012 were either present on Waddey’s recordings or were themselves descendents of those on his recordings.

harmony, “resembles” social harmony (Turino 2008: 6-8). The problem, however, is that this establishes something of a one-to-one correlation between thoughts (ideology) and symbols (sounds), such that if one facet changes so must the other. But, as Reily herself notes, this is not the case: “Currently . . . the prestige of the viola is declining in favor of the guitar . . . In the Folia do Baeta, for example, both Oswaldir and Zezo played guitars, claiming the guitar is a more versatile instrument than the viola” (p. 102). The author never addresses the problem this raises: if indeed people prefer violas and parallel thirds *because* these sonically eliminate hierarchical social relationships, does the increased use of guitar suggest a decreased belief in egalitarianism?

It seems to me that this sounded analogue for social harmony, one that Reily (2002: 235, n. 3) recognizes as being rooted in specifically Western musical concepts,²⁰ overemphasizes the way in which social ideals translate into aesthetic preferences. While certainly social values help guide aesthetic choices, it may be fallacious to over determine the ways in which these are manifested in sound. In other words, it is important to understand the *general* aesthetic concepts that dictate not only ideal performances but also “allowable” *substitutions* and *changes*. For example, Reily notes the emphasis on camaraderie as one of the primary values during any *folia* performance.

Since foliões conceive of music making in terms of the social relations involved in musical production, they orchestrate their performances in a manner which highlights their musical interactions. They explore the interactive possibilities embedded in their repertoire, such that the musical structure articulates dialectically with their conceptions about music and music making to enhance the experience of sociability during their musical activities. (Reily 2002: 111-112)

²⁰ The parallel thirds that Reily points to as icons of social harmony, parallel thirds, is grounded in a thoroughly Western notion of consonance. This, the author notes, is a point raised by the musicians themselves. However, “social harmony,” Charles Keil (1987) has argued, might be represented in any number of sounds and not just these Western harmonies. As Keil affirms, “one-ness” or the “urge-to-merge” is rooted in “participatory discrepancies,” which is to say music that is “out of time” and “out of tune.”

Framed as such, Oswaldir's and Zezo's use of guitars is completely sensible. Although the use of six-string guitars as substitutes for the ten-string violas apparently contradicts Reily's insistence that social values are musically brought to bear through performance, the decision to switch to more "versatile" instruments (and not to mention more common and accessible ones) may in fact foster social interaction in ways the viola cannot. If, as Reily observes, the guitar is "seen as a more modern instrument than the viola because of its associations with the Brazilian upper classes" (Reily 2002: 102), then the "modern" guitar may actually attract more participants than would an "old-fashioned" viola, therefore serving the *same* ideal (of social camaraderie) with a *different* aesthetic quality. Stated otherwise, even though people may share a particular *social* value, aesthetic decisions concerning the ways in which music serves that value are made on an individual basis, through social negotiations and material circumstances.

Social harmony is, as in the *folia* tradition, also an underlying ideal for domestic patron saint devotions in Bahia. Thus I posit that the apparent disappearance of thirds—the aesthetic modification—is *due to* social values, in negotiation with material circumstances, not in spite of them. At one time many prayer leaders, such as Yayá, who is on many of Waddey's recordings, traveled to rezas with another (or several other) vocalist whose responsibility it was to sing appropriate harmonic intervals (thirds and sixths) and serve as part of the responsorial chorus. Not only has the existence of these reza "troupes" become rare, but even the groups that do exist today tend to sing in unison.²¹ And it is unfathomable to me that the average devotee would be capable, without the necessary experience or training, of maintaining parallel thirds for the

²¹ According to practitioners themselves, the practice of the reza has decreased profoundly in the past half century. "In the old days," people often reminisce, "you had to decide which rezas you were going to attend on a given night." This is no longer the case. Using research conducted in the southern Recôncavo, Elivaldo Souza de Jesus (2006) suggests that the decrease in personal devotions and rezas is the result of "modernization," and particularly the construction of new transportation means. While I find it a bit specious to point to modernization as a singular culprit, increased rural to urban movement has no doubt impacted the tradition.

entirety of an hour-long novena. After all, encouraging people to respond is often difficult enough. It seems reasonable to deduce, therefore, that thirds do not currently exist at novenas simply because there is usually no one there to sing them. This is neither a transformation of aesthetic preferences nor of social ideals. Rather, reza participants simply prioritize their primary ideal—social interaction—over their aesthetic preference for thirds.

If they so desired, devotees could no doubt find a way of reintroducing part-singing to the reza either by hiring trained singers or by organizing extra-reza practice sessions. But devotees do neither, nor do they discourage out-of-tune singing during the reza itself. This is not because their ideals have changed; it is because their collective priorities are otherwise. The aesthetic value of parallel singing is trumped by the emphasis on group participation. Instead of pushing for an exclusionary notion of singing specialization, which would certainly discourage group participation, devotees encourage *all* to sing by continuing to use repertoire that *requires* choral accompaniment (e.g., the Litany), providing (in some cases) the texts in written form, sometimes selecting a more inclusive repertoire, and emphasizing loudness over consonance. This does not mean that a “parallel thirds” ideal is *replaced*. Indeed, people demonstrate a preference for thirds whenever intervallic harmonies are sung. The intervallic ideal is subsumed into the infinitely more important social value of group participation. Just as guitars are fine substitutes for violas in the *folia* tradition, unison singing is able to satisfy the dominant ideals of the reza tradition.

This example serves as a reminder that though aesthetics may result from social values, these cannot be treated as static symbols operating as one-to-one corollaries. A vague concept such as “camaraderie” can be sonically rearticulated in any number of ways, ranging from harmony (in synchronized parallel movement) to cacophony (in out-of-sync intervals of semi-tones), as long as that aesthetic *makes sense* to the practitioners themselves. The apparent

“stability” of parallel thirds in the Brazilian southeast (and Brazil in general) may be due as much to egalitarian ideals as to socio-historical circumstances that have allowed musicians to perfect and encourage such a vocal technique.

EVOKING THE BAROQUE

Recalling what I discussed in Ch. 2, the domestic altar is based largely on an aesthetic of ostentation (luminosity, splendor, density, etc.), which seems rooted in baroque styles. As such, it is quite alluring to suggest that the value of volume—both human and sonic—for the novena might also be derived from a “baroque” musical aesthetic.²² Scholars tend to periodize the Baroque (roughly the 17th to the mid-18th century in Europe) as the era associated with the Counter-Reformation, during which time artistic production expressed Catholic “truths” by way of opulence and grandeur.²³ Lay brotherhoods were among the chief means of popular Catholic expression in Colonial Brazil, whose public personae was unquestionably characterized by a baroque theatricality. On patron saint days, “brothers and sisters set out from their confraternity in their finest raiment, with capes, torches, banners, crosses, insignias, and statues of saints borne on platforms in pomp-filled processions, followed by dances and food and drink” (Reis 2003

²² The term “Baroque” has been problematized in a number of disciplines, in particular music, art, and architecture, and I will not review the issues here. As Hills (2007: 49) has noted, “Within the history of art ‘baroque’ . . . continues to be deployed broadly within the discipline to refer either to a broad chronological period (usually a long 17th century), or to an artistic style, or to both (period and style seen as overlapping).” What I am dealing with primarily here is the latter of the three, which is to say an overlapping of generalized aesthetic qualities of a Baroque that developed during the broad historical timeframe that has been viewed since the late-19th century as “the Baroque.” This is marked as beginning in the 16th century, overlapping Mannerism, and going through the Rococo (from 1700-1750) (see Adams 2011). Still, it is worth noting that this periodization, especially when dealing with the New World is quite problematic. As Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann (2011: 92) aptly notes, “Phenomena which we might propose to call baroque in Latin America, including Brazil, appear out of sequence, because while they were made in Latin America in the mid- or even late-18th century, the baroque works to which they might be compared had appeared 70 to 100 years earlier in Europe.” The same might be said for aesthetics in the New World. But regardless, the general philosophical and religious motivations for so-called baroque aesthetics of Catholicism were certainly rooted in Old World European developments.

²³ According to Biancardi (2001: 46), the baroque aesthetic in architecture can be characterized in accordance with five generally tendencies: preference for the monumental, desire to impress, exhibition of material wealth, decorative superposition, and preference for the unimaginable.

[1991]: 54; see also Kiddy 2005: 97; Ch. 6 of dissertation).²⁴ As João Reis (2003 [1991]: 54) further explains, “According to this baroque view of Catholicism, the saints are not satisfied with individual prayer. The greater the number of individuals who gather to praise saints in a spectacular fashion, the more effective their intercession will be.” No doubt this depiction of “baroque Catholicism” seems as valid for 21st-century novenas as it was for brotherhoods over two hundred years ago. But does the novena *sound* baroque?

In a revealing study of sonority in 18th-century Western European music, Kroesbergen and Wentz (1994) elaborate on what they call the baroque “ideology of sound.” The authors demonstrate that loudness was indeed a vital baroque aesthetic, particularly because it communicated human emotion and spiritual devotion. For example, in the early 1770s, Swiss aesthetician Johann Georg Sulzer wrote that “[a] motet or choral piece should use the maximum number of singers possible, otherwise the performance will remain weak and lacklustre [*sic*]. A choir with 100 singers makes ten times the impression of one with ten, not only on the eye but also on the heart” (Kroesbergen and Wentz 1994: 492). In 1702, François Ragunet admiringly commented that the sound of the Italian basses “reaches the furthest corners of the largest opera building, it carries the sound of their symphonies up to the vaulting of their churches, and *up to the heavens in the open air*” (Ibid., emphasis added). While not explicit, Ragunet’s early-18th-century observations suggest that the beauty of loudness was partly linked to its efficacy in communicating with “the heavens.” This implies that the novena harbors not only a baroque penchant for loudness, but also a baroque cosmology for the aesthetic predilection. Finally, the

²⁴ João Reis (2003 [1991]: 54) points to a mid-19th-century letter for evidence of “the semiology of these shows of faith.” In the 1851 letter to Bahia’s archbishop, Dom Romualdo Seixas, three brotherhoods (one white, one mulatto, and one black) based in Inhambupe, in northern Bahia, wrote “Without Symbols, the impression was merely ideological; without festivities, the Symbols explain nothing; therefore it is clearly recognized that the Symbols and festivities are two basic elements of the Faith which we profess.”

novena's contribution to the "drama" of the reza could be characterized as stylistically baroque (see Reily 2006).²⁵

If indeed the baroque is evoked in the novena's emphasis on elaborate altars, loud song, relationship with the divine, and theatricality, it is worth asking why this would be the case in the 21st century. Responding to a similar inquiry vis-à-vis a five-centuries old fiesta that continues to thrive in Tepoztlán, Morelos, Mexico, Diana Taylor proposes the following:

In Tepoztlán, the mountains, the temple to Tepoztecatl, and the church continue the spatial arrangements of the 16th century, . . . Some precolonial native practices—linguistic, commercial, culinary, and performatic—remain active. The town's organizational layout, with its subdivisions, or *barrios* (neighborhoods), continues the pre-Conquest divisions, or *calpolli*. . . The relationship of the tightly knit community to "others" is enacted twice a week in the larger market, in which merchants from other towns come to sell products—their strictly regulated positioning in the market sets them apart as "foreign." These arrangements and relationships are embodied practices based on ancient ones, and they allow us to understand how people continue to use the "past" as a repository for strategies in carrying on their lives, confronting contemporary struggles, and envisioning futures. (Taylor 2006: 72)

No doubt similar observations could be made for a great number of cities in Bahia's interior. In Cachoeira, for example, where large open-air markets are common, the cobblestone streets lead the way to the same public squares and baroque churches that have existed since the 18th century (Fernandes and Oliveira 2007).²⁶ Is Taylor thus correct in asserting that these spatial arrangements and relationships somehow contemporize aesthetics of a baroque past? Or might it

²⁵ For church music in colonial Minas Gerais, Suzel Reily, following Maurício Dottori, observes that "even though the music itself did not conform to European baroque stylistic procedures, its use within the ritual was nonetheless 'baroque,' in that it contributed towards the dramatic effect of the occasion" (Reily 2006: 48).

²⁶ The National (Brazilian) Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage's (IPHAN) declared, on January 18, 1971, that the city of Cachoeira is historical national patrimony and public funds are used to "preserve" architectonically the city. As Fernandes and Oliveira (2007: 3) observe, "in the case of Cachoeira it is also its domestic architecture, contiguity and the continuity of its habitations, on the riverbanks or the main roads, in addition to living spaces, large blocks of constructions, which, added to its monuments and edifices regarded noteworthy, constitute the object of preservation." This "preservation" of domestic spaces is, for many residents of Cachoeira, a fact worthy of consternation, for in many cases inhabitants are prohibited from making any adjustments to the architecture of their own homes.

simply be that the baroque period was foundation to the society that would eventually become Brazilian (and Bahian)?

Maristela Oliveira de Andrade, for instance, argues that the 17th and 18th centuries are crucial to an understanding of “how particular values were incorporated into the spirit of Brazilian culture, given that society had by then achieved a certain stability” (Andrade 2002: 77). In other words, might not a baroque aesthetic have laid the groundwork for many of the subsequent artistic and religious developments? This seems plausible. But Taylor’s argument regarding the way in which physical space memorializes the past seems no less reasonable. Either way, it is necessary to emphasize that if indeed the past lives in the present—is otherwise activated in the present—it is only because it continues to make sense to present day performers. Whether history is inscribed in space or lays embedded in the historicity of social life, historical continuities only remain vivacious because they are recursively *contemporized* in the present. If in fact a baroque aesthetic pervades 21st-century novenas (and rezas more generally), it is because this is the aesthetic that appears to be most *logical* to 21st-century practitioners. The persistence of aesthetic preferences does not necessarily denote a “congealing” of the past. It depends instead on a constant process of symbolic (re)inscription and (re)interpretation, which may or may not result in the continuity of cultural logics.

3. The Rezadeira

A general requisite for any novena (or reza) is someone(s) to lead it. This typically means an individual female prayer leader, called a *rezadeira*. A *rezadeira*’s job is to “puxar” or “tirar” the reza, terms I translate here as “lead.”²⁷ And to do this, the *rezadeira* must have the capacity to sing loudly during the whole novena. Indeed, the quality of a *rezadeira*’s performance is often

²⁷ Literally translated, “puxar” means “to pull,” and “tirar” means “to pull,” “to take,” or “to remove.” The verb “puxar” is quite common in all Bahian musical genres to refer to the leading or singing of a song.

judged by the power of her voice; she should not run out of breath or sing quietly. The rezadeira is expected to *lead* the others, thus she must be both confident and loud in her execution of the text so that others can hear and follow. The rezadeira's *competency* is determined by her command over the liturgy. Beyond the standard prayers sung at every novena, a skilled rezadeira would know how to sing for *any* patron saint a person might request. The rezadeira may be the host of the reza, but when she is not the host, she may be a family member, a neighbor, a friend, or little more than a casual acquaintance. Generally speaking, rezadeiras receive no payment for their work. Some may receive a tip (*agrado*), but this is rare.²⁸ Indeed, most rezadeiras proudly refer to their craft as “charity.”

Prayer leaders may be male or female, but the former is increasingly rare.²⁹ While men can still be depended upon to lead the samba and perform the instruments, they appear always to compose the minority of novena participants. I present here a few biographical details on four different rezadeiras, whose novenas will be treated later in the chapter. I will discuss the lives of (1) Dona Dé, (2) Dona Coleta, (3) Dona Maria, and (4) the Vieira dos Santos family. I have had more contact with some than others; I consider some to be friends (some even refer to me affectionately as an adopted family member) and others only acquaintances. From each of these women, I have learned much more than I can put into words. Indeed, I have no doubt that the rich lives of each of these individuals, which involve local politics, religious experiences, and personal hardship, could serve as dissertations in themselves. As such, I focus less on the

²⁸ I have heard of rezadeiras receiving anywhere from no money to R\$5 (~US\$2.50) or even R\$40 (~US\$20). Sometimes people provide transportation to and from the home, but in other situations the rezadeiras are on their own to get to and from the home at which they will be performing.

²⁹ During my fieldwork, I saw one man lead a novena and heard of one other whom I did not witness.

individuals *as* individuals (with particular life struggles, histories, experiences, etc.) than as what Ruskin and Rice (2012) call “key figures” in the study of music.³⁰

DONA DÉ

Dona Dé, born Deuzuita Soares de Oliveira, is a *rezadeira* who today lives in urban Muritiba. Born in rural São Félix in 1945, Dona Dé soon relocated to a rural district of the municipality of Santo Antonio de Jesus, located in the southwestern Recôncavo, where she was raised. Blind since childhood, Dona Dé never had, as she put it, “the luck to learn, to study anything.” The *rezas* she knows come from her own dedication, studying “as if in school.” Dona Dé is not only a *rezadeira* of domestic novenas, but she also works with curing prayers as a *rezadeira de cura*.³¹ She learned both of these crafts while still young. Dona Dé explains:

My mom knew curing prayers. . . . Now prayers for...saints, I learned those by listening to the radio. Well, I learned some of them by radio. I had a friend whose parents really liked having *rezas* and at the time there was a *rezador* named Manuel Ramos. He was already pretty old, so José told us “you should learn to lead the prayers, you should figure out a way to pray because Manuel, one of these days, won’t be able to do it anymore. Imagine he’s sick and we’re going to have to go without praying for our saint.” See how people in those days were worried about their saints? . . . So my friend got a catechism book and we went to study. . . . My mom knew a lot of *Benditos*. I also learned some by radio. Others I would learn at the *rezas* I’d go to at other people’s houses or on pilgrimages. That’s how I learned.

³⁰ For Ruskin and Rice (2012: 305), these are musicians who are “key” because “they play some crucial musical role in the culture—such as being extremely popular, occupying an important position, or being an outstanding representative of the style—and they play an important role in the narrative as a particular example of a general point the author wishes to make.” For me, these *rezadeiras* are important in the current narrative for their musical capacity and experience more so than for their personal, non-musical, stories. While of course all things are related, I choose not to explore here what might be construed as even more important issues such as ethnic/gender identity, class situation, emotion, etc.

³¹ The curing practices of *rezadeiras* is well worth an extended investigation and indeed some interesting studies have been conducted (see Santos 2005; Silva 2007). But space only permits a short summary here. *Rezadores* and *rezadeiras* who work with curing do so on an individual basis, as would a family doctor in the U.S. Ailing individuals knock on the curer’s door and are treated for little to no fee. Mayblin (2010: 81) explains that “[a] *rezador* is defined as someone who has a *fê* (faith) strong enough to overpower evil and channel God’s healing through the power and technique of her prayer. *Rezadores* are called on to cure a number of ailments, including *peito aberto* . . . but by far the most common affliction that a *rezador* treats is *mau olhado* (evil eye). Different *rezadores* use different chants and techniques, but the standard practice involves the use of a fresh sprig called *mato*, taken from any small leafed plant. The *rezador* uses the *mato* to make the sign of the cross over the afflicted person whilst chanting under her breath.”

What is salient in Dona Dé's explanation is that her learning was multifaceted and multi-sourced: family, radio, neighbors, and even books.



Fig. 3.1. Dona Dé preparing to lead a prayer in Muritiba, Bahia. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

Dona Dé has been leading prayers since she was 21 years old and proudly boasts that when she first began, everyone wanted to hear her. “They had never seen anyone lead the prayers without a book. So when I started, I said oh my goodness, they only wanted me!” Indeed, Dona Dé, without the ability to see, continues to lead all rezas by memory. Though her visual impairment inhibits more regular participation in church activities, Dona Dé regularly goes to church on Fridays and Sundays. She is also a member of the Apostolado da Oração, a church

sodality. Today she is well known in Muritiba as a rezadeira for both saints and cures (see Fig. 3.1).³²

DONA COLETA

Dona Coleta was born on March 6, 1936, in urban São Félix, where she continues to live today.³³ Dona Coleta talked much less to me about *how* she learned her craft than many others I met, informing me only that she led a prayer for the first time as an 18-year-old in 1954, at a neighbor's home. She in fact began as part of a duo, traveling from home to home with Mundinha, a close friend and her eventual daughter's godmother. As a rezadeira, she is well known in both São Félix and its neighboring Cachoeira. And this local fame gives her reason for pride. She would regularly tell me: "People appreciate me [*eu sou querida*]! I always say, when I die, my family will miss me. But imagine what it will be like for these people whose reza I do...I'm going to be missed!" I can certainly testify to her fame, as I often heard her name evoked in homes in both cities. Dona Coleta is a regular member of the local Catholic Church, where, before a string of health problems began in 2011, she led songs and participated on a nightly basis.

Although Dona Coleta was baptized as child, she was not always a churchgoer. In fact, it is only since about 2001 that she has been part of the church community.³⁴ Dona Coleta lost her husband when he was only 38 years old and she raised her seven children alone, never remarrying. To this day, she wears a wedding band and displays on her living room wall a painting depicting her with her husband. Prior to joining the Catholic Church, her chief religious

³² The information here comes from a few informal conversation with Dona Dé, her close friends, and a formal interview conducted with her at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

³³ When Dona Coleta first told me her full name, she explained that because names are "serious," she does not give it to just anyone. For this reason, I have left her full name absent from the pages of this dissertation.

³⁴ Given that Dona Coleta's decision to join the Catholic Church roughly coincides with the premature death of her son when he was only 42 years old, it seems to me that, although she has never made the link explicitly, the latter seems to have been causation for the former.

affiliation was Candomblé. And to this day, she continues leading rezas at the homes of many Candomblé priestesses. In fact, Dona Coleta is also “accompanied by” (i.e., incorporates) a Caboclo spirit named Boiadeiro-menino (child-cowboy). But it has been many years since she has been “grabbed” (*apanhou*) by him:

I have a Caboclo that used to grab me, but now it has been quite some time since he has come. Boiadeiro! [laughter] It has been many years. . . . In one house where I performed the reza, he grabbed me. He was applauded. When they sang his song [*cantiga*] for him, he grabbed me. . . . In a Candomblé house, too, he grabbed me. This was before joining the church. The church was afterwards, yeah. . . . But it has been years. It was after my husband died. . . . I didn't have these things. After my husband died, that's when he [the Caboclo] grabbed me. . . . He grabbed me in Cachoeira, at a woman's house. It was the house of Val, my son's godfather, I went to do a reza there, and can you believe he [Boiadeiro] came and grabbed me? And my Iemanjá also grabbed me at his house. So he said, take her back to rest. . . . Take her Our Lady of the Conception to rest, her Iemanjá.

Dona Coleta's comments offer fodder for topics regarding my prior discussion of syncretism (see Introduction; Ch. 2) that I will not address here.³⁵ Instead, I would like to draw attention to Dona Coleta's relationship with Candomblé. While she has never been initiated in Candomblé, she has “guardian angels,” as people often call the deities that possess individuals.³⁶

As Dona Coleta explains, she has not been possessed in many years, though she continues her participation in rezas for all people, including the homes of Candomblé priestesses. When leading a reza, Dona Coleta reads from her handwritten spiral-bound prayer book. And outside of her singing at church, she has a very active reza schedule during June (St. Anthony), August (St. Roch), September (Sts. Cosmas and Damian), October (Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Sts. Crispin and Crispinian), and December (St. Barbara, Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Our Lady of the Conception), during which time, particularly in August and September, she usually conducts at least one reza in Cachoeira or São Félix per weekend. On some nights, she participates in

³⁵ Notice, for example, the fascinating syncretism made apparent in Dona Coleta's association—in the same breath—of Our Lady of Conception with Iemanjá (see Introduction).

³⁶ In Dona Coleta's terms, she has never “taken care of” (*cuidar*) her deities in a way that an initiated Candomblé adept would. This includes ritual feedings and celebrations. These issues will be further discussed in Ch. 5.

multiple rezas. Dona Coleta also knows some curing prayers, which she claims to have learned only since joining the Catholic Church, though this is not her specialty, for she is primarily renowned for her expertise in praying for saints (see Fig. 3.2).³⁷



Fig. 3.2. Dona Coleta preparing to lead a prayer in São Félix, Bahia. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

DONA MARIA

Dona Maria dos Santos was born Maria da Conceição Santos in February 1947 (see Fig. 3.3). She continues to live in the same nameless rural area in which she was born and raised. Locally, the area is often referred to as Boca do Rio (lit. Rivermouth), for it sits on the banks of the Paraguaçu River. Officially, it is an area that pertains to the municipality of São Félix, though it is situated on the border separating the municipality of Maragogipe from São Félix. Dona Maria has always worked in the informal market, making clay pottery (*panelas-de-barro*), sewing, and farming. Dona Maria's husband, Manuel dos Santos, is a fisherman and farmer. Until recent years, when the couple began receiving their rural retirement pension (*aposentadoria rural*), the family made its living by selling seafood and pottery in nearby urban

³⁷ The information here comes from countless informal conversations I had with Dona Coleta, discussions with her neighbors and friends, as well as two formal interviews I conducted with her at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 3, 2010 and May 20, 2011.

centers such as Cachoeira and São Félix and more distant ones like Salvador. Dona Maria and Seu Manuel have two children who also live nearby and help with the work.



Fig. 3.3. Dona Maria (with white head scarf) leading a samba after the novena in São Félix, Bahia. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

Although cars can traverse the dirt roads leading to Dona Maria's home when the rains have not turned them into mud, people mostly transit from the main highway on foot (about a twenty minute walk). The area has electricity but no other utilities (i.e., water, plumbing, telephone, gas, etc.).³⁸ While there are a few Evangelical Churches that people have built in the region, there is no local Catholic Church or chapel. The nearest Catholic Churches are accessible only by car, along the main highway, or by canoe, along the river to the nearest city, Coqueiros. Needless to say, Dona Maria does not regularly attend church services. This does not mean she does not consider herself Catholic, however. She maintains that she and all of her family have always been "very Catholic." Her parents held rezas for St. Anthony, St. Roch, and Our Lady of

³⁸ Though the cellular phone signal is rather capricious and entirely dependent on where one is standing, cellular phones have become quite popular in the area.

the Conception, the latter of which is a reza she also hosts.³⁹ In fact, it was at her own father's reza that she got her start:

I remember the first time I led a reza all too well. . . . I was 11 years old, it was there at home, in my father's home. I said to him, "Father, will you be having the reza for Our Lady of the Conception soon?" He said, "I'm going to, my daughter, God willing, next week. On the 8th, I will have the reza." I said, "I'm going to lead it, with Seu Antonio." He [Seu Antonio] was an old man who lived nearby. He [my father] said, "But how do you know how to do it?" I said, "I'm going to give it a try. If I can do it, I'll continue doing it and if it doesn't go well, it'll be my last time." "That's fine," he said. So my father didn't call the man who always led the prayer. . . . From that day on, from 11 years old to now, there it is. It was my beginning.

With little schooling, Dona Maria does not read.⁴⁰ In her words, "I barely know how to sign my name." Therefore, she sings her novenas from memory, never relying on a notebook. Still, when she goes to rezas she takes along published Catholic Church books she has purchased over the years so that people can follow along during the novena. Dona Maria learned to perform by watching others when she would go with her mother to rezas, so it has never been, as she emphasized to me, with the help of a book. Indeed, she believes her ability to pray is a "gift from God." And in fact this justifies Dona Maria's belief that it would be inappropriate to receive payment for her work. Dona Maria is well known in the rural border region between Maragogipe and São Félix, where she lives. She sometimes travels quite long distances to pray at people's homes.⁴¹

³⁹ Although Dona Maria has always insisted that she holds a reza for Our Lady of Conception, during the three years I have known her, I have never seen it materialize. See Ch. 1 regarding the concept of "always" in the context of annual rezas.

⁴⁰ It was not the distance of her home to the school that impeded her learning. As Dona Maria explained it, a teacher once tried to reprimand her with corporeal punishment and she, still quite young at the time, decided it was the last time she would step foot in a school.

⁴¹ I have developed quite a good relationship with Dona Maria and her husband Seu Manuel, who is known in the region as Santo. I have had long informal conversations with both of them repeatedly between 2009 and 2012. I first heard Dona Maria's reza in 2008, which was, incidentally, the first reza I had ever attended. I have interviewed her formally, always at her home, a number of times: July 15, 2009; September 10, 2009; May 20, 2011; December 8, 2011; and May 31, 2012.

VIEIRA DOS SANTOS FAMILY

For rezas in the Recôncavo, *individual* rezadeiras usually travel from home to home. Less common are groups of rezadeiras. By traveling in a group, people can guarantee the responsorial and antiphonal singing that is so vital to the rezas themselves. I will thus focus on the Vieira dos Santos family.⁴² The prayer leaders span two generations, one born in the late-1930s and early-1940s, and another born in the late-1960s and 1970s. The three oldest rezadeiras are two sisters, Dona Marlene and Dona Margarida, and their cousin, Dona Cleusa. All three have been married but only Dona Cleusa has children. Dona Marlene and Dona Margarida, one widowed and the other a divorcée, today live together, across the street from their cousin, Dona Cleusa, in the Caquende neighborhood of urban Cachoeira. All three are today retired, Dona Marlene from her informal work and the other two from government jobs.

All three women are regular churchgoers, which includes regular Mass attendance, early evening church group prayer sessions (*celebrações*), acting as minister of the Eucharist,⁴³ participating in church confraternities (esp. the Sacred Heart of Jesus), and accompanying church processions. Only Dona Marlene, who has vision problems due to diabetes, refrains from going to church with as much frequency, though she watches—on a daily basis—Catholic Church programming on television, and she accompanies the prayers out loud. Every year, the women hold a reza for St. Roch (see Ch. 7), and Dona Cleusa also has her own reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, for which her cousins and the rest of the family offer assistance (see Party Interlude 1,

⁴² No one in the family has this last name. However, the extensive network of family prayer leaders is connected by matrilineal genealogy, thus traced back to Anna Vieira dos Santos. This is therefore the most effective way to condense the different names heuristically.

⁴³ This includes not only helping the priest with the Eucharist during Mass, but also taking the consecrated Eucharist from home to home, in the community, to celebrate with neighbors and family members who were unable to attend Mass.

pp. 51-61). With their handwritten prayer books in tow, the family also occasionally leads other peoples' rezas. Dona Marlene and Dona Margarida explain how they learned:

The person who first led [our mother's] novena [for St. Roch] was my godmother Constância. . . . And when there was a time when she left her prayer book [*caderno*] at our house, we grabbed it and copied everything. She kept asking for the book . . . and we just kept copying it. . . . When we finally finished copying it, we gave her book back to her. And every night we'd sit, praying, practicing! . . . We'd get home and practice, practice, practice, until we got it right. . . . It was me, Malvina [a deceased sister], and Margarida. By the next year, we didn't have to wait for her [Constância, who always arrived near midnight]. And in the end, we would do it for [Constância] because she just couldn't anymore, she didn't have any strength. So she would take us everywhere to pray with her. Now we're getting weak, too, so others have to come, but no one wants to do it anymore.

For the most part, the women travel to rezas together, rarely leading alone. However, their singing rarely resounds in distinct vocal lines (in thirds or sixths, for instance). Rather they travel together in order to provide an antiphonal unison chorus (see Fig. 3.4).⁴⁴



Fig. 3.4. The Vieira dos Santos family singing a reza in Cachoeira, Bahia. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

⁴⁴ I have no doubt lost track of the number of times I have spoken with this family. I have spent the night at many of their homes and have celebrated with them a number of important family events (such as graduations, birthday parties, and rezas). This data is an accumulation of these many encounters. The formal interviews I have conducted have tended to be with Dona Marlene and Dona Margarida, with the occasional presence of Dona Cleusa and other members of the family. These formal interviews were conducted in the Caquende neighborhood of Cachoeira, on September 3, 2009; September 3, 2010; and November 14, 2011.

Rezadeiras learn their craft in a number of different ways: books, the radio, listening live, and practicing in private. Some pray from books while others perform from memory. Rezadeiras can be active in the Catholic Church or not, just as they can participate in Candomblé or not. A rezadeira may be of any ethnicity. In all of these above cases, the rezadeiras are of African descent, though rarely do they speak of their own ethnic/racial identity. I have thus underemphasized it here. Except for Dona Dé, the rezadeiras are all very skilled *sambadeiras* (samba singers and dancers) and often lead the samba that follows the novenas. As is clear in these brief biographies, people who become rezadeiras *want to* become rezadeiras. People can start at any age and while only Dona Maria really emphasized her praying as a gift from God (and thus destiny), all seemed to feel compelled to pray and do so with pride. Perhaps what all rezadeiras share is a joy in exercising their skill and gain pleasure from the celebration of God, the Virgin Mary, and the Catholic saints.

4. The Novena: Liturgy in Melody and Text

No novena liturgy is entirely the same as another. The differences are generally manifest in three ways: texts, melodies, and liturgical order. Most novena texts are the same, typically differing either in isolated word choices or in the language (Portuguese or Latin), though neither usually affects the overall meaning of the text (except that participants understand the Portuguese more than the Latin). Melodies are less homogeneous than texts. Therefore, if a reza participant travels to a different city or even a different neighborhood, s/he may be unfamiliar with the melody used to sing a well-known text. The liturgy also varies slightly from home to home (and rezadeira to rezadeira), though there is notable cogency across the Recôncavo. As I will discuss later, much that is similar in texts, melodies, and liturgies is the result of the influential role of the Catholic Church in structuring domestic rezas.

Generally speaking, each rezadeira has a standard “liturgy” which she uses for all novenas independent of the saint.⁴⁵ This means that the liturgical order is basically the same from one novena to another,⁴⁶ and that save the “Bendito” (discussed later), the texts themselves (and their melodies) remain *relatively* unchanged.⁴⁷ As such, I offer, in Table 3.1, a comparative chart of the liturgies of four different novenas that were held for St. Roch between 2009 and 2011. I present the name of the text in the local terminology, as well as, in parentheses, the language used to sing it, whether in Latin (L), Portuguese (P), or a mixture of both (P/L). I use italics to signal spoken sections. While liturgical structures are not limited to the four presented here, the comparative elements salient in this juxtaposition are representative of the types of variety one might encounter in the Recôncavo. Because this is a comparative chart, I have tried to line up same or similar prayers horizontally, using gray to indicate when that particular text is not performed during a given novena.

⁴⁵ My use of the term “liturgy” is not strictly Catholic. That is, the Catholic Liturgy refers specifically to official Church acts, such as the Mass, the Divine Office, and the Sacraments. Given the novena’s unofficial nature, it is not liturgical or even para-liturgical in a Catholic Church sense. I am using the term more generally, as a reference to a ritual service.

⁴⁶ Novenas for St. Anthony can sometimes be significantly different from those of other saints. This is due to a rather strong Catholic Church influence regarding this Portuguese saint in particular. However, the basic structure remains consistent with the novenas I introduce here.

⁴⁷ The only important substitution is that wherever the name of the patron saint is mentioned within the prayer, the rezadeira is sure to place the appropriate name for that night’s affairs.

NOVENA 1 (DONA DÉ)	NOVENA 2 (DONA COLETA)	NOVENA 3 (DONA MARIA)	NOVENA 4 (VIEIRA DOS SANTOS FAMILY)
Em nome do Pai (P)			
Vem Espírito Santo (P)			Vinde Espírito Divino (P)
	Deus in adjutorium (L)	Deus in adjutorium (L)	Deus in adjutorium (P)
	Glória ao Padre (L)	Glória ao Pai (P/L)	Glória ao Pai [ver 1] (L)
<i>Prayers</i> (P)			
Pai Nosso (P)	Padre Nosso (P)	São Roque Santo (P)	Pai Nosso (P)
Ave Maria (P)	Ave Maria (P)	Padre Nosso (P)	Ave Maria (P)
<i>Prayers</i> (P) 3x	Glória ao Padre (P)	Ave Maria (P) 2x	Glória ao Pai [ver 2] (L)
Glória ao Pai (P/L)	Padre Nosso (P) 2x	Glória ao Pai (P)	
	Ave Maria (P)	São Roque Santo (P)	
		Padre Nosso (P)	
Ladainha (P)	Ladainha (L)	Ladainha (L)	Ladainha (L)
Salve Rainha (P)	Salve Rainha (P)	Salve Rainha (P)	Salve Rainha (P)
	Incenso (P)		Incenso (P)
Bendito de São Roque (P)	Bendito de São Roque (P)	Bendito de São Roque (P)	Bendito de São Cosme (P)
Bendito de S. Antonio (P)	Bendito de N. S. das Candeias (P)	Bendito de N. S. do Rosário (P)	Bendito de São Roque (P)
Incenso (P)			
Bênção (P)	Bênção (P)		Bênção (P)
	Oferecimento (P)		
Senhor Deus (P)	Senhor Deus (P)	Senhor Deus (P)	
<i>Prayers</i> (P)	<i>Prayers</i> (P)	<i>Prayers</i> (P)	<i>Prayers</i> (P)
Louvor (P)		Louvor (P)	
	<i>Vivas</i> (P)		
Derrama, Senhor (P)	Derrama Senhor (P)		
<i>Prayers</i> (P)			
	<i>Vivas</i> (P)	<i>Vivas</i> (P)	<i>Vivas</i> (P)

Table 3.1. A comparison of four different novena liturgies. Novena 1 was recorded in Muritiba, Bahia (8/31/2011). Novena 2 was recorded in São Félix, Bahia (8/15/2009). Novena 3 was recorded in Dinheiro Velho, a rural zone of Coqueiros, Bahia (8/16/2011). Novena 4 was recorded in Cachoeira, Bahia (8/16/2009).

I often asked rezadeiras—outside of the ritual context—what liturgical order they used.

Dona Maria told me the “first song we pray is The Lord’s Prayer [*Pai Nosso*], accompanied by

Hail Mary [*Ave Maria*] and Holy Mary [*Santa Maria*].”⁴⁸ As shown in Table 3.1, Dona Maria does not in fact begin with “The Lord’s Prayer.” She commences with “Deus in adjutorium.” This is because these are seen as a single *block of prayers* designed to invoke God and the Holy Spirit. When I asked the Vieira dos Santos family what the order of their novena was, they told me: “‘Vinde Espírito Divino’ . . . it’s as if we were exalting the Holy Spirit, requesting the Holy Spirit’s permission.” “And after that?” I asked. “The Litany [*Ladainha*].” “What about the ‘Lord’s Prayer?’” I asked. Confused with my inquiry, they responded, “Well yeah, but we already knew that; it all goes together.”⁴⁹ To most *rezadeiras*, the novena is set up in what might be best understood as “thematic blocks.” The beginning, which I will call Block A, is generally for the Father, who is viewed as being “above all others.” Block B is for the Mother, the Virgin Mary. Block C is for the patron saint, in this case St. Roch. And Block D is a return to the Father. Table 3.2 is a heuristic synthesis of Table 3.1, organized in these “thematic blocks.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on July 15, 2009.

⁴⁹ This conversation took place with three of the Vieira dos Santos family members, Dona Margarida, Dona Marlene, and Dona Iraíldes, at their home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

⁵⁰ It is tempting to use the terms employed in the Catholic Church for celebrative Masses. Pablo Sotuyo Blanco (2004), for example, uses these terms to discuss late-19th century Church novenas. As such, the novena is broken into two parts, beginning with a sequence of “Preparação” (Preparation) and followed by sequences of “Louvor” (Extolment) and requests of “Intercessão” (Intercession). The second part is of “Louvor,” “Intercessão,” and “Oferendas” (Offerings), “Agradecimentos” (Acknowledgments), “Orações” (Orations), and a final “Bênção” (Blessing). However, I avoid using such categorizations for although many people are no doubt familiar with such terminology from their participation in Catholic Church activities, I have never heard people use such taxonomies to discuss their own residential liturgical practices. In fact, even in locally published Church booklets, such as those sold for use during St. Anthony’s *trezena* (thirteen days of prayer for St. Anthony), these broad categorical terms are absent.

Block A	Deus in adjutorium
	Glória ao Pai
	Pai Nosso
	Ave Maria
	Glória ao Pai
Block B	Ladainha
Block C	Salve Rainha
	Incenso
	Bendito
	Bênção
Block D	Senhor Deus
	<i>Prayers</i>

Table 3.2. Basic performance structure of the novena in “thematic blocks.”

Notable in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 is the relatively dearth of texts performed for the patron saint, who is the ostensible motivation for the event. This is because saints are viewed as secondary, as but intermediaries to God. Dona Maria explained the inner workings of this divine hierarchy:

We appeal to him [the saint] so that he can go ask God for us. Because everything comes out of our mouths . . . What comes out is stuff that’s good and stuff that’s bad, too! Right? So that saint goes to ask God, because he has more power than do we. . . . “Father, so-and-so requested these things. Do it for me, for you are our Father. You are my father, Lord. You can do it for me.” . . . We can’t just say I’m going to ask that saint and he’ll help me. The one who helps us is God, but we ask the saint, so that he can go and ask God on our behalf. Because God is very fine [*fino*]. He is very fine.⁵¹

Humans do not have direct access to God, who is too “fine.” Humans must therefore turn to the saints, who are much more human-like than God. “Having themselves once walked the earth, [saints] are thought to be more acutely aware of the human condition” (Reily 2002: 180).

According to this logic, then, God occupies the primary position in the divine hierarchy involving saints.⁵²

⁵¹ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

⁵² This type of hierarchy is reminiscent of the familial patriarchy that Gilberto Freyre (2006 [1933]) argued was the base of all of Brazilian society, thus suggesting that the cosmology may have grown out of a particular social hierarchy of Colonial society. However, evidence from early-modern Iberia demonstrates that saints were even then seen as advocates who could intercede with God on behalf of humans (see Christian 1989). Therefore, this seems to be part of a more generalized (and historically based) *Catholic ideology*.

The relatively minor differences notwithstanding, the structure of the novena—the liturgical order and texts—is generally quite consistent from one reza to another. But why is the structure of these domestically run events, which, without a centralized institutional body, have every reason to be haphazard and capricious, so similar? The available evidence suggests that the novena’s apparent structural “stability” is a result of Catholic Church influence. While no institution officially controls the reza, practitioners themselves seem to model their activities in accordance with a liturgical structure derived from the Catholic Church. To illustrate this, I present, in Table 3.3, a juxtaposition of three liturgies: the composite liturgical structure of St. Roch’s residential novena (from Table 3.2); a late-19th-century Catholic Church novena also for St. Roch, as introduced in Sotuyo Blanco (2004),⁵³ and a contemporary *trezena* for St. Anthony which I attended in 2012.⁵⁴ At the level of liturgy and text, the parallels traversing the liturgies of the 1888 novena for St. Roch (in southeast Brazil), the 2012 *trezena* for St. Anthony (in Salvador), and the domestic reza are quite remarkable.

⁵³ Sotuyo Blanco gets his information from an 1888 collection entitled *Novenario de Marianna*, which offers, the author explains, “a panorama of the textual structures utilized in 1888 in the dioceses of Mariana [Minas Gerais] and São Paulo” (Sotuyo Blanco 2004: 6).

⁵⁴ I attended two days of the St. Anthony *trezena* on June 2, 2012, and June 6, 2012, at the Santo Antônio Além do Carmo Parish in the neighborhood of Santo Antonio, in Salvador, Bahia. Every year the church publishes a small spiral bound book (*livreto*) with the prayers of the liturgy, outlining the order for each of the thirteen days. Excepting slight adjustments, the texts and melodies are essentially the same for each of the thirteen days.

Catholic Church Novena for St. Roch (1888)	Catholic Church Trezena for St. Anthony (2012)	Composite Liturgy of 21st-century Domestic Novenas (from Table 3.2)
Aperi, Domine,...		
Deus in adjutorium		Deus in adjutorium
Gloria Patri,...		Glória ao Pai
Veni, Ste. Spiritus,...		
Oração Preparatória		
	Entrada (Salve Grande Antonio)	
	Invocação ao Espírito Santo	[Invocação] (in Novenas 1 and 4)
	Responsório de Santo Antônio	
Pai nosso [3x]	Pai Nosso	Pai Nosso
Ave Maria	Ave Maria	Ave Maria
Gloria Patri	Glória ao Pai	Glória ao Pai
1ª Jaculatoria [<i>sic</i>]	<i>Prayers</i>	
Meditação [for each day]		
Ladainha de..	Ladainha de Santo Antonio	Ladainha
Oração de N. Sra. [optional]		
1ª Jaculatória		
2ª Jaculatória		
3ª Jaculatória		
		Salve Rainha
	Incenso	Incenso
	Música de adoração (Tão Sublime Sacramento)	
	Senhor está aqui (w/ <i>Bendito Seja Deus</i>)	Bendito
	Comunhão	
	Bênção	Bênção
	Hino de Santo Antônio	
		Senhor Deus

Table 3.3. Comparison of two Church celebrative liturgies and that of domestic reza. The first is a novena for St. Roch from 1888, the second a 2012 trezena for St. Anthony, and the third is a 21st-century composite of domestic rezas for St. Roch. With the exception of the spoken “Bendito Seja Deus” (Blessed be God), I have excluded the orated interludes from the Catholic Church trezena (the middle column) to facilitate the comparison. Without knowing clearly what was spoken rather than sung in the 1888 example, I have decided to leave it fairly unedited. Still, I have removed some of the indications for responses, such as the “Domine” response to “Deus in adjutorium,” for these are assumed antiphonal responses.

The liturgies from one church parish to another have never been uniform. Indeed, celebratory Masses offer much greater variation than this brief presentation elucidates. Still, these representative liturgies suggest that the domestic novena liturgy has not been arbitrarily assembled, apparently rooted in Catholic Church practices. After all, at the most basic level of comparison, these three liturgical orders are roughly the same. They all begin with invocations of the Holy Trinity, proceed to the “Ladainha,” and then address specifically the saint. There is also

relative consistency regarding the specific texts employed, and, in the contemporary examples at least, even among melodies (as I will address below). This suggests that over the years, domestic novena practitioners, who no doubt participated in dialogic exchange with community parishes, developed their own local variations without ever drifting too far from an “official” Catholic Church liturgical novena script. The *structure* of all residential novenas, I would venture to say, primarily derive from Catholic Church liturgies, though this may range from contemporary liturgies to those that are centuries old.

ABOUT THE LATIN

Practitioners do not always recognize the language used to sing the Latin-language texts as Latin. While some did in fact tell me unequivocally that they sang in Latin, others did not know the name of the language but assured me it was not Portuguese. One practitioner even told me the language was Spanish. The employing of Latin in prayers acts largely as what Connerton (1989) calls a “liturgical” or “performative” language, whose “utterances tend to be stylised and stereotyped and to be composed of more or less invariant sequences of speech acts” (p. 58), and which are part of social memory.

The use of liturgical language as a link to the past may partially explain why many people continue to sing in Latin even though Portuguese versions currently exist in both written and sung form. After all, people often say they do not change their ritual because “this is how it was when we arrived.” It is a form of continuity. In the reza context, the Latin serves as an index of both a pre-Vatican II Catholicism and the past rezas of their own families and communities. Indeed, the performative (and perhaps even sentimental) value of Latin may partly elucidate why Portuguese words are sometimes pronounced as if they were not Portuguese. Taking just one example, often during “Glória ao Pai” (Glory to the Father), the sung words “filho” (son) and

“sempre” are pronounced differently than they would be if they were to be spoken. According to the patterns of local Bahian Portuguese, the “o” of “filho” sounds like a “u” (as in “tutu”) and the final “e” of “sempre” sounds like the “e” in “easy.” Yet when sung, the “o” and the “e” are accented and “opened” such that “filho” becomes “filhó” and “sempre” is “sempré.” These “performative utterances” (Connerton 1989: 59) convert Portuguese words into the non-Portuguese, liturgical language.

Still, considering Latin a “liturgical language” is not equivalent to reducing it to incomprehensibility. Remember, though Latin would be largely unintelligible to most native English speakers, given the proximity of many Portuguese and Latin words, native Portuguese speakers can no doubt make out a reasonable number Latin words.⁵⁵ For instance, when I asked Dona Margarida and Dona Cleusa what the words meant, they explained, “*Mater*, mother...*Virgem poderosa*...It’s *Vir-gem*.” These women appear to have a basic understanding of the meaning, however selective and abstract. In fact, so close are many of the words that people frequently pronounce many Latin words—such as “mater,” “Deus,” “adjutorium”—as if they were Portuguese, as well as, in other cases, actually translating words such as “Sancta” or “Dei” into the Portuguese “Santa” and “Deus.” This seems to be what might be termed “spontaneous translation,” such as that to which Dona Margarida alluded when she explained to me that “it’s Latin, but we sing it in Portuguese; but it used to be Latin.”⁵⁶ By *turning Latin into Portuguese*, through pronunciation and/or spontaneous translation, devotees are able to appropriate and make the texts relevant to their present.

The ease with which participants seem to navigate the bounds of liturgical language and ordinary speech language underscores the dual effectiveness of “Latin” in the reza context. The

⁵⁵ Many thanks to Suzel Reily (personal communication, 2009) for reminding me that Latin is not quite as far from Portuguese as one might think.

⁵⁶ Interview conducted with Dona Margarida at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

Latin serves to evoke the past—a liturgical continuity with the Catholic Church and a local (family, community) tradition—while also communicating a cosmologically valuable message regarding Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and God. Whether singing Latin words in accordance with a regional Portuguese accent, Latinizing Portuguese words through pronunciation, or spontaneously translating Latin to Portuguese, devotees performatively make the memory of the past semantically meaningful to the present.

5. Block A: Invocation

Block A is not only thematically self-contained. It is also melodically coherent. “Deus in adjutorium meum intende” is among the most widespread inaugural texts, though “Em nome do Pai” (In the Name of the Father), an invocation common today in the Catholic Church, often serves as a substitute. “Deus in adjutorium” is derived from the Holy Bible’s Book of Psalms, verse 69 or 70 (depending on the Bible version): “Deus in adjutorium meum intende; Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.”⁵⁷ Looking at a prayer book of a devotee of St. Anthony (Fig. 3.5), it is possible to get a sense of how the verse is pronounced in a Bahian accent.

⁵⁷ According to the King James Version of the *Holy Bible*, this verse translates to “Make haste, O God, to deliver me; Make haste to help me, O Lord.”

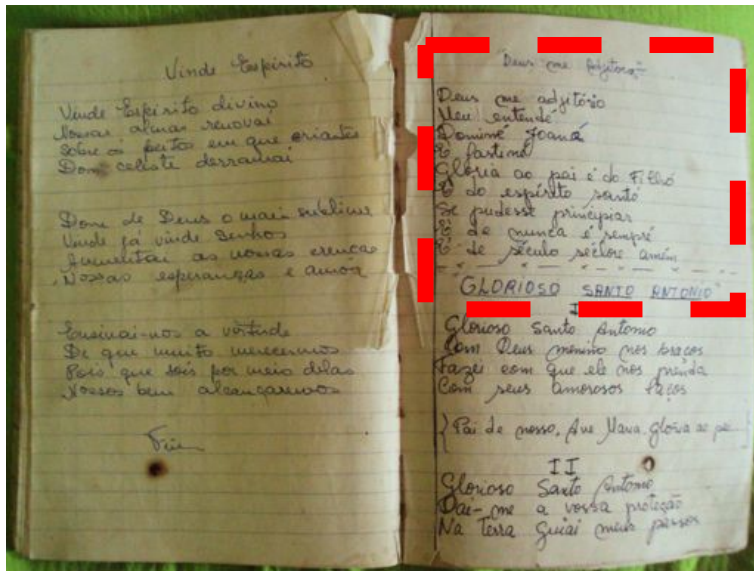


Fig. 3.5. Prayer book. Dashed red box around the text called here “Deus me adjitório.”

The book reads “Deus me adjitório / Meu entendé / Dominé joaná / E’ fastiné / gloria ao pai é do Filhó / E’ do espírito santó / Se pudesse principiari / E’ de nunca é sempre / E’ de século séclore amém.” It merits note that what this devotee titles “Deus me adjitório” includes not solely the text of “Deus in adjutorium” but also a separate text, “Glória ao Pai” (Glory to the Father). “Glory to the Father,” known as the Lesser Doxology, has followed Psalms in the Roman Rite Mass Introit since (at least) the Middle Ages. As such, for this reza practitioner (and many others), these two texts have been rearticulated as one, “Deus me adjitório.”

As Ex. 3.1 illustrates, the basic melodic contour of this text, as executed in Novenas 2, 3, and 4, is nearly identical and even include the syllabic repetition of a few (three) repeated pitches, which is indeed highly characteristic of the way in which psalm verses were often recited during Mass Intros (Grout and Palisca 1988: 64). With their half-step ascending cadences, however, these are quite distinct from classic formulae for Gregorian chant.⁵⁸

Furthermore, the melodies of the Lesser Doxologies in each example are radically different from

⁵⁸ Not only is there no clear dominant, or *Tenor*, where emphasis typically falls, but also the tonic, or *Final*, is preceded by a “sentimental half-tone,” which is atypical of plainchant (Heckenlively [1900?]: 33). It is worth noting, however, that the fifth and sixth modes (*tritus authentic and plagal*) include this raised-seventh cadence.

their preceding Psalm verses, uncommon in plainchant (Apel 1958: 214).⁵⁹ While the textual evidence and use of modal scales no doubt imply some historical continuity, the scalar variations—including the fusion, in Novena 2, of a modal line with a harmonic one—suggest that this continuity is somewhat fragmented and indeed selective. The activation of history is always subject to mediation in the present.

⁵⁹ As Apel (1958: 214) notes, “[T]he psalm tones are the melodic formulae used for the singing of the complete Psalms. This is done by repeating the formula for every verse of the Psalm, as well as for the two verses of the *Gloria Patri* added to it as a conclusion. Thus the over-all form of a Psalm is not unlike that of a strophic song, a hymn, for example, every stanza of which is sung to the same melody.”

Novena 2

Deus in adjutorium
 Deus me ad - ji - tó - rio mio en - te _____ n - de Do - na de Jo - ho e Fa - us - ti _____ ní

9 Glória ao Pai
 Gló - ri - ao Pa - dre Pa - dre é de fi - lio É do es - pi - ri - to em sa - n -

15
 to Se pu - de - se prin - ci - pi - o é de man - ca e sem - pre de sec - lo - ria - mín

Novena 3

19 Deus in adjutorium
 Deus que nún a - di - ji - tório me in - te - rde Do - na Jo - ho e Fa - us - ti - na

24 Glória ao Pai
 Gló - riao pai e do fi - lio É com es - pe - ri - toem sa - n - to se pu -

26
 der prin - ci - pi - a - r é de man - ca e sem - pre é de sec - lo - rio a - mín

Novena 4

28 Deus in adjutorium
 Deus me ad - ji - tó - rio mio en - te _____ n - de Do - na de Jo - ho e Fa - us - ti _____ ní

34 Glória ao Pai
 Gló - riao Pai é de fi - lio É do es - pi - ri - toe sa - n - to Se pu - de - se pri -

39
 ci - pi - o É de ma - nca e se - m - pre É de se - cu - lo - riam a - mín

Ex. 3.1. Comparison of “Deus in adjutorium” and “Glória ao Pai” (Novenas 2, 3, and 4). To facilitate comparison, the melodic lines have been transposed to C an octave up from A, D (Novena 2); C#, C (Novena 3); and D, B (Novena 4).

That Block A is understood as a block by the practitioners themselves is demonstrated not only in the way they describe it, but also in the melodic motif that returns throughout, creating something of a suite rather than just a block of “functionally” linked texts. This is most explicit in Novenas 1 and 3 (see, for example, Ex. 3.2), for which essentially the same melody was employed for “Glória ao Pai,” “Pai Nosso,” and “Ave Maria.”

Pai Nosso

A

4 Pai... No - sso ques-tais no céu... san - ti - fi - ca - do se - ja vo - sso no - me Veni a nós no vo - so

7 rei - no se... ja fei - ta vo - ssa ven - ta - de a - ssm na te - rra co - mo no céu - u

B

9 O pãe no - sso de ca - da di - a nos dai ho - je per - do - ai no - sso di - vi - das - ssm co - mo nós

per - do - a - mos aos no - sso de - vi - do - tes não nos deixe es - ca - ir em ten - ta - ção li - vrei me se - shor do mal a - mén

Ave Maria

A

12 A - ve Ma - ri - a chei - a de gra - ças O se - shor de... con... sos - co ben - di - ta ssm em was, gru - the - tes

17 Ben - di - ti frs - to do vo - sso ven - tre do vo - sso ven - tre Je... su - s

B

21 San - ta Ma - ri - a mãe de Deus to - gai por nós pe - ca - dores a - gor e na ho - ra de no - ssa mor - tua - mên

Glória ao Pai

A

25 Gló - rio ao Pai é de fi - lh - ó... é do es - pi - ri - to é sa - n to... se pu de - ra em prin

30 ci - pi - ó... é... de nun - ca é... de sem - pre é... de sec - lo Sec - lo - riam a - mén

Ex. 3.2. Partial transcription of Block A from Novena 1. The melodic themes are signaled as A and B. For all three texts, section A is a repeated melodic figure adjusted rhythmically in keeping with the text. The short four-beat phrase of B is repeated in accordance with the texts for both “Pai Nosso” and “Ave Maria.”

The repeated four-beat melodic phrase section B of “Pai Nosso” and “Ave Maria” in Novena 1 (Ex. 3.2) is also found in Novenas 2 and 4 even though the A, C, and D section melodies are distinct from each other (see Ex. 3.3, Ex. 3.4).

Glória ao Pai

A Gló-ri-a ao Pa-dre Pa-dre é de-fi-ni-dô f- do es-pí-ri-to em sa-ni-to

B Se pu-de-sser prin-ci-pi-o é de-man-ca e sem-prê de-sec-sec-lo-ria-mên

Pai Nosso

C Pa-dre no-ssos ques-tas no-cêu san-ti-fi-ca-do se-ja vo-ssos no-mes vem a nós ao

vo-ssos re-i-dos se-ja fei-ta vo-ssa von-ta-de a-sim na-te-ra-co-mo no-cêu

B O-pão no-ssos de-ca-da di-a nos dai ho-je per-do-ai no-ssas di-vi-das-sim co-mo nós

per-do-a-mos aos no-ssos de-ve-do-res não nos deix-ai ca-ir em ten-ta-ção li-vrai-nos do mal se-ri-or A-mên

Ave Maria

D A-ve Ma-ri-a Che-i-a de gra-ça O-Sc-rh-or é co-nos-co

Ben-di-ta-sois-vós em-tre-as-mu-lhe-res ben-di-to é o-fra-to do-vo-ssos ve-ni-je-sus

B San-ta Ma-ri-a mi-lhe-de-Deus ro-gaís por nós pe-ca-dores a-go-re na ho-ra de no-ssa morte A-mên

Ex. 3.3. Partial transcription of Block A of Novena 2. Each text begins with a distinct melody (sections A, C, D), but all return to (and end with) the same repeated melodic phrase in section B.

Pai Nosso

A

Pai No - sso ques - tais no céu san - ti - fi - ca - do se - ja vo - sso no - me venh - a nós o vo - sso

6

re - i - no se - ja fei - ta vo - ssa ven - tu - ra de a - soém na te - rra co - mo no céu

10

B

O plo no - sso de ca - da di - a nos daí ho - je per - do - ai no - ssas di - vi - dâsi - ra co - mo nós

13

pe - nlo - a - mos aos no - ssos de - ve - do - res não nos dei - xem ca - ir em ten - ta - ção li - vrai me do mal Se - nhor a - mén

Ave Maria

C

A - ve Ma - ri - a cêi - a de gr - a - ças O Senh - or É... con - vo - sco Ben - di - ta sois

23

em me as mu lheres... ben - di - to é o fru - to do vo - sso ven - tre Je - sus

27

B

San - ta Ma - ri - a mãe de Deus ro - gais por nós pe - ca - dorés a - gora e na ho - ra de no - ssa morte a - mén

Glória ao Pai

D

Gló - ri ao Pai Pa - dre é de fi - lh - o É do es - pi - ri - to Em... san - to

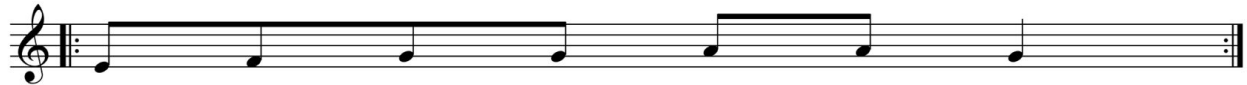
34

Se pu - de - use prin - ci - pi - o É de nun - ca e sem - pre É de sec - sec - ho - ria - mén

Ex. 3.4. Partial transcription of Block A of Novena 4. Again, each text begins with a distinct melody (sections A, C, D), but all return to (and end with) the same repeated melodic phrase in section B.

Although I have limited my investigation to only four novenas instead of discussing the dozens of variations I have heard, it is worth noting that the B phrase in Ex. 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4, isolated in

Ex. 3.5, is common in the overwhelming majority of homes throughout the Recôncavo. It can furthermore be heard on Ralph Waddey’s recordings from the early-1980s and is even sung at celebrative Catholic Church Masses and on Catholic audio recordings.⁶⁰ Moreover, the same phrase is always used with these same texts.



Ex. 3.5. Repeated four-beat melodic phrase recurrent in Novenas 1, 2, and 4.

But the diffusion of this recognizable, short phrase extends far beyond Bahian Catholicism. Indeed, this is also the melody of “La Farolera,”⁶¹ a well-known children’s song in Spanish-speaking South American countries.⁶² “La Farolera” is a round game (*juego de ronda*) whose pedagogical lyrics teach mathematics.⁶³ Evidence suggests that this song is common in at least Uruguay, Argentina, Bolivia, and Colombia.⁶⁴

On her website “Mi sala amarilla” (my yellow room), educator Sandra Luz suggests that “La Farolera” is “probably of Spanish origin.”⁶⁵ Given the melody’s ample diffusion in the Spanish-speaking world, this seems a reasonable speculation. The short melody could easily

⁶⁰ I remember hearing this melody on loudspeakers during Salvador’s annual Lavagem do Bonfim (Ritual Cleaning of the Bonfim Church) in 2012. Pre-recorded songs were broadcast at the Church to “greet” those who were arriving from Downtown Salvador. See Sansi-Roca (2005) for a critical overview of the history and politics of the Lavagem do Bonfim.

⁶¹ I am grateful to Pablo Sotuyo Blanco (personal communication, 2012) for alerting me to the diffusion of this melody, which he recognized from his youth in Uruguay.

⁶² In “La Farolera,” the short initial phrase is followed by a variation on the dominant.

⁶³ The lyrics in Spanish are: “La Farolera tropezó, / y en la calle se cayó, / y al pasar por un cuartel / se enamoró de un coronel. / Alcen la barrera / para que pase la Farolera / en la puesta del sol. / Sube la escalera / y enciende el farol, / y a la medianoche / se puso a contar, / y todas las cuentas / le salieron mal. / *Dos y dos son cuatro, / cuatro y dos son seis, / seis y dos son ocho, / y ocho dieciséis, / y ocho veinticuatro, / y ocho treinta y dos, / ánima bendita, / me arrodillo en vos.*” Translating the final verses (in italics), which deal with mathematics, “Two and two is four, four and two is six, six and two is eight, eight more is sixteen, and eight more is twenty-four, and another eight is thirty-two.”

⁶⁴ Regarding Colombia, see Orozco Meneses et. al (1993); for Argentina, see Martínez (2008: 75) and Roitman (2007: 8-9); regarding Bolivia, see “Mama Lisa’s World, a website interested in children’s songs around the world, which is accessible at <<http://www.mamalisa.com/?p=471&t=es&c=5>> (originally accessed on November 12, 2012), and I know about Uruguay from a personal communication with Pablo Sotuyo Blanco.

⁶⁵ Site accessed on November 12, 2012. <<http://salaamarilla2009.blogspot.com.br/2010/02/la-farolera-tropezo.html>>.

have thus arrived to Bahia by way of Iberia (i.e., via Portuguese or Spanish settlers) or inter-American contact. However, as far as I am aware, the melody has no infantile association in Bahia. Because the Catholic Church uses this melody regularly in celebrative Masses, I suspect that the widespread dissemination of the musical phrase in domestic prayers is due primarily to Church usage. And perhaps this explains the absence of the melody in Novena 3, which is sung by Dona Maria, who lives distant from any urban center and is rarely able to attend Catholic Church events.

6. Block B: Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Next in the liturgy is the “Ladainha de Nossa Senhora” (Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary). This is unquestionably the longest text of the novena. It is typically performed in Latin and in a way that is structurally much more responsorial than any other text (see Ex. 3.6, Ex. 3.7). While Blocks A, C, and D are all expected to be performed antiphonally, by alternating choral groups, they could surely be performed by a single individual. For the “Litany,” however, the responsorial musical phrases are structured to overlap. In other words, it would be impossible for *one* individual to sing the “Litany” correctly or completely without help from other individuals. The responsorial phrases are usually melodically simple and utilize a text that most everyone knows or can easily learn, such as “orai(s) pro nob(r)is” or “miserere nob(r)is.”⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Sometimes the Latin terms are exchanged for Portuguese terms, but not necessarily in a uniform way. In other words, some people might sing “orais pro **nós**” (instead of “nobis”) without necessarily translating the “orais” to “rogais,” as the term would be in the Portuguese version of the “Litany.” This could be due to the fact that “orais” is also a word in Portuguese, coming from the verb “orar” (pray), though the meaning is different from “rogar” (lit. beg).

Ex. 3.6. Three-bar phrase of the “Ladainha” in Novena 2. Notice that return of the rezadeira falls on the first beat of the third measure, while the chorus continues to hold their final note.

Ex. 3.7. Eleven-bar phrase of the “Ladainha” in Novena 4. This transcription is slightly different from the actual performance. Often when the primary voice returned after the responsorial “orais pro nobis,” it waited longer than the rhythmic presentation I offer here. In other words, the overlap was generally much less than the quarter note shown here. The overlap at the beginning of the responsorial “orais,” however, was much more strictly followed. This example includes two points of potential overlap more or less emphasized during a given stanza/performance.

Although I have, on some occasions, heard the same given melody for the “Litany” reproduced at two geographically distant rezas, melodies are typically harmonic and distinct. Thus unlike Block A, the melodies of Block B are not widely shared or standardized.⁶⁷ Indeed, the four novenas I present here share no Block B melodies.⁶⁸ The “Litany” in Novena 1 is sung in Portuguese, while in Novenas 2, 3, and 4, it is performed in Latin. In no case does the text deviate by more than a line or two from the official Latin- or Portuguese-language Catholic texts (see Table 3.4).⁶⁹

⁶⁷ In comparing Ralph Waddey’s recordings from the 1970s and 1980s, it is clear that many of the “Litany” melodies heard today existed in the same geographical locations over three decades ago.

⁶⁸ I have even heard the rezadeiras in Novena 4 melodically treat the “Litany” in two distinct ways.

⁶⁹ The major exception to this is the prayer recited at the close of the text. In Novenas 1, 2, and 4, the prayer is not recited. In Novena 3, Dona Maria leads an abbreviated version of the prayer in an intoned plainchant melody.

Ladainha	Latin	Portuguese	English
Section 1 (For Jesus Christ)	Kyrie, eleison	Senhor, tende piedade de nós.	Lord, have mercy
	Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison. Christe, audi nos. Christe, exaudi nos. Pater de cælis, Deus, miserere nobis. Fili, Redemptor mundi, Deus, Spiritus Sancte, Deus, Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus,	Jesus Cristo, tende piedade de nós. Senhor, tende piedade de nós. Jesus Cristo, ouvi-nos. Jesus Cristo, atendei-nos. Deus, Pai dos céus, tende piedade de nós. Deus Filho, Redentor do mundo, Deus Espírito Santo, Santíssima Trindade, que sois um só Deus,	Christ, have mercy Lord, have mercy Jesus, hear us Jesus, graciously hear us God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, God, the Holy Spirit, Holy Trinity, One God
Section 2 (For the Virgin Mary)	Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis. Sancta Dei Génitrix, Sancta Virgo virginum, Mater Christi, Mater divinæ grātiæ, Mater puríssima, Mater castíssima, Mater inviolata, Mater intemerata, Mater amabilis, Mater admirabilis, Mater Boni Consilii, Mater Creatoris, Mater Salvatoris, Virgo prudentíssima, Virgo veneranda, Virgo prædicanda, Virgo potens, Virgo clemens, Virgo fidelis, Spéculum justítiæ, Sedes sapiéntiæ, Causa nostræ lætítiæ, Vas spirituale, Vas honorabile, Vas insigne devotionis,	Santa Maria, rogai por nós. Santa Mãe de Deus, Santa Virgem das virgens, Mãe de Jesus Cristo, Mãe da divina graça, Mãe puríssima, Mãe castíssima, Mãe imaculada, Mãe intacta, Mãe amável, Mãe admirável, Mãe do Bom Conselho, Mãe do Criador, Mãe do Salvador, Virgem prudentíssima, Virgem venerável, Virgem louvável, Virgem poderosa, Virgem clemente, Virgem fiel, Espelho da justiça, Sede de sabedoria, Causa de nossa alegria, Vaso espiritual, Vaso honorífico, Vaso insigne de devoção,	Holy Mary, pray for us. Holy Mother of God, Holy Virgin of virgins, Mother of Christ, Mother of divine grace, Mother most pure, Mother most chaste, Mother inviolate, Mother undefiled, Mother most amiable, Mother most admirable, Mother of good counsel, Mother of our Creator, Mother of our Savior, Virgin most prudent, Virgin most venerable, Virgin most renowned, Virgin most powerful, Virgin most merciful, Virgin most faithful, Mirror of justice, Seat of wisdom, Cause of our joy, Spiritual vessel, Vessel of honor, Singular vessel of devotion,
	Rosa Mystica, Turris Davídica, Turris eburnea, Domus aurea, Fœderis arca, Jánua cæli, Stella matutina, Salus infirmorum, Refúgium peccatorum, Consolátrix afflictorum, Auxílium christianorum, Regina angelorum,	Rosa mística, Torre de David, Torre de marfim, Casa de ouro, Arca da aliança, Porta do céu, Estrela da manhã, Saúde dos enfermos, Refúgio dos pecadores, Consoladora dos aflitos, Auxílio dos cristãos, Rainha dos anjos,	Mystical rose Tower of David, Tower of ivory, House of gold, Ark of the covenant, Gate of heaven, Morning star, Health of the Sick, Refuge of sinners, Comforter of the afflicted, Help of Christians, Queen of Angels,

	Regina patriarcharum, Regina prophetarum, Regina apostolorum, Regina mártýrum, Regina confessorum, Regina vírginum, Regina Sanctorum omnium, Regina sine labe originali concepta, Regina in cælum assumpta, Regina Sacratíssimi Rosárii, Regina pacis,	Rainha dos patriarcas, Rainha dos profetas, Rainha dos apóstolos, Rainha dos mártires, Rainha dos confesores, Rainha das virgens, Rainha de todos os santos, Rainha concebida sem pecado original, Rainha assunta ao céu, Rainha do Santo Rosário, Rainha da paz,	Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Apostles, Queen of Martyrs, Queen of Confessors, Queen of Virgins, Queen of all Saints Queen conceived without original sin, Queen assumed into heaven, Queen of the most holy Rosary, Queen of Peace,
Section 3 (For God)	Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Parce nobis, Dómine. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Exaudi nos, Dómine. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis. Ora pro nobis, Sancta Dei Génitrix. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi. Oremus. Concéde nos fámulos tuos, quæsumus, Dómine Deus, perpetua mentis et córporis sanitate gaudere: et gloriosa beatæ Mariæ semper Vírginis intercessione, a præsentí liberari tristítia, et æterna pérfrui lætítia. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. Amen.	Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais os pecados do mundo, Perdoai-nos, Senhor. Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais os pecados do mundo, Ouvi-nos, Senhor. Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais os pecados do mundo, Tende piedade de nós. Rogai por nós, Santa Mãe de Deus. Para que sejamos dignos das promessas de Cristo. Oremos. Concedei a vossos servos, nós vo-lo pedimos, Senhor nosso Deus, que gozemos sempre da saúde da alma e do corpo e pela gloriosa intercessão da bem- aventurada Virgem Maria sejamos livres da tristeza presente e alcancemos a eterna glória. Por Cristo Nosso Senhor. Amém.	Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, Spare us, O Lord. Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, Graciously hear us, O Lord. Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that we Thy Servants may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, be delivered from present sorrow and unjoy eternal happiness. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Table 3.4. Official Catholic Church text of the “Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” It is presented here in Latin, Portuguese, and English.

The text of the “Ladainha” can be divided into three sections: (1) prayer for Jesus Christ, “Kyrie Eleison” (in Latin) and “Senhor, tende piedade de nós” (in Portuguese); (2) offering to the Virgin Mary, “Sancta Maria” (in Latin) and “Santa Maria” (in Portuguese); and (3) prayer to

God, “Agnus Dei” (in Latin) and “Cordeiro de Deus” (in Portuguese).⁷⁰ As shown in Table 3.5, the melodic divisions for each section of the “Ladainha,” not to mention the melodies themselves, are different in all four Novenas.

Ladainha de Nossa Senhora	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3
Novena 1 (ABA)	A1	B1	A1
Novena 2 (AAA)	A2	A2	A2
Novena 3 (AAB)	A3	A3	B3
Novena 4 (ABC)	A4	B4	C4

Table 3.5. A comparative chart of the melodic organization of the “Ladainha.” In each, the letter designates the melodic theme while the number indicates to which novena it pertains. A2, for example, indicates a different “A” section from the other numbered A melodies.

It is worth noting that section 3, “Agnus Dei” (Lamb of God), has a very specific associated “choreographic” (or performative) movement. People are expected (though never explicitly instructed) to place their right hand over their heart and stand up for the text’s entirety. For Catholic Mass, the congregation is also required to stand (though not with the hand over the heart) during the “Cordeiro de Deus,” which the Church suggests that this is a physical affirmation of one’s attention to the message being communicated in the text.⁷¹ But this movement seems to go beyond mere dogmatic protocol. As Judith Hanna notes regarding ritual more generally:

People may, in fact, be seduced through *dance*. . . . A variety of . . . seductive stimuli operate in the dance-play: there is movement, the feeling of kinesthetic activity or empathy; the sight of performers, and sometimes the audience, moving in time and space with effort; the touch of body to performing area, to the performer’s own body, or to another’s body; the sound of physical movement, the impact of the feet or other body supports on the “stage.” (Hanna 1979: 89, emphasis added).

⁷⁰ These are not native categories. While often the “Agnus Dei,” which I am here calling section 3, is differentiated from the rest of the litany, people do not refer to these melodic “movements” as sections. However, my heuristic breakdown of the “Litany” into sections is not really an imposition, as much as it an extrapolation of shared melodic changes and even choreographic movements.

⁷¹ On a website for Catholic youths, called JUPEC, Juventude Unida para Encontrar Cristo (Youth United to Encounter Christ), located at <<http://jupec.com.br/missa-parte-por-parte-os-gestos-objeto-o-sacerdote-o-altar-%E2%80%93-viii/>> (accessed on November 14, 2012), standing up is said to be a “position of one who is listening with attention and respect. It indicates a readiness and disposition to obey.”

Substituting, in this citation, the term “movement” for “dance” (in italics), it is possible to begin contemplating the ritual function served by this specific “Agnus Dei” *choreography*. Although the domestic prayer is semantically parallel to its Church counterpart, the Latin language makes the message more convoluted. Yet by standing up—moving with effort, hearing the sound of physical movement, seeing others move—and placing one’s hand over his/her heart (i.e., the individual’s own contact with his/her body), the *weight* of the message as “important,” more so perhaps than the message itself, is made explicit. With the simultaneous employment of multiple media—semantic content (however ambiguous), melodic repetition, movement—the ritual performance of “Agnus Dei” serves as an intense *experience* of the sacred in a way that goes far beyond the singing of the texts alone.⁷² It is furthermore important to note, as has Deborah Wong (2001) in the case of the Thai *wai khruu* ritual, that “the ‘meaning(s)’ of the ritual do not stand apart from these media . . . Music, dance, the sounded word, the silent word, and ephemeral substances . . . make the ritual effective in ways that collapse the real and the symbolic” (p. 5).

The “Litany” is usually the last prayer performed in Latin. But not all rezadeiras are fond of Latin-language performances, as Novena 1 demonstrates. Indeed, although Dona Dé knows by heart the Latin-language text, she insists on singing in Portuguese. In fact, at one moment during Novena 1, when the majority of her responsorial chorus members belted out “orais pro nobis,” Dona Dé interrupted her congregation, “That’s not it! ‘Rogai por nós.’” A few of the participants instructively repeated the phrase to the others, assuring accuracy from that moment onward. Eschewing Latin was, to Dona Dé, was little more than an issue of translation: “The Portuguese

⁷² I use the conceptualization of “multiple media” in the context of performance following Stanley Tambiah (1981) and Victor Turner (1986: 22-24), in his reading of Milton Singer. As Tambiah (1981: 119) notes, the multiple media facilitate for participants a more intensive experience of the event.

is different, right? But the prayer is the same. I mean the way to pray in Latin, the language, but the laud [*louvor*] is the same thing. It's just that the lyrics are different." She went on to explain:

I do it in Portuguese because I think it's prettier, but I know the other one [in Latin]. I think [in Portuguese] it's pretty, and that we should speak [the language] people understand. . . . Take the Mass, for example. In the old days Mass was in Latin, right? People would go to *listen to Mass*. Today no one says, "I'm going to listen to Mass." We go to celebrate *together*, because we know the words to respond. The priest says the words; we respond. In the old days, no one knew.⁷³

For Dona Dé, the substitution of one language for another results in no semantic consequence. Instead of changing the meaning, the Portuguese only gives the meaning more communicability. This alteration seems to reflect the post-Vatican II ideological shifts brought to the Catholic Church, which, among other things, encouraged more lay participation through uses of vernacular languages instead of Latin. Interestingly, this is an example of how the Church makes its way into the domicile. After all, Dona Dé did not learn this Portuguese prayer at peoples' homes, as she had the Latin version. Rather she learned the Portuguese-language "Litany" by way of a Catholic radio station based in Feira de Santana, which broadcasted the singing of a priest named Frei Aureliano.

It is quite easy to understand Dona Dé's logic when considering the aesthetic concerns I discussed earlier. Remember, a novena is beautiful when it is loud *because* it indexes the many people who are expressing their devotion. For Dona Dé, this devotion is best expressed in Portuguese, for it is unambiguous and easier for others to sing along. This substitution thus favors the more active participation of the congregation. For similar reasons, Dona Tânia, whose reza I explored in Party Interlude 3 (pp. 158-162), also sang her "Litany" in Portuguese.⁷⁴ When I asked Dona Tânia why she did not use Latin, she responded that "*in the old days* we had that.

⁷³ Interview conducted with Dona Dé at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

⁷⁴ The melody used to sing the version in Portuguese was the same melody that Dona Coleta, who leads some of Dona Tânia's other rezas and lives in the same city (São Félix), typically uses to sing her "Litany" in Latin.

But now it's 'Vinde,' because that's how the people who made the paper do it."⁷⁵ The paper to which Dona Tânia referred here was something that a member of her local Catholic Church congregation typed up and distributed so that people could conduct their rezas for St. Anthony at home (see Fig. 3.6). By using a pre-prepared guide, all attendees can read the text if they do not already know what to sing. In this way, not only do people unequivocally comprehend the language they are hearing and singing, but more people can participate, sing together, sing more loudly, and show more devotion. In the end, Dona Tânia is more likely to have a beautiful reza.



Fig. 3.6. "Novena em Louvor a Santo Antônio." This pamphlet was distributed at the local Church in São Félix in order for people to have the complete liturgical texts to conduct residential novenas and rezas. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

7. Block C: The Patron Saint

Block C, which is directed towards the patron saint, may not comprise the "finest" prayers, for this designation belongs to texts directed towards God, but it is perhaps the most

⁷⁵ Interview conducted with Dona Tânia at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on July 6, 2011.

important. This third block is composed of a salutary “Salve Rainha” (Hail Holy Queen), multiple-media “Incenso” (Incense), usually two hagiological “Benditos” (Blessed song) and a final “Bênção” (Blessing). Of these, the most important is no doubt the “Bendito” and for this reason the entire block is sometimes referred to simply as “the Bendito.” In fact, it seems that of all prayers sung during the novena, the “Bendito” is by far the most crucial; it establishes which saint(s) are being honored at the event.⁷⁶

SALVE RAINHA

The first text of Block C, despite being designated as “Hail Holy Queen,” generally has no content that actually addresses the Queen (the Virgin Mary).⁷⁷ Instead, the text—nearly always—deals exclusively with the saint. In a moment of reflexive curiosity, Dona Dé laughed to me as she observed that “there is the ‘Salve Rainha,’ but since it’s a saint, it’s not a *Salve Rainha*, it’s a *Salvo*, right? Because everyone calls it *Salve Rainha*, but *Rainha* is Our Lady, right? Since that’s how we sing it, it’s not a *Salve Rainha*.”⁷⁸ Regardless, the “Hail Holy Queen” is typically the first musical moment during which the saint is greeted by way of an extended sung text. The same basic text is used in each of the three novenas (Table 3.6), though slight differences are made regarding the repetition of particular stanzas and refrains. As should be clear, the text is primarily concerned with celebrating the role of the saint—in this case St.

⁷⁶ The terms “Bendito” and “Bênção” are difficult to translate for they are both derived from the same Portuguese word meaning “Bless.” Thus I choose to translate “Bendito” as “blessed song” and “Bênção” as “blessing.” A “Bendito” could be described as something not unlike a “Hymn,” but the designation is confusing if one considers that many Catholic songs are also called, in Bahia, “Hinos,” which translates literally as hymn. The difference between a “Bendito” and an “Hino” has been explained to me as the former having no known author and the latter having a known author.

⁷⁷ In this regard, I have only witnessed one exception: Dona Maria’s novena, during which she sings the Catholic “Salve Rainha” text. At every other novena I have attended, participants have sung the “Salve Rainha” for the saint.

⁷⁸ Interview conducted with Dona Dé at her home in Muritiba, Bahia on November 21, 2011. I suspect that at one time people in fact sang to the Queen with some sort of introductory “Hail” for the saint, as is heard in Novena 3. Over time, the introduction became the primary content while the designation remained.

Roch—in interceding to God on behalf of humans. The harmonic melodies for each of the four novenas are distinct in terms of contour, rhythm, structure, and pitch.⁷⁹

Salve Rainha (Portuguese)	English translation
Salve ô S. Roque, ouve os rogos meus A misericórdia, alcançar de Deus	Hail, Oh, St. Roch, here my prayers Mercy is within God’s reach
Viva senhor S. Roque no jardim celeste Flor do Paraíso, advogado contra a peste	Long live lord St. Roch in the celestial garden Paradise’s Flower, advocate against the plague
Sois vida doçura dos vossos devotos Esperança certa dos seus firmes votos	You are the sweet live of your devotees A sure hope of your secure votes
Ô doce S. Roque, atendei os brados Os filhos de eva, tristes degradados	Oh sweet St. Roch, attend to the shouts The children of Eve, sad and degraded
Gemendo e chorando pelo seu retorno Vivendo nos vales Deste cruel mundo	Moaning and clamoring for your return Living in the valleys of this cruel world
Voltai às vossas faces com olhos propícios Salve os brasileiros do santo exercício	Return to your faces with propitious eyes Hail the Brazilians who do holy work
Ô doce S. Roque sempre tão clemente Rogai piedoso pela humana gente	Oh sweet St. Roch, always so merciful Pray piously for human kind
Depois que acabamos a vida presente Mostrai nossas almas ao onipotente	After we are done with the current life Show our souls to the omnipotent
Por nós mereçamos de Cristo também Rogai as promessas para sempre, Amém	For we too deserve Christ Pray the promises eternally, Amen

Table 3.6. “Salve Rainha” text for St. Roch at Novenas 1, 2, and 4. The stanza in bold is a refrain sung only in Novena 4 and is non-existent in Novena 1 and 2. In Novena 1, the first stanza presented here is treated as a refrain that returns after each stanza. In Novena 2, the second line of each stanza is sung twice.

INCENSO

In most novenas, as is the case in Novenas 2 and 4, the “Incense” follows the “Hail Holy Queen.” This prayer, as its title suggests, is the liturgical moment during which incense is used to bathe the altar and the congregants. The aromatic smoke clouds are greeted with lively song, the lyrics of which describe the purpose of the incense: to take the prayers up to the “throne on high” (*trono do altíssimo*). The moment is joyous and intense. It is also a vital part of creating a sacred

⁷⁹ The melody of the “Salve Rainha” in Novena 4 utilizes an ambiguous seventh, oscillating between a minor and a major seventh.

atmosphere to receive the saint, who is the subject of prayers throughout Block C. This is the most celebratory “multiple media” moment of the liturgy, but it is not the first use of incense. Incense is often used to “cleanse” the room and the altar before anyone arrives or, in other cases, incense is set at the home’s front door to bathe those entering the domicile.⁸⁰ The sacred force of incense is nearly as old as Christianity itself. In a reading of modifications in the Syriac *Transitus Mariae*, Susan Ashbrook Harvey (2006) convincingly argues that by early antiquity, Christians had already come to appreciate incense as a “piety of fragrance.” By the 6th century, the author contends, incense had become “a dialogic device providing an olfactory language that served to bridge the human and divine spheres. Fragrance itself becomes the source and locus of power” (p. 96). It is perhaps due to this long tradition of incense in Christian (and other ritual) contexts that practitioners offered me little explanation regarding its employment in their liturgies.

Most people simply agreed that incense was “good.” Either it smelled “good” or it was “good” *for* people.⁸¹ Some reiterated the song’s message, affirming that incense takes the prayers to Heaven. Others insisted that incense is used because it was among the three presents the Magi took to Jesus upon His birth. Indeed, there seems to exist little consensus for *why* incense is used. From an analytical point of view, the incense, by means that are chiefly aromatic (though the dense smoke clouds are also quite visual), works to create a sacred atmosphere. It is a “smellscape” (Porteous 1985) that indexes not a physical space but an abstract sacred *ethos*. Incense, in this way, creates for reza participants what Jim Drobnick (2002) calls an “olfactory

⁸⁰ Incense is typically placed in an incensory. Although the incensories can be purchased, they are most often homemade with empty 400-gram powdered milk tins.

⁸¹ That incense smells good already reveals quite a bit. After all, it could smell bad or people could be ambivalent about what they thought. As Connie Chiang (2008: 406) notes, in a study on the U.S. fishing and tourism industries at the turn of the 20th century, “In deciding what smelled good and what smelled bad, [Americans] were making decisions about what activities and people they valued.” One might therefore conclude that the “good” smell of incense helps expose, at the most basic level, that people associate the scent with positive values.

affect.” The scent, which is the primary trace of incense, transforms the domestic space into a sacred one; it “operates at that contradictory intersection of lived experience, states of feeling, and non-signifying sensations that nevertheless communicate something important about a place or period” (Drobnick 2002: 40). The incense, like the altar, is integral to Catholic Church ritual, and consequently *reminds* participants that they are not *just* in a (secular) home. They are also participating in a sacred moment during which God, the Virgin Mary, and the patron saint are renewed. The aroma significantly affects the sanctity of the profane environment, reinforcing what the songs, the altar, and the bodily movement are all about.

When comparing novenas, except for the earlier mentioned sections of Block A, no other text/melody is as widespread as the “Incense.” Not all novenas have a celebratory song of “Incense,” but among those that do, the song is usually the same. In fact, this repetitive harmonic (and regularly metered) melody is also a regular part of celebratory Masses in the Catholic Church throughout Bahia. Indeed, it seems probable that the relative standardization of this melody is but another church consequence.

7 Su-biu pre-ci-o so in-cen-so a-tê o tro-no do al-ti-ssi-mo in-cen-sai se-nhor São
 II Ro- que com o per-fu-me su-a-vi-ssi-mo in-cen-sai se-nhor São
 Ro- que com o per-fu-me su-a-vi-ssi-mo Es-ta

Ex. 3.8. Transcription of the opening strophe of the “Incense” from Novena 1. This melody is among the most common at domestic rezas.

BENDITO

“Benditos” typically follow the “Incense.” To most devotees, “Benditos” are among the most important prayers of the night. So important are “Benditos” that sometimes singing a novena is referred to as singing “the Bendito.” The saint whose “Bendito” has been sung is said to have been “prayed” (*rezou o santo*), which roughly translates as “to be honored.” “Benditos,” which recount saint hagiographies, symbolically bring the saints back to life by serving as reminders of their miraculous feats. And given that the primary purpose of the reza is to remember the saint, it hardly seems insignificant that the “Bendito” is the most treasured prayer of the night. Although a reza is conducted in the name of only one saint (*viz.* a reza *for* St. Roch), other saints can also be honored at the same event simply by singing their “Benditos.” For instance, on occasion of a reza for St. Roch, at which St. Anthony’s “Bendito” was also sung, I heard someone remark triumphantly, “Well, we’ve honored St. Roch and St. Anthony; we sang their Benditos!” At least two “Benditos” are usually sung at any given reza,⁸² the patron saint of the night and another symbolically important saint of the host’s choosing.

In her study on the “lament of souls” ritual (*lamentação das almas*) in the Chapada Diamantina region of Bahia (located around 200 miles west of the Recôncavo), Carolina Pedreira (2010) notes the prominence of a variety of different “Benditos.” She explains:

The category “bendito” tends, in accordance with the native classification, to cover all types of reza, including the entrance bendito, the *bendito-praise-be* and those that, only to make the classification less confusing, we will call hagiological benditos. Hagiological benditos, called benditos or *incelências*, are sung prayers or prayed songs that verse about saint histories, about the life of Jesus, His suffering on the cross, the ailment and strength of Our Lady (and of the many Our Ladies), emphasizing bitterness and/or heroic feats of these or other entities. (Pedreira 2010: 23)

⁸² These are typically the two most meaningful saints for the family. Therefore, even if an entire novena is dedicated to a certain saint, if the host’s father or mother had a devotion to another saint, usually that saint’s “Bendito” is also performed.

Pedreira’s taxonomic innovation is quite convenient for thinking about the textual content of “Benditos” at rezas. “Benditos” recall saints by recounting who they were, what they did, and what they *can* do. Indeed, these “Benditos” serve as sources of information regarding saints. Often when I asked a practitioner about a saint’s hagiography, s/he would quietly sing the saint’s “Bendito” to her-/himself in order to remember or, in other cases, s/he would reference the “Bendito” as s/he explained to me the saint’s characteristics.⁸³ But can these “Benditos,” sung memorials, be regarded as “faithful” hagiographies? To explore *how* and *what* Benditos express, I consider here two representative examples, one for St. Roch (Table 3.7) and another for Sts. Cosmas and Damian (Table 3.8). As seen here, the localized hagiographies recounted in “Benditos” generally deviate quite significantly from same saints’ “official” hagiographies (such as that which is related in *Butler’s Lives of the Saints*). Although “Benditos” are definitionally hagiological, they must be understood as New World readings of Old World saints.

Bendito for St. Roch (Portuguese)	English translation
REFRÃO: A 16 de agosto todos temerá a São Roque <i>Não temeram os castigos do divino braço forte.</i>	REFRAIN: On the 16th of August everyone will fear St. Roch <i>They won't fear the castigation of the strong holy arm.</i>
Valei-me, senhor São Roque, do golpe da epidemia, <i>Assim como vos livrou vossa cidade, Bahia.</i>	Save me, Lord St. Roch, from the epidemic’s blow, <i>Just as you freed your city, Bahia.</i>
Fui em Roma, eu fui em França com tamanha alegria, <i>Para livrar o vosso povo do golpe da epidemia.</i>	I went to Rome, I went to France with great happiness, <i>To free your people from the epidemic’s blow.</i>
REFRÃO O filho pediu ao Pai que queria ser valido <i>De um favor tão grande, quem serve quer ser servido.</i>	REFRAIN The son asked his Father, for he wanted to be valued <i>A big favor, he who serves wants also to be served.</i>
São Roque pediu ao povo que fizesse uma festa <i>Que ele também prometia de livrar todos da peste.</i>	St. Roch asked the people to have a party for him <i>And he also promised to free all from the plague.</i>
Ofereço este bendito ao Senhor que está na cruz,	I offer this bendito to the Lord who is on the cross,

⁸³ I have heard people say, “St. Roch came from France. See, in his ‘Bendito,’ we sing that he went to France.”

<i>Ao milagroso Senhor São Roque, para sempre. Amém, Jesus.</i>	<i>To the miraculous Lord St. Roch, for always, Amen, Jesus.</i>
REFRÃO	REFRAIN

Table 3.7. Text for a “Bendito” for St. Roch in Portuguese and English. This is from Novena 4. I have italicized phrases that are repeated.

Bendito for Sts. Cosmas and Damian (Portuguese)	English Translation
REFRÃO: Aleluia Aleluia Que nasceram dois irmãos <i>Que São João batizou São Cosme, São Damião</i>	REFRAIN: Haleluia, Haleluia For two brothers have been born <i>Whom St. John baptized St. Cosmas, St. Damian</i>
Toda mulher que tiver Dois, dois em uma nação <i>Trate logo de festejar São Cosme, São Damião</i>	Every woman who has Twins in a single pregnancy <i>Be sure to celebrate St. Cosmas, St. Damian</i>
Toda aquela que tiver Que não quiser festejar <i>Também há de ter a dita Que no céu não há de entrar</i>	All of those woman who have [twins] Who don’t want to celebrate <i>Also should be warned That in Heaven they won’t enter</i>
REFRÃO	REFRAIN
São Cosme quando nasceu Trouxe a sua esmola certa <i>Escada para subir As porta do céu aberta</i>	St. Cosmas, when he was born He brought his certain alms <i>Stairs to ascend And Heaven’s door open</i>
Damião a seus devotos prometeu a não faltar <i>Escada para subir Cadeira para sentar</i>	Damian, to his devotees, promised not to lack <i>Stairs to ascend A chair to sit</i>
REFRÃO	REFRAIN
Salve o dia 27 Salve a boa união <i>Salve a hora em que nasceram São Cosme e São Damião</i>	Hail the 27th Hail the good union <i>Hail the hour when they were born, St. Cosmas and St. Damian</i>
Salve Cosme e Damião Salve a hora em que nasceram Os anjos cantam no céu [26:10] Glória e necesses Deus	Hail Cosmas and Damian Hail the hora when they were born The angels in Heaven sing Glory and MECESSSES God
REFRÃO	REFRAIN
Esses dois, para [?] um bendito Todo mundo refulgente <i>Rogai a Deus por nós todos</i>	These two, for a bendito Everyone refulgent <i>Pray to God for us all</i>

<i>Lá no céu eternamente</i>	<i>In Heaven eternally</i>
Ofereço este bendito a São Cosme e São Damião <i>A Virgem da Conceição</i> <i>Madrinha dos dois irmãos</i>	I offer this bendito to St. Cosmas and St. Damian <i>The Virgin of the Conception</i> <i>Godmother of the two brothers</i>
Ofereço este bendito a São Cosme e São Damião <i>A Virgem da Conceição</i> <i>Madrinha dos dois irmãos</i>	I offer this bendito to St. Cosmas and St. Damian <i>The Virgin of the Conception</i> <i>Godmother of the two brothers</i>
REFRÃO	RERAIN

Table 3.8. Text for a “Bendito” for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Portuguese and English. This is from Novena 4. I have italicized phrases that are repeated.⁸⁴

According to Catholic Church sources, Roch was born sometime in the middle of the 14th century, probably at Montpellier, in southern France. Early on, Roch decided to go to Italy, where the plague was rampant, in order to care for the sick. Indeed, Roch successfully cured victims with nothing but the Sign of the Holy Cross. Upon returning to France, Roch, unrecognizable to the local population, was imprisoned and, only five years later, died while still incarcerated (Brugada 2003: 8; Farmer 1998: 162-163). Cosmas and Damian were born in Arabia a millennium earlier, probably in the 3rd century. After completing their studies in Syria, the twin brothers went to Aegeae (modern-day Turkey) to practice medicine in the name of Jesus Christ and preach the gospel. Given their refusal to accept payment for their services, these saints are often called *anargyroi* (the moneyless ones). Victims of the era’s hostility towards Christianity, the twins were eventually tortured and beheaded (Belém 2005: 7; Farmer 2000: 239).

St. Roch’s “Bendito” is not a striking a departure from his official hagiography, as is Sts. Cosmas and Damian from theirs. St. Roch did indeed travel to both France and Rome, as his

⁸⁴ This “Bendito” affirms that St. Cosmas’ day is the 27th of September. Yet there is some discrepancy regarding which day has been consecrated for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. It seems that after 1970, the official date was moved from the 27th to the 26th of September. Thus the twin saints’ day can be different depending on which source is consulted.

“Bendito” claims. However, unlike his “Bendito,” nothing in the saint’s official hagiography insinuates that the French saint should favor exchanging a party in his name for his protection against the plague, nor does it seem he was ever on a cross of any sort. Sts. Cosmas and Damian’s “Bendito,” on the other hand, offers a pronounced separation from their written hagiography. No Catholic Church authorized source has ever claimed, for instance, that Sts. Cosmas and Damian are the patron saints of twins or that a mother who has twins should celebrate the saints, which the “Bendito” unequivocally asserts. Indeed, the historical record shows that except for isolated New World localities, Sts. Cosmas and Damian had always been patron saints of medics, pharmacists, surgeons, nurses, and barbers (David-Danel 1958; Carvalho 1928: 3-18; LaWall 1934; Lima 2005: 15; Matthews 1942). Although an in-depth exploration would detract from the current discussion, suffice it to say that this New World transformation in the twin saints’ characteristics is linked to the African (specifically Yoruba) rewriting of Sts. Cosmas and Damian’s hagiography, which was particularly marked in Bahia and Haiti (Capone 2011; Lima 2005; Houlberg 1995; Omari 1979).⁸⁵

Turning to Africa, it is clear that Fon- and Yoruba-speaking people have for many centuries accepted, welcomed, and rejoiced the birth of twins because of the blessings they are said to bring with their birth (Chappel 1974: 250; Houlberg 1995: 269; Leroy, et al. 2002: 134). In Babatune Lawal’s (2011: 85) terms, “[Yoruba] believe . . . that twins have the capacity to transform a ‘beggar into somebody with food to eat’—which is understandable in view of the many gifts that some Yoruba mother of twins (*iyá ibeji*) receive from wee-wishers in the course

⁸⁵ Wyatt MacGaffey (2002) has suggested that in Haiti, the cult of twins and abnormal children is largely a result of the Kongo influence. In Brazil, and perhaps Cuba, the influence appears to be primarily Yoruba. The linguistic evidence alone is quite compelling for this argument. After all, even though the majority Brazilian words of African derivation are linked to Central African, those words related to twin veneration point directly to Yoruba territory (words such as *Ibeji*, *Doú*, *Alabá*, etc.). Furthermore, though the historical record is scant, evidence suggests that the cult of Sts. Cosmas and Damian (and twins more generally) only became significant over the course of the 19th century, after large numbers of Yoruba slaves had been imported into Brazil.

of dancing round the town with their children.” But twins can also be dangerous if not properly cared for and nurtured. “As twins are believed to be of divine origin, their parents fear the retributions which would result if they were neglected, and so sacrificial rites are performed” (Oruene 1985: 212).

While no doubt an investigation of the Yoruba (and other African ethnic groups’) connection to Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Brazil merits a more rigorous discussion, the point I wish to make here is simply that at the most basic level, the *idea* that a mother should celebrate the birth of her twins, and that there are consequences in neglecting to do so, comes from an Africanization—an apparent “Yorùbázation” (Omari 1979: 70)—of the saints. The hagiological “Bendito” not only serves as oral evidence of this reconfiguration, but also helps reinforce—through repeated strophes—that Sts. Cosmas and Damian are patron saints of twins. Put otherwise, hagiological “Benditos” communicate *local, creolized* hagiological (and thus Catholic) truths concerning the saints whose story they tell. Catholicism-inspired “Benditos” can, like altars (Ch. 2) and samba (Ch. 6), serve as non-discursive memories of a Black Atlantic experience.

Significantly, the “Bendito” offers the reza host an opportunity to personalize the liturgy. Unlike the rest of the liturgical texts, which are collectively organized according to a predetermined liturgical pattern, the “Benditos” are explicitly chosen by the reza host. Moreover, the choice of “Bendito” is never whimsical; decisions are informed by personal experiences with a given saint. Singing a “Bendito” is akin to placing a saint’s image on one’s altar. By choosing which “Bendito” to sing, the host is also choosing whom/what to remember. As I discussed in Ch. 1, saints are often directly linked to the memory of human ancestors and thus singing the saint’s “Bendito” quite organically—and implicitly—indexes its human devotees. Reza hosts can

therefore use “Benditos” to collectivize their personal memories. Although “Bendito” texts and melodies are impersonal (that is to say, collectively remembered), the choice of *which* “Bendito” to sing is mediated by personal memories and experiences. Taking just one example, the hosts of the reza in Novena 4 always sing to Sts. Cosmas and Damian as well as to St. Roch because although they inherited their reza for St. Roch from their mother, their father was a devotee of Sts. Cosmas and Damian. And like the images of an altar (see Ch. 2), “Benditos” can also additively acquire layers of meaning and memory over the course of an individual’s lifetime. “Benditos” effectively intermesh personal histories with collective hagiographic memories.

“Benditos” are performed by singing strophes of a fixed text over a repeated melodic phrase, usually with a repeated refrain. The same basic texts for “Benditos” are found at most rezas. And though the specific words can sometimes vary from one novena to another, the message is always the same. Every “Bendito” for St. Roch, for example, relates that he is the patron saint of pestilence and plague and that he should be celebrated on August 16. But texts are not linked to melodies. Not only have I heard innumerable melodies for St. Roch’s text, even from the same rezadeiras, but I have also heard the *same* melody used for *different* saints. For example, in Novena 1, the non-St. Roch “Bendito” is for St. Anthony, in Novena 2, it is for Our Lady of the Candles (*candeias*), and in Novena 3, it is for Our Lady of the Rosary. However, a comparison of these three “Benditos,” in Ex. 3.9, shows that the *same* melody (with only very minor differences) is used in each. Melodies and texts are interchangeable; changing the melody has no effect on how the text will be recognized. Therefore every “Bendito” for St. Roch, regardless of its melodic treatment, will *always* be a “Bendito” for St. Roch. Text once more carries more communicative weight than melody.

Novena 1 - Bendito for St. Anthony

3 Glo - ri - o - sAn - tóni - o de Deus a... do... ra - do Pe - lo mundo...
in... tei - ro vós é fes - te - ja - do Pe - lo mundo in... tei - ro el - é fes - te - ja - do

Novena 2 - Bendito for Our Lady of the Candles

6 Vir - gem das can - dei - as ce - les - te ra... inh - a Nes - te mar -
dean - gús - tia se - tes - tre - las mí - nha Nes - te mar - dean - gús - tia se - tes - tre - las mí - nha

Novena 3 - Bendito for Our Lady of the Rosary

11 Vir - gem do Ro - sá - rio Se - nho - ra... das... do - res Cer - ca - da...
de an - jos co - ro - a de flor - es Cer - ca - da... de an - jos co - ro - a de flor - es

Ex. 3.9. Comparison of secondary Benditos for Novenas 1, 2, and 3.

On the other hand, some “Benditos,” such as that for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, seem to be rather fixed melodically (Ex. 3.10). And though not a rule, at nearly every reza during which someone sings a “Bendito” for the twin saints Cosmas and Damian, it will usually be sung with a melody similar to the transcription I have provided.

8 A - le - lui - a a - le - lui - a Que na - sce - ram dois ir - mão Que São Jo - ão ba - ti - zou São...
Cos - me São Da - mi - ão Que São Jo - ão ba - ti - zou São... Cos - me São Da - mi - ão

Ex. 3.10. “Bendito” for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, as performed during Novena 4.

BÊNÇÃO

Following the Benditos is the “Bênção,” which is a sung request, for the last time of the night, that the saint take the mortals’ message to God. During the prayer, when the word

“Benção” (*blessing*) is sung, people make the Sign of the Holy Cross. The “Bênção” is always performed—in domestic and church contexts—with the same text and same melody (see Ex. 3.11). This is further corroborative evidence regarding the important role the Catholic Church exercises in standardizing the repertoire today and probably in the past. As such, it is perhaps unsurprising that the three melodies most commonly shared among domestic novenas—the short repeated motif I discussed in Block A, the “Incense,” and the “Bênção”—are all also regularly sung in the Catholic Church. This suggests that *the reason* people sing the same melodies in different homes is related in some way to the Church.

5 Glo-ri - o - so Se - nhor São Ro - que Aos vo - sso - s de - vo - to lan - çai Vo - ssa Bén - ção ca - rin - ho - sa Do

7 céu as gra - ças nos dai Ro - gai por nós Oh! São Ro - que

Lá no céu on - de rei - na a - le - gri - a jun - toa Deus

Ex. 3.11. Partial transcription of “Bênção” from Novena 1.

8. Block D: Lord God

The final block of prayers returns participants’ attention back to God. “Senhor Deus” (Lord God), whose text begs for forgiveness and confesses that “we” have sinned, is typically described as the “finest” (*mais fina*) prayer of all. The fineness of a prayer relates to how seriously it must be taken, for fineness is a facet of responsibility. As discussed in Ch. 1 and Ch. 5, responsibility is, for reza participants, part of maintaining the spiritual world in balance, for a person’s actions have serious consequences if a given “responsibility” is poorly handled.

Regarding “Senhor Deus,” Dona Maria comments, “If we don’t sing the ‘Senhor Deus, ‘I’ve

sinned, Lord,' in honor of the vows I have kept or the sins I have committed, then God won't accept that novena, that reza. We have to ask for His forgiveness so that he can accept [the reza] and forgive us for our sins."⁸⁶ Echoing Dona Maria's sentiments, Dona Marlene once asked me rhetorically, "God is powerful, right? So we ask him for mercy...You have to pray on your knees."⁸⁷ Indeed, Dona Coleta explained to me why she makes it a point to kneel upon singing "Senhor Deus": "Our Lady walks on her knees, so when I sing this prayer, I go down, I kneel at the saint's feet to sing this prayer. But when I get up, I always ask for help because of the arthrosis in my legs. It's an obligation I have, my son! This obligation, it's the responsibility I've been given."⁸⁸ In addition to taking seriously the singing of "Senhor Deus," people must also sacrifice themselves physically by kneeling, though this is typically restricted to the rezadeira; the rest of the congregation usually remains standing.

If a man leads the prayer, however, he need not kneel at all. In fact, the prayer itself should only (theoretically) be conducted by a man. In Novena 3, for example, it was Dona Maria's husband, Manuel, who sang "Senhor Deus." He stood at the front of the congregation, with his back to the altar, and sang responsorially with the participants. Devotees readily acknowledge and insist that *men* are supposed to lead the prayer. If a man (familiar with the prayer) is not present, then a woman may conduct the prayer. There are even some women, Dona Maria told me, "who put a hat on their heads to become men."⁸⁹ But it is not just any woman who may do the prayer, as Dona Maria details, "It depends on the woman. It's not just any, you know, any woman from the street. . . . There are those women from the street who walk the world. But those women who are responsible, of age, who have their husbands, are married, they

⁸⁶ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on May 20, 2011.

⁸⁷ Interview conducted with Dona Marlene at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on November 14, 2011.

⁸⁸ Interview conducted with Dona Coleta at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

⁸⁹ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 10, 2009.

can lead it.”⁹⁰ The “street” is presented in Dona Maria’s words as the binary opposition to the “home,” where a “responsible” woman is found. The street is for a woman who is irresponsible, and by implication, sexually promiscuous. Thus, responsibility (via marriage and age) is intrinsically linked to morality. And in northeastern Brazil, Maya Mayblin (2010) argues, a discourse of “suffering” marks married women, who embrace the responsibilities of childbirth, childrearing, and maintaining a household. This “suffering,” Mayblin contends, as a voluntary “sacrificial” act done on behalf of others, leads to “moral freedom” (p. 88). Through marriage, then, women are absolved of their sins, they metaphorically put on their “hat,” and morally rise to the level of men. With no stipulations put on men (as far as I am aware),⁹¹ men are treated as *naturally* moral. Women, on the other hand, must *prove* their morality through virtuous “suffering” (see also Melhaus 1996). A gendered double standard of appropriate behavior—a reproduction of dominant social discourses—is thus thrust into the ritual sphere, translated into the language of morality.

In the twenty-first century, one is much more likely to see a woman leading “Senhor Deus” than a man. While this is no doubt a consequence of diminished male participation, one wonders to what degree males are truly preferred in practice. After all, at most rezas at least a few men *are* in fact present, and therefore if it is indeed of *utter importance* that a man perform, why not just substitute *any* man for the rezadeira? I posit that the correct singing of the text is more vital than the sex of the singer. This suggests a disjunction between what Kristi Anne

⁹⁰ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on May 20, 2011. Interestingly, this binary of women as either proper or vulgar—of the home or of the street—dialogue with similar notions in other parts of Latin America. Concerning Mexican gender discourses, for example, Marit Melhaus (1996: 231) notes, “[W]omen are classified discretely, as either decent or not decent, [while] men are classified along a continuum, in positions relative to each other, as either more or less a man.” This characterization of men seems applicable to Brazil as well, but certainly more research would be needed to make any definitive assertions.

⁹¹ Though I have never heard anyone discuss *rules* pertaining to the men who lead “Senhor Deus,” I suspect that some practical exigencies must be met. For instance, I cannot imagine an inebriated man would be permitted to lead the prayer.

Stølen (1996: 159) calls “gender as it is represented and gender as it is lived.” For “Senhor Deus,” then, what is the relationship of discourse to reality? Since women are increasingly likely to sing “Senhor Deus,” and no one seems to insist that men be taught to do so instead, why do people continue to insist that a man *must* sing it? Largely the issue is based on what Støler calls “complicity.” In other words, the privileged male hierarchy is based on mutual (male and female) *consent*, which is “achieved by the transmission of values through the institutions of civil society, such as the family, the [Catholic] Church, the education and legal systems, and the mass media” (Støler 1996: 180-181). Therefore, women are “complicit” in—though not necessarily coerced into—propagating what appears to be a chiefly imaginary necessity for a gendered “Senhor Deus.” The discursive sphere is somehow disengaged from practice.

This does not mean, however, that the discourse is impervious to change. And indeed not all women agree with the seemingly “conservative” position taken by rezadeiras such as Dona Maria. Dona Dé, for instance, maintains what might be regarded as a fairly progressive view regarding the gender requirement for leading the “Senhor Deus” prayer:

There isn't any difference [between men and women], is there? They did this, they thought this up, and people used to get angry, the older people. Goodness! . . . But who was it hurting? No one. Everyone is a child of God. God created everyone, right? Where does all this discrimination come from? . . . If women are sinners, and men are too, then how can we discriminate? They say that in the old days, even in the Bible women were more...they say women were more discriminated against. Haha [laughter]. . . . But that's over now, that whole discrimination thing.⁹²

As Mayblin (2011: 151, n. 17) posits, this “ideology of equivalence between the sexes . . . may have been partly influenced by the impact of Vatican II and Catholic Liberation theology, both of which have sought to promote ideas about sexual and racial equality.” And this could well be the source for Dona Dé's position, for she, as I have shown, chooses to sing in Portuguese (rather than Latin) for ideological motives that are in accordance with the Vatican II. While men as the

⁹² Interview conducted with Dona Dé at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

moral ideal no doubt continues to dominate reza discourse throughout the Recôncavo, as Dona Dé's words demonstrate, there clearly exists a multiplicity of discourses.

Block D closes with spoken prayers. These prayers, usually the “Lord’s Prayer” and “Hail Mary,” are orated in unison by the entire congregation. The prayers are typically recited in somebody’s (or many peoples’) name, including the present and the absent, the living and the dead. In Novena 1, for instance, Dona Dé requested that everyone pray a “Hail Mary” for all of the sick in Brazil and the whole world, for St. Roch is the patron saint of the sick. She also requested a “Hail Mary” for the reza host’s husband who, working as a night watchman, could not attend the event. Dona Coleta, at the end of Novena 2, prayed two “Lord’s Prayers” and “Hail Maries” for the reza host, his whole family, and the families of those present at the event. Novena 3 ended with less directed prayers, with Dona Maria only reciting (responsorially), in Portuguese, the final part of the Litany for Our Lady, “Cordeiro de Deus que tirais o pecado do mundo” (Lamb of God who take away the sins of the world). For Novena 4, the Vieira dos Santos family prayed the “Lord’s Prayer” and “Hail Mary” twice, once for the whole family, and the second time for world peace and all those present and absent. Finally, since this was in 2009, when Brazil was experiencing a swine flu pandemic, a “Hail Mary” was requested to protect all from the swine flue and world hunger.

The prayers end with the Sign of the Holy Cross. After these orations, people sometimes sing praise songs, with handclaps, but almost ineluctably, “vivas” (long live), applause-filled wishes for the long life of the saint and those present and absent, close the novena. Samba typically follows (see Ch. 4). Although it was not the case in any of the four example novenas I reviewed here, in many novenas, prayers are said for those who have passed on. So the rezadeira might request a “Lord’s Prayer” for “the soul of so-and-so’s mother (or father).”

Summarizing, Block A is dedicated to invoking God and the Holy Spirit. This is a mix of modal and harmonic melodies in both Latin and Portuguese. There is general melodic coherence to this cycle of texts, creating something of a suite. Block B, consisting of the “Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” is dedicated to both the Virgin Mary and God. This is performed responsorially in a way that, more so than any of the other prayers, requires a choir to respond. Block C, organized around the hagiological “Benditos,” is designed to celebrate the patron saint. Here the saint’s past is remembered while also requesting that he interceded to God on behalf of humans. Block D is a final appeal to God, that he receive the novena that has just been performed, and forgive human sin.

The liturgy comprises texts drawn mainly from different historical periods of Catholic Church song. “Deus in adjutorium,” for instance, comes from a pre-Vatican II period, while the “Incense” and the “Bênção” are still today performed in celebratory Catholic Church Masses. Along with these Catholic texts are others rooted in local oral tradition, such as the “Benditos.” The melodic material seems to be something of an achronistic melding of Western music history, ranging from fragments of Gregorian plainchant to strongly harmonic melodies. And these melodies appear to be pieced together independently of the texts. Thus, while novenas seem to share texts, melodies seem to differ wildly except for those that are also sung in local church parishes.

9. Song as Sacrifice

Before ending this discussion of the novena liturgy, I would like to touch on the topic of sacrifice, which is recurrent in much of the literature on Catholicism. In an analysis of Catholic funeral laments in Ceará, Brazil, Ewelter Rocha (2010, 2012) makes the fascinating argument that singing is a form of sacrifice, what he calls “musical self-flagellation.” Rooted in Hubert and

Mauss' theorization on sacrifice, the author insists that the body of the singer is consecrated through song. "The musical performance is directed to propitiate an experience of consecration, which is successful as long as it produces a state of sacrificial victim in the bod[ies] of those present and, above all, in the prayer leader who 'leads' the benditos" (Rocha 2012: 124). This sacrifice and consecration of the body is realized by singing *in a particular way*, which, Rocha emphasizes, is a prominent aspect of the patterned construction of song phrases.

A similar argument could no doubt be made for the rezadeira and the novena participants. But because *suffering*, emphasized by Rocha as part of the funeral lament, is not generally a sentiment associated with the Bahian novena, perhaps the sacrificial object is otherwise. I posit that during the novena, participants do not sacrifice themselves. Instead they sacrifice their song, their liturgy. Following Rocha, then, I turn to Hubert and Mauss (1964 [1898]) on sacrifice, as I described in Ch. 1 of this dissertation. If indeed song is what Hubert and Mauss call the sacrificial "victim" (sacrificed object),⁹³ the participants would be the "sacrifiers" (beneficiaries of the sacrifice), and the rezadeira the "sacrificer" (intermediary and guide of the sacrifice). Hubert and Mauss explain that "before the ceremony neither sacrificer nor sacrificer, nor place, instruments, or victim, possess this [religious] characteristic to a suitable degree. . . . [R]ites are necessary to introduce them into the sacred world and involve them in it" (Hubert and Mauss 1964 [1898]: 19-20). For the reza, it seems to me that the preparation of the sacred involves assembling the altar, spreading incense around the home, and completing general party preparations. The authors explain the next issue of sacrifice: "There are sacrifices in which there are no other participants than the sacrificer and the victim. But generally one does not venture to approach sacred things directly and alone. . . . An intermediary, or at the very least a guide, is

⁹³ I choose to employ the lexical "victim" in keeping with Hubert and Mauss' terminology. I recognize, however, that "victim" carries a connotation of *suffering*, which is not really something I would attribute to song. Instead, I treat the word "victim" as meaning "that which is sacrificed."

necessary” (pp. 22-23). This is the rezadeira. The rezadeira knows how the liturgy is to be performed and is needed, in most cases, to complete successfully the novena.

Just before the novena, the altar, in the main room of the home, sits ready with its candles lit and its flowers fresh. The rezadeira is present, as are the guests who will help sing the prayers. “The scene is now set. The actors are ready. The entry of the victim will mark the beginning of the drama. . . From the moment it has begun, it must continue to the end without interruption and in the ritual order” (Hubert and Mauss 1964 [1898]: 28). The “victim,” the liturgical song, is subsequently “destroyed.” That is, it is “separated definitively from the profane world” (p. 35). Sound only exists for as long as it is produced. Thus when production ends—when the song is over—the sound, which was offered to the divine, is subsequently taken to the heavens and is no longer “living” on earth. By singing the liturgy, or more precisely, by reaching the end of the liturgy and ceasing to sing, it has, for all practical purposes, “died.” Treating song as an offering is not solely an interpretive imposition. Remember, people often described the novena as an offering to the divine powers or as something that must be accepted by God. Furthermore, the texts of many prayers emphasize the song as an offering. For instance, In both of the “Benditos” I examined (Tables 3.8, 3.9), the texts make clear that the “Benditos” are *offered* to the saints. The song—the victim—is thus consecrated (i.e., made sacred) when its life force dissipates, and the sacrificer is transformed by being freed from the obligation to the saint.

While sometimes the novena can signal the end of the reza, usually there is also a samba (see Ch.1 and Ch. 4). Thus although “[t]he group of people and things formed for the occasion around the victim has no further reason to exist[,] . . . it must be dissolved slowly[.] . . . All those who have shared in the sacrifice have acquired a sacred character that isolates them from the world of the profane. Yet they must be able to return to it” (Hubert and Mauss 1964 [1898]: 45-

46). While I have my reservations regarding the strict division of the sacred world from the profane, it is worth asking if “our samba” constitutes this slow dissolving of the sacred?

Although a reza’s samba is never quite profane, it does seem to approximate the profane in ways that the novena does not: it is executed away from the sacred space of the altar, has no liturgical form, and involves libations. Perhaps this samba functions as something akin to what Hubert and Mauss detailed as a transitory sacred “descent” away from sacrifice.

While close scrutiny might reveal inconsistencies in my exploration of song as “victim” and performance as “slaughter,” it is certainly worth considering the many ways performance can be a vital part of symbolic exchange (see Rocha 2012). And this highlights another detail. In Chapter 1, I discussed the ways in which the reza was itself a form of sacrifice, though in much less figurative terms (i.e., the sacrifice of time, money, and labor). Here, by suggesting that singing is also sacrifice, I am, to some degree, portraying the reza as a series of overlapping sacrifices. And this is further complicated by the animal sacrifices that are sometimes conducted at dawn on the day of the reza (see Ch.1, Appendix 1). Why so many sacrifices? Partly I wonder if it is not because people enjoy them. The term sacrifice no doubt carries the grave connotation shared by the idea of “responsibility” as I have discussed it here and in other places of the dissertation (Ch. 1, Ch. 5). But perhaps many reza practitioners see nothing wrong with responsibility. In fact, maybe this is why “responsibility,” a morally elevated term, so often appears to act as a euphemism for “sacrifice.” I am reminded of the wise words of Dona Ivone: “responsibility is what gives one spiritual power. With commitment comes power.”

10. Concluding Thoughts

A good novena is one that is conducted according to the appropriate liturgical order and has group participation. The choice to use one melody or text over another is thus strategic; it is

rooted in both history and ideology. People use melodies and texts they think (or believe) others will know or can learn swiftly. This largely explains the increased distribution of photocopies of texts, such as that from Dona Tânia's reza for St. Anthony. I have seen this in less *complete* form as well, with the distribution of only the "Bendito," for example. But it would be erroneous to presume that just because the reza is a "popular" tradition, it has somehow only recently relied on the written word.⁹⁴ A 1936 newspaper article in *A Tarde*, for instance, notes that at a reza for St. Anthony in Salvador, "Dona Chica, kneeling before the altar, opens her prayer book [*caderno de reza*], [and] fixes her glasses."⁹⁵ But the same logic of group participation that leads people to use contemporary Catholic Church melodies and texts, also explains the singing of modal melodies and the use of Latin. After all, people have a basic goal of paying tribute to, and thus revivifying, their patron saints, and the best way to accomplish this is to remember him/her with as much devotion (i.e., loudness) as possible. To achieve this, people utilize the means that seem most appropriate to them at a given moment.

But there is always negotiation, and thus room for innovation. The rezadeira may not always agree with the reza host, just as the participants may not be interested in participating. As I related earlier, one person may sing "orais pro nobis" while the rezadeira insists on singing "rogai por nós." This negotiation, over the course of centuries, is no doubt the cause of the unsystematic use of shared melodic fragments that can be heard at rezas today. Each text is a text and each melody is a melody. When one melody does not work in leading a text, it is switched without a second thought. Some people may find a particular melody aesthetically beautiful, but it is useless if no one can sing along, and it will likely be dropped from the repertoire. As I have argued, liturgical order seems to matter and it is thus reinforced generation after generation, but

⁹⁴ With her study on the use of writing (and reading) in Candomblé, Lisa Earl Castillo (2010) offers an extended meditation on the issue of the usage of the written word in so-called oral traditions.

⁹⁵ AT, June 13, 1936, p. 2. See also Iyanaga (2010) for a detailed description of the event.

only in thematic blocks. The Father comes first, then the Mother, then the patron saint. The texts of each block seem to be much more easily mutable, adjusting according to each novena. With baroque loudness, “Benditos” recounting Africanized New World hagiographies, Catholic Church liturgical structure, Portuguese Latin, and Spanish children’s songs, the novenas are aural assemblages constructed from personal preferences, local community histories, and the specificities of the practice’s colonial and Black Atlantic past.

PARTY INTERLUDE FOUR
Seu Rezinho and St. Roch
(Accompanied by PI_4.mp3)

Tuesday, August 16, 2011. Dinheiro Velho (Coqueiros), Bahia.

It was 2008 when I attended my first reza, which took place in a rural area of São Félix known as Fazenda Pilar. The rezadeira that night had been a woman named Dona Maria, whom I befriended shortly thereafter. In fact, I became a regular visitor at her out-of-the-way home on the banks of the Paraguaçu River. Dona Maria was always incredibly kind, an eloquent “lecturer” on issues of sambas, rezas, and Catholic saints, and quite an excellent cook. Indeed, I was often *required* to lunch at her home even when I insisted I had already eaten. In hindsight, it seems quite likely that my frequent visits were chiefly the result of her lack of telephone. For in order to find out when she would be leading her next reza, personal visits were somewhat mandatory.

On August 8, 2011, I went to Dona Maria’s house to find out if she would be praying for St. Roch anywhere and, for the first time in nearly three years, she said she would be. The event was scheduled for August 16th, the day the Catholic Church has consecrated to St. Roch, in a nearby rural area known as Dinheiro Velho. My excitement was somewhat squelched by Seu Manuel, Dona Maria’s husband, who immediately lamented: “But there won’t be any samba.” Seu Rezinho, the host of the reza, had just lost his sister; there could be no samba. “But I’d still like to go,” I insisted. “OK,” Seu Manuel said. “Then I’ll go with you. I wasn’t going to go because there isn’t going to be samba, but if you’re going then I’ll go, too.” A neighbor, who had been partaking in the conversation, noted, “Yeah, and they say they won’t even have firecrackers...” “Why not?” I asked. Pausing for a moment’s thought, the two tacitly came to a

consensus, “It’s because they don’t want people to think they’re having a party [*farra*]...It’s the sentiment.”

Eight days later I made my way back to their home. The annual August rains had transformed the hilly dirt path into a series of conjoined, uneven mudslides. When I arrived, muddy and tired, at Seu Manuel and Dona Maria’s home around 6:00pm, everyone was still grooming themselves. Joining the couple at their home were their three grandchildren, a neighbor, and Seu Manuel’s sister. Their two granddaughters, 10 and 13 years old, were doing their hair, trying to get it just right for the social event at which they would shortly be in attendance. At around 7:00pm, we all carefully got seated in the canoe, which would be taking us down to the river to Dinheiro Velho. The enormous vessel fit Manuel, Dona Maria, their three grandchildren, Manuel’s sister, three neighbors, and myself. After the twenty-minute trip down the river, we docked the canoe and made the short, five-minute walk up to Seu Rezinho’s home in Dinheiro Velho, a rural area of Coqueiros.

Seu Rezinho had a large property, on which he had constructed a chapel, with wooden benches and an altar at the front. Seu Manuel was quick to introduce me to the homeowner, who bemoaned that there would be no samba after the novena. We then began talking about his chapel, which he had built five years prior in order to satisfy his mother’s request. He informed me that a priest sometimes comes to his chapel, where they occasionally have Masses, weddings, and baptisms. He explained that in October there would be a celebration for Our Lady of the Rosary at his chapel.¹

After the usual pleasantries, Dona Maria entered the chapel and sat in the front row, continuing her conversation with her pew-mate. Slowly but surely, the other guests all filed in to occupy the many rows of benches. I remained in a strategic location outside the chapel, from

¹ This never happened, however, for not long after this August reza, Seu Rezinho suffered a sudden death.

where I was filming the event. Soon Dona Maria announced to the congregation, “Now we can begin.” With that, there was a mad dash from the participants to get inside the chapel; this included the adolescents who were the last to enter. The pews of the chapel were full, leaving standing room only. There were several dozen congregants present, and most accompanied Dona Maria’s reza. Dona Maria remained seated in the front row throughout the event, facing the altar. She sang the liturgy from memory, with only short breaks between texts. Dona Maria remained seated during the first few seconds of the “Agnus Dei” section of the “Litany.” The woman seated next to her seemed hesitant to stand until Dona Maria finally rose. Soon everyone in the chapel was also on their feet. Given Seu Rezinho’s affinity for Our Lady of the Rosary, it was of little surprise to me when one of the “Benditos” Dona Maria sang was for this saint (PI_4.mp3, 29:10).

When it came time for “Senhor Deus,” there was a long pause. Everyone was standing, involved in some confused shuffling. Seu Manuel, Dona Maria’s husband, who was already standing with the other congregants, slowly made his way to the pulpit, embarrassed and apologetic. “My voice is really hoarse. Don’t pay any heed” (PI_4.mp3, 36:41). With hat in hand, Manuel turned his back to the altar, and began quietly to sing with the wide vibrato typical of all rezas: “Senhor Deus, misericórdia.” With Dona Maria’s voice resounding over the others, the congregation responded in unison: “Senhor Deus, misericórdia.” After this ended, Dona Maria sat back down and led a few spoken prayers. Seu Manuel waiting for the conclusion of these prayers before finally making his way back to his seat, nervously and apologetically laughing all the way: “Sorry about that everyone...”

Dona Maria then stood up and began to sing and clap what I would later learn is the “Louvor” (Laud). Shortly thereafter, the whole congregation had excitedly joined in (PI_4.mp3, 39:00):

Glorioso São Roque do céu bela rosa
Glorioso São Roque do céu bela rosa
Aceitas as graças de Nossa Senhora
Aceitas as graças de Nossa Senhora

Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
De Nossa Senhora } repeat

Glorioso São Roque do céu bela flor
Glorioso São Roque do céu bela flor
Aceitas as graças do Nosso Senhor
Aceitas as graças do Nosso Senhor

Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
De Nossa Senhora } repeat

Glória seja ao Pai, a Filho, amor também
Glória seja ao Pai, a Filho, amor também
Glorioso São Roque para sempre amém
Virgem do Rosário para sempre amém

Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
Cheio de glória
*De Nossa Senhora*² } repeat

As the “Louvor” ended, Dona Maria immediately cheered: “Long live glorious St. Roch!”

“Viva!” While the congregation was still clapping and cheering, Dona Maria called for a second

² “Glorious St. Roch of the sky beautiful rose (2x) / Accept the graces of Our Lady (2x) / Full of grace, full of grace, full of Our Lady’s grace (2x) / Glorious St. Roch of the sky beautiful flower (2x) / Accept the graces of Our Lord (2x) / Full of grace, full of grace, full of Our Lady’s grace (2x) / Glory to the Father, to the Son, and love, too (2x) / Glorious St. Roch, forever, amen / Virgin of the Rosary, forever, amen / Full of grace, full of grace, full of Our Lady’s grace (2x)”

one: “Long live Our Lady of the Rosary!” “Viva!” To end the event, Dona Maria belted out a final cheer, “Long live us!” “Viva!”

With the conclusion of the event, the participants, lingering inside the chapel, engaged in small talk before making their way outside. Occupying the large patio, the congregants stood talking amongst themselves. Soon the family began serving popcorn on silver trays, allowing people to take whatever quantities they wished. Several minutes later, the white corn porridge (*mugunzá*) was served in plastic cups. Both of these foods, because they are white and made of corn, are symbolically associated with St. Roch. I stood, occupied in light conversation with Seu Manuel and Seu Rezinho, as they lamented once more that there was no samba. “See this space here?” Seu Rezinho pointed to the patio, “This is where we would’ve had the samba. You’ve got to come when we have a party. But we just can’t do it today. You know how it is.” Soon, Seu Manuel, with a mischievous smile all his own, looked to me and asked if I wanted some hard liquor that had been making the rounds with the party guests. “Sure,” I agreed. It was a store-bought bittersweet alcohol made of a fruit I couldn’t recognize. I shrugged my shoulders in acceptance as Seu Manuel laughed.

After nearly an hour, Dona Maria and Seu Manuel decided it was time to go. So we thanked our party hosts and walked down the hill back to our canoe. There was little conversation until a fish, which was flying from one side of the canoe to the other, knocked me in the head and the entire canoe erupted in laughter. The flying fish continued to entertain us until we finally reached our destination, Dona Maria and Seu Manuel’s home, where I would be spending the night. Everyone was tired, covered—to varying degrees—in mud, and ready for bed. Seu Manuel showed me where I would be staying and apologized, in his typically humble way, for the simplicity of the sleeping quarters, a twin-size bed with a thin sheet and pillow.

The next morning, I sat with both Dona Maria and Seu Manuel as I asked them about the reza. I asked them some of my immediate questions and they were both quick to answer; they clearly remembered the night well. I decided to play them the recording of the reza that I had made. While they did not have the time to listen to the full 40-minute recording, Dona Maria listened intently to her own singing. After hearing the “Louvor,” she nodded her head approvingly, “Even the clapping is good.” I am not entirely sure I know what she meant, though I suspect her comment had to do with the clarity and synchronicity of the group handclaps. I rewound the recording a bit more and we listened briefly to the “Senhor Deus.” Seu Manuel embarrassingly explained that it was “weak” and that his voice was still hoarse from his cold. Without any sentimentality, Dona Maria reassured her husband that it was just fine; it was performed after all.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Samba: Sound as Sentiment, or the Embodiment of Happiness

“No engenho não tinha samba. Não tinha alegria.”
There was no samba on the plantation. There was no happiness.

“Música é a arte de manifestar sentimentos.”
Music is the art of expressing sentiments.
–Mário dos Santos¹

*The morning of September 18, 2011, was not my usual Sunday morning. I had gone to sleep around 4am after spending all of Saturday night at a reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Opalma, a rural district of Cachoeira. Consequently, I was quite exhausted as I hurriedly made my way to the city of Cachoeira to partake in the final part of the three-day devotion to the Holy Cross [Santa Cruz], which the samba-de-roda group Esmola Cantada organizes every year. I arrived at Mass around 11am, about an hour late. But to my luck, Mass was also behind schedule. And indeed the schedule was quite tight: following Mass would be a short philharmonic band performance and then samba would extend the festivities to dusk. The samba was going to be performed by Esmola Cantada and another local samba-de-roda group, the Filhos da Barragem, on a small, publicly funded stage. After the philharmonic band played its short set, the Filhos da Barragem samba-de-roda group began setting up to play. Before they began, however, disheartening news made its rounds amongst the celebrants: a well-loved community member who had been sick in the hospital finally passed away that morning. Suddenly the festivities were halted; everything was canceled. No more celebration, no more cheer, and definitely no more samba. After all, to the residents of the Recôncavo, like so many others in the world, death is a time for sadness. And as **everyone** knows, there is no samba without happiness.*

The novena is the moment during which the saint is remembered and thus revived for yet another year. Such a happy event is great reason for cheer, and thus great reason for samba. Samba after all, is nothing if it is not happiness; samba is the musical and choreographic embodiment of happiness. Samba is not *necessary* at a reza, in the sense that an altar is necessary, but I have yet to partake in a reza at which samba is not at least *theoretically* a regular

¹ Mário dos Santos is a retired police official, poet, composer, local historian, advocate for regional artistic expression (music, dance, arts), and “President” of one of the most prominent samba-de-roda groups in São Félix, the Grupo Cultural Os Filhos de Nagô.

part of the after-novena activities.² On the surface, the samba is important because it is the “fun part.” Reza attendees enjoy the samba dancing and the vibrant, festive atmosphere that accompanies it. However, the importance of the samba goes far beyond the ludic: it is a palpable embodiment of happiness and it is a sign of extended devotion to the saint. This samba—which in the reza context can also be called *samba-de-caruru*, in reference to the term “caruru,” a frequent synonym for “reza”—is a major symbolic part of the event. The more samba there is, the happier the people are, and thus the happier the saint is. This is not only because the saint him-/herself is said to enjoy samba, but also because samba dancing shows that people are enjoying themselves *in the saint’s name*, after the “work” (i.e., *novena*) has ended (see Ch. 1).

In Chapter 1, I explored some of the basic aspects of the domestic saint devotion. I argued that people practice rezas largely to remember individual experiences, family histories, and a collective socio-religious past. At the same time, devotions serve as a means of making good on contractual agreements with those of the spiritual world, including Catholic saints and deceased family members, while also creating fertile grounds for social interaction and the creation of a faith-based community. I further demonstrated, in Chapter 2, how vitally important the altar is in the experience of the reza, for it serves as a physical index of Catholic identity, it aggregates memories, and it creates a necessary sacred ethos. Finally, in Chapter 3, I analyzed the liturgy of the reza’s novena. I argued that aesthetic decisions and shared repertoires are not simply a product of history, but are resignified in accordance with contemporary logics and taste.

The present chapter deals exclusively with the samba performed at the “typical” *reza*. As I have explained, the samba happens after the *novena*, with *rezas* for St. Cosmas serving as interesting variations. Although I will deal briefly with these variations here, the dissertation’s

² By “theoretically,” I mean that samba does not always materialize fully, but it is always at least expected. That said, I have heard that some wealthy reza practitioners in Salvador shun samba.

Party Interlude 1 (pp. 55-61) serves as a more lucid illustration. I have a number of diverse aims in the present chapter. Under the auspices of a detailed analysis of how samba is practiced in the reza context, I am primarily concerned with a revision of what samba in the Recôncavo actually is. Treatments of Bahian samba—so-called *samba-de-roda*—whether in literature, audio-visual recordings, or quotidian discourse, homogenize the diversity of the samba tradition in Bahia. According to this “canon,” samba is profane, has a specific rhythm, relies on specific instruments, and is defined by a characteristic dance. But as I emphasize here, samba in the Recôncavo denominates activities that include a variety of rhythmic patterns, a significant number of sacred contexts, and often no instruments or dance. Thus I investigate the way samba is practiced at rezas in order to elucidate the constituent elements of samba’s emic definition. In this process, I establish that samba (as a genre) is defined primarily by its texts, the melodic rhythms used to sing those texts, and the happiness people believe is necessary for, and feel is incorporated into, *every* samba performance. As such, samba not only serves as a reminder to (ethno)musicologists that definitions of musical genres might also often include emotions and sentiments in unexpected ways, but also offers a case study that can contribute to the growing scholarship in what might be termed an ethnomusicology of emotion.

Beginning with a working definition of “samba” and some evidence regarding the tradition’s Central African origins, I place “samba-de-roda” within the context of a more generalized Bahian samba. The rest of the chapter details samba in the reza context. Here I address rhythms, song forms and texts, content classifications, performance styles, and the significance of happiness. I conclude with some brief thoughts on the value of emotion in ethnomusicological questions regarding sound in human social life.

1. Samba: A Working Definition

Scholars often refer to samba in the Bahian context as *samba-de-roda*. However, *samba-de-roda* is in fact less a designation of a musical genre than a specific way of performing Bahian “samba.” But what is “samba”? As Ralph Wadley (1980: 196) noted several decades ago, “The concept *samba* is so vast and profound in Brazilian music and life as to practically defy definition. It is a genre (of both music and dance), an occasion, and a group.” The polysemy of the term “samba” is largely a focus of the present chapter, as I explore many facets of what exactly samba can be and how the term is employed. But I would like to provide a broad working definition that offers some direction. Samba might be thought of, expansively, as *a specific musical mode of celebration*.

Samba is an Afro-Brazilian repertory of rhythms, timbres, texts, choreographic movements, and poetic forms that when performed unambiguously express happiness. In other words, samba is happiness as song and dance; it is sound as sentiment. In Bahia (and I believe throughout Brazil), samba can refer to: (1) a genre of music (e.g., “We’re going to play/dance samba!”); (2) an event at which samba music is performed (e.g., “Tomorrow there is going to be a samba at Maria’s house.”); and (3) each individual “song” that comprises the genre (and event) known as samba (e.g., “What are the words to the samba you just played?”). The verb “to samba” (*sambar*) refers specifically to the act of dancing. As a metaphor, this verb also permeates non-musical contexts, such that a narrative can *samba* (“bounce back and forth”), just as an uneven table might have legs that *samba* (“wobble”). In Bahia, a male samba performer—singer, dancer, or instrumentalist—is known as a *sambador*, while a female samba performer is known as a *sambadeira*.³ The verb indicating the playing of an instrument during samba, “to

³ This is different from the rest of Brazil, where samba performers are known as *sambistas* (Sandroni 2010: 373).

play a samba,” is *tocar*, *puxar*, or *tirar um samba*. To sing a samba is “to verse” (*versar*) or, more commonly, “to lead” (*puxar*) or “to do” (*tirar*) a samba.

2. A Central African Inheritance: A Brief Note on Origins

While I am not interested in “origins,” *per se*, a discussion of samba’s provenance merits some attention. Calling samba “Afro-Brazilian” implies that the musical tradition derives from some African source(s) and was elaborated in Brazil. And cross-referencing the information available on Brazil with what is known about Africa, it is possible to confirm, with relative confidence, that *all* Brazilian samba derives primarily from Bantu Central Africa. This deduction is based on evidence found in what Kubik (1993) calls “clusters of traits.” These are specific aspects of a practice that functionally adhere to one another such that “when one component drops out . . . other components are affected” (p. 440). This suggests that traits of a style, such as rhythm and dance, remain relatively stable because they are dependent upon each other. I will look here at three specific aspects of Bahia’s samba—etymology, rhythm, and choreographic movement—which, as a cluster of traits, clearly demonstrate Central African provenance. I look first at the etymology of the term “samba.”

ETYMOLOGY

As Carlos Sandroni (2001) points out, isolated 19th-century cases of the word “samba” (or closely related terms) have been documented throughout the Americas, ranging from the Caribbean to the Río de la Plata region.⁴ Most scholars agree that this polysemic term is of Bantu origin, though the exact antecedent word and meaning is contested. Surely the word “samba” has most typically been identified as a corruption of the term “semba,” a lexical that was observed in

⁴ Sandroni (2001: 84) cites examples from Cuba, the Rio de la Plata, Haiti, and Argentina. The author emphasizes that these examples are all, with the exception of the Argentine *zamba*, linked to black culture (*universo dos negros*).

both Angola and the Congo during the 19th and 20th centuries (Carneiro 1961; Kubik 1979; Sandroni 2001).⁵ However, Silva and Oliveira Filho (1983: 43) later questioned this etymology, noting this derivation to be “phonetically unacceptable and semantically impossible.” Indeed, the term “samba” has a number of possible Bantu-derived definitions: (1) a variation of “semba,” (2) the Kikongo/Kimbanda “nsamba,” or (3) the Kikongo/Kimbanda “samba,” meaning to pray (*rezar, orar*) (Y. Castro 2005: 333).

Favoring the last of these definitions, and indeed the only one free from linguistic transformation, Silva and Oliveira Filho attribute a necessarily sacred meaning to the Brazilian word “samba.” The authors explain that “[s]amba, in the Bantu languages, means prayer, invocation, lament, grievance, and other meanings from this semantic field.” (Silva and Oliveira Filho 1983: 44).⁶ In a much earlier—though largely ignored—publication, Souza Carneiro (1937: 436) similarly claims “samba” is a Kimbundo verb and noun meaning “adore and adoration, invoke and invocation.” While the link between samba and prayer clearly has interesting implications for the practice of samba in saint devotions, for now I wish only to emphasize that, notwithstanding Batista Siqueira’s (1978) widely disputed claim that the term “samba” is of Amerindian derivation,⁷ the word is generally agreed upon to be of Central African

⁵ Though this etymology is sometimes traced to Alfredo de Sarmiento’s mention of the term “semba” (Sarmiento 1880: 127), it seems more linked to an “inference” made by Carneiro, as he makes clear in a posthumously published work: “By what is inferred from Alfredo de Sarmiento’s account, *samba* would come from *semba*” (Carneiro 1974: 36, italic emphasis in original, underscore added).

⁶ Building on this argument, Mauricio Castro (2011) has further suggested that the samba/semba association is a 20th-century creation, “which received a genealogical aspect in a [nationalistic Brazilian] desire to inscribe an African origin to those cultures considered national and folkloric.”

⁷ For Sandroni (2001: 86), the examples Siqueira offers are not sufficient “to give consistency to his thesis about the indigenous origin of the vocable.” Similarly, Silva and Oliveira Filho (1983: 43) point out that “[t]he African origin of the word . . . seems incontestable, according to the well established principle and which is proven each day that the designated accompanies the designation, that is, the name accompanies the thing. It is known, with certainty, that the regional samba variants are found in Brazil, from Maranhão to São Paulo, in marked coincidence with the regions where there was a predominant introduction of black Bantus. This fact alone would justify the accepting of not just an African origin to the term samba, but also one linked to languages of the Bantu group.”

provenance. But it is not solely this etymology that points toward Equatorial Africa, as I will demonstrate.

TIME-LINES AND PERCUSSIVE CYCLES

In African Diaspora research, percussive cycles, also known as “time-lines,”⁸ have been helpful in identifying the general African regions from which musical practices derive. As Gerhard Kubik points out, these rhythmic cycles are especially suitable as “diagnostic markers” for two reasons: (1) their “mathematically definable internal structure” tends to make them durable practices, and (2) “time-line patterns have specific geographical areas of distribution” (Kubik 1993: 438). Given these factors, Kubik (1979, 1993) has convincingly argued that basic pulsations of rhythmic cycles can differentiate West African rhythms from those of Central Africa. Accordingly, 12-pulse cycles generally characterize West African musics, while Central African cycles tend toward 16 pulses. With its 16-pulse cycles, samba in Bahia (and samba throughout Brazil) fits into the latter of these (Döring 2004; Kubik 1979, 1993; Oliveira Pinto 1991).⁹ This stands in contrast to the 12-pulse cycles that are a central component of the West African-derived Candomblé rhythmic patterns in Bahia. According to Kubik (1979: 18), percussive cycles “steer[] and hold[] together the motional process.” The persistence of a given rhythmic cycle would thus further indicate the constancy of particular choreographies. I will therefore turn my attention briefly to characteristic dance movements.

⁸ According to Kubik (2010), Nketia (1974) is the first to employ this term in the African context. A time-line pattern is a “structured, short cycle[] of specifically spaced action-units, generating sound mostly on one pitch level.” A time-line is “characterized by an asymmetric inner structure, such as 5 + 7 or 7 + 9” (Kubik 2010: 57).

⁹ Though his reference is to Rio de Janeiro style samba, some insight can still be garnered from Kubik’s observations: “[W]e can say that the presence of the 16-pulse 9-stroke pattern . . . as a prominent trait in many forms of ‘Samba’ in Brazil is a strong indication of historical connections between Brazilian ‘Samba’ and musical cultures of Eastern Angola and Katanga (Shaba Province in Zaïre). This is the original home area in Central Africa of this pattern” (Kubik 1993: 439).

CHOREOGRAPHY

Bahian samba has two distinct corporeal movements. The first, the belly bounce (*umbigada*), is so common throughout Brazil that folklorist Édison Carneiro's 1961 book about Brazilian samba is entitled *Samba de umbigada* (Belly bounce samba). The second characteristic dance movement—distinct in Bahia—is the *miudinho*, which is a dance step in which both feet shuffle back and forth in an even, 16th-note rhythm. Both of these seem to derive from Central African cultural sources. Beyond being recognized as a synonym for “samba” (one of the possible etymologies of “samba”), the “umbigada” was a dance gesture identified by travelers in Luanda (Angola) during the 19th century (Sarmiento 1880: 127; see also Carneiro 1961: 10-11). Often cited in the relevant literature is Portuguese traveler Alfredo de Sarmiento, who wrote:

In Luanda and in various presidios and districts . . . the *batuque* consists also of a circle formed by the dancers, going to the center a black man or woman who, after executing various dance steps, is going to give an embigada [belly bounce], which they call *semba*, on the person they choose, who will then go to the middle of the circle, to substitute him. (Sarmiento 1880: 127)

This choreography, with the circle, solo dancer, and the belly bounce, lucidly resembles any given 21st-century Bahian samba performance.

Still, this appears not to be the only important choreographic Bahian samba movement to come from Central Africa. Sarmiento notes that the so-called *batuque* dance has regional variations. In the Kongo, it is danced in pairs and with a “small movement of the feet”:

A circle is formed, composed of the dancers and the spectators, and the musicians with their instruments also join in. With the circle formed, they jump to the middle of it two or three pairs, men and women, and begin the fun. The dance consists of a serene body shake, accompanied by a small movement of the feet, of the head and of the arms. These movements accelerate, as the music becomes more lively and enchanting, and, soon, one admires a prodigious sway of the hips. (Sarmiento 1880: 126-127)

This small foot movement is reminiscent of the *miudinho* dance movement characteristic of Bahian samba. While pair dancing is certainly not common in today's Bahian samba, it is found in early-19th-century Salvador (Lindley 1805: 276).

No doubt a late-19th-century source is hardly concrete proof of antecedence, particularly in light of the high 19th-century flux of manumitted Brazilians who "returned" to Africa (esp. West Africa).¹⁰ However, as I will explore in Chapter 6, early-19th-century sources suggest that these corporeal movements were indeed practiced in Brazil. For instance, Langsdorff's (1817) observations—from 1804—of a Central African-derived black king commemoration in Santa Catarina (Brazil) reveals a musical performance including the circle of performers, the solo dancers, and the *miudinho* foot movement. At any rate, it is not these choreographic movements alone that denote samba's Central African provenance. Rather it is these dances taken together with the rhythmic and etymological evidence I have already reviewed. This cluster of traits indicate that Bahian samba, though clearly modified and resignified in its New World habitat, is primarily rooted in Central African cultural traditions.

3. Between the Sacred and the Profane?

In both academic circles and popular discourse, samba continues to be portrayed explicitly as a *profane* cultural tradition. Indeed, samba has become the epitome of Afro-Brazilian ludism. This historiographical treatment has somewhat distorted the interpretive frame within which one can understand samba, such that Bahia's (and Brazil's) socio-historical landscape is left deformed and misunderstood. While I find problematic the Durkheimian sacred/profane binary, opting instead for the inclusive view of the sacred and non-sacred as

¹⁰ For discussions of African-bound returnees, see Amos (2007), Matory (2005), and Verger (1987 [1968]), among others. Moreover, in a novel, and quite innovative interpretation, M. Castro (2011) argues that the growth in Angola of semba is a result of 20th-century contact with Brazilian popular music.

advocated by scholars such as Asad (1993),¹¹ some aspects of life are surely more *explicitly* “sacred” (i.e., related to the divine) than others. Yet most samba scholars seem to adhere *a priori* to a Durkheimian view of the social world such that samba fills the “profane/ludic” *slot* of the Afro-Bahian cultural “trinity” that also includes Candomblé (sacred/serious) and *capoeira* (dance/sport) (see Oliveira Pinto 1991). While samba—particularly in Bahia—is certainly ludic and often unequivocally profane, this is only half (or less) of the story. As I have addressed in prior chapters, samba is an integral and intrinsic part of domestic devotions for Catholic saints. Oddly, the historiography is, for the most part, silent on this matter. Rather, the use of samba in religious contexts has been treated as the *superimposition* of the profane *onto* the sacred.¹²

The few exceptions to this treatment of samba have come primarily from attentive ethnographic and historical approaches. One of the pioneering efforts to call attention to samba’s sacred contexts—though it seems to have flown under the scholarly radar—is Jocélio Telles dos Santos’ (1997) historical investigation of 19th-century Bahian *batuques* and sambas. Through an exposition of historical documents, Santos convincingly defends the thesis that samba in the 1800s was both sacred and profane. Ralph Waddey also discerned samba’s link to the religious,

¹¹ In his brilliant critique of the Geertz’s universalist view of religion, which is also taken to be the classic anthropological treatment of religion, Asad convincingly argues that “[r]eligious symbols—whether one thinks of them in terms of communication or of cognition, of guiding action or of expressing emotion—cannot be understood independently of their historical relations with nonreligious symbols or of their articulations in and of social life, in which work and power are always crucial” (Asad 1993: 53).

¹² For Barbara Browning (1990: 26), “[T]he very use of the term *samba* to designate the caboclo spirit’s dance seems to be a way of blurring the distinction between the divine and the profane” (underscore added). The author implies that the Caboclo spirit is divine and the samba is profane, and thus the use of samba with the Caboclo is a “blurred distinction.” But the author is hardly alone in such an analysis. For example, attempting to explain how samba derives from Orixá worship, Clarence Bernard Henry (2008) convolutedly bifurcates samba into, as he puts it, “dance (the secular) and religiosity (the sacred)” (p. 86). In accordance with this view, the *dancing* of samba is definitionally secular but can be made sacred by its performance in sacred spaces (like a Candomblé terreiro). Differing from Henry’s view of samba’s origin, Gerard Béhague (1993: 175) implies that samba has always been entirely secular: “[I]t is erroneous to attribute . . . a religious ritual origin to . . . the [national] Brazilian *samba*.” In yet another case, Peter Fryer (2000) explains that “[t]he *samba de roda* (ring samba) which survived into the twentieth century is simply the *batuque* under a different name” (p. 102). And though Fryer acknowledges that the term “batuque” is polyvalent, he essentially treats it as meaning “a secular dance which came to Brazil from the Kongo-Angola culture area” (p. 95, emphasis added). Even anthropologist Louis HERNES MARCELIN, in his groundbreaking and attentive reading of a reza for St. Benedict in Cachoeira, characterizes the samba as “a half-profane, half-sacred dance” (Marcelin 1996: 253).

observing that “*samba* can be the public, celebratory, and recreational part of the full ritual which helps fulfill one’s *obrigação*” (Waddey 1981: 264).¹³ Finally, anthropologist Brian Brazeal (2007), who characterizes the samba dancing at rezas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian as “a rollicking party with *secular music and dancing* and sometimes drumming and spirit possession” (p. 162), recognizes, albeit only as a footnote, that “[o]ften there is no strict distinction between the” secular music and spirit possession (p. 162, n. 8). For Brazeal, the secular is often melded with the sacred.

Perhaps the most impressive recent revision of the profane samba historiography is that of anthropologist Ordep Serra. Theoretically grounded in Durkheim, Serra (2009) presents a book-length exposition on the in-between-ness (i.e., in between sacred and profane) of Bahia’s festivities. Here the anthropologist asserts that “samba-de-roda” (by which he means all Bahian samba) is a polyvalent “game” (*brincadeira*) that “can also, at certain times, constitute a sacred rite” (p. 114). Serra goes on to explain a number of different samba contexts, ranging from improvised leisurely activities to religious rites, related especially to *erês* (West African-inspired child-like entities) and the twin saints Cosmas and Damian.¹⁴ The author concludes his analysis affirming, “The samba de roda, which often remains isolated to pure merriment, in other instances constitutes a rite that is unequivocally religious . . . *between the sacred and the profane*” (p. 132, emphasis added). Serra’s slightly misguided position is that samba in Bahia—much like the state’s public festivities (*festas de largo*) in general—is *ambiguous*, sacred or profane depending on the performance context. While I agree that samba is polyvalent, this characteristic cannot be attributed to ambiguity (or its implied amorphism). Indeed, this “trans-contextuality” is *a constituent facet* of samba; samba is definitionally extra-contextual. For this

¹³ Waddey seems to be drawing on Souza Carneiro (1937), whom he cites in an endnote (Waddey 1981: 278, n. 31).

¹⁴ See Lühning (1993) for an in-depth, ethnographic exploration of what she calls the “fantastic world of the *erês*.”

reason, it is not so much the sacred contexts themselves that are of concern in this chapter. Rather, my focus is on what the samba sounds like, communicates, and means *in* these sacred contexts.

4. One Samba Among Many: Samba-de-roda in the Recôncavo

In 2005, Bahian samba—designated as *samba de roda*—took center stage on the international scene when it was recognized as a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Since then, interdisciplinary academic research on “samba-de-roda” has rapidly increased.¹⁵ Despite what this growing body of literature suggests, however, not all Bahian samba is called *samba-de-roda*. Indeed, as I have deduced from a preliminary analysis of the available literature,¹⁶ the widespread use of the designation “samba-de-roda” as an *umbrella term* to reference *all* “native” Bahian samba is relatively new.¹⁷ The fact is, according to most people with whom I have spoken, samba-de-roda, which some call “street samba” (*samba de rua*), is a recent phenomenon. It appears that until only a few decades ago, people rarely used “samba-de-roda” as a generalized term. I will not analyze the reasons for the shift in terminology

¹⁵ A very summary list of some of the more recent works include Almeida and Reginaldo 2010; Carmo 2009; Ferreira and Freitas 2010; Nobre 2008, in addition to my own work (Iyanaga 2010).

¹⁶ Édison Carneiro (1961), one of the first folklorists to explore Brazilian samba in a detailed fashion, mentions samba-de-roda as only one of many names for samba in Bahia. The author explains that “[t]he dance has, in Bahia, the names of *samba de roda*, *corta-jaca*, *corrido* and *samba*” (p. 24). Unlike the 21st-century literature (and not to mention many samba musicians themselves), which discusses “samba-de-roda” as the name for samba into which modalities such as “corrido” would *fit*, Carneiro included samba-de-roda as *one of the modalities* of Bahia’s samba. Furthermore, in other work, Carneiro (1991) does not mention the term at all, explaining that samba in Bahia has regional denominations: “*samba batido* (Cidade da Bahia [Salvador]), *corta-jaca* (Cidade da Bahia and the state’s central east), *corrido* (Mar Grande), etc.” (p. 201). Only in a much later work, published posthumously, does Carneiro explain the samba from Bahia as “*samba* or *samba-de-roda*” (Carneiro 1974: 69). Ralph Waddey, who researched Bahian samba during the 1970s, published two articles (Waddey 1980, 1981) in which the term “samba de roda” is entirely absent. Furthermore, Waddey has expressed to me via personal communication (June 2012) that he does not have any recollection of the term being used at the time. I have no doubt that both Carneiro and Waddey were keen ethnographers, so I suspect the reason Carneiro noted the term and Waddey did not is a result of the regional denominations that the folklorist observed. After all, Waddey’s research was done mostly in the municipality of Santo Amaro, while Carneiro’s was located chiefly in Mar Grande on the island of Itaparica (Döring 2004: 74).

¹⁷ My employment of the term “native” is designed to suggest the styles of samba that are not considered to derive from other regions of Brazil, such as Rio de Janeiro’s “pagode/partido alto.”

here, though I suspect it has to do with a number of intersecting internal and external factors.¹⁸ It is worth noting that the umbrella use of “samba-de-roda” seems still to be limited to the academic literature and to the discourse of some professional samba musicians. It seems probable, though, that the tradition’s recognition (under the auspices of “samba-de-roda”) as a UNESCO Masterpiece of Intangible Heritage has set the groundwork for an increased sedimentation of the term in quotidian usage.¹⁹ But generally speaking, at the present juncture of the 21st century, when people discuss “samba-de-roda” in the Recôncavo (at least in the Cachoeira/São Félix/Muritiba region), they are referring to a specific *samba performance ensemble*. In other words, samba in the Recôncavo is not generally recognized as *samba-de-roda* unless it is performed by a *samba-de-roda performance group*.

SAMBA-DE-RODA AND THE PERFORMANCE GROUP

The abundant scholarship on “samba-de-roda” offers a convenient place from which I can begin my discussion of Bahian samba. It was, after all, with samba-de-roda groups that I initiated

¹⁸ Part of the change might have been a result of the growth of performance groups throughout the region, which started as early as the 1940s, but really began to take off in the 1980s. This would have *created* “street samba” (and the need to designate it) in a way that would not have previously existed. The increased use of the term may also have been due to an effort to distinguish it from other types of Brazilian samba, particularly the distinct style from Rio de Janeiro. Moreover, one cannot discard the possibility that literature on the topic, such as Carneiro’s (1974) book on traditional celebrations, as well as CD projects (e.g., Travassos, et. al. 1994), may have influenced how people discussed the genre in the public sphere. In other words, the changes may have been as much internally motivated (among the musicians themselves) as externally (by public discourse and public officials). But much research is necessary to approximate a better understanding of this topic.

¹⁹ Carlos Sandroni was invited to coordinate the dossier on samba-de-roda that was eventually submitted to UNESCO. Reflecting on his experiences, Sandroni (2005) explains how samba-de-roda was chosen. Initially, in April 2004, Gilberto Gil, then the Minister of Culture, expressed his desire to propose “Brazilian samba” as a candidate for the 3rd UNESCO Declaration of the Masterpieces of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. When the solicitation for financial support (in the preparation of the dossier) was sent to UNESCO, the international organization expressed its opinion that Brazilian samba would be unviable since it was not “in risk of disappearing.” Recognizing that “Brazilian samba” was a poor UNESCO candidate, officials decided that the “samba de roda of the Bahian recôncavo [*sic*] would be better suited for the profile suggested by UNESCO” (Sandroni 2005: 46). This means that for UNESCO, at least, it was especially important to designate this Bahian samba as something distinct from other types of “samba.” Treating Bahian samba as monolithically “samba-de-roda” invariably marks it as different from the non-endangered national “Brazilian samba.” Indeed, Sandroni confirmed to me (personal communication, 2012) that using the designation “samba-de-roda” was a politically motivated decision.

my own research. According to the dossier published by the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) for UNESCO submission:

Samba de roda is a musical, choreographic, poetic, and festive cultural expression present throughout the state of Bahia, but very particularly in the region of the Recôncavo. At the most basic level, it is defined as the gathering, which might be calendrically fixed or not, of a group for the performance of a musical and choreographic repertory. (Sandroni and Sant'Anna 2006: 23)

It bears reminder that this definition refers—implicitly—to Bahian samba in general, for it takes “samba-de-roda” to refer to all localized samba rather than to its performance by specific groups.

The dossier further provides a detailed list of samba-de-roda “characteristics,” which I present here in heavily edited form:

Performance – for samba-de-roda performance, participants typically stand forming a ring/circle, with the musical activity occurring within the ring and along its circumference. It is generally presumed that the name *samba de roda* (or ring/circle samba dance) derives from this ring formation, though I have also been told that the “roda” refers to the “ring” created by the female dancer’s (*sambadeira*) skirt when she spins. Samba can occur anywhere, in- or outdoors. Because performances are “inclusive” in nature, even a first time visitor is welcome to dance, sing, and/or clap along.

Instruments – of frequent use are membranophones (typically the Brazilian tambourine known as a *pandeiro*), idiophones, and chordophones (most often the *cavaquinho* and *viola*).²⁰ Those playing musical instruments are part of the circle, as are others who are clapping ostinato rhythmic patterns (I will describe these rhythms in detail later).

Singing – the Portuguese-language singing is antiphonal or responsorial with repetitive strophes. Some verses are improvised, though mostly they come from an extensive repertory with which participants are already familiar. The Spanish *copla* form (*ABCB*) is the most typical poetic rhyming scheme.

Choreography – dance movements, usually done within the ring, can vary greatly. However, the most typical dance step is the aforementioned *miudinho* (itty-bitty), which consists of an almost imperceptible dance step in which the feet, quite close to the ground, shuffle back and forth in an even rhythm of 16th notes.²¹ This is further accentuated by a shaking of the hips. Since usually only one person at a time dances in

²⁰ A *cavaquinho* is a small lute, about the size of a Hawaiian ukulele, with four steel strings. A *viola* is roughly the size of a guitar and has five double-courses with steel strings. For an in-depth discussion of the use of chordophones in samba-de-roda music, see Nobre (2008, 2009).

²¹ Daniela Amoroso (2009: 141-153) offers an extended description of the *miudinho*, depicting the choreographic movement in illustrations (p. 143) as well as explaining didactically *how* to perform the dance steps.

the ring, people must alternate in order for others also to dance. Consequently, upon ending the dance, in a way that is strikingly similar to Sarmiento's 1880 description from Luanda, the dancer executes an *umbigada*, or belly bounce, indicating who will be next to enter the ring. While the designation suggests that the belly is used to choose the dancer, in fact any part of the body may be used, an elbow, a foot, a hip, or even a head nod.

This normative description of “samba-de-roda,” which emphasizes aspects such as instrumentation, choreography, and vocal styles, most accurately addresses the samba-de-roda performed by professional groups. In other words, outside the context of an “official” group performance—as I will explain below—many of these traits are non-existent. And indeed, performance groups are quite new. In the early-1980s, Ralph Wadley (1981: 268), reflecting on his 1970s fieldwork, wrote that “participants” speak of “our *samba* . . . to indicate that group of musicians and dancers who often in reality perform the genre together.” But, Wadley emphasizes, “[*Samba* in Bahia is certainly no explicit formal group or society” (emphasis in original, underscore added). Evidence indicates that the gradual shift from “no explicit” formal groups to the dominance of such groups began during the second half of the 20th century.²²

Ethnomusicologist Elizabeth Travassos estimates that professionalization really began “to take off in Cachoeira and neighboring cities in the 1970s, when the city was recognized as cultural heritage by IPAC [Institute of Artistic and Cultural Heritage of Bahia] when the official tourism press began promoting large annual festivals, which had become part of the official Bahian tourism circuit” (Travassos 1997: 221).²³ While professionalization has certainly become increasingly common since the 1970s, it is only within the last decade that professional samba-de-roda groups have boomed throughout the Bahian Recôncavo. In a study concerned with the

²² While surely the majority of samba-de-roda groups were not established before the 1970s, the group Samba de Roda Suerdieck is recognized as “the first group of samba de roda organized with the objective of participating in performances [*tocatas*] and religious festivals” (Marques 2003: 187). The group was founded around 1958 (different sources affirm different dates).

²³ There were probably multiple reasons for the growth in groups that went beyond market demand. After all, I know of at least one instance in which a sambador founded a group in order to fulfill a vow he had made to his dying grandfather (see Iyanaga 2009).

effects UNESCO recognition has had on the practice of samba-de-roda in the Recôncavo, ethnomusicologist Raiana Maciel do Carmo notes that a mere 16 groups had been registered with Bahia's samba association (ASSEBA) in 2005. However, by September 2008, this number had nearly quadrupled to 62 (Carmo 2009: 97).²⁴ Carmo, corroborating my own observations, reasons that this nearly 400% increase is due in large part to the financial resources and symbolic capital that can be garnered through the officialization of a samba-de-roda group (Carmo 2008: 529, 2009: 103-110).

While samba musicians disagree vis-à-vis which instruments should be included in a “complete” samba-de-roda ensemble, a typical group includes somewhere around eight to twelve amplified musicians. This usually includes a 10-string *viola*, *cavaquinho*, guitar with six steel strings, three or more *pandeiros*, a triangle, a *timbal*, and a variety of other percussion, such as a so-called *105* (*cento e cinco*) bass drum, *timba*, *tábuas*, and shakers. The vocalists, usually one lead singer and two or more back-up singers, typically play on one of the aforementioned instruments while also singing (see Fig. 4.1). Musicians often perform with so-called “Baianas,” who are *sambadeiras* (female samba performers), who dance, sing, and clap along with the musicians, and who dress in characteristic multi-layered colonial Afro-Brazilian garb (see Travassos 1997).²⁵

²⁴ It is difficult to know if this number only reflects a growth in affiliated groups or if it is also an indication of the formation of new groups in general. Given my experience, it seems that in many cases people who would regularly play together at rezas or other events made the conscious decision to officialize themselves as a group in order to participate in ASSEBA.

²⁵ Travassos (1997) interprets the use of *baianas* as a means of conjuring antiquity in the samba-de-roda performance. For a detailed description of the Baiana's clothing (*traje da baiana*), see Mendonça et al. (2005).



Fig. 4.1. The Filhos de Nagô, a samba-de-roda group from São Félix. Photo taken at a performance in 2008 for a private birthday party in a neighboring city, Cruz das Almas. The depicted instruments used for the performance, from left to right are a viola (on the far left), pandeiro, pandeiro, pandeiro, timba, pandeiro (gentleman in yellow), triangle, 105, and timbal. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

These groups most frequently perform in city festivities, where they are contracted by public officials to play, though they also perform in smaller venues such as bars, birthday parties, rezas, and other private events. To the best of my knowledge, groups receive payment in one of three ways: money, barter (beer, food, musical equipment, etc.), or gratitude.²⁶ It seems to me that gratitude, as a form of payment, is increasingly rare; as groups grow progressively more “professional,” traveling more and garnering more fame, they appear less willing to perform in what might be viewed as a “community service.” This does not mean they refuse to perform gratis, or that members do not *individually* attend various events and lend their skills, but the organized samba seen in paid performances—with uniforms, “complete” instrumentation,

²⁶ I never felt comfortable asking groups what they received for their performances. In some cases, however, I would hear complaints and frustrations, or even participate in the transfer of money. In many cases, when the performance was an informal affair, as long as transportation was provided for (and even sometimes when it was not), groups seemed willing to perform in exchange for beer. This was particularly true on Sunday afternoons when there were no other performance opportunities. Primarily, groups hope for larger payments from government organs, which hire samba-de-roda musicians to perform during large public festivities, such as São João (St. John’s Day).

organized sets, etc.—typically exists only when material goods (be it money or otherwise) are exchanged.

If indeed not all Bahian samba is samba-de-roda, what is the difference? Simply put, it is a question of *performance style*. A samba rhythm is a samba rhythm, just as are the repertoires, the choreographic movements, and the vocal style. But samba-de-roda is generally recognized as something that is *organized* and *professional*. This translates to a presentational, rather than participatory, performance. The musicians recognize themselves—and are recognized by others—as *musicians*. The singers command an extensive repertoire, meaning few or no pauses between songs (or *sambas*) in order to think of what to sing, the instrumentation is “complete” (according to the specific group’s understanding of the term), the musicians are amplified, and the musicians are dressed as a group (i.e., matching clothing). While a samba-de-roda group may perform without one or all of these categories fulfilled (no amplification, not all of the ideal instruments present, etc.), a professional group would *typically* satisfy these particulars.²⁷

5. Samba in the Reza Context

Samba-de-roda is often a part of the reza context, but so are other styles of samba performance. That said, people do not insist on a distinct boundary between what constitutes samba-de-roda and what does not. After all, if I were to use the term “samba-de-roda”—as I initially did—to describe a samba as performed by a family of non-professional musicians without instruments, no one would (nor did) correct me. However, in any perceptive ethnographer would quickly recognize that people rarely use the term “samba-de-roda” to describe anything other than a professional performance. So if samba-de-roda refers to the way

²⁷ A group such as Esmola Cantada, in Cachoeira, has a yearly tradition in which they go from house to house singing and performing as they beg for alms. They do not do so with amplification and though they do not stop being a samba-de-roda group, the musicians would tend not to label their performance as *samba-de-roda*, but rather samba (in the general sense) or the musical begging of alms.

in which samba is performed, what is a samba performance called when it is *not* samba-de-roda? The short, analytically perplexing answer: “samba.” Though I have heard a number of terms that seem to be idiosyncratic to individuals or groups of individuals—simple samba (*samba simples*), family samba (*samba de família*), clapped samba (*samba na palma*), house/private samba (*samba de casa*), little samba (*sambinha*)—there is no specific, widely diffused taxonomic category for the samba that is not professional. However, my use of any of the designations I have listed here would probably communicate to any individual that I am *not* talking about samba-de-roda, the “big samba” (*sambão*), the “street (or public) samba” (*samba de rua*).

For heuristic purposes, I will refer to this uncategorized samba as *sambinha* (small samba), which is the Portuguese diminutive of samba. I choose this designation to emphasize the “smallness” of these non-professional samba events. A *sambinha* is often marked by the smallness of the sound (quietude), the limited number of participants, and the more subdued euphoric experience. At a *sambinha*, then, there are fewer people, who produce less loudness than would a group of amplified musicians, and if it is not a less enthusiastic performance, it is certainly a briefer one. *Sambinhas* often rely on few (if any) musical instruments, an incomplete or non-existent ring for performance, poor call-and-response, and less enthusiastic or even non-existent dancing. These aspects are due primarily to the improvised nature of a *sambinha*. Distinct from a samba-de-roda performance, then, there is often no premeditation regarding how or when a *sambinha* will be conducted; it occurs spontaneously.

Rezas, as I have emphasized throughout the dissertation, nearly always include samba performance in one form or another. Larger rezas, which include more people, more food, and more excitement, tend to have samba-de-roda. In these cases, people usually contract groups to

perform, exchanging money or other goods.²⁸ The smaller rezas tend only to include sambinha. Yet both are still *samba*. So the question stands: if the primary distinction between the sambinha and a samba-de-roda lies in *how* this samba is performed, what defines this localized samba in the first place? Put differently, what makes Bahian samba distinct from other styles of Brazilian samba? There are three elements I have never seen absent from any big or small samba performance in the Recôncavo: strophic song,²⁹ ostinato handclapping, and happiness.

Notably missing from this definition is movement and call-and-response singing. While samba dancing is a potential (and underlying) part of *any* samba performance (i.e., the melodies always imply a choreographic element), corporeal movement may be limited to handclaps. In other words, I have seen performances with no dancing. The same can be affirmed for call-and-response singing. Though the stanzas are structurally responsorial (i.e., they include repetition and overlapping singing), often there is no clear distinction in performance; the “caller” and the “responder” regularly sing everything in unison. Consequently, though call-and-response is an implied part of *all* samba song structure, its performance, like dance, may or may not in fact materialize. Yet the music is still considered samba. Given these observations, it becomes clear that performative elements (i.e., *how* it is performed) have little to do with defining what samba

²⁸ Of course the musicians, like all reza guests, receive food and drink. In addition, they usually receive something in exchange for their performance, though what they receive typically depends on the personal relationship the group has with the reza host. I know of a woman who pays the group with guitar strings and other types of “maintenance” fees. This is seen more as a courtesy than as a payment. In her particular case, because she has known some of the musicians’ families for generations, and commands a certain amount of respect from the samba group, the musicians would likely play for free. In contrast, I know of one case in which a reza host contacted a samba group in a rather distant city after only having *heard about* the group. When the samba group’s leader requested 500 *reais* (R\$500)—roughly US\$300 at the time—to cover transportation and payment for the musicians, the reza host declined, choosing a different group which was presumably less expensive. In another case, a samba group’s leader complained to me that many of the local groups were “selling out the tradition” by playing at government-sponsored affairs for only R\$300. The leader expressed his anger with the government, which he felt should be paying at least R\$1,000 to R\$1,500. He further explained that R\$300 is the price a group should charge “a penniless woman who wants a group to play at her caruru [reza].”

²⁹ This may not be the case in the Santo Amaro region. I have heard many recordings that demonstrate what is often called “samba de viola,” a type of all-instrumental samba performed on the *viola machete* (a smaller version of the more typical *viola caipira*). However, as Cássio Nobre (personal communication, 2012) has corroborated, these appear to be out-of-context recordings.

is. The definition thus lies in its structure. Consequently, samba is defined within parameters of song, rhythm, and emotion. In other words, something is Bahian samba rather than some other genre of music, such as Rio style samba (*samba-de-partido alto*), *farró*, or *música sertaneja*, as a result of a combination of its song (i.e., text/melody), its rhythm, and its sentiment. Hardly ambiguously defined parameters, it can be concluded that samba is a socially shared and *locally coded* musical expression of happiness. What then can happiness sound like in Bahia?

6. Samba as Rhythm

It is possible to discuss the rhythms present in samba performance on a number of different levels. And this is especially true for the “complete” instrumentation of a samba-de-roda performance. Following Nobre (2008: 207-212), it is possible to analyze the rhythms played by the plucked string instruments.³⁰ Focus can also be placed on the rhythms implied in the danced *miudinho* (Sandroni and Sant’Anna 2006: 49).³¹ Still, one could also characterize samba as it is played on the “marking drums” (or *tambores de marcação*, which are low pitched membranophones).³² Furthermore, the *pandeiro* has its own characteristic rhythm of straight 16th notes.³³ When looking at each of these rhythms in context, as presented in Ex. 4.1, it is clear that the performance of a samba can be strongly polyrhythmic.³⁴ Indeed, Ex. 4.1, which is a simplified transcription of a 2008 performance, demonstrates seven distinct rhythms. If rhythm truly is a centrally defining characteristic of samba in Bahia, which of these is *the* samba rhythm?

³⁰ Nobre points out that the viola rhythms during a “barravento” samba are played in groups of four beats that are often repeated to construct subdivisions of a twelve- or sixteen-beat pattern.

³¹ Sandroni and Sant’Anna (2006: 49) point out that the dance step may be ternary or binary, depending on how the dancers conceive of the dance step.

³² Marking drums typically emphasize the downbeats (in 2/4), with an accent on the second beat.

³³ Here the third 16th note typically receives a bit more emphasis.

³⁴ Some analysts might denominate this as polymetric if considering the triplets to be superimpositions, but I would argue that the samba musicians themselves do not tend to think of their rhythms as metrically different.

Ex. 4.1. Partial transcription of instrumental samba-de-roda introduction. Example taken from a performance by the Filhos de Nagô samba-de-roda group on August 23, 2008, in São Félix, Bahia. In the highlighted measure, there are at least seven different rhythms.³⁵

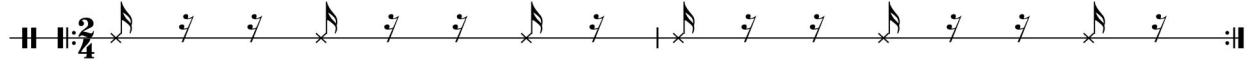
Very little can be learned about samba’s “defining” rhythmic pulse by looking at Ex. 4.1. After all, this shows only some of the possible *interlocking rhythms* that emphasize (or not) the *underlying* pulse—the heartbeat—of this samba. Any one of these rhythms, whether played, sung, or danced, only works *because* it interlocks with samba’s repeated underlying rhythmic pulse. Thus in order to conceptualize “samba rhythm,” it is necessary to consider its underlying pulses.

The rhythm most closely associated with samba-de-roda is also widespread in the Brazilian northeast (e.g., *samba-de-coco*, *baião*, *embolada*, etc.). Conceptualizing the rhythm as a time-line in 2/4, as samba scholars typically do,³⁶ the rhythm is a 16th note pulse of

³⁵ Because this is chiefly a demonstrative transcription, I have omitted the rhythmic nuances created by timbral differences as well as the parts played by the third pandeiro and the timba.

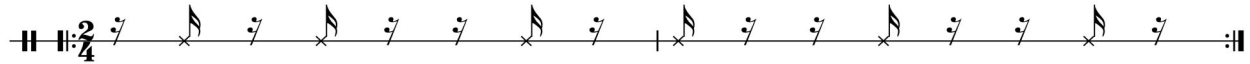
³⁶ According to Sandroni and Sant’Anna (2006: 48), if asked about samba’s meter, “[a]ny Brazilian musician who has studied a little so-called musical theory would not hesitate in responding: ‘2/4.’”

asymmetrical accents, which are organized in a 3-3-2 pattern: /x..x..x./.³⁷ This basic pulse is a *two-bar* phrase, in which the pattern repeats: /x..x..x.x..x..x./ (Ex. 4.2).



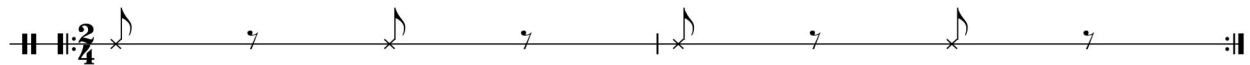
Ex. 4.2. Samba time-line (S-1).

I will refer to this as S-1 (samba rhythm 1). While most participants clap this time-line (S-1), some might also accompany by clapping an interlocking rhythm similar to the time-line but with the first accented pulse coming a 16th note later: /x.x..x.x..x..x./ (Ex. 4.3).



Ex. 4.3. Common interlocking rhythm in S-1.

Though this time-line, what I am calling S-1, is the most well-known samba rhythm, it is not the only one. Indeed, another prominent rhythm at rezas, virtually absent from relevant scholarship, which I will call S-2 (samba rhythm 2), is a four-bar pattern of symmetric accents and a different underlying pulse. And because the underlying pulse is in 8th notes rather than 16th notes, it is incompatible with S-1.³⁸ Conceptualizing S-2 in 2/4, this rhythm (which does not have the asymmetric or orienting characteristics to qualify it technically as a time-line) comprises a succession of quarter notes accents: /x.x.x.x./ (See Ex. 4.4).³⁹



Ex. 4.4. Samba rhythm (S-2).

³⁷ See a discussion of this rhythm in Döring (2004: 81) and Sandroni and Sant'Anna (2006: 50).

³⁸ By “incompatible,” I am suggesting that the simultaneous performance of both rhythms is practically and theoretically unviable. In other words, to clap S-1 while others are clapping S-2 would be understood as an error.

³⁹ I owe great thanks to Nolan Warden for sharing his knowledge on terminology and ideas regarding African and African-American rhythmic concepts and scholarship.

Often played simultaneously by participants is the following interlocking clapped rhythm:

/x.x.x.xx/ (see Ex. 4.5). Interestingly, neither rhythm has a distinctive “native” name by which to differentiate them; both are simply referred to as “samba.”⁴⁰ Dona Maria described this S-2 rhythm as a “samba, but *like* a march.”⁴¹



Ex. 4.5. Clapped rhythmic variation in S-2.

On another occasion, I asked a professional samba-de-roda triangle player the rhythm’s name. “That’s for a samba at someone’s house.” In other words, it is a samba rhythm typically *not performed* by a samba-de-roda group. This reference to context is a common one. Some people refer to the rhythm as *similar to* “what we play for a *cantiga-de-roda* [song in a circle].” Given their 21st-century rarity, I have never participated in a “cantiga-de-roda.” Yet, in 1971, a multi-investigator research project focusing on Bahian “folkloric music” published a number of transcriptions of and brief informative essays on Bahian music from the interior (Ferreira et al. 1971). Included in the collection are fourteen musical transcriptions of “cantigas-de-roda,” an illustration of one (Fig. 4.2), and a description of their performance context:

The cantigas de roda published in this work were selected from within others collected in the rural zones. They are preferentially intoned during rezas, which are still today frequent in the interior. . . . Before beginning the reza proper, while waiting for the prayer leader [rezador] or the other guests, women and men make themselves comfortable in unfinished chairs, in tree trunks or even on the beaten ground of the field and begin to play around with riddles [*adivinhações*] or dares [*prendas*]; at other times they get up and

⁴⁰ On one occasion I was told by a professional samba-de-roda musician that this is a “chula” rhythm, thus relating the rhythm specifically to the sung verses, which are called “chulas” (see Döring 2009; Waddey 1981). However, I have never otherwise heard this term in relation to the rhythm and thus believe that the use of this term in relation to this time-line (S-2) is rather idiosyncratic to the individual.

⁴¹ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, on May 20, 2011. Largely due to this response, and the characteristics of the rhythm (i.e., the emphasis placed on beats one and two, the choreographic “march-like” movement associated with the rhythm, and the rhythm’s similarity to a Brazilian march rhythm), I termed this, in a previous publication, a “samba-marcha,” or marched samba (Iyanaga 2010). Here, however, I have chosen to avoid neologisms.

hold hands to form rings under the rhythm of the characteristic melodies. These games are also done in the room itself where the altar is erected. (Ferreira et al. 1971: 67)

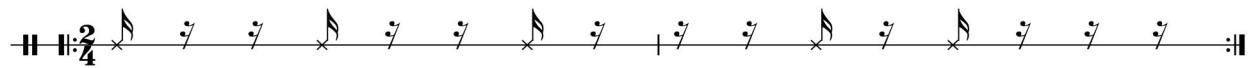
Although this citation suggests that *cantigas-de-roda* occurred *before* novenas, oral historical accounts unanimously agree that they took place *after* novenas as well. Also according to oral history, “*cantigas-de-roda*” were performed with no externalized rhythmic accents (i.e., no handclaps), a detail corroborated by the handholding described in the above citation. It furthermore appears there was no noteworthy choreographic movement, suggesting that when someone claims an S-2 samba is *similar to* a “*cantiga-de-roda*,” s/he is implying both an association with the home samba/reza context (and not public samba-de-roda) and a lack of salient choreography or rhythm.



Fig. 4.2. Illustration of a “*cantiga-de-roda*.” (Ferreira, et al. 1971)

The third rhythm—and the only other I have heard at a reza—is that of the Caboclo’s samba (*samba de caboclo*). In the reza context, Caboclos are nearly always inherited deities (ranging from Catholic saints and Orixás to Brazilian archetypes of Indians, cowboys, sailors, and others) that sing, dance, and advise through the physical vessels of their human mediums. While people sometimes sing sambas for the Caboclos without the presence of a Caboclo (see

Party Interlude 2, pp. 105-110), usually the Caboclos’ sambas are actually sung by the Caboclos themselves (through the bodies and voices of their human mediums). Samba accompaniment in Candomblé *terreiros* includes at least five distinct Caboclo *toques*, as time-lines are thus designated (see Garcia 2008).⁴² At rezas, Caboclos might sing sambas (also called “cantigas”) in one of the two samba rhythms I have already discussed (S-1, S-2), but they more typically sing in a time-line associated specifically with Caboclos’ sambas. This time-line, with a 16th-note pulse, is a two-bar phrase of asymmetric beats: /x..x..x...x.x.../ (see Ex. 4.6).⁴³



Ex. 4.6. Congo time-line. The rhythm is typically played on a percussion instrument.

In the reza context, this time-line has no clear designation and is again associated primarily with context. Thus people might explain the rhythm as “what we play when there is a Caboclo.”

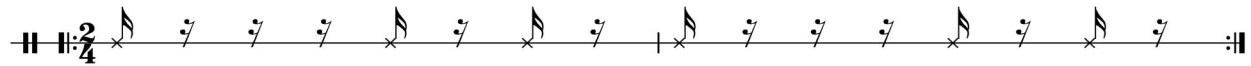
However, in the Candomblé community this time-line is referred to as the Congo rhythm. Thus, for heuristic purposes, I will refer here to this time-line as the Congo time-line. Unlike the other two samba rhythms I have discussed so far, the Congo *time-line* is typically *not played by handclaps*. Hands typically clap a rhythm identical to the march-like S-2 (Ex. 4.4). It is no

wonder, then, that Jerônimo Cardoso, a Candomblé adept, explained to ethnomusicologist Sônia Chada Garcia that “[t]he Congo is a type of march” (Garcia 1996: 109). People also sometimes

⁴² Sônia Chada Garcia conducted extensive fieldwork on what is known as Candomblé-de-Caboclo, which is the worship of *caboclos* in Candomblé terreiros (1996, 2001, 2006). The five basic time-lines are Congo, Barravento, Cabula, Ijexá, and Samba. Interestingly, the *toque* known as “samba” is not rhythmically the same as the samba in any other Bahian context. Rather, the rhythm resembles something of a Rio de Janeiro style of samba.

⁴³ Garcia (2006: 80) explains that “[t]he Congo accompanies cantigas of the padê [opening], the xirê [salute to all Orixás], the matança [sacrifice], Oxalá’s cantigas and the great majority of the Caboclo repertory. It is, without a doubt, the most utilized *toque* [rhythm].” Garcia offers a transcription (p. 80) of the rhythms played on each of the three drums that interlock with the time-line performed on the bell (*gã*). The author also explains the rhythms in technical terms: “The basic pattern of the *gã* is additive (6 + 10 or 10 + 6), but that of the atabaques is divisive in halves. The rumpi [small, high pitched drum] and the contra-rum [medium, mid-range drum], beyond divisive are internally symmetric. The *gã* presents 5 strokes in the 16 pulse base, the rumpi and the rum [large, low pitched drum] 8, and the contra-rum 10” (p. 81).

clap the variation illustrated in Ex. 4.7: /x...x.x.x...x.x./. And although the Congo time-line is sometimes clapped, it is more typically performed on percussion instruments such as a *pandeiro* or bell (or other idiophone).



Ex. 4.7. Clapped variation in Congo time-line.

Because the handclaps in S-2 are identical to those used to accompany the Congo time-line, one could easily assume they are based on the *same* rhythm and *same* pulse. But are they the same rhythm? Dona Margarida explained to me that when “we’re clapping, it’s the same. But on the *atabaque* it’s different.” “But there are never *atabaques* at *rezas*!” I remember retorting. “No, but if there were...”⁴⁴ Dona Margarida’s assertion provides a cognitive perspective through which to *conceive* of samba rhythm. Basic pulses (whether heard or not) underlie all samba such that every other rhythmic component is little more than an *accompaniment*. Thus the *clapping* associated with Caboclos, unlike that which helps define S-2, is little more than a rhythm that interlocks with the other instruments, such as the *atabaques*, that all relate explicitly to the Congo time-line.

Despite the monorhythmic characterization of Bahian samba available in the literature, there is in fact no *single* samba pulse or rhythm. Rather there are at least three.⁴⁵ In the *reza* context, all of these rhythms are broadly categorized as “samba.” When pressed, however, people do express cognitive modes of rhythmic differentiation. And as I have already emphasized, these distinctions typically appeal to context and corporeal movement. The term “samba,” particularly as a verb, insinuates *motion*, and thus S-1, more so than the other rhythms,

⁴⁴ Interview conducted with Dona Margarida at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on February 10, 2012.

⁴⁵ I have been to at least one *reza*, in Salvador, at which the samba performed included *samba-de-partido alto*, which is a Rio de Janeiro style samba with a related, though entirely different time-line.

is the most “samba-esque.” In other words, unlike S-2, the asymmetric accents of S-1 create a rhythmic *swing* that facilitates dancing. And because samba-de-roda groups perform sambas in S-1 almost exclusively, this S-1 also indexes the context of large-scale sambas (i.e., many people, loudness, and festive energy). S-2 samba, on the other hand, is associated with the tranquility of a “family” atmosphere, and with its binary rhythm, it hardly lends itself to dancing that extends beyond “marching” movements. Finally, while the Congo time-line also comprises offbeats (though less so than S-1), its explicit association with Caboclos inhibits its utility for human dancing. The Caboclos sing their sambas to facilitate their own dancing, not that of the humans.

Reiterating, none of these rhythms has an emic label. Why? A simple explanation is that people have no *need* to distinguish the rhythms discursively and there is no formalized system of musical training. The transmission of musical knowledge occurs over the course of the event, primarily through non-discursive imitation.⁴⁶ And because the reza is a ritual—not a “professional”—performance, the playing/singing need only be “good enough.” In fact, it is rare to see anyone correct the playing of another.⁴⁷ If a novice plays an instrument incorrectly, for instance, a better player usually takes the instrument away and assumes the performing role, or, in other cases, the novice is simply ignored. As a *de facto* rule, formal teaching is non-existent. But the absence of formal instruction alone does not explain the lack of elaborate taxonomy.

⁴⁶ Only in recent years have samba-de-roda groups begun opening up local samba schools. The schools, designed to teach basic musicality to community youth, often suffer from unstable attendance and a lack of resources. However, these schools are oriented primarily toward the teaching of samba-de-roda (and not samba in the broader sense). But of course, most students who learn to play are capable of playing any style.

⁴⁷ This is particularly true when there are a large number of people. The mistakes of a single individual (or group of individuals) do not usually ruin the performance, in which the majority of people are performing correctly.

Indeed, I posit that the principal explanation for the dearth of technical vocabulary is that the *rhythm is always “obvious” to the participants.*⁴⁸

During a given *reza*, any one of the three rhythms I have discussed can—in theory—be performed at any time. Therefore the performance of an S-1 samba is equally likely be followed by another S-1 as by an S-2. No one ever tells anyone else *which* rhythm will be performed (and there is no specialized vocabulary anyway), yet people seem instinctively to know. In other words, not only do people teach the rhythms without explicit discussion, they also communicate them tacitly during an entirely improvised performance. So how do people know what to clap or play without being told? The typical performance occurs as followed: an unaccompanied individual intones (*puxa*) the first few lyrics of a samba and those who recognize or can quickly learn the samba join in with voices and handclaps. What this suggests is that participants perceive the rhythm by interpreting the *melodic rhythm* of the samba. The vocal line exposes the rhythm. After all, a “time-line” is nothing more than the *externalization* of the already implicit rhythm. People thus do little more than externalize, with handclaps or instruments, what is already apparent (to them) in the samba’s melody (*toada*).

7. Samba as Song

Sitting one warm February afternoon with Dona Margarida as she sang me different “cantigas” (as sambas are often called) and clapped their respective rhythms, I got an important lesson: singing matters. “See how the clapping is?” she asked, “It’s different isn’t it?” “Yeah, it’s different,” I dully responded. She sat silent for a second or two and then verbalized what I came

⁴⁸ Here I am referring specifically to “musically competent” participants, not novices. In other words, those who are familiar with the style of music and often participate in samba events. There are of course moments during which people perform the wrong rhythms or perform incorrectly. This usually only last for moments until the person finds her/his place in the musical performance. Again, novices are more inclined to learn through imitation. Therefore, when s/he is embarking on the learning process, often at a young age, usually s/he listens carefully to what others do first and simply imitates and learns the repertory or how particular rhythms fit with the melodic rhythms.

to learn is a tacitly shared cultural logic: “It’s in accordance with the *cantiga*.” She then returned to singing, but I was still stuck on her words. I interrupted: “So how do you know what to clap? Is it just the way you sing it?” Her sister chimed in: “It’s the *cantiga*.” Agreeing, Dona Margarida completed her sister’s phrase, “And you start clapping as you hear how it goes!”⁴⁹ Samba rhythms matter little without song. The verses are largely what define samba. The clapping only *externalizes* the “basic pulse” already present in the melody’s articulation. In the context of the *reza*, singing is the primary element from which all other aural and choreographic aspects derive. Consequently, the way in which a melody is phrased makes clear to participants the appropriate rhythm and choreography.

How does the melody (called a *toada*) of a *cantiga* establish the rhythm and its associated choreography? As a general rule, the melodies imply one of the three samba rhythms through melodic accents. Therefore, S-2, with its 8th-note (rather than 16th-note) pulse, is made clear by the “straight” quarter- and 8th-note melodic rhythms, such as in the example “Dois-dois viajeiro” (Ex. 4.8).

⁴⁹ Interview conducted Marlene and Margarida’s at their home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on February 10, 2012.

Dois - dois vi - a - gei - ro vi - a - ja no mar. Dois -

dois vi - a - gei - ro vi - a - ja no mar Oi - a

bar - ca vi - ro - ou - dois - dois quer na - dar Oi - a

bar - ca vi - ro - ou - dois - dois quer na - dar Dois -

Ex. 4.8. “Dois-dois viageiro.” A saint’s samba for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in S-2.

In the same way, cantigas for Caboclos also emphasize their Congo time-line (Ex. 4.9).

Ó dá fu - lô En - gẽ - nia dá fu - lô. É

O - ba - lu - ai - ê En - gẽn - ia dá fu - lô. Ó

Ex. 4.9. “Dá Fulô.” Samba-de-Caboclo for Obaluaiê in Congo time-line.

Finally, the S-1 melodies are the most asymmetric and employ a variety of quarter, 8th, and 16th notes (Ex. 4.10).

Ex. 4.10. “Abalê.” A saint’s samba for Sts. Cosmas and Damian in S-1.

Occasionally, these S-1 melodies can be *swung* in way that sounds like triplets. An example of this is presented in Ex. 4.12.⁵⁰ It is worth noting that the pulses implicit in the melodies will be more or less clear (to an outsider) depending on the melody. Furthermore, since it is often already part of their locally shared repertory, most participants need not hear a given melody in order to know what the rhythm will be. In summary, the melody/rhythm relationship is not arbitrary and the clapped rhythm does little more than externalize the rhythm already implicit in the sung melody.

While the rhythmic information is communicated by the melodic articulation, the basic identity of a given samba is carried in the text. In other words, like in the novena, the samba’s text—not the rhythm or the pitches—bears its identity. As already mentioned, a samba’s text is typically organized in a poetic structure derived from the Spanish *copla*, “a quatrain with assonant rhymes that serves as a fundamental structure for textual improvisation” (Béhague 1980: 118). These assonant rhymes, according to William Gradante (2001: 397), consist of “four

⁵⁰ My use of triplets to represent the sound seems to suggest something more interesting than a superimposition of 3 on 2. Instead, what might be learned from this apparent “clash[] of accents” (Gerischer 2006: 114) is that the S-1 time-line is fact in a triple meter time-line and not the duple meter that is typically used to represent samba. Or might this be an issue resulting from microrhythms? As Gerischer (Ibid.) points out, “Double-time offbeats and simple offbeats are consistently stressed by playing them a little earlier than an equidistant division of cycles and beats would suggest. Time-lines are also articulated with microrhythmic characteristics.” This is a concern for those specifically interested in how particularly *grooves* are created and those who are interested in *exactness* regarding the notation of musical phenomena. While the issue is worth investigating, my chief interest is to reach an understanding of how people perform and the sound of these performances. I leave these technical issues to another time.

eight-, six- or five-syllable lines generally rhymed *ABCB*.” For the most part, although sambas tend to vary greatly vis-à-vis syllabic formulas, rhyming schemes adhere strictly to this *ABCB* organization. Still, repetition of specific couplets or the inclusion of new quatrains is common. Regarding the former, the quatrain stanza can be extended to a sestet or an octet, thus producing rhythmic schemes of *ABABCB* or *ABCBCBCB*, respectively. Other variations are also possible, though never deviating too far from the basic *copla* pattern.

The term “cantiga” is often exclusively as a synonym for a samba (song). According to *Minidicionário Houaiss da língua portuguesa* dictionary, a cantiga can be defined as a “song [*canção*]” or a “poetic composition of the troubadours” (Houaiss, Salles Villar, and Mello Franco 2004: 132). Words are central to “cantigas”; and sambas are *always* also “cantigas.” The use of this lexical alternative underscores the essential role *words* play in sambas. Unlike the English term “song,” which tends to imply a relatively fixed relationship between melody and text, “cantiga” refers solely to lyrical content. In talking about a samba, then, a person might say, “Let’s sing that *cantiga* in a different melody.” Altering the melody does not change the samba. Modifying the meaning of a samba text, however, changes the samba. *A samba is a cantiga because all sambas are defined by their textual content.* Two sambas are “the same” as long as their texts are the same,⁵¹ even if their melodic lines are dissimilar. On the other hand, if a melody is maintained but the text is altered, the cantiga will be recognized as *entirely* distinct.

One of the most commonly performed sambas for Sts. Cosmas and Damian is “A sua casa cheira” (“Your house is scented”), of which I offer transcriptions of two different performances. The first transcription (Ex. 4.11) comes from a 2009 *reza* in Cachoeira, and it is

⁵¹ Slight variations in the text are inevitable, such as, for example, substituting the word *apanhar* (grab) for *catar* (gather). But these adjustments hardly change the semantics of the text.

sung in an on-beat S-2 melody. The second transcription (Ex. 4.12), from a 2008 *reza* in rural São Félix, contains a nearly identical text set but the melody's pitches and rhythms are distinct.

Ex. 4.11. “A sua casa cheira,” in S-2, from Cachoeira (2009). The transcription has been transposed to G to facilitate comparison with Ex. 4.12.

Ex. 4.12. “A sua casa cheira,” in S-1, from São Félix (2008). The transcription has been transposed to G to facilitate comparison with Ex. 4.11.

In early 2012, I met with Dona Margarida, whose family’s 2009 performance is transcribed here.

In order to test my hypothesis regarding the significance of text over melody, I sang to her, as best as I could, the alternate, S-1 version of “A sua casa cheira.” I asked her whether it was the “same” as the S-2 samba she and her family had sung in 2009. Dona Margarida listened attentively: “Yes, that’s the same, it just has more of a samba rhythm.” The melody’s pitches went unnoticed while the rhythm was seen as “more of a samba,” probably due to the implied choreography of the beat. However, this rhythmic distinction did not affect the samba’s “identity.” Regardless of melody or rhythm, it was still “A sua casa cheira.”

Conversely, if the melody and rhythm remain constant, but the text's *meaning* is different, the samba is consequently viewed as entirely distinct. For example, a popular samba for St. Roch is the following:

*Senhor **São Roque**
Está no altar
Me dê licença
Pra eu sambar*⁵²

A similar (same?) samba for St. Cosmas and St. Damian is equally widespread:

*Senhor **São Cosme**
Está no altar
Me dê licença
Pra eu sambar*⁵³

Both cantigas are always performed in S-1, with nearly no variation in the sung pitches, and with—as is shown—only the saint's name (emboldened) differing in a comparison of the texts. However, because the semantic meanings are distinct, one is for St. Roch while the other is for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, these are *entirely different sambas*. From an analytical perspective, this appears to be a convenient way of generating repertory. That is, there are many “generic” samba texts that do not refer to specific traits of saints, such as the above texts, such that by simply altering the saint's name, an entirely new composition is created. Furthermore, new repertory can be generated through the composition of new texts for familiar melodies, and familiar melodies facilitate group participation. This largely explains why a samba composer is seen not as someone who creates new melodies, but as someone who creates new lyrics.

Even though pitch content is valued less than is text, it is nevertheless possible to identify some general patterns in melodic choices common in a samba aesthetic:

⁵² Translation: “Lord **St. Roch** / Is at the altar / Give me permission / To samba”

⁵³ Translation: “Lord **St. Cosmas** / Is at the altar / Give me permission / To samba”

The sambas de roda of the Bahian Recôncavo utilize a non-tempered major diatonic scale, with the seventh degree oscillating between the major and minor seventh and, frequently, in an intermediate position. . . . The polyphony in parallel thirds is very frequent . . . [T]hese are the predominant intervals, but also occurring are fourths, fifths, and sixths . . . [W]hen there are harmonic instruments . . . the chords are generally the tonic and dominant. (Sandroni and Sant’Anna 2006: 51)

It is worth noting that these melodic intervals and pitch choices are similar to those of the novena (as discussed in Ch. 3), suggesting a shared cultural patterning and aesthetic logic between the two types of music. While this description, borrowed again from the UNESCO dossier, accurately assesses Bahian samba, I would like to add just a few details. Firstly, in the move from tonic to dominant, harmonies often pass through the subdominant or (less commonly) the supertonic.⁵⁴ In informal settings, such as the reza, the use of harmonic intervals is largely absent. As such, the melodies heard at rezas are rarely anything but unison lines, though if *intentional* harmonizing occurs—usually sporadically—it is in thirds or sixths. These harmonic intervals tend not to operate in parallel motion; they are sung on sustained notes that initiate or end phrases. Furthermore, the emphasis on text *over* pitch means that though “correct” pitches exist and the vocalization of these is regarded as “beautiful,” even culturally uncharacteristic intervals such as seconds or tritones go uncommented (though probably not unperceived).

Singing matters. A cantiga is defined by its text, while its rhythm—what is danced and clapped—is established by how that text is sung. As the sambinha at rezas is generally quite spontaneous, a participant will sing alone a strophe or part of a strophe before anyone claps a beat. Each person individually accompanies as s/he recognizes *which* cantiga it is, what the pitches are (this time), and what the rhythm is (this time). Depending on a number of factors, such as how shared the repertory is, how excited the congregation is, and how musically apt the

⁵⁴ These harmonies are often made explicit on the plucked guitars, whether the cavaquinho, the guitar, or the viola. Remarkably, this I-IV-V7 movement is in fact a widely shared throughout African-American musics (e.g., U.S. blues, Brazilian samba, Mexican *son jarocho*, etc.), thus suggesting a particular pan-African or diasporic preference for these harmonic structures.

participants are, this process of hearing-recognizing-joining may be nearly instantaneous, may take a whole strophe or more, or may never occur at all. Samba singing is furthermore necessary to establish another aspect of the samba: for whom it is being performed and to whom it belongs. Therefore, I will now turn to samba “ownership” (*pertencimento*).

8. Samba “Ownership”: Caboclos, Saints, and People

Lyrics indicate who “owns” the samba (*o dono do samba*), to whom the samba pertains. Put otherwise, the text evidences whose “fun” the samba is. As I will later explain, samba largely serves the purpose of “making happy” (*alegrar*) and the texts of a given cantiga explicitly offer insight into who is being made happy. Regardless of who is performing, any given samba “belongs” to one of three categories of entities: Caboclos, saints, and human beings. No explicit taxonomy to describe the categories exists, presumably because the lyrics make this so clear. Therefore, the terms I will use are “Caboclos’ samba,” belonging to and addressing Caboclos, “saints’ samba,” which celebrates saints, and “our samba,” which pertains to humans.

CABOCLOS’ SAMBA: O SAMBA DE CABOCLO

The Caboclos’ samba (*samba de caboclo*) is the easiest to characterize for it refers to the samba that is usually sung by the Caboclo deities themselves. When a Caboclo manifests itself in its medium during a reza, it identifies itself through what Brazeal (2003) calls “songs of arrival.” These allow the Caboclo to describe who s/he is and from where s/he has come. Caboclos may also sing *their sambas* about characteristics and personality attributes. While each subsequent samba will be identified in accordance with the content of the text, the umbrella term for cantigas sung by Caboclos (or directly for them) is “samba-de-caboclo,” the Caboclos’ samba. These are designed primarily for the Caboclos to enjoy themselves. Although many of the cantigas

Caboclos sing are well known by reza participants, the Caboclo entities frequently introduce new cantigas during the course of a reza. For the similar Candomblé context, Garcia (2008) notes that when a Caboclo performs new sambas, it is considered as a “delivery” rather than a “composition.” After all, Caboclos’ sambas are “cantigas that are brought from Aruanda by these entities. . . . For the Caboclos, according to adepts, Aruanda is a distant land, a promised land, a place where they probably all live” (Garcia 2008: 118). In this way, Caboclos are less like composers than messengers, bringing new sambas to the human populations. Therefore, while these sambas are “owned” by Caboclos, once they enter the repertory, humans can freely perform them even if the given Caboclo is absent.

SAINTS’ SAMBA: O SAMBA DO SANTO

The next content category, sambas about/for Catholic saints, is something Marques (2003: 90) claims is called “samba de axé” (lit. *axé* samba) or “samba-de-preceito” (lit. obligatory samba). However, although at least one reza host confirmed for me these designations, I have never heard them employed in practice. Instead, this samba is usually discursively discussed according to the specific saint, thus people will specify: “St. Roch’s samba” (*samba de São Roque*) or “St. Cosmas’ samba” (*samba de São Cosme*), and the like. Thus, translating a generalizing term, I call this the “saints’ samba” (*samba do santo*). These cantigas follows the novena and contemplate the given saint; they playfully celebrate the saint by way of his/her attributes, presence, activity, or ability. Sometimes a cantiga about a Caboclo or other god (such as an Orixá who shares a syncretic relationship with the saint) will be incorporated into the saints’ samba. People often insist that when performing a saint’s samba,

one is supposed to perform at least three sambas before stopping. However, this is hardly a requirement.⁵⁵

It is worth mentioning that typically during the saints' samba, performances occur before the altar. But more than simply in the presence of the saint (via her/his image on the altar), the samba ring spatially includes her/him. Precisely, the samba ring leaves a gap—where a human participant might normally stand—at the point of the altar, treating the saint as if s/he were but another participant in the samba ring. Like a Caboclo or human attendee, the saint quite literally partakes in the merriment of “her/his” samba. True, images of saints are never removed from the altar in order to dance, as is the case, for example, in domestic saint festivities that occur in other parts of Brazil (see Brandão 1981).⁵⁶ But at rezas, as part of the choreography of the samba dancer who enters the ring to samba, s/he often “salutes” the saint by facing the altar and making the Sign of the Holy Cross and sometimes by bowing (Fig. 4.3). In this way the saints' samba is more than just a samba *in the saint's honor*; it is a samba in which the saint *symbolically* participates (see also Ch. 1).⁵⁷

Distinct from the Caboclos' samba, which is nearly always performed by the Caboclo, the saints' samba is performed not by the saints, but by human devotees. Furthermore, unlike the Caboclos' sambas, which come from Aruanda, the saints' sambas tend simply to exist. Indeed, saints' sambas are not believed to come from the Heavens or even from the saints themselves.

⁵⁵ Marques offers corroboration: “There does not exist a definite number of sambas for the occasion but it should be conducted by singing a minimum of 3 and should proceed in a sequence of multiples of 7, 14, or 21 sambas without repeating any. This does not seem to be a rule and, invariably, one observes the breaking of the pattern” (Marques 2003: 90).

⁵⁶ Carlos Brandão (1981: 67) depicts an interesting scene at a Dance for St. Gonçalo in the Central-Southern region of Brazil: “The devout dancers walk to the altar. They cover their hands with a handkerchief and take the saints, images of dance partners for a few moments: a man wraps a St. Gonçalo in his handkerchief, two others do the same with two other images. There is still another image left and a young man grabs it. Some images are wrapped in small colored ribbons that had been left by previous devotees, after having ‘danced with the saint.’”

⁵⁷ Once, during a reza for St. Roch, I asked the participants if St. Roch was present. My apparently laughable question received a response that made me feel as if my inquiry was in fact ridiculous: “No, of course not. Do you see him?”

When asked about the provenance of these sambas, devotees tend to answer that they have “always been around.” These cantigas have no recognized composers and if someone sings a samba with which other participants are unfamiliar, people are generally excited to learn the samba that “has always existed” but that they had simply never heard before. In other words, the person who introduces the “new” cantiga is viewed not as a “composer” but, like the Caboclo, as something of a messenger. Thus in practice, the saint “owns” any samba—new or old—that is performed for him/her, for the cantiga’s human composer is unknown (or unimportant) and its contents pertain to the Christian martyr.



Fig. 4.3. A participant saluting St. Anthony. The Sign of the Holy Cross is made during this samba for St. Anthony, on June 12, 2011. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

“OUR SAMBA”: O SAMBA DA GENTE

The third category of samba is often simply called samba. Yet it is implicitly different from the other two classes of samba. As Dona Maria has repeatedly told me, this is “our samba” (*samba da gente*), in which “our” vaguely refers to the specific family, neighborhood, or group of people performing it. It is for “us” to enjoy. Dona Maria has also explained this to me as

“typical samba” (*samba normal*). This is the only type of samba usually identified in academic literature. A samba-de-roda ensemble is often employed for the performance of “our samba.” It is ostensibly ludic and playful, with lyrics about amorous relationships, funny incidences, livestock, the city, etc. This is also the samba that people tend to enjoy most. After all, unlike the Caboclos’ or the saints’ samba, “our samba” belongs to the humans and serves the purpose of entertaining and making happy the human beings at the reza. It is perhaps for this reason that it is this category of samba that lasts longer than either of the other two. Unlike the Caboclos’ and the saints’ sambas, original compositions often figure into the performance of the “humans’ samba.” Indeed, the repertory contains sambas of the public domain (whose composers are unknown), improvised sambas, and original compositions. However, when people perform their own compositions or those of others, little regard tends to be given to the origins of the compositions. This underscores my assertion that “ownership” is primarily attributed to categories of entity (Caboclo, saint, human) rather than individuals. Thus, independent of who composed a given samba, it is “our samba,” so it belong to humans *in general*, not necessarily to a specific individual, unless the text makes this explicit.⁵⁸ Consequently, the repertory circulates quite freely.

One final point must be made regarding “our samba.” The samba that is produced by humans for humans is explicitly secular: texts treat quotidian human themes, the saint (via an altar or channeled through a human medium) is often nowhere in sight, and the atmosphere— with freely flowing beer and liqueur (*licor*), sexually charged innuendos, and profane

⁵⁸ As far as I am aware, recording royalties and issues of copyright have yet to appear among sambadores and sambadeiras in the Recôncavo. And indeed, some individuals emphasize the importance of recognizing samba composers more than others. As the production of artistic material (CDs, DVDs, etc.) increases, it will be interesting to see if concepts of intellectual property change. I can think of at least one samba that makes explicit reference to the name of the group in which the samba’s composer participates. In cases such as these, it would be highly unlikely to hear another group perform the same samba. However, if a different group were to use the same basic text and melody, changing only the group’s name, it would likely be regarded as a new composition and not plagiarism for the reasons I have already discussed.

conversations—hardly seems sacred at all (according to both insiders and outsiders alike). But implicitly, this “human” samba is surely sacred, and is as much a part of the worship of Catholic saints as the other types of samba. These large parties, people feel, are encouraged and condoned by the saints themselves. Dona Sinhá, a devotee of St. Anthony whose reza is pictured in Fig. 4.3, explained this reasoning to me quite clearly: “What St. Anthony likes is parties. He likes dance; he likes samba.”⁵⁹ She further emphasized that similarly, other martyrs such as St. Roch, Sts. Cosmas and Damian, and St. Barbara—all of whom commonly receive rezas throughout the Recôncavo—also favor lavish fests (see Ch. 1). Thus samba—whether employing lyrics about the saints or not—thrills these Christian martyrs. “Our samba” may not *belong* to the saints, as the saints’ samba does, but it is an integral facet of the saint’s celebration.

I offer a further reminder that the “profane” social interaction that ensues after the more explicitly sacred samba is all due to the saint, something not generally forgotten by the guests. Sometimes hosts will privately sing a “good-bye” samba for the saint (see Party Interlude 1, pp. 55-61) well after the “human” samba has begun. This is meant to wish the saint farewell until the following year, while also remembering that the night’s events were in the name of the saint. In his oral history project on devotional activity in the Recôncavo, Elivaldo Souza de Jesus interpreted people’s recollections in a similar way:

To samba and to have fun did not externalize, in their eyes, mundane, non-religious attitudes, as they would likely be understood outside of this [reza] context. Rather, they were attitudes that configured a religious extension of the act of praying. Certainly, the dance and the ring games [*brinquedos de roda*] were understood as sanctified activities, comprising a ritual part of the payment of the debt owed to the saint or the continued devotion. (Jesus 2006: 51)

⁵⁹ Interview conducted with Dona Sinhá at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on July 20, 2011.

Largely due to this form of reasoning, people in the 21st century often longingly remember “the old days,” when their elders had “so much faith” that they “would samba until dawn.”⁶⁰ It can thus be surmised that “our samba” is as much a part of the devotion as the novena or the other explicitly sacred sambas, especially given its widespread practice; it is a “logical” part of Bahian Catholic saint celebrations. This further obfuscates the problematic Durkheimian sacred/profane binary, revealing how the sacred world (humans’ samba context) is not quite so separate from the mundane (humans’ samba content). In other words, “our samba” illustrates that a mundane song about a lovesick sailor might serve just as sacred a purpose as a song about St. Roch.

It is important to note that at the majority of rezas, the only type of samba to occur is that of the saints. When the reza is thought of as a party, rather than *just* a “devotion,” the humans’ samba generally occurs. And it is only when a family member has a Caboclo—something that appears to be increasingly rare in the 21st century—do people perform the Caboclos’ samba. Generally speaking, the saints’ samba is first. If there are Caboclos, the Caboclos’ samba follows. Finally, if the party is intended to continue, the humans’ samba (our samba) is performed until the participants decide to stop. This order is significantly different for rezas realized in honor of Sts. Cosmas and Damian (see Ch. 1). If the event does not include a novena portion, it ends with the children’s feast.

9. Samba Modalities: Performance and Style

Although samba taxonomies are imprecise regarding text content and rhythms, they are very rich in describing performance style. This probably because text content is largely self-explanatory and underlying rhythmic pulses/time-lines are communicated in the melodies. *How* these melodic texts are performed, however, is entirely open to debate. While trying to discover

⁶⁰ I discussed this with many different people more than once, but one informal conversation with Seu Manuel at his home in a rural district of São Félix on July 15, 2009, really made this sentiment clear to me.

how people differentiate between rhythms, I once asked Dona Maria what she would tell someone who played the “wrong rhythm.” She thought for a moment: “We might say something like, ‘Hey! Play more violently!’”⁶¹ Though I was in fact inquiring about what would happen upon playing the wrong pulse accents, Dona Maria quite naturally assumed I was talking about *how* the hypothetical rhythm was being performed. After all, I would later realize, everyone is already supposed to know the rhythm. In much the same way, the primary complaint people have about others’ playing relates to tempo. I remember once hearing someone complain about some overly slow samba: “You can’t play so *amarrado* [bound]!” The value performers place on performance styles has led to the development of a rich metaphoric vocabulary by which to distinguish ways of playing.

The metaphors are largely derived from the *way* in which a particular modality of samba is performed. In the above example, for instance, the term “amarrado” (bound) is used to imply a slow-tempo samba, whereas a “corrido” (run) is a fast and animated modality of samba. Still, other denominations are a result of geographical provenance. Ethnomusicologist Cássio Nobre compiled an illustrative list of some of the many modalities of samba found in the Bahian Recôncavo:

“[S]amba chula,” or “samba de chula,” or “samba chulado,” the “samba de viola,” the “samba corrido,” the “samba amarrado,” the “barravento,” the “samba de partido alto,” the “samba de parada,” the “samba santa-amarense,” the “samba batido,” the “samba valentão,” or “samba de rojão,” the “samba parelhado,” the “samba de leva,” the “samba de prato,” “samba de lata,” “samba de caboclo.” (Nobre 2008: 118)

I have come into contact with only a few of these. This is because these terms, which primarily reference tempo and performance, are often restricted to regions or localities.

⁶¹ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, on May 31, 2011.

In the Cachoeira region—as opposed to, say, the Santo Amaro region—there are two broad categories of samba: *corrido* and *barravento*.⁶² Zamith (1995:62) explains that “[t]he Corrido possesses a more accelerated tempo and the sambas are linked in a succession, establishing an intense dialogue between the soloist and the chorus. In the Barravento, in addition to a slower tempo, an instrumental part is played between the sambas.”⁶³ In other words, the two aspects that distinguish a *samba-corrido* [run samba] from a *samba-barravento*⁶⁴ are the tempo and the way in which the verses are sung.⁶⁵ Mário dos Santos, a samba composer and president of the group Filhos de Nagô, explained to me, “In the barravento, because the rhythm is slower, the instruments can work.” Conversely, the samba-corrido tempo is generally too fast to play intricate solo lines. At the most basic level, the difference in tempo means the samba-corrido is danced at a faster tempo than the samba-barravento.⁶⁶

Fitting within these two broad taxonomies of fast (*corrido*) and slow (*barravento*) sambas are a number of other less clearly defined more variable categories of samba. In the Cachoeira

⁶² In the Santo Amaro region, the typical denomination for the slower samba is “samba chula.” For more regarding this style, see Sandroni and Sant’Anna (2006: 34-35).

⁶³ In the *samba-corrido*, the singing is continuous, whereas in the *samba-barravento*, the “soloist” will sing a strophe, the chorus will respond with the refrain, and there will be an extended interlude before the soloist enters again with the next strophe.

⁶⁴ There is no clear translation for “barravento,” and the term exists only in the Afro-Brazilian cultural sphere, particularly in Candomblé contexts (see Döring 2004: 88; Garcia 1996: 109; Nobre 2008: 211-212).

⁶⁵ In the *corrido*, as the name suggests, things are “running,” or fast, while the *barravento* is performed at a slower tempo. Furthermore, *corridos*, as Zamith notes, place more emphasis on the call and response vocal lines. As such, in a *samba-corrido* the verse is followed by the refrain, which is in turn immediately followed again by a verse. This repeated back-and-forth “dialogue” continues until the samba has ended. Given this formula, instrumental (i.e., chordophone) accompaniment is not a necessity. A *barravento*, on the other hand, includes instrumental interludes after each call-and-response stanza. These interludes are usually performed in single note melodic lines by the *cavaquinho* alternating with the *viola*, while different percussion instruments, the *timbal* in particular, “*requebram*” (jam). The instruments (both chordophones and percussion) play a variety of improvised rhythms consisting of 8th and 16th notes, and triplets. The “solo lines” of the chordophones principally play chord tones (I-V7), though always with a strong emphasis on the scale’s sixth degree. Samba-de-roda groups in Cachoeira and São Félix always play in the key of G. The groups take great care in using electronic tuners to make sure the *viola*, *cavaquinho*, and guitar are all tuned accurately according to their tuners. Therefore, the scales they play are diatonic scales in the Ionian mode of G.

⁶⁶ In a fascinating analysis, Francisca Marques (2008) explains how these different tempos are inherently linked to particular emotional states: “[I]t is clear that the samba *corrido* . . . causes a more physical pleasure (sweat and collective samba) while *barravento* samba dancing brings an aesthetic pleasure to the watching public, and an internal pleasure, even meditative, for the person samba dancing” (pp. 139-140).

region, a samba-corrido can often also be referred to as a *samba-sacudido* (shaken samba), just as a samba-barravento is often called a *samba-parada* (stopped samba). Mário dos Santos once told me that there are at least four types of barravento: *ligeiro* (quick), *amarrado* (bound), *cadenciado* (rhythmic), and *versado* (versed).

So how do these modalities of samba fit into *rezas*? As already discussed, in terms of “ownership,” there are three types of samba: of Caboclos, of saints, and of humans. Saints’ sambas are nearly always performed as corridos. Remember, when people perform saints’ sambas, they typically do so without instrumental accompaniment, using only their voices, handclaps, and foot scuttling to generate the aural atmosphere. And when there is instrumental accompaniment it seems always restricted to percussion.⁶⁷ The singing of these sambas is continuous, free of instrumental interludes, and is quite fast. After a few repetitions of the short strophes, someone will begin a different samba unannounced and people will follow along to the new samba. The result is a continuous chain of short sambas-corrido that can last anywhere from a several minutes to twenty.

Often the saints’ samba is used as a way of transitioning into the Caboclos’ samba. In other words, the saints’ samba often calls the Caboclos, who will thus sing their own sambas. And this samba is performed at a markedly fast tempo, perhaps to encourage possession.⁶⁸ The Caboclos’ samba is very much regarded as its own modality (*sambas-de-caboclo*), but it is not unlike the samba-corrido in terms of speed and strophic repetition. Caboclo dancing is generally very fast and can even be erratic. In almost all cases, percussion instruments accompany the Caboclos’ samba. When plucked string instruments play along with the Caboclos’ singing, they

⁶⁷ The term “always” is dangerous when discussing *rezas*. However, I use the term to emphasize that even at events where people had and knew how to play chordophones, only percussion was used for the saints’ samba.

⁶⁸ I once heard someone complain to the musicians performing the saints’ samba in order to *prepare* for the arrival of the *caboclos* that the music was too slow: “it needs to be hotter!” (*precisa esquentar mais!*)

tend to follow the sung melodic line heterophonically with the Caboclo. Sometimes the Caboclo(s) will choose to dance instead of sing, and the chordal instruments are thus responsible for sounding the melodic line. Unlike the saints' samba, in which sambas are sung by whoever wishes to sing in a continuous sequence with little to no break between each samba, the Caboclos' samba is entirely dependent on the Caboclo entity. Occasionally, if the Caboclo takes what some consider too long a break before singing another samba, participants will help intone additional sambas in order to keep the Caboclo dancing. If more than one Caboclo manifests during the festivities, they switch off amongst each other, allowing newly arrived Caboclos announce their presence. The Caboclos' samba can continue for an hour or more.

“Our samba,” which is nearly always played by a samba-de-roda group or ad-hoc group of seasoned musicians, is quite different. For this samba, there is usually a full range of accompanying instruments, and thus they have the option to play all classes of samba (belonging to any of the three groups) as both barraventos and corridos. And they do. Typically they begin with corridos for the saint before slowing it down for barraventos, but the samba-de-roda group may also accompany the Caboclos' samba. Generally speaking, barraventos are more common than corridos during the humans' samba. However, this is not a rule. The humans' samba can go on for hours (even until daybreak) and thus the musicians are free to pick and choose their sambas.

10. Samba as Emotion: Hearing Happiness in the Recôncavo

I now discuss what I believe is the most important part of understanding *what samba is*. As I have shown, samba can be performed slow or fast (with or without instruments), as well as danced in a variety of ways (ranging from marching and short steps to no movement at all) with at least three distinct rhythms, sung in harmony or not (by humans or Caboclos), in large or small

groups, contexts of the sacred and entirely profane, and deal with texts ranging from gods to goats. Furthermore, samba can be defined as a genre, an event, or a self-contained cantiga. So how to comprehend the embrace of such a variety of musical occasions and experiences under a single designation? *Why is this all samba?* There no doubt exists some performative constants: (1) **Singing**. Without song it is impossible to have samba (in the reza context at least). If people do not know what to sing, the activity stops—there are no instrumental sambas. (2) **Rhythm**. All of these different sambas share rhythmic commonalities—duple meters, fixed tempos (i.e., no cadenzas), rhythmic patterns organized in 16-pulse repetitions. (3) **Handclaps**. These rhythms are nearly always expressed through handclaps. While all of these aspects contribute to why samba practitioners classify this variety of musical activity as samba, the concept of “samba” goes beyond the sounds themselves. These performative components work in conjunction to communicate a singular emotion: happiness. *Samba is happiness*. To perform samba, regardless of whether it is fast or slow, marched or not, played on expensive musical instruments or plastic buckets, one needs to be happy. This is because happiness is embodied in samba. I explain by example.

SAMBA AND HAPPINESS: REZA FOR ST. ROCH

My second visit to the Vieira dos Santos family’s reza for St. Roch (see Ch. 7) was on August 16, 2010. Upon my arrival I was informed there would be *no* samba due to the recent passing of a close relative. “After all,” the family emphasized, “our uncle has died. We can’t have samba.” One might therefore imagine my surprise when, immediately following the *novena*, the family members began gleefully clapping, dancing, and singing sambas for St. Roch and Sts. Cosmas and Damian, as they do each year. It had been made explicit to me that there would be no samba, yet they performed sambas for these saints. How can this be explained?

The polysemy of the term “samba” no doubt lends itself to confusion. First of all, when they explained to me that there would be no “samba,” they were partially referring to the *event*. There would be no large samba event; there would be no “humans’ samba.” But there was a deeper meaning. If samba is synonymous with happiness, as I am insisting it is, the phrase “we can’t have *samba*” could be converted to “we can’t have *happiness*.” This reveals as much about samba as it does about the practitioners’ worldview. In other words, death is not—as João Reis (2003 [1991]) would have it—a festival.⁶⁹ As is the case in many cultures of the world, death is a moment of sadness for Bahians. In Bahia, however, this sentiment can be *ritually expressed* through the silencing of samba. If people do not samba it means they are not happy, just as if people are not happy they will not samba. This abstention from samba is the result of what most people explain as “sentiment” (*sentimento*). One afternoon, in a discussion about samba and death, Seu Manuel recalled to me incredulously: “I’ve heard there are places where they play samba when people die!” Seu Manuel’s friend, also involved in the conversation, chimed in with a sly smile: “And they cry when people are born!” The ironic comment was meant to suggest something of a “bizzaro world,” in which people “cry” (embody sadness) when they *should* be happy and “perform samba” (embody happiness) when they *should* be sad.

This samba-happiness equivalence explains why there was no “humans’ samba” at the 2010 reza for St. Roch. But why was there samba for the saints? To understand this, it is important to once again substitute “samba” with “happiness,” since samba *is* happiness. At their reza for St. Roch, the Vieira dos Santos family typically performs two categories of “samba,” two categories of “happiness”: the saint’s *happiness* and the human *happiness*. In 2010, due to the death of their uncle, the family canceled their “human happiness.” But mortal death need not

⁶⁹ While death is the primary reason to abstain from samba, debilitating illnesses can also lead to the decision to eliminate samba from the reza.

hinder the *saint's* happiness. After all, the reza itself is a celebration of the saint's life, and it is thus possible to see why the saint's samba, unlike the human samba, is *not* dependent on human happiness. In other words, there was no good reason to deprive St. Roch of *his* happiness. On another occasion, after having performed St. Anthony's samba, a reza host exclaimed triumphantly, "We've finished making the saint happy!" Performing a saint's samba makes him/her happy because the samba is an *expression* his/her happiness.

When people assert, "there will be no samba," they typically mean to suggest there will be no big samba *event* (with samba-de-roda, loud music, drinking, and dancing). However, the saint's samba will probably still be performed. After all, there are few reasons to deny a saint his/her happiness on his/her special day. In some cases, however, even the saint's samba is removed from a reza if the sadness is deemed overwhelming. In other words, if a family member's death has occurred near the date of the reza, if the deceased family member was especially close, or if the death was unexpected, the saint's samba might also be suspended out of respect (i.e., *sentimento*). The entire reza might even be canceled if the situation calls for it. These decisions largely depend on the degree of a given family's "sentiment." But canceling samba due to sadness is hardly optional. That is, it is quite *logical* that a lack of happiness should result in a lack of samba. Happiness is as much a part of samba as is singing or clapping. Just as one cannot play soccer without a ball, samba cannot be performed without happiness.

Samba does not just *represent* happiness, however. It also *creates* it. I once asked Dona Maria if samba was a necessity at a reza. "No. Whoever wants to do it can. For those who want only to do that devotion of praying and end it with that, that's fine. Now those who want to have that influence . . . have more happiness, that person's cheer, then you have that samba. It's just

another joy, another happiness we can have.”⁷⁰ The term “influence” was as confusing to me in Portuguese as it appears here in English. But I have left it literally translated because it is so powerful. The infectious air suggested in the term “influence” implies that the performance of samba does more than simply express happiness; samba also creates and fosters it. People perform samba because they are happy and they make themselves and others *happier* through its performance. In this way, samba is a musical “emotive”;⁷¹ its performance—“utterance”—has a two-way property of being capable of referring to and affecting the “emotional object” (see Wolf 2001).⁷² Samba so powerfully indexes *happiness* that its performance in the wake of a tragedy would be insensitive and inappropriate. This is more than simply a case of the aural expression of sentiment. Like the contagiousness of laughter, samba “influences” happiness because it *is happiness*. Samba is the sentiment itself. And indeed, this extends beyond the domestic reza context.

SAMBA AND HAPPINESS: FESTIVAL OF OUR LADY OF GOOD DEATH

Every year, from the 13th of August to the 15th, the Afro-Brazilian Sisterhood of Our Lady of Good Death (*Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte*) celebrates the Virgin Mary’s “Good Death” (i.e., ascension to Heaven) with a three-day sequence of processions and public banquets. One of the most exciting aspects—from the viewpoint of many of the Sisterhood’s

⁷⁰ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on May 20, 2011.

⁷¹ The term “emotive,” in its original usage by Reddy, was a *statement* that expresses emotion. It is a statement “in which the statement’s referent changes by virtue of the statement” (Reddy 1997: 331). The author further suggests that “[e]motives are themselves instruments for directly changing, building, hiding, intensifying emotions” (Ibid.).

⁷² In a powerful argument, Wolf (2001) suggests that the ritual funerary music of South Indian Kotas communicates different emotions at specific moments in the performance, such that the sound constructs an “emotional contour” and a variety he feels is best described as “emotional texture.” Wolf notes that “at least three layers of musical meaning are engaged in dynamic interaction: 1) music as an announcement, or label, for . . . an emotional state; 2) music as an active constituent of the emotional texture of a ceremony as it unfolds; 3) music as directly affecting the feelings of the ritual participants” (p. 382). In other words, the performance of a socially coded sound can index emotion, contribute to the general shape of the ceremony, and affect sentiment in the participants.

members—is the samba which marks the event’s finale on August 15.⁷³ The samba is divided up into a public samba (on a stage), which is run by city officials, and a more private samba, which is performed in the Sisterhood’s “headquarters” (*sede*) and is controlled by the sisters themselves.⁷⁴ When I attended the event in 2007, there was no samba at the Sisterhood’s headquarters; yet in 2008, the samba at the headquarters continued for hours. What had changed from one year to the next? I asked one of the sisters if I had simply missed it the previous year. “No,” she explained. “There was no samba last year. A.C.M. passed away and we couldn’t samba—you know, he was very important to us.”

A.C.M., Antonio Carlos Magalhães, remains one of the most polemical politicians in Bahia’s history. Often associated with the Machiavellian sentiment embodied in the phrase, “He steals, but he gets things done” (*rouba mas faz*), Magalhães was a central figure in developing the cultural tourism that continues to entice and attract tourists to Bahia from all over the world. To this end, starting in the 1970s, Antonio Carlos Magalhães became one of the most important public figures to aide in the revitalization and “turistization” of the all-but-defunct Festival of Good Death.⁷⁵ The news of the populist politician’s death on July 20, 2007, was met with unapologetic cheers from his political opponents and sobs of lament from his throngs of supporters, which included the members of the Sisterhood of Good Death. After all, Magalhães

⁷³ On the topic of the Irmandade da Boa Morte, see A. Castro (2006), Lody (1981), Marques (2008), and Nascimento (1999).

⁷⁴ Armando Castro (2006) explains that “[t]he order and the respect in the Sisterhood’s samba-de-roda are monitored by the sisters. From a simple glance to the accompanying, side by side, of the most frenetic person. In some cases, they utilize the microphone of the musicians and singers to make necessary observations” (p. 79). Meanwhile, “On the streets beyond the reach of the sisters, the samba occurs in its many stylistic facets. Organized and conducted spontaneously by the populous, these songs range from samba-de-roda to more modern and audacious sambas such as those of the Bahian group *É o Tchan*, *Pagod’Art*, *Harmonia do Samba*, among others” (p. 81).

⁷⁵ Antonio Carlos Magalhães “leveraged for the Sisterhood of Good Death a sequence of direct and indirect agreements and benefits. . . . His intervention, in a direct way and exclusive to the Good Death, resulted in the reform of the headquarters in 1995 The second episode, in 2001, . . . [a]ssured the Sisterhood of Good Death that the Bahia state government, by way of an annual agreement, would begin to financial support the festivities of the Good Death and the maintenance of its headquarters and memorial” (A. Castro 2006: 123).

was, in the words of the late Dona Estelita, “a friend of the Good Death” (Castro 2006: 124).⁷⁶ Consequently, the politician’s death was reason for sadness. And happiness is necessary for samba. When I first attended the festivities of the Sisterhood of Good Death in 2007, then, I did not see the Sisterhood’s samba because they had silenced it in order to communicate the sadness they felt in the wake of their close friend’s passing.

A death generally requires a year of waiting—for some this means a calendar year, for others it is a 12-month period—before one can commence holding a samba. Therefore even if a person has fully grieved, if the year has not passed, s/he will refrain from *hosting* a samba. The person may samba at others’ homes, but one’s own family’s *reza cannot* have a samba. In this sense, the unhappiness is less related to *individual* sadness than a more generalized “family sadness.” Samba *shows* others how happy one is and thus by choosing not to samba, one demonstrates her/his *sentiment* by respecting her/his recently deceased—or very ill—relative or close family friend.

SAMBA AND HAPPINESS: CHOOSING A REPERTOIRE

Samba is happiness in non-religious contexts as well. Ferrolho, a samba musician who sings, plays the viola, and leads a samba group, described to me how happiness figures into the decisions he makes concerning his samba group’s performance repertoire. Ferrolho told me that his favorite style of samba is the slow *barravento*. This, he insisted, was the most “beautiful” samba style. Beyond aesthetics, the slow tempo of *barravento* allows ample space for instrumental interludes, during which time Ferrolho, as a viola player, could display his technical prowess. Despite this preference, during performances at bars or on publicly funded stages, Ferrolho liked to play sambas in the faster *corrido* style. Interestingly, the musician’s penchant

⁷⁶ Dona Estelita passed away on August 5, 2012, at 105 years old.

for fast corrido over slow barravento sambas was rooted in a basic assumption about emotion and tempo. Ferrolho didactically explained to me that corridos are faster and are thus more “influential in the happiness.” In other words, Ferrolho felt that corridos made people happier. And the job of samba, whether at a bar, on a government-sponsored public stage, or a private devotion, is to express *and* create happiness. In Bahia, samba *is* happiness, *regardless of context or occasion*. Understanding this further emotional element helps to explain why three different rhythms, with different choreographies, and different melodic content can all *logically* be denominated “samba.” First and foremost, *samba is musical happiness*. The emotional content is the primary mode of categorization.

11. Towards an Ethnomusicology of Emotion

Ethnomusicology has long been involved in the exploration of the relationship between sound and sentiment, though this has only infrequently taken the form of a cogent approach to affectivity and music. John Blacking was perhaps one of the most thoughtful ethnomusicologists to take an early interest in emotion. In an extended meditation of the significance of cultural context to “feeling” music, Blacking concludes that music is not universally communicative “but it is useful and effective only when it is heard by the prepared and receptive ears of people who have shared, or can share in some way, the cultural and individual experiences of its creators” (Blacking 1973: 54). Blacking’s point was that music only successfully evokes emotions when people are already culturally “programmed” for a given reaction. But for the author, music’s *communicativeness* was limited to “a metaphorical expression of feelings” (p. 104).

Yet this is something of a contradiction. After all, how can *all* members of a culture feel a given set of emotions if the music is only metaphorical or abstract? In something of a revision to Blacking’s argument, Turino (1999, 2008) convincingly argues that music might in fact derive

its affectivity precisely *from its referentiality*.⁷⁷ “[I]ndexical communication,” Turino (1999: 235) asserts, “is most prominent in intimate groups such as married couples, families, close friends, and further down the continuum, in small close-knit communities or neighborhoods.” In this sense, samba *creates* happiness by appealing to the past experiences of participants, whether they are singing, dancing, or clapping. The interest in understanding the affectivity of music (i.e., how sound evokes emotion) is perhaps the most common approach to an “ethnomusicology of emotion.”⁷⁸ These scholars have tended to address how people react to music, how they interact with it, and how they utilize it. This perspective takes the human and his/her emotions as the primary point of analytical departure.

Less commonly treated in ethnomusicological literature is the value of emotion as a defining parameter of musical genre, understanding emotion as part of taxonomy. As I have repeatedly emphasized, as a *genre of music*, samba is constituted by at least three different rhythms, any type of performance ensemble or instrumentation, various tempos, a diversity of subject matter, and can be sung by gods or humans. But samba only happens if there is happiness. In other words, emotion can be an *a priori* component of the musical genre. In a related way, Amy Catlin-Jairazbhoy (2004: 264) observes that for the devotional music of the Khoja Muslims, “the added element of physical embodiment of *religious emotion* . . . is crucial to the *identity* of git” (emphasis added). Git is *identified* by way of embodied emotion. The most common examples, however, come not from music per se, but from “natural”—and seemingly universal—human sounds. Arguably, specific emotions are in fact requisites for common human

⁷⁷ In Turino’s (1999: 235) words, “Of key significance to a theory of musical affectivity, indices continually take on new layers of meaning while potentially also carrying along former associations—a kind of *semantic snowballing*.”

⁷⁸ See, for instance, Becker (2004), Berger (1999), Gray (2007), Racy (2003), Shannon (2003), among many others. Perhaps the most fruitful area of ethnomusicology treating the affectivity of sound is in research in music of the Arab world, particularly regarding *tarab*.

aural expressions such as laughter or crying.⁷⁹ In other words, sentiment is *necessary* in the production of particular sounds, sounds (and *only those*) which become aural cues for specific feelings. Indeed, this can even lead to semantic confusion in quotidian interaction. For instance, because crying acts as an aural icon of the crier's sadness, one might erroneously interpret "tears of joy" as sadness. *Sounds of sadness*, then, are only *categorically* so in accordance with the sadness that catalyzes the sound. Put differently, emotion can, in some cases, provide the primary means of classifying what is heard.

This issue relates to a larger set of ethnomusicological questions, which, presuming that sound codes sentiment, asks *which* sounds express *which* sentiments and *how* they do so. This is an ethnomusicology of emotion that *foregrounds sound as a means* of understanding emotion (and culture). In his study of Kaluli song, Steven Feld (1990 [1982]) notes that Kaluli songs are metaphorical representations of birds, which are in turn mytho-poetic representations of emotions. In other words, when the Kaluli listen to themselves, they hear birds, and these bird sounds aesthetically code sentiment. Similarly, Anthony Seeger calls attention to the emotions embodied in Suyá sounds and silence: "[A] shout indicated a successful hunt, the wailing of a mourner might indicate a death. . . . Silence was characteristic of anger, of lovers, and of witches. While noise was characteristic of the public, the collective, and the euphoric, silence was the mark of strong but socially disruptive emotions" (A. Seeger 2004 [1987]: 67).⁸⁰ Differences in poetics aside, both authors point to the fruitful possibility of *hearing* emotions in culture. In the same way, since samba so clearly communicates the general sentiment of "happiness," silence in

⁷⁹ Examining the cross-cultural treatment of the expression of emotion and the emotion itself, Richard Schechner (1986: 350), notes that "there are definite links between 'mechanical acting' and interior states of feeling; [and] that the causal chain can go in both directions: feeling can lead to stage action . . . and the practice of specific stage actions can cause feelings to occur in the actor."

⁸⁰ Silence likely communicates something in all cultures. I am reminded, for example, of the Western use of silence (i.e., pausing for a "moment of silence"), which often communicates respect.

the place of samba is a particularly powerful aural (and corporeal) expression of “sadness.” Thus while samba at a *reza* is happiness, its silencing is sadness.

Reviewing these examples from the literature, it is clear that there are different ways of conducting an ethnomusicology of emotion. Indeed, it seems to me that there are three distinct approaches, which are formulated around three clearly separate sets of inquiries. First is what might be called the “emotional human” approach, which looks primarily at how humans *relate* to sounds. These studies are guided by the following questions: *What emotional attachments do people have to music? How do they respond to music? What do they feel when they perform/listen?* The second might be called the “emotive genre” approach: *What emotions distinguish the genre? How are people supposed to feel when they listen and perform?* The third set of questions seems to trace a “sounded emotions” approach: *What do emotions sound like? How do people aurally identify another’s sentiments?*

12. Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter, I have attempted to conceptualize a basic definition of “samba” in the Bahian context by isolating the primary structural parameters that characterize those musical events designated as “samba.” The parameters I have focused on are the three aspects found in every samba performance: song (melody/text), rhythm (distinct pulses and time-lines), and emotion (happiness). I began by outlining briefly the etymological, rhythmic, and choreographic evidence that indicates samba’s Bantu origins. I then discussed two of the primary problems in the samba historiography: the secularization and the over-emphasis of the denomination “samba-de-roda.” Regarding the former, I explained that one of the objectives in this chapter was to elucidate what samba *sounds like* and *is* in sacred contexts. For the latter, I suggested that for inhabitants of the Recôncavo, samba-de-roda is often regarded as nothing more than a *way* of

performing a broader genre of Bahian samba. I then isolated various aspects of Bahian samba as it is performed at rezas. Finally, I emphasized how emotion can offer a tool in classifying what appear to be disparate manifestations with the same designation, “samba.” I turned to “happiness” to explain why “samba” designates a song sung by a Caboclo, an amplified samba-de-roda group, and a party at an individual’s house. Emotion provides an emic cultural category by which to classify and conceptualize diverse aural manifestations in a way that is inadequate for musical analysis alone. This chapter should not be taken as an assertion that Bahian people express happiness only through samba; happiness is expressed in a number of other ways, too. However, happiness is a necessary element in the production of samba and samba is always a clear index of that particular sentiment.

PARTY INTERLUDE FIVE
Dona Cilú and Sts. Cosmas and Damian
(Accompanied by PI_5a.mp3, PI_5b.mp3, PI_5c.mp3)

Saturday, September 17, 2011. Opalma, Bahia.

I had never met Dona Cilú, the woman at whose home the reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian was scheduled to take place, nor had I ever been to Opalma, where Dona Cilú lived. But to attend a reza, neither is a prerequisite. Opalma is a rural district of Cachoeira, and like most rural districts in the Recôncavo, it has electricity but is solely accessible by dirt road. While Opalma has no markets, schools, or hospitals, there is—I've been told—a small chapel being erected there. I learned of this reza from Neide, the manager of a samba-de-roda group called Sensação do Samba. Since the group had been hired to perform at the reza, I arranged to go to Opalma in the same van that had been contracted to transport the musicians. It was about 9pm when we finally arrived to the reza. Everything—the road, the house, the sky—was pitch-black. The incessant wind and rain that had been pummeling the area all day had succeeded in knocking out the power. By the time we reached Dona Cilú's home, the pre-dusk ritual children's banquet had already taken place. And had it not been for the blackout, we might have missed the novena too. As things were, however, at least two-dozen people were already there, waiting in the dark to start the reza.

The reza was to be held in a large room, built as an annex to Dona Cilú's home, which seemed to have been constructed for the solitary purpose of housing the family's elaborate altar. The blue room was bedecked with colorful paper streamers and its walls were adorned with saint iconography. There were a few plastic chairs for people to use, but mostly the guests just stood. Reaching nearly an hour of elapsed time, the room's collective impatience reached a tipping

point and it was decided that the power outage notwithstanding, the novena needed to be sung. Consequently, several extra candles were brought in and placed upon the altar.

The prayer leader, Dona Celeste, a friend and neighbor of Dona Cilú, stood before the altar as she led the novena. She conducted the liturgy entirely from memory. The domestic congregation of men, women, and children stood behind the prayer leader also facing the altar. Though the singing was almost entirely unison, I heard occasional harmonies in thirds sung somewhat haphazardly. Lit only by candlelight, the darkness clearly did not dissuade the enthusiasm of this improvised choir. Still, the eventual return of electricity was greeted with rousing applause. Indeed, directly following the hagiological “Bendito” for St. Cosmas, about 40 minutes into the liturgy, the power returned and the room radiated (PI_5a.mp3, 39:03).

The outburst of merriment apparently irritated prayer leader, who was too focused on her task to take note of the motive for the fuss. Turning to the congregation behind her, Dona Celeste reprimanded her disobedient choir: “The reza isn’t over! You shouldn’t all be cheering ‘Long live’ yet!” A woman standing next to the prayer leader leaned over, “It’s the power that came back on.” The cheers had yet to subside as Dona Celeste launched into the next prayer of the liturgy: “*Salve*—” Stopping abruptly, Dona Celeste quickly realized she had begun the wrong prayer. “Well that’s just great!” she said angrily, “You’ve broken my concentration! See?!” (PI_5a.mp3, 39:21). Waiting another minute or so, Dona Celeste, ignoring the few chatterers, began once again. By the time the novena reached its end, several dozen people occupied the large room.

After singing the final text, “Senhor Deus,” Dona Celeste recited a short prayer. “Praise be to Our Lord, Jesus Christ.” And the congregation responded in unison, “May He be praised always” (PI_5a.mp3, 53:48). After a brief pause for small talk, the prayer leader suggested the

next step: “Let’s sing a song for St. Cosmas and then the ‘Long live.’” So she began singing a song of praise and accompanying herself with handclaps. The entire congregation joined in

(PI_5a.mp3, 54:41):

<i>Ô viva São Cosme</i>	}	repeat
<i>Enfeitado de flor</i>		
<i>Até paro ano,</i>	}	repeat
<i>Até paro ano</i>		
<i>Até paro ano</i>	}	repeat
<i>Se nós viva for</i>		
<i>Ô viva São Cosme</i>	}	repeat
<i>É com muita alegria</i>		
<i>Ô viva São Cosme</i>	}	repeat
<i>São Damião (Roque)</i>		
<i>Ô viva Jesus</i>	}	repeat
<i>José e Maria¹</i>		

Dona Celeste then cheered: “Long live St. Cosmas!” This was followed by a big unison response, “Viva!” “Long live glorious Lord St. Roch!” “Viva!” “Long live all those present!” “Viva!” “And long live those who are absent!” “Viva!” The prayer leader then expressed her hope that everyone remain healthy and, if sick, be well.

Following this a capella singing was an extended break during which four percussionists assumed strategic positions at the front of the room with instruments in hand. The ad-hoc quartet comprised two pandeiros, a triangle, and a bass drum (*marcação*). I only recognized one of the musicians, who was a member of Sensação do Samba. As soon as the four percussionists were ready, Dona Celeste led the next part of the reza: the sung alms. A massive circle was formed in the middle of the room and the prayer leader, in song, solicited—one-by-one—alms from each participant. The samba she led, accompanied by the percussionists and the voices and handclaps of the whole room, was quite textually pertinent:

¹ Verse 1: “Oh long live St. Cosmas / Done up in flowers / Until next year / Until next year / Until next year / If we are still alive.” Verse 2: “Oh long live St. Cosmas / It’s with a lot of happiness / Oh long live St. Cosmas / St. Damian (Roch) / Oh long live Jesus / Joseph and Mary.”

Aonde vai São Cosme?
Aonde vai São Cosme?
Eu vou depressa assim
Vou colher dinheiro
Lá no meu jardim
Vou colher dinheiro
*Lá no meu jardim*² (PI_5b.mp3, 00:03)

Following this refrain's repetition were a variety of stanzas and although Dona Celeste had begun as the leader, anyone who wished to sing a stanza did so. In many cases, however, only the person doing the singing knew the lyrics. And because there were no microphones being used, few people could hear the lyrics well enough to learn them on the spot. Therefore, while the entire room sang the refrain, the stanzas, save a few, were generally solos. The handclaps and percussion continued throughout this four-minute samba performance.

Immediately afterward Dona Celeste led two other sambas for St. Cosmas, both of which were accompanied by the same four percussionists and an added button-accordion player. During this, many of the participants entered the open ring (*roda*) in the middle of the room, one at a time, to samba dance. There was a short pause before the third samba for St. Cosmas began for it seems there was a problem with the samba. "We have to call him," a woman protested. Agreeing, another woman responded, "Exactly, we're doing Cosmas' samba, right? But he doesn't want to come." Someone else chimed in, "It's hot (*quente*). This stuff that's bound (*amarrado*) doesn't work. The deal is that it's got to be hot!" (PI_5b.mp3, 09:05). After several minutes passed, one of the women led the next samba. This time it was quite a bit "hotter," which is to say faster and more polyrhythmic. As the congregation sang for St. Cosmas, Dona Celeste samba danced in the ring with Dona Cilú, the host of the reza. After about a minute and a half, Dona Cilú began spinning in place to the rhythm of the music with her eyes closed.

² "Where are you going St. Cosmas? / Where are you going St. Cosmas? / I'm going in a hurry like this / I'm going to harvest the money / That's there in my garden / I'm going to harvest the money / That's there in my garden."

Suddenly, with eyes still closed and hands cupped behind her back, Dona Cilú began bouncing up and down rhythmically and appeared to hurl herself across the open dance floor, colliding with some of the participants on the inner edge of the ring. Her body then trembled; St. Cosmas had finally arrived.

As is typical protocol in Bahia when a human medium receive a spirit, the tie in Dona Cilú's hair was removed and she was loosely embraced until St. Cosmas fully took control. Dona Cilú, still quivering, attempted to go back to the middle of the samba ring, but was restrained by the other participants. After all, the transitional period between consciousness and possession can pose a physical danger to the human vessel. Dona Cilú, an elderly woman whose height is well under five feet, unexpectedly raised both of her arms in the air, signaling that the music was to stop. It was also a cue to listen for St. Cosmas' wisdom.

The first words out of Dona Cilú's mouth were, "Hey! Praise be to Our Lord, Jesus Christ!" (PI_5b.mp3, 16:55). Using his medium, St. Cosmas opened his arms widely and reiterated the phrase several times before taking up another one: "May the light of Jesus accompany me!" As St. Cosmas greeted the crowd with his Catholic orations, the accompanying instrumentation was modified. One of the pandeiro players switched to cavaquinho, an instrument which was already plugged into an amplifier, and began tuning up. The accordionist, in the meantime, had put his instrument down. Oddly, the official arrival of St. Cosmas among mortals, which was to me enchanting and fascinating, seemed hardly to be of any interest to the other guests. Most everyone appeared too busy laughing and socializing about other things to offer any attention to the earthly presence of this Christian martyr. Soon St. Cosmas traversed the ring toward his altar and the musicians began playing some instrumental samba while Dona

Celeste and another participant, who was holding a baby in her arms, entered the ring to samba dance.

Following a few short minutes of instrumental samba, St. Cosmas returned to the ring and, with a broad hand gesture, motioned for the musicians to cease. They obliged. St. Cosmas, using Dona Cilú's small voice, began singing a samba about himself and his twin brother, Damian. While a participant was passing incense along St. Cosmas' earthly body and around the room, the saint repeated solo the samba stanzas a few times. After about thirty seconds, the crowd joined in singing and clapping. The cavaquinho player quickly learned the melody, which he played heterophonically with the group singing. When St. Cosmas was sure the congregation and the musicians had learned the samba, he stopped singing and began to dance. The saint repeatedly exited the samba ring to visit his altar, during which time he sprayed himself (and others) with lavender perfume. But every time he would leave the ring, Dona Celeste (who was un-possessed) would once again occupy the ring with samba dancing. A few minutes passed and St. Cosmas once again raised his hand, signaling an end to the samba.

St. Cosmas opened his medium's arms wide and blessed everyone with the "peace of Christ." With that Dona Cilú dipped toward the ground and sprang up in the air with some fervent claps and held her face as she sprang up and down. These were the physical signs of the arrival of another deity, whose first words were, "Long live the peace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ!" This Caboclo led everyone in prayer before launching into a samba. With this, another party guest, convulsing, fell into the samba ring. She, too, had just received a Caboclo. The two deities greeted each other through their human mediums with a firm hug and dancing. This new Caboclo seemed uninterested in singing, so the Cabolco incorporated in Dona Cilú took it upon himself to lead the song.

Soon the two gods were joined by another, then another, and another. In fact, I counted at least seven women who received deities that night. But this hardly implies that only seven Caboclos were present at the celebration. After all, Dona Cilú alone sometimes incorporates ten or more spirits. And this is the case with many of the other participants at the reza that night. According to one participant, there were at least three cowboys (*boiadeiros*), two St. Cosmases, one sailor (*marujo*), one St. Barbara, and one Ogum. It was quite difficult to recognize when a deity was coming and going, for even though the gods tended to announce their presence (and often their exit) through song, it was generally difficult to discern the lyrics of the sambas due to the loud music and chatter. Moreover, many of the gods remained silent, expressing themselves only corporeally. In fact, Dona Celeste, who remained deity-less throughout the night, often led songs when the gods refrained from singing.

Slowly but surely, the gods proceeded to leave their human mediums, and by the end, only Dona Cilú remained incorporated. Before finally vacating her body, the backlands cowboy decided to lead the whole room in a recitation of the “Lord’s Prayer” and “Hail Mary.” Immediately afterward, in a didactic and cautionary tone, he announced, “This prayer that Jesus Christ taught all of us, may it reside in all of your hearts.” He then led a final samba:

*Vaqueirão
Vai embora
Com Deus e
Nossa Senhora*³

After repeating the samba a few times, the cowboy made his final announcement of the night: “I’m gone! Bye!” (*Já fui! Tchau!*). Marking the departure of the Caboclo, the musicians played a fast, celebratory instrumental samba.

³ “The big cowboy / Is taking off / With God and / Our Lady.”

This period of possession dancing, known as samba-de-caboclo, lasted until about 12:15am. After nearly two hours of this samba, the human participants had grown restless. After all, they had come to Dona Cilú's reza to enjoy themselves, not to watch gods party. Therefore, with the parting of the divine party guests, the humans could finally have *their* fun. And this was indeed the case. Soon Sensação do Samba, the samba-de-roda group with which I had come to the reza, was ready to get the humans up and dancing. The lead singer (*cantador*) stood at a *timbal* with a microphone at his mouth. To his immediate right sat the guitar player, the cavaquinho player, three pandeiro players, and the triangle player. Throughout the rest of the performance, the musicians would occasionally switch instruments and new players would join in. For example, Neide's husband, Reginaldo, who had been playing a little metal shaker during the samba-de-caboclo also accompanied the samba. Similarly, the cantador switched to pandeiro when a musician who knew how to play timbal decided to lend his skills to the performance.

The samba-de-roda began around 12:30am and lasted until 3:30am (PI_5c.mp3, 00:00). But the guests' enthusiasm most certainly would have carried the performance until daybreak. In fact, the performance only ceased when it did because Reginaldo insisted they had played long enough. The group played several sets, each lasting about 40 minutes, which comprised primarily "profane" (rather than sacred) *sambas-corrído*. The crowd, perhaps numbering close to one hundred people, animatedly danced the whole time. And although women dominated the dance floor, samba-dancing men were not insignificant. Between sets, while people indulged in St. Cosmas' symbolic okra stew (*caruru*), Djalma, who had provided the amplifiers and the soundboard, played a diversity of samba-de-roda CDs that had been recorded by local groups.

We arrived back to Neide's house around 4am. And I, like everyone else, was exhausted. We all went immediately to bed. During breakfast a few hours later, the principal conversation

topic was the previous night's reza. Reginaldo commented that he had insisted on leaving when he did because some of the guests were, without authorization, grabbing the group's musical instruments. Neide's daughter, who had not attended the reza, mentioned that she had heard the firecrackers from the reza. To this, Neide laughed, "Well, that's weird, since there weren't any firecrackers! It must have been someone else's reza." Indeed, it is quite common on Saturday nights in the Recôncavo during the months of August, September, and October, that a number of rezas are held concurrently in a given community.

CHAPTER FIVE
Religious Identity in the Recôncavo:
Ancestors, Obligation, and Collective Memory in the Reza Tradition

“Quem tá fora não entra; quem tá dentro não sai”
Those who are out don’t go in; those who are in don’t leave
—A popular Bahian saying

“The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, . . . they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service.”
—Karl Marx

*It’s 4:36am on Sunday. I’m going to spend the night here at the headquarters of the Filhos de Nagô [samba group]. Cesar [the group’s principal vocalist] gave me a little mattress, pillow, and a blanket for me to sleep. . . . Yesterday I went with [the group] to the Vila [Pilar] . . . They played at a reza party. It was a very complex event and, as I understand it, it was for St. Roch. . . . Soon after [we arrived], the “reza” began. I didn’t know what it was so I went to look. . . . I also recorded about 10 minutes of the reza, which was a very Catholic song. Luciano also made a point of asking me to take lots of photos. The reza ended while I was outside and we heard lots of applause. . . . Then they called Seu Pedro and De Boi to accompany the samba [on percussion]. . . . [While] they were playing . . . all of the sudden [a] lady fell down on the ground and started screaming. It was like a Candomblé ceremony, but the little table at which they were playing was so Catholic: pictures of the Virgin, Santa Barbara, Santo Antonio, etc. **What was going on?** When Luciano asked me later on if I had filmed everything, I told him not the part where the “caboclo came down[.]” [H]e said, “It’s better that way.” . . . Everyone told me that this wasn’t a terreiro. That it wasn’t Candomblé . . . and the people were “normal.” . . . I guess it’s really common what happened tonight because no one even batted an eye when the caboclo thing started happening.*

This is an excerpt from the field notes I took after having attended my first reza in late-August 2009. It was also the first time I was forced to confront the complex plurality of Bahia’s spiritual landscape. In Chapters 1 through 4, I treated the reza tradition rather microscopically, as though it existed somewhat in isolation from other religious institutions. In the present chapter I look chiefly at the discourse of reza practitioners to explore how they understand their place in the religious landscape of the Recôncavo. My designation “reza practitioners,” whom I will—for heuristic purposes—refer to here as “Catholic,” denotes specifically those individuals who

(discursively) align themselves with Catholicism and who see their own practices as distinct from evangelical Christianity and Candomblé. After all, this no doubt characterizes the overwhelming majority of reza practitioners in the 21st century.

In the present chapter, I address how these Catholics define themselves in relation to adepts of the two other most prominent institutional religious traditions in the region: evangelical Christianity and Candomblé. Evangelical Christians are seen as intolerant and anti-social, while Candomblé adepts are often regarded as dangerous, sometimes even evil. Although the evangelical Christian worldview is largely incompatible with Catholicism—saints are, after all, illusionary and meaningless to evangelicals—the spiritual universe inhabited by Candomblé adepts and these Catholics is essentially the same. Thus while for both of these groups (to the extent that they are actually distinct) the world is full of spirits, spells (*feitiço*), and divine intermediaries to God, the valuations of how humans should interact with that world is generally quite different. No doubt the “deepest” ethnographic approach would include viewpoints from all sides, but my goal for this chapter is to illustrate how reza practitioners—nominal Catholics—understand themselves within the complex network of religious practices and discourses in Bahia.

In the Recôncavo, “obligation” is one of the most important values a person can demonstrate. Part of being a morally good person and certainly a fundamental aspect of leading a spiritually sound life is in living with commitments, fulfilling personal and family obligations, and respecting one’s past. Evangelical Christianity, like Candomblé, is regarded to be *optional* rather than obligatory. The former is relatively new to the region and thus evangelicals are mostly converted Catholics, while the prominent role of initiation in Candomblé underscores it as elective. Reza practitioners often tell stories of how exchanging one’s religious affiliation or

neglecting one's spiritual obligations results in calamitous consequences, ranging from bad luck to death. People regularly express the belief that those who have a devotion to a saint, a responsibility to an ancestral spirit (i.e., Caboclo), and/or a social obligation to the community suffer dearly when such duties are treated with disregard.

This chapter's primary focus is on the relationship reza practitioners have with particular Candomblé practices, particularly those involving animal sacrifice and palm oil. Although the evangelical presence is perhaps more significant in sociological terms, as Catholics often place the blame of the decline in Catholicism (and Catholicism-inspired activities) on the spread of evangelical Christianity, its presence is fairly new and its overtly oppositional relationship offers little fodder for extended analysis. A person cannot be both an evangelical Christian and a Catholic, a quite different relationship from that of Candomblé adepts to the Catholic religion (and vice-versa). Due to their long history of mutual constitution and parallel development, Catholicism-inspired and Candomblé-related practices interweave and interconnect in nuanced and complex ways.

The chapter is organized as follows: (1) a discussion of Catholicism as a religious identity in the Recôncavo; (2) a demonstration of views on evangelical Christianity and evangelical Christians in the area; (3) an explanation of what a Caboclo is in the spiritual universe of the reza; (4) an extended discussion of the history and historiography of the Caboclo deity; (5) distinctions between Caboclos and the Candomblé tradition; and (6) concluding thoughts.

1. Catholicism as a Religious Identity

As I have insisted throughout this dissertation, practitioners of rezas consider themselves to be Catholic. Indeed, whenever I asked, reza attendees and hosts would inevitably express their religious affiliations as Catholic. But such affirmations should be taken with prudence, for such a

religious identity never precludes an individual's involvement in Candomblé, even as an initiated adept. People proudly wear their Catholic identities on their sleeves. Following Margaret Somers' (1994) suggestion that a person's identity is largely ontologically elaborated by "being located or locating ourselves (usually unconsciously) in social narratives *rarely of our own making*" (p. 606), it is possible to understand a Catholic identity as something established through social interactions that are "emplotted in a *religious* narrative—one in which 'religious' actors, ideas, institutions, and experiences play a role in the story of who we are and who I am" (Ammerman 2003: 216).

For Catholicism in the Recôncavo, these religious narratives are largely generated and sustained by Catholic Church dogma, beliefs, and practices. Thus not only do people consider themselves Catholics because of their participation in Church-run events such as baptisms, weddings, Masses, and processions, but they also identify with (i.e., believe in) the cosmological narrative propagated by the Church. This includes the essential Christian narrative apropos of Christ's death on the Cross, as well as the holiness of the Virgin Mary and the Catholic saints, the inviolability of Catholic symbols such as the rosary, host, and chalice, and the sanctity of priests and nuns. People also regard their rezas as a facet of their involvement in the Church. And this is not a misguided interpretation. Paraphrasing a conversation I had with a Catholic priest who, in 2009, presided over the city of São Félix, popular Catholicism done in homes is supported by the Catholic Church and even the Pope, for these practices are believed to enhance and concretize the congregation's faith.

Nominal Catholics are involved in a constant process of constructing their own religious identities. Therefore, while each person may have more or less interest in affirming his/her identity, it seems clear that the reza, as a devotional act, is viewed as an affirmation of a Catholic

identity, for it embeds the individual—and the participants—in a dominant Catholic narrative vis-à-vis Catholic saints, iconography, musical repertoire, etc. This does not mean, however, that every person’s narrative of him-/herself is the same, and in fact some of these identities involve the negotiation of practices situated well outside of the socially shared (and Church constrained) Catholic narrative. After all, these Catholic identities are entangled in personal histories that involve individual trajectories and family obligations. Nancy Ammerman (2003: 224) explains religious identities as simultaneously structured and emergent:

Describing religious identities is not a matter of asking a checklist of categorical questions, but a matter of analyzing a dynamic process, the boundaries of which cannot be assumed to fall neatly within private or personal domains. Intersectionality means that no situation or identity is ever utterly devoid of multiple narratives . . . People can signal the presence of religious ideas, symbols, story lines, and sacred coparticipants within a wide range of social contexts, both to themselves and to others, invoking religious narratives of widely varying scope and robustness.

Having a Catholic identity in Bahia does not necessarily presume that one is constrained to *all* of the bounds established by the Catholic Church. What it does suggest, however, is that one’s social interactions—experiences, ideas, involvement in institutions—are situated within a Catholic narrative.

2. Evangelical Christianity in Brazil and the Recôncavo

In 1990, prompted by the rapidly growing evangelical population in Brazil and other Latin American countries, David Stoll published a book with the provocative title “Is Latin America Turning Protestant?” At the time of the book’s publication, over two decades ago, Protestants in Brazil claimed “as much as 18 percent of the population,” second only to Chile. More impressive, however, were the rates of growth in Brazil: “From 1960 to 1970 evangelical growth was 77 percent; from 1970 to 1980 it was 155 percent” (Stoll 1990: 8). And “[t]wo thirds of Brazil’s Protestants are members of the Pentecostal churches” (Clarke 1999: 204). Scholar

Peter Clarke furthermore explains, citing Paul Freston, that “[t]his evangelical Protestantism . . . is ‘new’ . . . principally [*sic*] in its exclusivism, which is atypical of Brazilian religious life and practice, and in its opposition to Catholic religious hegemony” (p. 205). Finally, it is worth noting that this Pentecostal dominance is demographically concentrated; it is “associated disproportionately with the poor, less educated and darker-skinned” (Freston 2004: 24).

In Bahia, the “systematic presence of Protestantism in Bahia dates to the first half of the 19th century” (Silva 2001). And the growth of so-called “historical Protestantism” continued throughout the 19th century, including mainly the establishment of Presbyterian and Baptist denominations. The first Pentecostal congregation, *Assembléia de Deus* (Assembly of God), was established in Salvador in 1930 and extended into other parts of the state over the course of the 20th century (Ibid.). According to Lizandra Santana (2012), Pentecostal expansion in the *Recôncavo*, and specifically in *Cachoeira*, began in the mid-20th century, with so-called neo-Pentecostalism taking off in the 1980s. While it is generally well known that evangelical Christians in the *Recôncavo* “avoid and are often openly hostile toward *Candomblé* and other expressions of Afro-Brazilian culture” (Selka 2005: 76), it is important to note that a no less antagonistic stance is frequently taken with regards to Catholicism, particularly apropos of the adoration of images. Catholicism-inspired domestic practices (such as the *reza*) are no exception, and are generally treated with hostility by evangelical populations and even by a minority of Catholics.¹

¹ The quiet minority of Catholics that disapproves of practices such as the *reza* generally identify with the charismatic movement (see Clarke 1999), which tends to disapprove of the adoration of images and saints more generally.

THE REZA AND EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

Reza participants are surprisingly univocal in their assessment that evangelical Christians have negatively affected their patron saint tradition. Dona Maria, justifying the relative lack of rezas in the 21st century, explained that “the old folks are all passing away, and the young kids today don’t care about it. And a lot of people are going along with this evangelical thing, which changed almost everything. And the majority is basically evangelical. So they don’t want this Catholic religion, they only follow evangelism.”² Dona Maria is hardly alone in her interpretation of the changing religious scene. Indeed, it is quite common that devotees of Catholic saints pin the blame of the diminished number of rezas in the Recôncavo on evangelical Christians. And typically this negative effect is attributed to either a tacit rejection of the patron saint tradition or an explicit condemnation of saint venerations (or sometimes both). The first of these is no doubt the most common. For instance, evangelical Christians, who believe that the veneration of saints is an “illusory” path to God, do not host their own rezas for patron saints or participate in their neighborhood rezas. And though I was unable to find any evangelical Christians who had converted from Catholicism and had left their devotions behind for good, I did meet individuals who had left their devotions for a period of time due to evangelical conversion and in nearly every case (except those in which the individuals died prematurely), misfortune eventually compelled the people to recommence.

One case involved a woman from Salvador, Tina, who, on the occasion of her son’s first birthday began holding a reza for St. Cosmas and St. Damian, a tradition she maintained for nearly two decades. Soon after, Tina converted to evangelical Christianity (I am not sure the reason), and ended up dismantling her altar and giving away all of her Catholic iconography. Over the next seven years, Tina’s life was wrought with tribulation. At the time, she was the

² Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on July 15, 2009.

owner of a beverage dispensary that suffered three robberies, resulting in significant financial losses.³ When I spoke to Tina in January of 2012, she assured me that later in the year she would reinstate her *caruru* for the twin saints. Although individuals who ceased permanently to fulfill their yearly ritual obligations were difficult to find, abundant were cases in which saint devotees' offspring simply did not continue their parents' rezas. This is seen as problematic because saint devotions are, as I discussed in Chapter 1, envisioned as transgenerational. I know too of instances in which only one or two members of the family—usually a son or daughter—converted to evangelical Christianity. Although this did not necessarily impede the family's saint devotion, it often caused contentious relationships within the families and effectively limited the funds and labor available to care for the saint. Finally, reza practitioners also complained that the cessation of their “begged Masses” (*missas pedidas*), a ritual begging for alms practiced by children in past generations, was largely catalyzed by the growing evangelical Christian community, for evangelicals refused to collaborate.

The second general way in which evangelical Christians are seen as detrimental to rezas is in the explicit condemnation of the veneration of patron saints. Dona Meire, a former Candomblé adept and devotee of St. Roch who frequents an evangelical church with the encouragement of one of her daughters,⁴ once explained the types of comments people from the evangelical congregation make:

Sometimes when I go to church, sometimes they come here [to my home] and ask something [about the altar]. “It’s not mine, no. It’s my daughter’s.” And there are some who say [with sarcasm], “oh yeah? I guess she’s really able to express her faith, huh?” It’s what they say, right? Because evangelicals don’t have faith in anything; they only

³ Tina explained to me that the first robbery cost her R\$180,000 and the second two were both R\$90,000 (roughly US\$90,000 and US\$45,000).

⁴ While some people reject the Candomblé religion on ideological grounds, Dona Meire’s decision to leave Candomblé was circumstantial. She remains sympathetic to the religion, but is no longer a practicing *filha de santo* because when her “mother” (Candomblé priestess) passed away, the terreiro closed its doors. Since then Dona Meire has never found another terreiro with which she identifies.

have faith in God, only in God. . . . I like the church because it talks about God, you know? But I also don't put it down. . . . And my grandkids tell me that all of this [the saints] is an illusion . . . "Everything is an illusion. What's good is God."⁵

Many evangelicals explain saints as an impediment to the veneration of God, who is—as Dona Meire's grandchildren apparently affirm—"what's good." While Dona Meire's experience appears to have occurred during a moment of social interaction after a church meeting, I know of instances in which an evangelical Christian in fact interrupted a reza. Every September, Dona Maria Reis, a *mãe de santo*,⁶ hosts a reza for St. Cosmas and St. Damian, at her home in Itaberaba, which is located northwest of the Recôncavo, in the dry backlands (*sertão*), 171 miles from Salvador. The year I attended, in 2010, the reza was cut short due to her son's demands. As an evangelical Christian, he did not approve of his mother's activities and pressured her into ending it early. Therefore, while the ritual feeding of the children, the singing, and the communal feasting all proceeded as usual, the planned samba finale was cancelled.

More socio-historical data is imperative to understanding the degree to which the evangelical rejection of saints has in fact diminished the number of rezas per annum. However, it seems to me quite logical that certain evangelical ideological stances might indeed have quite real consequences that would be related to the decrease in rezas in the Recôncavo. After all, with fewer reza hosts, helping hands, and participating community members, it is much more difficult to have a many-voiced "beautiful" reza (see Ch. 3), afford (in both time and money) the event itself, and fulfill ritual obligations (such as getting seven *baptized* children to eat out of the tub for St. Cosmas and St. Damian). But I would suggest that these changes were only partially affected by the growth in evangelical Christianity, for there is no doubt that the decrease in rezas

⁵ Interview conducted with Dona Meire at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on September 3, 2010.

⁶ It is not clear whether she is a Candomblé priestess or an Umbanda priestess, for these designations are not quite as bounded away from the big cities (Brian Brazeal, personal communication, 2010).

is also the result of changes in the Catholic Church following Vatican II and the charismatic movement, in addition to socio-economic changes in the Recôncavo and general cultural shifts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EVANGELICAL IN SOCIETY

The discordant relationship many reza practitioners feel toward evangelical Christians reaches beyond the perceived effects on patron saint festivities. Indeed, reza participants often paint evangelicals to be anti-social and antipathetic. One of the many complaints Catholics make is that “there is only one God but evangelicals have a hundred different churches.”⁷ Partially, this is a comment on how misguided the evangelicals are in trying to find God. Rather than partake in a *universal*, historically proven church like the Catholic Church, evangelical Christians are “inventing” their own *Gods* even though there is only one God. However, the critique digs deeper. Indeed, by disparaging the way in which evangelicals worship God, Catholic devotees also implicitly question whether evangelicals worship God at all. In fact, many Catholics claim that evangelicals—led by their pastors who themselves are said to have dubious ethics—are more interested in material goods than in God. Dona Maria once told me a story illustrating this:

They say there was once an evangelical who went to church, right? And the pastor told him he needed to wear a uniform, put on a tie, and wear shoes to participate in the church worship. He said, “I’m not going to. If I have faith in God, I’m going to get the regular clothes I have and put those on. I don’t have a uniform, I don’t have shoes, I don’t have a tie.” . . . So he put on clothes, a shirt and pants that were so-so, and went to worship. When he arrived there the pastor wouldn’t let him in. . . . [So] he went home, put on the uniform, put on nice shoes, put on a nice tie and went. He arrived there, and when he arrived at the door, he presented himself to everyone. . . . He said, “do you see that you don’t have faith in God?” They said, “why?” “Because your faith is in clothes, you don’t have faith in God. If you had faith in God, you would have received me as I came here before.” . . . Nowadays the evangelicals are always looking to dress nicely, wear nice shoes to go to church. . . . Nice shoes, money in their pockets. But it’s not like that, for God doesn’t want anyone’s money.⁸

⁷ Interestingly, many evangelical Christians similarly ridicule Catholics with the assertion that “there is only one God.” Unlike the Catholic point of view, this is meant as a critical evaluation of the adoration of saints and the Virgin Mary.

⁸ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

While it is difficult to know the veracity of this story, given Dona Maria's acceptance of its basic premise (that evangelicals have questionable morals), it can at the very least be interpreted as expressing a "typical" Catholic view of evangelical Christians. The tale portrays Evangelicals (and their pastor) as more concerned with garments than God. At the heart of the story is also a judgment about pastors, who are so often viewed as swindlers. Having no real interest in worshipping God, pastors found new churches just to earn money, resulting in the multiplicity of evangelical denominations; churches are often presumed to be little more than moneymaking schemes.

Another one of the claims I have heard leveled against evangelical Christians addresses their supposedly anti-social behavior. A reza practitioner once told me that evangelical Christians did not like to open their homes, for they do not want people to dirty it. This is clearly an antithetical stance to the reza, during which *everyone* is invited into the devotee's private home for free food, drink, and entertainment. As I have already mentioned, people often blame the evangelical population for bringing an end to "begged Masses," but not only because evangelical Christians did not contribute. Reza practitioners also claim that if a child were to knock on an evangelical Christian's door in the name of the saint, the child would be sent away. And "no one," people assured me, "wants to be offended." In short, evangelical Christians are believed to be capable of mistreating "sinless" children (see also Ch. 1). Finally, when I was conducting research about Edinha for the micro-history I tell in Ch. 7, I wanted to speak to her living daughters. My research collaborators insisted that Edinha's daughters would not help me *because* they were evangelicals. And they consequently never told me her daughters' names or where they lived. I pleaded, "But I just want basic information about their mother!" "No, they're

very difficult. They won't talk to anyone." No amount of insistence on my part was successful. Evangelicals are, after all, seen as anti-social and disagreeable.

The relationship between evangelical Christians (of all denominations) and Catholics—whether reza practitioners or not—is characterized primarily by conflict. Metaphorically speaking, these two institutions interact like oil and water within the landscape of the Bahian Recôncavo. Those who consider themselves Catholic are no doubt still the majority, but evangelical Christianity is fast growing in the region and is exercising considerable social influence. Devotees of patron saints, simply by holding their rezas, are able to affirm unabashedly their cosmological belief in saints—the chief symbol of evangelical-Catholic discord—while also asserting their moral superiority over evangelicals by emphasizing their social charity; Catholics open up their homes and their pockets to serve the community. Although reza participants, like evangelical Christians, believe in a Christian God, the devotion to saints by the former and the critical view of these martyrs by the latter operate as an immediate ideological disunion that may in part contribute to the general opinion reza practitioners have of evangelical Christians in the Recôncavo.

3. The Caboclo in the Spiritual Universe of the Reza

Contrasting with the unambiguous friction characterizing the interactions between Catholics and evangelical Christians, the relationship between Catholics and Candomblé adepts is hazier. For unlike the seemingly facile evangelical-Catholic conflict, undergirded by mutual disapproval, the Catholic-Candomblé confrontation is generally one-sided and heterogeneous. Candomblé adepts typically have few negative words to say about Catholic practices, and indeed

often engage in them.⁹ The discord usually emanates from the Catholics. Catholics often vilify Candomblé as black magic (*macumba*) and its practitioners as malefactors or crooks. Yet related practices and ideologies often circulate among the populations, linking the two institutions in interesting ways. The veneration of the Caboclo spirit, for instance, as a practice and an ideology common to both Catholicism-inspired rezas and Candomblé terreiros, offers an instructive point of departure. It bears note that Caboclos are uncommon at rezas. I have only seen Caboclos at a small handful of the three-dozen or so rezas I have attended,¹⁰ but their presence is never *out of the realm of possibility*. In other words, even if their appearance is rare, they are very much a part of the Catholicism-inspired reza tradition and thus merit in-depth discussion.

Caboclos are, as I briefly noted in Ch. 1, inherited guardian angels. “Caboclo” is a generic term for these “angels,” also referred to as *encantados* (enchantments) or *santos* (saints), that can have either specific names—Marujo, Boiadeiro, Sultão das Matas, Obaluaiê, Ogum, Saint Cosmas, Saint Barbara, Iansã—or more ambiguous titles, such as “o/a velho/a” (the old man/woman) or “rainha do mar” (queen of the sea).¹¹ Anyone familiar with Afro-Brazilian religions might recognize Obaluaiê, Ogum, and Iansã as *orixás*, just as saints Cosmas and Barbara are Catholic saints. And the first three—Marujo (sailor), Boiadeiro (cowboy), Sultão das Matas (Sultan of the forests)—are, in the overwhelming majority of scholarly literature,

⁹ The situation is slightly different in Salvador, where the identity politics involving the negritude movement of the late-20th century (and particularly the anti-syncretism movement I discuss in the Introduction) has caused a stronger rift between Candomblé and Catholicism, such that many Candomblé adepts assert a distance from Catholicism.

¹⁰ People assured me that “in the old days” Caboclos were rampant. Practitioners generally attribute their disappearance to a diminution of faith and the more general decrease of Catholic devotees. It seems to me, however, that the rarity of Caboclos today is probably due to a number of confluent factors beyond this. For instance, certainly changes in understandings about Catholicism and how to be Catholic—particularly following the Vatican II and later the charismatic movement—have created a barrier for many devotees to welcome Caboclos. No doubt this process has also been further impelled by the increased social presence (and acceptance) of Candomblé. Thus people associate Caboclos not with the Catholic Church but with Candomblé.

¹¹ These are common names that leave the entity’s strict pantheon entirely ambiguous. For instance, people will often talk about how strong their *Velho* is. This “old man” can refer simultaneously (and ambiguously) to St. Roch and Obaluaiê (who share a syncretic relationship). Similarly, the *Rainha do mar*, can refer to the Orixá Iemanjá, who is often regarded the queen of the sea, to the ambiguous figure Janaína, or even, in some cases, to the Virgin of the Conception.

recognized as “Caboclos.” Take, for instance, a recent definition offered by J. Lorand Matory (2005: 29-30): “The *caboclos* are typically regarded as the spirits of Brazilian Indian chiefs who lived in the distant past . . . However, the category of spirits so named in Candomblé includes an ethnic array ranging from Tupi Indians to mixed-race cowboys, Turks, and Gypsies.” Yet in the reza context of the Recôncavo, rather than a restrictive pantheon, “Caboclo” is used as an all-encompassing designation to refer to any category of deity that can be manifested at a reza.

This is a somewhat shocking departure from the past century or so of literature on Afro-Brazilian religions in Bahia, in which academics have continued to portray Caboclos as placed in “opposition to the other category—Orixá—a category encompassing those divinities of African origin (Oxóssi, Xangô, Oxum, Oxalá, etc.)” (Santos 1995: 59; see also Bastide 1945; Browning 1995; Carneiro 1991; Garcia 2008; Ribeiro 1983).¹² But as aptly noted by Brian Brazeal, “It is time for ethnographers of Candomblé to rethink the facile division of deities into distinct pantheons of Exús, Orixás, and Caboclos, to include the marginal entities the Marujos, Pilintras, Pombagiras, and Eré, and to recognize that these categories are fluid” (Brazeal 2003: 657). More than this, however, it is worth revisiting the taxonomic bases of the categories themselves.

GOOD SPIRITS: CABOCLOS AS INHERITANCE

In the Recôncavo, the term Caboclo is polysemic. For those more closely linked to Candomblé, “Caboclo” is, like its treatment in the literature, a pantheon of deities distinct from the Orixás. However, for most reza practitioners, particularly those who have little to no contact with *organized* Candomblé terreiros, the Caboclo is a spirit which a person inherits from an

¹² Carneiro (1991) noted (in the late-1930s) that these “Caboclos” went beyond Indigenous archetypes, including a “‘caboclo’ Ogum” (p. 65), a “‘caboclo’ Oxalá” (p. 66), the caboclo of the woods (or Oxóssi) (p. 67), a caboclo St. Barbara (which Carneiro calls Iansã) (p. 67), a Caboclo of the new woods (*mata-verde*), Malembá, Jaci, Katendê, and “many others” (p. 67). In other words, Carneiro astutely observed that Caboclos can include deities generally referred to as Orixás and saints (St. Barbara), as well as others with more Indigenous characteristics.

ancestor. People do not express detailed theological conceptualizations of Caboclos, which are usually vaguely described as “ancestral spirits.” Yet Caboclos tend not to be *distinct* ancestors. Thus, while there are certainly exceptions, these are not generally spirits of ancestors with which a person shared experiences during life (e.g., grandmothers, uncles, mothers, etc.). Instead these are simply spirits that are ambiguously “in the family.”¹³ The underlying point, however, and what matters to practitioners, is that Caboclos *are inherited*; they are part of ancestry and are thus vibrant reminders that time can sometimes be simultaneously vertical and horizontal, that the past often resides in the present (Taylor 2006: 83).

People who inherit Caboclos never go through a ritual initiation process; they are simply born with their ancestral spirits. In Dona Maria’s words, “Some already have that gift [*dom*] when they are born; they bring that guardian angel with them. People are born with that gift. . . . They come, sometimes it’s from the family. When that child is born, it’s born with that good and strong spirit; it speaks worthwhile things.” This, Dona Maria noted, is in contrast to Candomblé: “And then there are those who get it from Candomblé; they go into a Candomblé [house], stay there and a sorcerer puts it in them.”¹⁴ For Dona Maria, a woman with an unabashed aversion to Candomblé, the distinction between a good and bad spirit is related to *where* it originates. Ancestral “gifts” are good; “initiation” is bad.

The distinction between “gift” and “initiation” is indeed widespread in Bahia, particularly as Afro-Brazilian religions are concerned. Roger Sansi explains that Candomblé adepts relate to spirits in two ways:

¹³ This is not unlike the Congo ancestor who accompanies Charley Guelperin, a Los Angeles-based *santero* (see Cosentino 2010). In Charley’s words, “As I develop my relationship with Manuel, I came to know he was a Congo king, and was brought in slavery to Cuba. And he ended up having a hundred children. I was one of those children, and he said he to work with me because last time—and now we’re talking five hundred years ago—I supposed to be a *santero*” (p. 415). Charley has a much more elaborate relationship, it seems, than many Caboclo mediums in the Recôncavo, who simply receive their deities as an annual obligation.

¹⁴ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

[O]ne is by means of the “gift,” the innate capacity of the person to embody and “find” spirits. The other is through “initiation,” the ritual process through which the priest (“*mãe do santo*”), as an initiator, “puts her hand on the head” of the person, teaches the secrets and gives the elements necessary for the person to “seat” (*assentar*) the “saints.” . . . The “initiation”/“gift” distinction could be superimposed on the more traditional dichotomy of “magic” and “religion.” (Sansi 2007: 22; see also Boyer 1996)

Sansi reasons that “the practices based on the ‘gift’ of mediums have been rejected as forms of magic, as sorcery, while other practices, based on initiation, have been identified with ‘religion’” (Sansi 2007: 22). For most reza practitioners, however, the inverse is true. That is, *seeking out* a Candomblé terreiro in order to acquire a spirit can *only* be rooted in dubious intentions, whereas a person who accepts his/her unsolicited guardian angel—an obligatory inheritance—is generally viewed positively. In other words, “magic” just happens but “religion” is a choice. Therefore the binary gift/initiation might also be construed as an opposition of obligation to choice. And thus an inherited deity is an obligation while a sought out one is a choice.

Inherited Caboclos usually manifest themselves in their mediums via affliction fairly early on in the medium’s life. This sickness must subsequently be treated through spiritual means, by consulting either a Candomblé priestess or someone who knows the appropriate means of “caring for” (*cuidar*) the entity. This “caring” process usually includes receiving the deity as well as delivering ritual offerings (in forests, rivers, or oceans), animal sacrifice, and/or hosting annual rezas. In some cases, the initial “treatment” may lead a person to join a Candomblé terreiro while in other situations, only the correct ritual protocol must be learned. I have also heard of cases in which individuals simply *know* (intuitively) how to care for their Caboclos.

Stories of Caboclo revelation vary greatly from one individual to another, and these are neither myths nor fables, but are instead generally regarded by the individuals themselves (and those who know them) as historical fact. For instance, Dona Soreica and her deceased mother

were both born with Caboclos. And both went to a Candomblé terreiro to care for their inheritances. Yet while Dona Soreica ended up joining the terreiro and becoming a Candomblé adept, her mother decided not to join, choosing instead to care for her Caboclos by herself with rezas and offerings. Eventually, Dona Soreica's mother converted to evangelical Christianity and stopped caring for her Caboclos, which directly led—or so her neighbors and relatives say—to prolonged health problems. Many people in fact claimed that her abandoned Caboclos caused her nearly two-dozen surgeries and premature death.

In another case, Dona Cilú, the reza host described in Party Interlude 5 (pp. 304-312), has had her Caboclos, numbering more than ten,¹⁵ from childhood. She always “felt” them, but it was only as a young adult that she began to manifest them. In her son's words, “This comes from her youth, from her mom, because her mom was an Indian, you know? And this comes right from the family. . . . See, there is always a chosen one in the family . . . so in her family it was her.”¹⁶ In 2010, after years of serving her Caboclos, she decided not to hold her annual reza. And she furthermore had no intention of holding the reza the year I attended, in 2011. However, sometime earlier in the year, she grew ill, with pains in her back, legs, and arms. Dona Cilú decided to go to the doctor only to learn that he could find nothing wrong with her. Soon after, her Caboclo revealed himself to her son, “Her pain is not something a hospital can fix! She knows what's causing her pain.” After Dona Cilú hosted her reza in 2011, all of her pains were suddenly gone.

Affliction is indeed often accompanied by the revelation of Caboclos, as Dona Adélia made clear to me in the story about her mother, Dona Martinha, who has a number of Caboclos:

¹⁵ Dona Cilú's Caboclos include a cowboy (Boiadeiro), Saint Cosmas, a female saint/mermaid named Janaína, and even her husband's deceased grandmother (someone with whom Dona Cilú had cultivated a loving relationship).

¹⁶ Interview conducted with Dona Cilú and her son at their home in Opalma, Bahia, on February 15, 2012.

Since I was little I can remember that she had a Caboclo that would grab her and everything, but Mother was never really interested. Mother has been blind. People don't believe it, right? . . . Over night, Mother went blind. . . . There was no medicine she could use, there was no doctor, there wasn't anything. Then she had a dream, she dreamed of a place where a woman made her well. And . . . after two or three days, a woman passed by our house. . . . The woman told Father that he should take Mother there, because what Mother had was not for a doctor. So Father took her and I went with him and Mother...I remember it as if it were today, I was small, maybe around 5 or 6 years old. So they did some "things" there . . . that I don't really remember what it was. And children, too, don't participate in the things they do, you know? We washed some leaves for Mother to clean her eye, for her to put on her eye. . . . [It] is a little flower, that inside of the little flower there is a gathering of water that looks like saliva [*babazinha*]. . . . So Mother put that on her eye, she got well. What it was, they did things that . . . many people don't believe it exists, right? Witchcraft, these types of things. So they cursed her, so that she'd be blind and God, for her and us, who were little, she got well. . . . After this, she began to have these things.¹⁷

Interestingly, in Dona Adélia's story, the Caboclos seem to have begun to appear as a form of spiritual protection against sorcery. In fact, Dona Martinha's blindness, which is not symbolically unimportant given the popular belief that the evil eye (i.e., envy) is among the worst spells one can cast, was the result of witchcraft. And the ritual specialist, the mysterious woman who had appeared in Dona Martinha's dreams the night before, was needed to release the divine protectors. Given that Caboclos run in Dona Adélia's family, it is no wonder to her that her daughters—Dona Martinha's granddaughters—were also born with Caboclos. Dona Martinha's Caboclos are not clearly *from birth*, though her "gift" to begin incorporating them was never a choice. Dona Martinha continues to serve obligatorily her Caboclos to this day.

Anthropologist Louis Marcelin (1999), in a study on the way in which African descendent Brazilians living in Cachoeira describe their families, points out that kinship based on blood is the primary unit of cohesion amongst individuals. Marcelin explains that "the condition of existence of every person is the family" (p. 40). But a "family" goes beyond blood; it comprises individuals who "consider" (*ter consideração*) one another:

¹⁷ Interview conducted with Dona Adélia at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

The relative is a relative only when it is “recognized” as such. . . . This recognition translates into a cultural category of consideration, given that this supposes a structure of relationships of exchange, a demonstration . . . of the acceptance of the relative as one’s own, and the entrance in the circuit of exchange and of symbolic reproduction of the family and kinship. (p. 45)

This “circuit of exchange,” Marcelin argues, is initiated at birth, for all children are immediately dependent on (and thus indebted to) their parents, for the progenitors are expected to care for and socialize their birth (or adopted) children. This enmeshes a child in a network of debts to prior generations (Marcelin 1999: 46). While these obligations are owed to both blood relatives and non-blood relatives, blood relations—the anthropologist emphasizes—are always the primary category of “consideration.” In many ways, then, family Caboclos might be understood as one among many obligations that younger generations have to their blood relatives. And it is for this reason that inherited deities are considered to be distinct from those that are procured. Indeed, the Caboclo, like a devotion to a saint, is a family heirloom which establishes generational continuity and a perpetually renewed memory of the past.

CABOCLOS’ DESCENT: FUN, PARTIES, AND REZAS

Dona Maria once told me of a man who, while working in the fields one day, was unexpectedly incorporated by his Obaluaiê and began yelling. When his neighbors went to see what the problem was, they found the man rolled up in a ball on the ground. The man’s brother informed the neighbors, “It is just a Caboclo he has.” Soon the Caboclo, through his medium, advised the neighbors that within the next three days a thunderstorm would hit and that they should all protect themselves. After giving this advisory prediction, the Caboclo left his medium. Sure enough, within 72 hours a torrential storm devastated the region.

For most reza practitioners, Caboclos are capable of appearing—often termed “descer” (descend) or “baixar” (lower)—in any context. However, there are two contexts in which they

are *expected* and in which they are especially welcome: *rezas* and sessions. These are contexts that might be distinguished as play (*reza*) and work (*sessions*). I will begin with the former. For their play, Caboclos come and go fairly quickly, usually proclaiming their presence (in song), dancing a bit, and then announcing their departure (again, in song) (see Ch. 1 and Ch. 4; also Brazeal 2003). People who have a Caboclo often have more than just one; the same individual often acts as a medium for numerous Caboclos. This is not unlike the mediumship typical of Bahia's backlands, as is clear in the description which anthropologist Brian Brazeal provides of his experiences at a Candomblé ceremony run by a woman named Alaides:

The *feira* unfolded very differently from an Orixá or a Caboclo *feira* in Cachoeira. Orixás, Catholic Saints and Brazilian Caboclos descended together in the persons of Alaides' congregation. Deified Turks and Gypsies danced along with them. Some of the songs indicated that there were even Exús incarnate in our midst. Ogum arrived and departed. He was be [*sic*] followed by Saint Barbara in the body of the same devotee. Janaina and Yemanjá made appearances. Sultão das Matas appeared and disappeared and was soon followed by Cosme and Damião. In Alaides' practice these deities all form a single pantheon and are cultivated together. (Brazeal 2007: 205)

Brazeal's observations suggest two important similarities between these backlands Candomblé houses and domestic *rezas* in the Recôncavo: an individual may serve as a medium for various entities in the course of a single celebration and the concept of an all-encompassing "Caboclo," in which different deities—without regard for divisions by pantheon—coexist, extends beyond the domestic *reza* context. These phenomenological parallels regarding the experience of possession at *rezas* in the Recôncavo and backlands Candomblé ceremonies, both of which remain largely non-institutional, suggest that the mode of multiple possession and all-inclusive pantheons may be a much more significant part of Bahia's ritual landscape than the available academic literature leads one to believe.

When Caboclos descend for the samba, as was the case, for instance, in Party Interlude 5, they come prepared to sing and dance for extended periods of time. But Caboclos need not wait

for samba to attend the reza. For instance, if a reza includes some sort of animal sacrifice, which always occurs around dawn, the Caboclos manifest themselves for a short period of time during the early morning ritual (see Appendix 1). The attendees of the sacrifice (typically limited to family and close friends) sing and clap as the Caboclos appear. But rather than sing and dance, as they do during the samba, the Caboclos usually do little more than greet those present and make guffawing and grunting noises. Certainly, some Caboclos can be a bit more active, but they never celebrate as they would were they in attendance at an after-novena samba.

Caboclos are also known to descend during the all-day food preparation. I have seen this happen twice. On one occasion, the Caboclos sang a few songs, did a little dancing, offered curt words of advice, and showered the guests with hot okra stew. While at a different reza, the two visiting Caboclos, staying for fewer than five minutes, did little more than pass through the medium's body, forcing it to tremble, convulse, and make the appropriate physical gestures to indicate their identities. Caboclos demonstrate a variety of different comportments in accordance with their archetype (e.g., sailor, cowboy, old man, etc.). Some dance a lot, others are more verbose. Old Caboclos—particularly Obaluaiê—do little more than greet the human attendees. Finally, it is important to emphasize that some people's Caboclos are quite selective about when (and where) they appear on earth, choosing only to descend when the medium is at her/his home. On the other hand, some Caboclos may descend in their mediums regardless of the moment or location. With Caboclos, nothing is ever entirely predictable.

CABOCLOS' DESCENT: WORK, CHARITY, AND THE *MESA BRANCA*

Caboclos do not just celebrate, however; they also work. While this work can theoretically occur anywhere, it generally takes place during what is known as a “sessão de caboclo” (Caboclo session), “sessão de mesa branca” (white table session), or “mesa branca”

(white table). Based largely in Kardecian Spiritism and Central African forms of healing, these “white table sessions,” which often occur on a regular weekly schedule, are regarded as the primary purpose of a “good” Caboclo.¹⁸ After all, during a *mesa branca*, the Caboclo conducts works of charity by giving counsel and offering cures for ailments (often in exchange for money). A *mesa branca*, in Dona Adélia’s words, is when “[the medium] is there. Then the Caboclo descends in him. You ask what you’re going to ask. He teaches you what you will want to do.”¹⁹ *Mesa branca* ceremonies occur during the daytime, usually beginning in the late morning and extending until early evening. And the sessions are really much more like doctor’s visits than mystical ceremonies. I have had the opportunity to attend two *mesa branca* sessions. I offer a description of one I attended in 2012, held in the Quilômetro 25.

Every Wednesday, Dona Adélia (a different Adélia than the one from Muritiba whom I cite throughout the dissertation) conducted her session. I had seen Dona Adélia’s Caboclo dance during the *samba-de-Caboclo* described in Party Interlude 5. As a female who runs a *mesa branca* session, Dona Adélia is widely known as a powerful *mãe de santo*, a term which also designates a Candomblé priestess. Nevertheless, a *mesa branca* is typically understood as something quite distinct from Candomblé. Dona Adélia possessed a large property which had been separated into a spacious patio and three separate edifices. One was a small bar, where she sold snacks and drinks; another building was her home; and the third structure, designed for ritual activities, was a spacious *terreiro*. The *terreiro* was separated into two separate rooms, one was a wide-open space and the other was much smaller altar room.

¹⁸ These are also found among Candomblé adepts at terreiros (see Brazeal 2003; Santos 1995).

¹⁹ Interview conducted with Dona Adélia at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

When I arrived, I was directed to enter this smaller room, where Dona Adélia sat in a large chair. Her ritual helpers,²⁰ dressed in whitish-blue and -green satin clothing, were arranging the room, lighting candles, and organizing the consultations. With everything in place, the women began by singing the “Lord’s Prayer” and “Hail Mary.” Soon, Dona Adélia, with a slight shoulder shrug, indicated that she had received her Caboclo, an old sailor (Marujo), who would be working all day. The a capella singing continued as the newly arrived Caboclo greeted (via hugs) the people in the room, about six or seven of us. Shortly thereafter, several of her ritual helpers were also incorporated.

Save one individual, we were all ushered outside. The door was shut and we—both humans and incorporated mediums alike—sat outside in the terreiro’s “waiting room.” The incorporated mediums sang Catholic hymns and cantigas for hours, while also occasionally stopping to chat with the people sitting patiently waiting for their turn. Indeed, everyone—myself as the exception—was hoping to meet with the sailor who was counseling on the other side of the closed door. Eventually I too was encouraged to speak with the sailor, so I obliged.

My thirty-minute conversation with the loquacious Caboclo lasted for what seemed an eternity as he repeatedly emphasized how much power he wielded. Upon leaving the consultation room, I returned to the “waiting room,” noting that the number of clients seemed to have doubled. Sometime around 3pm I purchased a small tub of crackers which was being sold at the bar area of Dona Adélia’s property and struck up a conversation with a woman about my age who had already gone in for her consultation with the Caboclo. She had been having dizzy spells that no doctor could explain, so when a coworker informed her of the sailor’s miraculous

²⁰ These women are, sharing Candomblé terminology, *filhas de santo* of Dona Adélia. But they were not formally initiated as someone typically is in Candomblé. They regard their “mother,” Adélia, as a spiritual guide who helps them understand themselves, their Caboclos, and their spiritual universe. In other words, as far as I am aware, all of Dona Adélia’s *filhas de santo* have Caboclos from birth.

powers, she made the nearly three-hour drive from a Bahian city known as Tancredo Neves in search of spiritual counsel. Her story is indeed a common one in the Recôncavo.

For work, only a single Caboclo descends; never do they come in multiples as they do during rezas. This is because the sessions are serious obligations and only the most powerful of an individual's Caboclos is capable of helping. Indeed, people often comment on how "strong" someone's Caboclo is (or was), referring to the spirit's ability to cure and/or counsel. Rezas and mesa branca sessions are regarded as quite distinct affairs. For instance, though sometimes a Caboclo may give advice during a reza, the primary purpose of the event is "fun" (i.e., singing and dancing). The session, on the other hand, never has dancing, and the singing is limited to cantigas or Catholic hymns. Whereas anyone with a Caboclo can potentially manifest during any given reza (or if not at any reza certainly at his/her *own* reza), not all people with Caboclos hold sessions. In fact, most people who have Caboclos *do not* hold sessions, for these are seen as tremendous responsibilities. It is a high-pressure job with potentially dangerous spiritual ramifications.

4. The Caboclo in Historical Perspective

Jocélio Teles dos Santos (1995: 53), following Antonio Geraldo da Cunha's *Dicionário Etimológico Nova Fronteira*, explains that the term Caboclo (in this lexical form), which dates to 1781, meant a *mestizo* Indian (whose father was white and mother was Indian), a man of the backlands (*sertão*), of rural habits, and of skin burnt by the sun.²¹ Until the 19th century, "Caboclo" was used to refer to semi-aculturated Indians who lived among whites. But starting the mid-19th century, the term began to designate—as it does today—a man of the backlands, a "yokel" (*caipira*), and a "hick" (*roceiro*) (Santos 1995: 53). But why, in the reza context, does

²¹ Other parallel terms with similar meanings, such as *curiboca*, *cabocolo*, and *cauacolo*, have origins dating to the 17th century (Santos 1995: 53).

the term Caboclo encompass such a wide range of deities, from Orixás to saints and Brazilian archetypes?

In his study of the Jarê, a type of Caboclo Candomblé (*candomblé de caboclo*) native to Bahia's Chapada Diamantina region (located around 200 miles west of the Recôncavo), Ronaldo Senna (1998) notes the prominent spiritual position of the Caboclo. Having developed in a major mining area, Senna argues, Jarê has always reflected the region's cosmopolitan social milieu. The author notes that during the rituals there are various "lines" (*linhas*) of certain entities, all called Caboclos. The first *linha* comprises Ogum, Iansã (as [?] St. Barbara), and Xangô, all of which "were or are 'originally' Orixás." If these Orixás are called Caboclos, reasons Senna, the Jarê tradition demonstrates a "phenomenon of the 'caboclarization' of the Orixás in the construction of the candomblés de caboclo and not just a juxtaposition or mixture" (Senna 1998: 116). In other words, in Jarê, dissimilar from its Salvador-based Candomblé counterparts, Orixás do not sit side-by-side with Caboclos, but are instead *turned into* Caboclos (i.e., caboclarized). Yet the author never makes clear why such a process should take place at all.

Still, Senna seems to presume, like most scholars of Afro-Brazilian religion, that Orixás are entirely distinct from Caboclos and can therefore be *made into* Caboclos by designating them as such. Senna's language implies that the primary difference between an Orixá and a Caboclo is the deity's "origin." The Orixá is African and the Caboclo is Brazilian. However, the author's own observations catalyze an unaddressed epistemological crisis. If an Orixá can in fact be made into a Caboclo, then is it still African? Can something that *is* a Caboclo really *have been* an Orixá? At any rate, regardless of the potential similarities vis-à-vis the Caboclo in the cosmological world of the Jarê and the domestic Catholicism-inspired reza, Senna's concept of "caboclarization" seems somewhat unproductive. After all, an Orixá can be a Caboclo without

“becoming” a Caboclo; it is still an *African* Orixá. Put differently, among those who celebrate rezas, calling someone’s Obaluaiê a Caboclo would never mean that Obaluaiê is not also an African Orixá. Calling a deity a “Caboclo” does not change its mythical origins.

I would like to posit an alternative way of thinking about these pantheons, related less to the deities themselves than to the *way in which* a given deity—Ogum, Boiadeiro, St. Cosmas, etc.—is acquired. Jocélio Teles dos Santos notes that an important difference between Caboclos and Orixás relates to the way in which a human becomes a medium: “The making [*feitura*] of the Orixá passes through a whole process that takes into account the inheritance of African values. *The Caboclo, on the contrary, does not need initiation*” (Santos 1995: 67, emphasis added). Might it thus be that the use of the term Caboclo in the Recôncavo has *less to do* with what the deity is than *how it was acquired*? Such a perspective explains why a so-called Caboclo can be any deity, ranging from an “old African” to a Catholic saint or an Indian chief. Caboclos are not pantheons; they are inherited ancestral spirits which can be Africans, saints, or cowboys.

Anyone associated with the Candomblé community and/or academic literature on the subject would be (and is) quick to correct the generalized way in which Catholic (non-Candomblé) reza practitioners employ the term “Caboclo.” Still, the terminology is notably widespread and deeply ingrained in the culture of the Recôncavo. Why? The persistence of labeling as “Caboclo” *any* deity that happens to appear at a reza suggests to me that this conceptualization is a “logical” means of interpreting the spiritual world which can be deciphered through an examination of the historical trajectory of the “Caboclo” deity in Brazil.

CENTRAL AFRICA AND THE CABOCLO

The Caboclo as part of Candomblé in what has been called *candomblé de caboclo* (Caboclo Candomblé) seems to have existed since at least the late-19th century (Garcia 2008:

39). And since the early-20th century, academic literature on the topic has insisted that the Caboclo spirit is a result of contact between Africans and Indigenous populations (Carneiro 1991; Landes 1994 [1947]; Querino 1919; Ramos 1940 [1934]).²² But is the assertion accurate? While an Indigenous influence has certainly played a role in the development of the Caboclo, a better understanding of the entity emerges when it is rearticulated as a creole innovation shaped first and foremost by Central African cultural logics.

Folklorist Édison Carneiro was no doubt the earliest to contend that Candomblé-de-Caboclo resulted from a “fusion” of Bantu and Indigenous mythologies (Carneiro 1991). Although it is right to question the adequacy of Carneiro’s argument, sustained by an impulsive belief regarding the “poverty” of Bantu culture and mythology, looking to Bantu culture to understand the development of the Caboclo deity in Brazil still merits consideration. Indeed, looking to Bantu cosmology may be particularly fruitful. For instance, historian Kairn Klieman has attempted to explain the cultural ramifications of pre-colonial Bantu migrations throughout Africa by turning to what she calls a “first-comer” model:

Bantu speakers entered into the region carrying a set of ideas derived from the ancient Niger-Congo cultural heritage, ideas that prescribed the type of relations they should establish with first-comers to ensure their own survival in the new land. Key among these ideas, and certainly of great antiquity, is the notion that ancestor spirits are a central concern in religious observances. Often accompanying this core concept is the idea that a society’s land is its own because its ancestors are buried there. Ancestors are the link between past generations and the present, and their presence in the land

²² The great compiler, Arthur Ramos first published *O negro brasileiro* in 1934. In it he affirms that “Candomblé de Caboclo” is “according to what I could verify, from the intromission of entities of the Amerindian mythical in the fetish practices of the blacks” (Ramos 1940 [1934]: 159). At around the same time, folklorist Édison Carneiro, in *Religiões Negras*, argued that “[i]t was the very poor mystics of the Bantu blacks that, being fused with the equally poor mystics of the savage Amerindian, produced the so-called *candomblés de caboclo* in Bahia” (Carneiro 1991: 62). American anthropologist Ruth Landes, about a decade later, asserted that “‘Caboclo’ refers to the Indians of Brazil, and these cults worship Indian spirits which they have added to the roster of African deities” (Landes 1994 [1947]: 37). According to Jocélio Teles dos Santos (1995: 13), the literature on Afro-Brazilian religions has interpreted the Caboclo’s presence in the religions in one of two ways: (1) a syncretic Afro-Amerindian process or (2) as a variant of Jeje-Nagô Candomblé that has simply incorporated Indigenous elements. The difference is no doubt quite minute, but the latter historiographic perspective is guided by a Nagô-centrism that insists on variation over creation.

legitimizes the right of the community to the land. . . . Thus, the beliefs that the Bantu brought with them necessitated giving religious respect to the autochthons and deferring to their knowledge if the Bantu communities themselves were to establish the right relations with existing spiritual power. (Klieman 2003: 74)

While most Brazil-bound Bantu slaves came from specific locations such as the Kongo and present-day Angola (Parés 1997: 47), scholars have increasingly suggested that Central Africa can be considered a single “cultural area,” characterized primarily by Bantu-speaking peoples and their cultural practices (Slenes 2007: 116-117). Consequently, it seems reasonable to propose that the generalized first-comer Bantu belief system outlined by Klieman may have been imported to Bahia by the enslaved Africans, who came overwhelmingly from Central African during the first several centuries of the slave trade (see Reginaldo 2011; Sweet 2003).

Perhaps the term “Caboclo” to designate an ancestral “inherited” deity (whether an Indian or not) may have less to do with a syncretic relationship (i.e., fusion) with Indigenous religious *systems* than with a profound respect for the so-called first-comer. In other words, the metonymic “first-comer” in Brazil will always be “the Indian”—the Caboclo—but ancestral spirits who come before the present generation need not always be actual Indians. This *respect rather than fusion* would furthermore explain the cosmologically sound incorporation of non-Indigenous ancestral spirits—sailors, Orixás, sultans, Catholic saints, and cowboys—within the rubric of a “Caboclo.” Furthermore, this Central African provenance helps explain why Caboclos dance to and sing Central African-derived samba (see Ch. 4).

Another reason to look to Central Africa for the Caboclo spirit’s origins is that it seems to be cosmologically embedded in what anthropologist Victor Turner (1969, 1975) called, for the Ndembu of Zambia, “rituals of affliction” (a translation of the indigenous term *ngoma*²³), which “are performed to propitiate or exorcise ancestor spirits which are believed to bring illness or

²³ The term *ngoma* has different meanings among various cultures. “Ngoma” designates a drum, as well as performances, drumming, dancing, celebration, and ritual therapy which utilize such a drum (see Janzen 1992).

misfortune. The victims are their living kin. Reasons for afflicting vary, but it is commonly alleged that the victim has neglected to make offerings to the spirit or has forgotten the spirit in his heart” (V. Turner 1975: 245). In fact, the cult of affliction (and *ngoma* designation) is widespread throughout Central and Southern Africa, suggesting this is a generalized Central African institution. And involved in all *ngoma* affliction institutions is “the process of sickness, labeling, healing, searching for answers, becoming well, and emerging as a healer” (Janzen 1992: 87). Both Turner’s and Janzen’s descriptions appear to characterize the experiences of many afflicted people in the Recôncavo who found cures by learning to care for ancestral Caboclo spirits.²⁴

The earliest widespread possession ritual practiced in Brazil was the Central African-derived *calundú* ceremony (see also Ch. 6). And remarkably, the context and logic of modern-day Caboclo possession offers significant parallels to *calundús*:

Divination ceremonies that involved human possession most often were referred to in Brazil by the corrupted Kimbundu word *calundú*. In Angola, *quilundo* was a generic name for any spirit that possessed the living. . . . Because the term *quilundo* had a universal meaning, describing *any* ancestral spirit who possessed the living, it probably became a widely recognized term for spirit possession across all of Central Africa. . . . Brazilian *calundú* ceremonies were scripted in much the same manner as possession rituals in Central Africa, with the medium invoking the spirit to enter his or her body, followed by a direct conversation between the spirit and the client. . . . The vast majority of *calundú* ceremonies were conducted in order to determine the cause of illness. (Sweet 2003: 144-145)

Similarly, for the mesa branca session, the medium receives his/her Caboclo(s), ancestral spirits (and therefore not a far cry from the Central African *quilundo*), in order to suggest cures for illnesses and remedies for social binds. Still, the *calundú* ceremony seems to sit somewhere

²⁴ Although Janzen does not use the terms “to care,” it seems that cults of affliction are precisely about such a concern. The anthropologist explains that “[t]he worldview that inspires cults of affliction includes, as an axiom, the idea that ancestral shades and spirits, ultimately expressions of the power of God, may influence or intervene in human affairs. They are held responsible for visiting their sentiments and forces upon humans through sickness and misfortune. Who they are, why they come, and what to do about them is what cults of affliction are all about” (Janzen 1992: 94).

between mesa branca sessions and rezas. After all, *calundús* share with sambas at rezas percussion instruments (membrane drums and rattles), solo circle dancing, and possession of only select individuals (see Ch. 6). The major difference, of course, is that while Caboclos may offer general advice during rezas, they do not typically concentrate on curing in the same way that was apparently the case during *calundú* ceremonies. Therefore, while the Caboclo *concept* probably derives from the ancestral worship of the Central African *calundú*, it has clearly been adapted and reconfigured to meet New World needs.

That the *calundú* tradition underwent modifications is clear from early on. For instance, as early as the mid-1700s, Luzia Pinto, a black woman from Angola, began employing in her *calundús* curing techniques that appear to have been of Amerindian provenance. According to historian Laura de Mello e Souza, the Tupinambá, Apopocuva, and Chipaia all employed a healing technique that involved blowing on the afflicted body part. Similarly, Luzia Pinto, the historian explains, “would have the sick kneel before her, blowing on them and smelling them to understand their grievance and figure out what sickness was ailing them” (Souza 1987: 169).²⁵ This forging of new techniques and practices was probably increasingly common as African-Indian interaction and communication improved. Thus not only might the “first-comers” system have resulted in *respect* for Brazilian Indigenous groups—the “original owners” of the land—but it may also have led to the incorporation of specific ritual practices. And if indeed Central Africans adopted Amerindian modes of ancestor manifestation, as historian Robert Slenes (2007: 117) has suggested, then the multiple mediumship practice—of a single individual successively

²⁵ It is significant that curative blowing seems related particularly to Amerindian populations in a way that was distinct from Africans and Europeans. As Laura de Mello e Souza (1987: 169) observes, blowing often had negative potentials in Europe (particularly France), and suction, rather than blowing, appears to have been common among Africans in Portugal.

receiving manifold entities—may very well derive from an Amerindian source akin to northern Brazilian *Pajelança*.

Pajelança, according to Maués and Villacorta (2004: 11), “is a form of Shamanism during which occurs the phenomenon of the incorporation of the pajé [priest], being that his body is taken, in ritual trance, by entities known as encantados or caruanas.” The act of curing proceeds as follows: in a private room, the pajé receives the afflicted person and others who also wish to consult with the healer. After the room is full, the pajé says a number of prayers for God and Catholic saints. Sitting on a bench or a hammock, the pajé begins to receive—in succession—*multiple* deities (called *encantados*), while accompanying himself with a maraca. The pajé then sings and dances (Maués 1995: 185-186). Considering this ritual protocol, I find particularly convincing Luis Nicolau Parés’ argument that the multiple mediumship experience in the Tambor de Mina religious tradition of Maranhão (northern Brazil) has primarily resulted from Bantu-Amerindian cosmological complex:

It was in the plantations where the African magico-religious experts, and particularly the Bantu *kimbanda* in his role of healer-sorcerer, may have started to adapt, and to assimilate, the existing magical practices of the *caboclo* or Indian *pajé*. Both the *pajé* and the *kimbanda* share structural similarities in the conception of a plurality of ancestor’s [*sic*] and nature spirit fields. . . . The overall emphasis on the healing and anti-sorcery aspects of their activities, where the idea of exorcism is central, is probably the main convergence. . . . [S]imilar ways of operating may have contributed, to a certain extent, to an easy and quick acceptance of the local Pajelança by the Bantu slaves. (Parés 1997: 50)

Like Central African possession rituals, those of Pajelança are primarily directed to the curing of illnesses (Maués 1997: 188). And furthermore both cosmologies share a tradition of ancestor veneration. As such, I am suggesting that in Bahia, an Amerindian multiple mediumship practice was also absorbed into Central African healing rituals. Still, due to an accumulative strategy rooted in the “idea that the more spirit fields the healer-sorcerer can deal with the stronger his magic” (Parés 1997: 51), the Brazilian Caboclo continued to assimilate new logics and practices.

KARDECIAN SPIRITISM AND THE CABOCLO

Most prominent among the other “spirit fields” for the development of the Caboclo in Brazil was Spiritism (*espiritismo*). As Patrick Polk (2010: 373) observes, “The beginning of Latin American Espiritismos is usually traced back via France to the emergence of Spiritualism in late 1840s New York.”²⁶ And the religious movement exploded in Brazil precisely by way of the writings of Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail (1804-1869), better known as Allan Kardec. In 1857, the Frenchman published his first major work, *Le livre des Esprits* (*The Book of the Spirits*), followed by *Le livre des médiums* (*The Book on Mediums*) in 1861, and *L’Evangile selon le spiritisme* (*The Gospel According to Spiritism*) in 1864, among many other books. Spiritism was first introduced into Brazil as early as 1853, but the religion only took root after Kardec’s work was translated to Portuguese sometime in the 1860s (Lewgoy 2008; Ortiz 1978: 36). By the 1890s, Spiritism was fairly well established in the country.²⁷

According to Donald Warren (1968: 396), the “philosophical core” of Spiritism lies in “the evolutionist concept of souls or Spirits advancing intellectually and morally through vast space and endless time to inevitable union with God, their creator.” Mediums incorporate these astral bodies, designated as “perispirits,” in order to facilitate communication between the living and the dead. And in Brazil, because the spiritual aspects of Kardec’s writings were preferred over his rationalist (i.e., scientific) perspectives (Ortiz 1978: 36), Spiritism’s therapeutic orientation developed as its primary role in Brazil. The curative logic is:

²⁶ Following the “spirit raps” of Margaret and Kate Fox in 1848, mediums and Spiritualist societies mushroomed across the United States in the late-1840s and early-1850s. By the middle of 1852, Americans were holding séances on European soil and appeared in German newspapers by early-1853. Months later, the French press was also reporting séances, so-called *tables tournantes*. And finally, by 1861, middle-class believers created a “serious seance,” which served as a credible basis for a “respectable” religion (Monroe 1999: 219-221).

²⁷ Internal conflicts among different Spiritualist sects inhibited a unified movement until the early 1890s, “when the positivist-influenced penal code of the Old Republic included a new article that outlawed *espiritismo*” (Hess 1987: 18).

The gift of curing rests on the life force vaguely felt to be united with the perispiritic power of good Spirits. Many individuals are endowed with this gift of spiritual force. These curing mediums are expected to bestow their gift on the sick; not to do so is regarded selfish. Vibrations are the mechanisms of transmission accompanying the emanation of spiritual power . . . Practical curing sessions run from the formal (set hours, white smocks, bright lights) to the informal (in a sick friend's room at any time). . . . As a rule, though Spiritists seat themselves around or near a table, hence Spiritism of the Table, a term no longer confined just to the home circle of family, servants, and close friends. (Warren 1968: 398)

Clearly this Spiritist emphasis on healing is an aspect shared with the Central African cults of affliction and Amerindian curing rituals. Furthermore, French Spiritism (in Brazil) also partakes in a veneration of the deceased. It seems, therefore, that the Caboclo—an entity rooted in Central African cosmology and expanded as a result of contact with Amerindian healers—found further inspiration in Spiritism during the 19th century.

On January 11, 1933, the newspaper *A Tarde* published a rather lengthy piece whose title translates as “Marshal Deodoro is Manifested at a Spiritist Session: Indiscretions of an Orthodox Assistant.” The article describes its writer’s experience at a Spiritism session in Salvador. During the session, while the guests sat around a table, the first president of the Republic of Brazil, Marshal Manuel Deodoro da Fonseca, was incorporated by a medium. In a shocking turn of events, another spirit, also partaking in the session, demanded that ““Marshal Deodoro’ speak the truth,” for he was not in fact the Marshal! This triggered a tremendous uproar, leading to the eventual expulsion of the guests. The author concludes the piece by relating what was told to him by a guest who had remained at the event:

When we had just left, accompanied by the president no less, four of the “mediums” of the house received the spirits of Cosmas, Damian, Crispin, and Crispinian, which, after reprimanding the president, for having consented to allowing “those coarse folks” (referring to us) “to ruin the happiness of the party[”]—they ordered the people to bring them caruru, vatapá [flour past], acarajés [fried bean cakes] and other foods, and they came and were devoured voraciously, in the context of “canticos” [*songs*] of the other “manifested spirits,” being that “Dou” cried and “fought” with the other disembodied, for

they did not give him—“honey with ‘malafa’ [palm oil wine] and jurema [a type of plant]”.²⁸

While the term Caboclo is never used to designate any of the deities in this piece, the five Catholic saints present at the white table session would probably be considered to be Caboclos were a similar situation to transpire among reza practitioners today (and in a Candomblé context they might be called *erês*). Interestingly, although this 1933 table session appears to have followed a Kardecian model, with a table and mediumship, things quickly got out of hand and other “spirits” descended to have “fun” with *carurú* and “cânticos,” two of the main characteristics of a reza for St. Cosmas and St. Damian since at least the mid-20th century (Iyanaga 2010). This suggests that by January 1933, the relationship between Spiritism and Caboclo worship was quite intertwined indeed.

A comprehension of Kardecian Spiritism surely elucidates some of the basic elements composing the symbolic universe of the Caboclo’s mesa branca sessions, including the set hours, emphasis on white, and abundant use of candles. The name of the event itself—white table session—clearly refers to a 19th century séance, a remarkably stable linguistic marker despite the absence of physical “tables” at mesa branca sessions in the Recôncavo.²⁹ Garcia (2008) has argued that the Caboclo has primarily been influenced by Spiritism vis-à-vis “behavior.” The author affirms that “[t]he Caboclos act with the intention of practicing charity, a goal whose doctrine derives from a Kardecian view of treating one’s neighbor with goodness and love” (p. 48). No doubt one could argue that this “love thy neighbor” value is as organic a part of Christianity values as Spiritism (not to mention many other traditions), but nonetheless it seems clear that Spiritism has been a major force in the formation of the Caboclo entity in Brazil.

²⁸ AT, January 11, 1933, p. 2.

²⁹ As Renato Ortiz (1978: 34) notes regarding the Cult of the Cabula, which led to the Macumba tradition in Rio de Janeiro, “[T]he sessions and ornaments of the altar have the name of *table*, that is, the Kardecian table, where the spirits coming from the astral world descend.”

CATHOLICISM AND THE CABOCLO

Before concluding this speculative venture into the Caboclo's origins, I would like to mention briefly the impact of Christianity—via Catholicism—on the formation of the Caboclo. In fact, a reliance on Catholic symbolism, gestures, and prayers is an especially salient unifying characteristic among all Caboclos. This is clear as much in Party Interlude 5 as in the above description of the mesa branca session, both of which depict the Caboclo predilection for Catholic prayers and Catholic hymns. The significance of Catholicism is abundantly clear when considering the entity's integration into the reza tradition. It seems to me hardly happenstance that the most opportune time for a Caboclo to have “fun” is at the Catholicism-inspired reza. When I first spoke with Dona Maria in 2009, I asked her quite directly, “What exactly is the religion that involves the Caboclo?” Without batting an eye, Maria responded, accompanied in unison by her husband and son, “Catholic!”

Catholicism-inspired practices involving Caboclos are quite normal (and “traditional”) in the Recôncavo and this may be because the Caboclo itself is often seen as being a “baptized” Catholic. And this goes back at least a century. In 1919, Afro-Brazilian intellectual Manoel Querino published a short essay about Candomblé-de-Caboclo in the *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia* (and was later republished as an appendix in his 1938 *Costumes Africanos no Brasil*):

From the fusion of superstitious elements of the European, the African, and the forest people [*selvicola*] was originated the fetishism known by the name of “*Candomblé de Caboclo*,” well rooted among the inferior classes of this capital [Salvador]. . . . It is a belief among priests and practitioners of the denomination, which is guided by three entities: Jesus Christ, St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist, having Jesus Christ the particular name of *Good Caboclo* [*Caboclo Bom*]. They adore with great respect the symbol of the Cross; at the same time they believe in the revelations of the gypsies [*ciganos*] regarding the present and the future. . . . When the time comes it is necessary to celebrate [*festejar*] the *santo*, requesting a Mass. Upon returning from the temple they

pray the office of Our Lady; this done, they start the work [*funccção*]. (Querino 1919: 235-236)

From this description, it is quite apparent that by 1919, and perhaps dating to a much earlier inception, the Caboclo had developed an intrinsic relationship with Catholicism-inspired practices, such that before the Caboclo “worked,” people would attend public Mass and privately say the office of Our Lady. Querino’s observations also demonstrate that nearly a century ago, the term “Caboclo” was used—as it is at rezas today—to designate a variety of deities, including saints, Jesus, and gypsies.

In summary, can the Caboclo be called an Afro-Indigenous deity? First, it is important to remember that I am discussing the Caboclo outside of the institutionalized Candomblé context. Consequently, my observations from non-institutionalized settings in the Recôncavo depart significantly from the academic literature and much of the Candomblé discourse, which, as many authors have noted (Castillo 2010; Dantas 2009 [1988]; Matory 2005), has itself been significantly shaped by academic literature. Given the foray into the Caboclo’s creation, it seems the entity is indeed born out of a confluence of Central African and Amerindian religious practices and ideologies. But it is much more than that. It is also the result of Portuguese Catholicism (whether from within Brazil or already in Central Africa) and North American Spiritualism and French Spiritism by way of the ample dissemination of Allan Kardec’s writings. More than an Afro-Indigenous entity, then, the Caboclo that holds curing sessions and dances at rezas is, like the reza itself, a creole novelty. What is more, it is the type of “flexible” deity that is characteristic of innovations resulting from the Atlantic slave trade. In this way, the Caboclo is not only an important part of ancestry, family inheritance, and generational obligation. It is also an embodiment of a collective Black Atlantic memory.

5. Rezas and Race: Discursive Realities, Whitening, and Exú

Despite the shared vocabulary, cosmology, and deities, there is a palpable (and sometimes quite abrasive) discursive divide between Candomblé and mesa branca sessions that I have yet to address fully. The aforementioned *mãe de santo*, Dona Adélia, who has at least twenty-one Caboclos, and who holds a weekly white table session at her home, is not shy about her abhorrence of Candomblé. For instance, she told me of a story about Marciana, a friend of hers who had many “beautiful” Caboclos but who suddenly decided to begin practicing Candomblé. Upon attending Marciana’s yearly reza, Dona Adélia noticed that everything changed. Marciana added a goat sacrifice, a ritual jackfruit, a chunky (rather than smooth) okra stew, and completely removed the novena. This was off-putting to Dona Adélia and she decided to leave without participating in the samba. I asked Dona Adélia if her Caboclos would have partaken in the samba had she ended up staying. “They might have come, but only to denounce the event. You don’t mix God with the Devil. The Devil stays out on the street and doesn’t come inside. Until then, her *caruru* [i.e., reza] had been like mine, just water and flowers.” Dona Adélia then informed me that not long after, Marciana was found dead. And though many claimed it was the work of thugs, Dona Adélia was convinced that it was her friend’s spiritual negligence. After all, she explained, “If Marciana had the protection of her Caboclos, the thugs never would have been able to kill her in the first place.”³⁰

Locals generally agree that there is a big difference between Candomblé and rezas/mesa branca sessions. Dona Maria once explained to me that “mesa branca only has the baptized. Those Orixás there are baptized;³¹ they are clean. Animal sacrifice isn’t done at a mesa branca,

³⁰ This is my paraphrasing of an informal conversation I had with Dona Adélia at her home in Quilômetro 25, Bahia, on June 5, 2012.

³¹ Notice here that Dona Maria uses the term Orixá to discuss the entities present at the mesa branca. Indeed, Dona Maria seems to be using Orixá and Caboclo interchangeably. Just as she has told me that there are good and bad

there is no blood at a mesa branca, there is no alcohol at a mesa branca, there is nothing. And in Candomblé there's blood, there's animal sacrifice, there's everything."³² Similarly, Dona Adélia (from Muritiba) noted, "The mesa branca is different because it doesn't use liquor, it doesn't use palm oil. So what does it use? Water, candles, and flowers."³³ Even Candomblé priestesses regarded the two as discrete. Mãe Myra, priestess of a Candomblé terreiro in São Félix, explained to me that the difference is that in Candomblé they "shave the head" (i.e., do ritual initiations), use palm oil, and conduct animal sacrifice. This does not mean that Candomblé practitioners do not conduct mesa branca sessions (see Brazeal 2003 for an example), but it does mean that the ritual logic of "Candomblé" is distinct from that of the "mesa branca."³⁴

The three underscored aspects in Mãe Myra's assessment are initiation, animal sacrifice, and palm oil. I have already discussed the first of these, but the latter two need to be addressed. These two liquids—blood and palm oil—serve as immediate indexes of Candomblé. But they are also, as many scholars have convincingly argued, indexes of blackness (Ortiz 1978; Shapiro 1994). In anthropologist Dolores Shapiro's interpretation, these indexes create convenient euphemisms, for "[b]oth inside and outside Candomblé circles, animal sacrifice is held to be the most significant feature of the [possession] group. . . . The Candomblé can thereby be denounced without recourse to direct racial aspersions" (Shapiro 1994: 834). Condemnation of animal sacrifice is, in other words, a socially shared expression of racism. And palm oil (*dendê*) is no different: "Distancing oneself from dendê, as from blood, translates clearly into distancing oneself from the Afro-Brazilian" (Ibid.). Similarly, Renato Ortiz equates Umbanda's removal of

Caboclos, there surely exist for her good (baptized) and bad (non-baptized) Orixás. This suggests that general categories for deities is much more fluid than they might appear.

³² Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

³³ Interview conducted with Dona Adélia at her home in Muritiba, Bahia, on November 21, 2011.

³⁴ Mãe Myra furthermore explained that Candomblé adepts can participate in mesa branca sessions, but mesa branca practitioners (i.e., those who are not initiated in Candomblé) cannot participate in Candomblé. This highlights the importance of ritual initiation for Candomblé as opposed to mesa branca.

practices such as animal sacrifice with *whitening*: “The genuinely African elements, or better, Afro-Brazilian are rejected by . . . the creators of the Umbanda religion” (Ortiz 1978: 31).

According to these views, the ritual use of blood and palm oil are socially shared indexes of race such that their denigration becomes an indirect—yet explicit—form of racism. Following such logic, it might be concluded that the critical views articulated by Dona Maria and Dona Adélia (both of whom are Afro-Brazilian),³⁵ the former (implicitly) calling Candomblé “dirty” because it included blood and the latter equating Candomblé with the Devil, are expressions of racism.

There rests no doubt in my mind that the historical construction of race and anti-black racism plays a significant role in framing how these women (and many others living in the Recôncavo) characterize Candomblé. After all, Candomblé and African-derived cultural practices more generally were common targets of institutionalized discrimination and police repression until at least the first half of the 20th century.³⁶ Moreover, judgments regarding the “civility” of Candomblé practices are dynamically linked to the “whitening” ideologies that had become crucial social discourses by the 19th century.³⁷ Still, I feel this *practice-as-race* interpretation is problematic. Firstly, as Lindsay Hale (2001) implies in a study of Umbanda

³⁵ I do not know if Dona Adélia would indeed call herself “negra.” Dona Maria, has, in less direct words, expressed to me that she is of African descent. Yet both women clearly have features associated with African-descendants, including a dark complexion and kinky hair, and I would thus be fairly confident in affirming that others in the Recôncavo (or in the U.S., for that matter) would identify both women as “negra” or at the very least, “African-descendent.”

³⁶ While I cannot address the topic in full here, historical sources ranging from the Colonial period to the first half of the 20th century offer proof of constant police raids on private homes where Candomblé or other Afro-Brazilian/African activities were believed to be practiced. See, among many others, Braga (1995), Harding (2000), Lühning (1995/1996), Mott (1988), Reis (1988, 1989), J. Santos (1997), E. Santos (2009), and Souza (1987). This officialized hostility also includes campaigns against particular behaviors that were/are stereotypically assigned to Afro-Brazilians. In particular is the three-century development of what George Reid Andrews (1991: 48) calls the “ideologia da vadiagem,” according to which the elite classes have “a firm and unshakable belief in the innate laziness and irresponsibility of the black and racially mixed Brazilian masses.”

³⁷ Since the late-19th century, around the Law of the Free Womb (1871) and abolition (1881), as different sectors of society were figuring out how to deal with the emergent questions vis-à-vis race (Albuquerque 2009), the elites—and particularly the abolitionists—developed an ideology of whitening in order to confront the Brazilian race “problem.” This ideological move subsumed a racist white ideal which society could strive to reach (Skidmore 1983, 1990).

leaders,³⁸ it is erroneous to presuppose an ideological homogeneity even within a single community. The second problem, it seems to me, is that both Shapiro and Ortiz are treating what are essentially magical practices as meaningful *only* in the social realm of human relations. Finally, neither author acknowledges the obvious fact that possession *also* indexes Africa.³⁹ In other words, people would be practicing *selective racism* by accepting an African-derived style of possession (with drums and dancing) and discriminating against blood and palm oil. Why would they do so? More is at play here than race; it is also an issue of morality (albeit also a racialized morality) and, perhaps more importantly, an example of *selective historical memory*.

FEEDING EXÚ: BLOOD AND PALM OIL

Possession is distinct from blood and palm oil because of the latter's explicit association with Exú, the guardian of the crossroads. But since Exú is "able to realize both the good and the bad" (Ortiz 1978: 126), he is also unquestionably the most morally ambiguous deity in the Afro-Brazilian pantheon. He is "the messenger of the orixás" and "a go-between for men and gods" (Capone 2010 [1999]: 43), what Bastide (2001 [1958]: 34) described as an "African Mercury." Consequently, in Candomblé contexts, exús are always ritually "fed" (with blood) before offerings are given to any other deities. And, for immediate solutions to earthy problems, people appeal to Exú by way of *ebós*, or *despachos* (dispatches), which are offerings of—among other things—sacrificed animals (and blood), palm oil, liquor, and cigars, which are placed at crossroads, roads, bridges, or railroad tracks. Of these ritual substances, "[b]lood sacrifice," more

³⁸ Regarding the first issue, Lindsay Hale (2001: 219) has duly observed that "[n]ot all early Umbandistas were embarrassed about Africa; in fact, such figures as Tancredo da Silva Pinto proudly proclaimed the African roots of Umbanda, and celebrated the religious integrity of Afro-Brazilians, even under conditions of slavery." In the author's estimation, "Umbanda . . . is pushed and pulled between opposing poles of pride and shame over Afro-Brazilian identity" (p. 219), an interpretation quite a bit more sophisticated and methodologically sound than the generalized presuppositions of homogenous indulgences of "whiteness."

³⁹ Of course there is also possession in a number of other traditions, ranging from the receiving of the Holy Spirit in Christian traditions to Spiritist mediumship and Amerindian Shamanism. But the *form* of possession associated with Caboclo veneration is clearly related to African aesthetics, actions, and logics.

than perhaps any other ingredient, “serves as payment to exús for earthly work” (Brazeal 2010: 268). Thus animal sacrifice, more than just an index of Africa, is an index of the morally ambiguous “work” of Exú. This is no less true of palm oil.

Anthropologist Raul Lody (1992) has argued that palm oil is “one of the most marked cultural symbols and of immediate decodification with that which is African” (p. 11). But beyond this, the author asserts that palm oil *is* Exú:

Exu incarnates a broad understanding of the telluric African that is equal, standard, general and therefore indivisible. A no less indivisible relationship is that of the African man with palm oil and since Exu is not only a component of this African man, but that which was able to aggregate a defensive story of this same African man, and, in this way, an ideal of the African being in Brazil is, without a doubt, an agent of palm oil. . . . It is a fundamentally ethical and moral vision, that which brings together Exu and palm oil, while at the same time bringing together the African man and palm oil, and even Africa and palm oil. (Lody 1992: 9)

Despite the slightly convoluted language, the anthropologist seems to be insinuating that Exú is the same as palm oil because it, like the (enslaved?) African man, is a sign of African resilience in Brazil. Lody further suggests that “palm oil can be seen as African blood, or that orange sperm that gushes from the fruitful and magnificent penis of Exu” (p. 10). Not only is palm oil a vibrant link to Africa in Brazil, but it is also intimately linked to Exú. Indeed, when I asked Dona Maria why palm oil was so problematic, she explained that “palm oil is for dispatches. They grab that palm oil, make that *farofa*, and put it there for stuff that is no good. . . . They say that *candomblezeiros* [a pejorative term for Candomblé adepts] really like palm oil and do garbage with palm oil, they put everything there on the roads.”⁴⁰ For Dona Maria, as for many others, palm oil is an index of “bad” because of its use in dispatches for Exú and its presumed demonic dealings.

⁴⁰ Interview conducted with Dona Maria at her home in São Félix, Bahia, on December 8, 2011.

Exú's historical link to the Christian Devil is erroneous, yet not entirely unfounded. After all, the deity assumes a complex level of moral ambiguity in the Candomblé religion:

[Exús] benefit or harm people as they are told or as they like. Malicious and vengeful if mistreated, they also take care of their own and have a sense of poetic justice. . . . [E]xús are used by practitioners of Candomblé to resolve problems and perform the value transformations that assure the continuity of religious communities. . . . Exú may be the Devil or a devil, but he is not the Devil of North Atlantic Christendom. (Brazeal 2010: 284)

Exú is capable of doing more than just charity work; he is a deity capable of realizing what some people, such as Dona Maria, characterize as “garbage.” The problems self-affirming Catholics have with palm oil and animal sacrifice are not the acts in and of themselves, but rather the purpose presumed to be guiding them: *contracting Exú for no good*. After all, save an insignificant number of exceptions,⁴¹ people always use palm oil in their cooking; it is one of the main ingredients of *caruru* and its accompanying dishes.

It is also worth emphasizing that animal sacrifice is sometimes an integral part of rezas, though it is increasingly atypical and people rarely discuss the ritual. However, when Catholics do talk about their animal sacrifices, they often stress that it is *only* for their saint. Dona Cilú proudly boasted to me, “Here there’s no sacrifice! We only do the sacrifice of the two male virgin chicks for St. Cosmas.”⁴² With this paradoxical affirmation, Dona Cilú was informing me that on the day of her reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian she did not sacrifice any animal *for* Exú, she only fulfilled her “obligation” to her twin patron saints. I know of no case in which a person with a Caboclo does not also conduct an animal sacrifice at dawn on the day of the reza. Yet all of the non-Candomblé individuals I have met make it explicit that they are not practicing

⁴¹ Dona Maria, for instance, told me that for spiritual reasons, she never uses palm oil in her *caruru* when it is for St. Cosmas and St. Damian. Again resounding is the association with Exú.

⁴² Interview conducted with Dona Cilú and her son at their home in Opalma, Bahia, on February 15, 2012. The two “virgin” chicks are designed to represent the twin saints who are “without sin.”

Candomblé (i.e., serving Exú); they are only satisfying their “obligation.”⁴³ Notably, when food offerings are made—often termed *axés*—these are placed in woods or running water (i.e., rivers or oceans), never at crossroads.

Summarizing my argument, the discursive contradistinction made between ritual practices for Caboclos and similar Candomblé activities, is based less on race than on Catholic conceptions of morality. Appealing to Exú (i.e., the “Devil”), many Catholics (and evangelical Christians) reason, is something only a malefactor would risk. As such, Candomblé is bad not *because it is “black”* but because it relies on practices (and deities) that are morally dubious. This is not to say that socially prevalent racism is not to blame for the demonization of Candomblé practices from the outset, but the *primary* motivation for reza practitioners to discriminate against Candomblé is *not* race or racism. Nor do the practices they find objectionable *necessarily* relate to race. But what else is at play?

SELECTIVE COLLECTIVE MEMORY

I would like to propose a somewhat more abstract interpretation. It seems to me that the acrimonious feelings many people express toward Exú are not only responses to the potential harmfulness of the deity. I think a facet of the problem is the *type* of historical memory that is evoked upon turning to Exú. Take, for instance, Dona Adélia’s explanation regarding the difference between her “baptized” work and that of Candomblé: In Candomblé, the Orixás use *slaves* to do their work. And the work of slaves is always “dirty.” In this context, “slaves” refer to exús, for these devilish figures are often described as “slaves” of the Orixás (Bastide 2001 [1958]: 178; Carneiro 1978 [1948]: 68-70; Lody 1992: 11). The image of Exú as a “slave” of the Orixá rather than, say, a “helper” or, as is sometimes said, a “messenger,” seems to be, as some

⁴³ Sometimes the obligation is done for entities that do not descend in the reza host. For example, I have seen, at rezas for St. Cosmas and St. Damian, animals sacrificed for other entities, such as St. Roch and Nanã.

scholars have reasonably suggested, a direct result of Candomblé's development within Bahia's slavocracy (Capone 2010 [1999]: 275; Lody 1992: 11). As such, dealing with an Exú is a direct appeal to a slavocratic system of exchange. Moreover, the way in which Exú is characterized appears in some ways to reproduce the racist discourse historically used by the ruling classes to express their own fears vis-à-vis their human chattel.⁴⁴ Might it be then that the invocation of Exú—by way of blood and palm oil—evokes an uncomfortable memory of a distant past with which many non-Candomblé adepts do not identify and which they feel would be better left *forgotten*?

Anthropologist Luis Nicolau Parés (2010) raises a similar issue regarding the progressive disappearance of a Candomblé practice known as “buying of the *iaôs*,” which is a ritual reenactment of a slave auction. Parés suggests that the ritual's “explicit references to an uncomfortable past may be contributing to its progressive obliteration” (p. 73). Furthermore, the author notes, by the early-20th century, “the ceremony slowly transformed into a *brincadeira* (game) a *divertissement* . . . One could interpret the satirical mimesis of the slave auction as a subtle subversive strategy for appropriating, domesticating, and controlling the conflictive memory of slavery. Ritual continued to activate the past, but in order to neutralize it through ridicule” (p. 87). Might the explicit discursive distancing of Candomblé *because* of its Exú and *consequent evocation of slavery* be a response—filtered through the demonizing terms set by the racist Bahian elite—to reconciling the painful memory of slavery? Remember, by calling ancestral deities Caboclos, the ancestors are effectively inscribed into the mythical image of the

⁴⁴ The historical record—ranging from the Colonial period to the Republican—shows that the ruling classes always acted with caution in dealing with slaves, who could rebel, harm their masters, or flee (see Reis 2011). Particularly in the spiritual realm, slaves were not infrequently accused of afflicting—by way of sorcery—slave masters and masters' families. As Reis argues, “[t]he belief that sorcery could help slaves obtain manumission or break the willpower of and even kill their masters was widespread” (p. 69). Consequently, masters, unsure what might be done to them, no doubt treated their capricious slaves with gradations of mistrust.

free Caboclo Indian, “whose power comes from the forces of nature and who ha[s] never been subjected to the yoke of servitude” (D. D. Brown 1986: 67). Consequently, although the inherited Caboclo appears to harbor memories of the slave trade, these collective memories are repressed by the “free” quality of the Caboclo and the non-descript history of the “ancestor.” Exú, the slave, exposes this dissimulation and *reminds* people of a past that is largely at odds with contemporary Catholic narratives. It is, in other words, *dangerous to remember* slavery; slavery is part of Candomblé, not Catholicism. By deriding Candomblé practices through the dualistic Christian frame of good and evil, people offer an implicit critique on the past that is appropriate to their present. Like individual memory, collective memory can also be selective.

Getting rid of Exú is not equivalent to removing “what is left of black, of Afro-Brazilian, of ‘traditional’ in the ‘modern’ Brazilian society” (Ortiz 1978: 122). Rather, eliminating Exú is a ritual forgetting; it is the exclusion of a traumatic chapter in Afro-Brazilian history. As I have shown, for reza practitioners a Caboclo is primarily different from an Orixá because it is unsolicited, not because it is not African. It is a difference between obligation and choice, articulated as moral goodness and evil, respectively. The slave trade happened and cannot be forgotten—such that by discursively positioning themselves against Candomblé, reza practitioners are always also remembering what they seem to suggest should be forgotten—but turning to it to control the present is “garbage.” The Caboclo, a family inheritance, is a constant reminder of the nightmarish *weight* of the dead generations, but *conjuring* the spirits of that past is ultimately wrong. The discursive demonization of sacrifice and palm oil in ritual practice is less a manifestation of racial valuations than a symptom of a selective historical memory. The traumatic history of the slave trade is condensed in Exú and those who continue to remember *that* past are viewed as outsiders to the Catholicism-inspired reza tradition.

6. Concluding Thoughts

The chief message of this chapter is that obligation matters. Devotions are part of contracts that people make not only with saints but also with their own families. And the Caboclo is vibrant proof of this. I have dealt here primarily with individuals who are not *filhos de santo* and thus do not usually choose to have Caboclos, but can receive them as “gifts” and obligations. The same is true of one’s devotion to a saint. These obligations are annual keepsakes of one’s past, both collective and personal. By embodying the Caboclo, people are confronted with a reminder that *their* “Catholic past” is part of the Black Atlantic. To make sense of it, they make distinctions regarding the historical memories of slavery that are encapsulated in specific Candomblé ritual activity. Catholicism is a religion; family inheritance is an obligation. Hosting rezas and receiving Caboclos are practices, not religions. Therefore an individual’s religious identity, constructed by the Catholic Church narrative, can sensibly intersect with other religious institutions or practices as s/he sees fit.

Reneging on obligations (whether to a Caboclo or saint) by embracing evangelical Christianity, for instance, what might be interpreted as erasing the past, has dire consequences *in the present*. Forgetting that the past is part of your present, or worse, ignoring the past, can bring about financial and/or physical hardships. The story of evangelical Tina, for example, demonstrates how disregarding Sts. Cosmas and Damian can lead to financial calamity. Similarly, when those who have Caboclos ignore them or do not appropriately “care” for them, medically untreatable illnesses often emerge. For the cosmological world of reza practitioners, respecting one’s obligations (i.e., remembering one’s past) is the key to a peaceful daily life and a prosperous future. But memories can be selective.

Caboclos “fit” into the context of a discursively Catholic tradition because the practitioners of the tradition place a high value on obligation. Thus if someone has inherited a Caboclo, there is *no choice* but to accept it and care for it. However, this care must not breach the realm of sorcery, for a Catholic Caboclo only does charitable work. A Candomblé Caboclo involves “slaves” and the potential for harm, and thus betrays the moral order. The spiritual universe of the reza is one in which ancestral spirits exist and help the needy on earth, just as saints intercede on humans’ behalf and palm oil in the wrong hands can lead to unspeakable things. A popular Bahian saying serves as a reminder that those who are “in” Catholicism “should stay in,” while those who are “out” of Candomblé “should stay out.”

CHAPTER SIX
“Catholic Samba” in the Bahian Home (c. 1739-1950):
Empowerment in an Afro-Bahian Institution

“O samba de roda nasceu nas rezas”
Samba de roda was born at the reza
–Mário dos Santos¹

In the 21st century, people in the Recôncavo perform samba during their rezas not only because they themselves enjoy the samba, but also because they believe the saints delight in the Central African-derived art form. For this reason, rezas always include samba after the novena, whether this means a few minutes of the saint’s samba or a large all-night party of dancing and singing. If indeed samba is etymologically and aesthetically Central African, what processes led to its association with Catholic saints of European provenance specifically in Bahia? How, in other words, did “Catholic samba” become an “institution” (Mintz and Price 1992 [1976])?² This chapter proceeds along the following lines of inquiry: *Since when does a domestic samba that can be described as Catholic exist? What does this say about how the black experience is embodied in the reza? What does this reveal regarding the broader African and African-American foundational contributions to society in Bahia, Brazil, and the Americas?*

In Bahia, samba dancing for saints developed as a way by which Africans and Afro-Brazilians could venerate Catholic saints, an innovation that would eventually disseminate from the black social sectors to the general population. I posit that it made “sense” (i.e., was logical) to celebrate Catholic saints by way of samba because Africans and their descendents in Bahia *reinvented and transformed the saints*. As such, the preference saints are believed to have for

¹ Mário dos Santos is a retired police official, poet, composer, local historian, advocate for regional artistic expression (music, dance, arts), and “President” of one of the most prominent samba-de-roda groups in São Félix, the Grupo Cultural Os Filhos de Nagô.

² It is an “institution” because it is, as Mintz and Price (1992 [1976]: 23) put it, “any regular or orderly social interaction that acquires a normative character, and can hence be employed to meet recurrent needs.”

samba reveals the *historical processes* of rearticulation and revision, suggesting that the relationship of saints to samba developed over time. These historical processes are the focus of the present chapter, as I examine how “Catholic samba” developed from Central African dances in Colonial Brazil. While the term “samba” only first appears during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, references to Central African dances in Bahia (and Brazil) that are strongly linked to Catholic contexts exist as early as the 17th century.

One of the primary goals of the present chapter is to explore the available evidence from the 17th century to the mid-20th—focusing on the presence of samba in the domestic sphere—in order to demonstrate *one possible* trajectory of the development of this “Catholic samba” in Bahia. My sources are varied: 19th-century archival documents, 19th- and 20th-century newspapers and periodicals, 19th-century travelers’ accounts, and secondary sources. The clues are far from unequivocal and thus my interpretations are often guided by what might be construed as an ethnohistorical approach. In other words, my knowledge of the present—including oral histories—significantly informs my reading of the historical documents. This should not suggest that I hold a static view of cultural practices. Rather, my approach is based on the assumption that the innovation of “saints loving samba” did not spring up overnight, and that the current incarnation of this “cultural institution” holds at least some core continuities with its own centuries old past.

A methodological caveat is in order, however. Terminology presents one of the great obstacles in an elusive historical project such as this. The term “samba” has probably always been—as it is today—polysemic. It is thus problematic to assume that the word “samba” in the historical documentation necessarily refers to the same musical and choreographic phenomenon it characterizes today. What is clear, however, is that the word “samba,” as it is employed

beginning in the mid-1800s, designates an African-derived celebratory dance. In other words, it is distinct from European-derived dances such as marches or quadrilles. While the lexical “samba,” and other vague terms such as “batuque” or “batucajé,”³ were at one time used fairly indiscriminately to refer to *any* African-derived musical practice (particularly when it included hand percussion), observers became increasingly skilled at distinguishing these from African-inspired religious practices (such as the emergent Candomblé) over the course of the 19th-century. Finally, my discussion of “samba” refers specifically to samba native to Bahia, and not to the better-known samba of Rio de Janeiro (see Ch. 4).

Traditionally, scholars have interpreted “sambas” or “batuques” in the historical record as references to either secular recreation or early Candomblé. Here I am suggesting, as a third alternative, samba as Catholicism. And just as historians have used context to determine whether practices were sacred or profane, I too decipher context to serve my new Afro-Catholic readings. Where possible, I also rely on characteristics recognizable today (such as choreography and geographical provenance) to determine whether something is in fact “samba” in the 21st-century Bahian sense of the term. Thus the evidence I am searching for here, when I use the term “Catholic samba,” is (1) choreographic movements suggestive of Bahian samba in Catholic contexts, (2) domestic African-derived musical practices that seem closer to Catholic celebrations than African-derived religions (i.e., no possession, no ritual clothing, no initiation rites, etc.), and (3) events held for Catholic saints that are large dance parties or are specifically designated as “sambas.” I will also attempt to identify other events at which there may have been samba performance (a performance of *cantigas*) without necessarily having been denominated as “sambas” (events).

³ As João Reis notes, the terms “samba” and “batuque” were “semantically convergent” (Reis 2002: 128).

The broad temporal perspective of this study does not permit a *detailed* examination of socio-historical context. Although a more comprehensive investigation could certainly contribute significantly to the issues in which I am interested, I limit the scope of the present chapter to a diachronic depiction of Catholic samba in Bahia. My interest here is *not* in the historical development of samba.⁴ Rather I use Catholic samba as a means of understanding a deeper ideological process concerning black empowerment going back to the Colonial period. If indeed smoke indicates fire, then this “Catholic samba” is no doubt vivacious evidence of a profound ontological fire.

After presenting the historical evidence vis-à-vis Catholic samba, I then ask “why”: why has samba been linked to Catholic saints for more than three centuries? My argument is that samba for saints, as an experimental practice of black empowerment, developed out of the sub-human conditions of slavery and its aftermath. Africans and their descendents appropriated and transformed Catholic saints, thus creating a new social institution in which samba was a “legitimate” devotional practice, while simultaneously redefining European saints in such a way that these Christian martyrs *identified* with the culture and plight of the black populations and could therefore act as their divine “advocates.”

The interpretation I am proposing here suggests reconsidering Catholicism as an integral part of the African Diaspora in Bahia and, by implication, in many parts of the Black Atlantic more generally. Indeed, scholars of the Black Atlantic have tended to relegate the practice of European-inspired religious traditions by African and African descendent populations to a category of “assimilation,” an implied “passivity,”⁵ treating only African-inspired religions as

⁴ For an excellent overview of samba in Brazilian history, see Sandroni (2001: 84-99).

⁵ Mary Karasch, for instance, describes Catholic conversion as the Africans “succumb[ing] to their owners’ influences” (Karasch 1987: 254).

loci of “resistance.”⁶ I posit that this so-called assimilation is really an instance of creative innovation. In this way, “Catholic samba,” constructed over time with whatever tools were available, is neither unbridled resistance nor submissive assimilation. Instead, it, like so many African-American institutions, is an empowering “experimental practice” that lies somewhere along the ambiguous line separating assimilation from resistance.

The many Catholic saint celebrations found in 21st-century Bahia, practiced by both Euro- and Afro-Brazilians, with sambas, Catholic Church hymns, and Afro-Bahian foodstuffs, result from centuries of negotiating *between* resistance and assimilation, innovation and recreation. As I will elaborate in this chapter, I propose rethinking this “in-between-ness” as a rearticulation—an Afro-Bahian experience—that is the consequence of a process of black empowerment. More directly put, in confronting the oppressive system of slavery and racial discrimination, the enslaved and discriminated, interested in both salvaging their own humanity and constructing the best possible lives, creatively built new cultural institutions based on interpretations of fragments of theirs and their oppressors’ pasts.

I organize this chapter primarily along chronological lines: (1) Central African dancing in 17th- and 18th-Century Brazil; (2) the appropriation of Catholic saints in Brazil and Africa; (3) Catholic samba in the 19th century; (4) Catholic samba in the 20th century; (5) rethinking resistance and assimilation; (6) an overview of the field of black empowerment in the 18th and 19th centuries; and (7) final thoughts concerning this study and future directions.

1. Central African Dancing in 17th- and 18th-Century Brazil

I begin in the late-17th century, with a vague reference to the “umbigada,” the characteristic, Central African-derived movement strongly associated with present-day Bahian

⁶ This tendency is particularly true in geographical contexts where African-inspired religions are prominent, viz. Brazilian Candomblé, Haitian Vodou, Cuban Regla-de-Ocha, etc.

samba (see Ch. 4).⁷ Musicologist Rogério Budasz notes some of the era's common dances in the poem "Regra de bem viver, que a persuasões de alguns amigos deu a uns noivos, que se casavam,"⁸ by Gregório de Mattos. In the poem, Mattos writes that on occasion of a feast for Our Lady of Guadalupe a black woman, Luísa Sapata, danced the so-called "cãozinho" (little dog), during which "[s]he took so many belly blows [*embigadas*] / She ended up transforming / Wine into pure vomit." (Budasz 2001: 151-152). Though Luísa Sapata appears to have been dancing the "cãozinho," and not the "embigada," Budasz interprets this "embigada" as a "choreographic movement" (p. 152). If in fact this Central African "embigada" was part of Luísa's dance, might it have resembled today's samba? It is difficult to know. While it is unclear why or under what conditions Luísa was dancing, one of the general implications of this small piece of evidence might be that as early as the seventeenth century, a feast for Our Lady of Guadalupe included a Central African choreographic movement. Might Central African dancing at saints' feasts have been widespread in the Colony? This certainly appears to have been the case in public celebrations organized by black brotherhoods for their patron saints.

BLACK BROTHERHOODS

Lay brotherhoods played an integral role in the socio-religious milieu of Colonial Brazil. "In the pattern of religious life in Bahia," historian Manoel Cardozo (1947: 18) explains, "[T]he *irmandades* or lay brotherhoods figured prominently, and added color and vitality to the social cosmos of which they were intimately a part." After all, not only did confraternities annually sponsor public festivities for their patron saints, but they also served as mutual aid societies, vehicles for social ascension, and philanthropic organizations. By the beginning of the 18th

⁷ The "umbigada" is so closely associated with samba that the title of Edison Carneiro's 1961 book about Brazilian samba is *Samba de umbigada*.

⁸ The title of the poem literally translates as "Rule of Good Living, That At the Persuasion of Some Friends Was Given to Some Affianced, Who Were Getting Married."

century, there were at least thirty-one brotherhoods in Bahia dedicated to the Virgin Mary alone (Cardozo 1947: 22), and the sodalities became increasingly popular approaching the 19th century. While membership in brotherhoods was sometimes restricted to specific classes or ethnicities, this was actually quite rare (Parés 2007: 82; Silveira 2006).⁹ Instead, the primary exclusions were made based on “color” (*cor*) distinctions, thus separating black brotherhoods from white and mulatto (*pardo*) confraternities (Mulvey 1980: 254-255; Parés 2007: 82; Reis 2003 [1991]: 41-51; Russell-Wood 1974: 579).¹⁰

In 18th-century Bahia, the most popular saints among black brotherhoods were Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Benedict the Moor. Indeed, as early as 1722, Friar Agostinho of Santa Maria counted—from Salvador to Ilhéus (a stretch of land totaling around 240 miles)—twelve black brotherhoods that worshipped Our Lady of the Rosary.¹¹ And it appears there were at least six brotherhoods dedicated to Saint Benedict (Reginaldo 2011: 121-122).¹² The popularity of Our Lady of the Rosary continually increased, such that these brotherhoods numbered nearly twenty over the course of the 18th century. Notably, whether in Bahia or Pernambuco (to the north), these brotherhoods were run—almost exclusively—by Angolans and Brazil-born blacks (*crioulos*) (Reginaldo 2011: 172). This means that although *exclusion* vis-à-vis ethnicity was rare in lay confraternities, official *control* was maintained in the hands of Angolans and *crioulos*. This

⁹ Luis Nicolau Parés (2007: 82) affirms, “Many authors have pointed to the fact the black brotherhoods were divided according to various African ethnicities . . . Now, this ethnic exclusivity was extremely rare and the brotherhood always included a plurality of ethnic-racial groups.”

¹⁰ Some of the most significant exclusions were between Brazil-born *crioulos* and foreign-born Africans. While this distinction was not a rule, it was a fairly common occurrence (Parés 2007: 82; Reginaldo 2011: 151-163; for a discussion of the “conflicts” and “alliances” between Africans and *crioulos*, see Parés 2005: 97-103).

¹¹ The spread of black brotherhoods for Our Lady reached beyond Bahia. Elizabeth Kiddy (2005: 79) notes that in Minas Gerais, to the southwest of Bahia, “By 1720, brotherhoods of the rosary had already been established in all the official towns in Minas Gerais.” The author further notes that “during the colonial period, brotherhoods of the rosary were the most numerous of all the brotherhoods in the captaincy” (p. 80). Still, these brotherhoods were not strictly black brotherhoods, often including people of any race or gender.

¹² Other popular devotions among black brotherhoods included St. Ephigenia, St. Kaleb, St. King Baltazar, St. Anthony of Cartago, different invocations of Christ (Lord of the Redemption, of the Martyrs, of the Resurrection), and those of Our Lady (of Amparo, Guadalupe, and the Conception) (Reginaldo 2011: 122).

power was typically secured through pre-established hierarchies written into the sodalities' official statutes. Consequently, through management positions, Angolans and crioulos established monopolies over 18th-century Bahian black brotherhoods of Our Lady of the Rosary (pp. 173-185).

The most significant day on the brotherhoods' calendars was its annual patron saint commemoration. "Each lay religious brotherhood put on an annual feast day celebration, and the communities competed to see which would have the most extravagant festival. The festivals included religious observances as well as lavish processions in which all the brotherhoods in town would participate" (Kiddy 2005: 97). The lavishness was expressed through ostentation: "[B]rothers and sisters set out from their confraternity in their finest raiment, with capes, torches, banners, crosses, insignias, and statues of saints borne on platforms in pomp-filled processions, followed by dances and food and drink" (Reis 2003 [1991]: 54).¹³ But how were these dances performed? If in fact Angolans exercised what historian Lucilene Reginaldo has called a "singular importance" in the Bahian brotherhoods, whether through their prominence as founders of brotherhoods or their monopolistic positions of power (Reginaldo 2011: 239-240), one is compelled to wonder if this ethnic group did not also shape the aesthetics of celebration. Indeed, evidence strongly suggests that the celebratory song and dance of black Colonial confraternities was strongly linked to Central African performative expressions.

In a 1786 letter, black devotees of the Glorious Lady of the Rosary of the City of Bahia wrote to Queen Maria I requesting that they be permitted "masks, *dances in the idiom of Angola* with their related instruments, Songs [*Cânticos*] and praises" (Reginaldo 2011: 204, emphasis added). Here is an example of black agents, themselves probably identifying as Angolans,

¹³ Although the focus in Reis' characterization is on the events' visual splendor, as Alisson Eugênio (2002: 38) observes, these were equally stunning events for their effect on other senses. The author points to the smells of incense, as well as the loudness of music, bells, sermons, and firecrackers.

characterizing their own dance as Angolan. While it is difficult to know exactly what was meant by “dances in the idiom of Angola,” Alfredo de Sarmiento’s 1880 travelogue from nearly a century later affirms that people in Luanda (Angola) danced a ring dance strikingly reminiscent of Bahian samba. What were the “instruments” mentioned in the letter to Queen Maria I? Iconographic evidence suggests that these were Central African instruments. For example, pictured in Antonio Cavazzi’s 17th-century images from Portuguese Africa are thumb pianos (*sanzas*), membrane percussion, jugs (blown gourds), xylophones, and bow harps (see the latter three in Fig. 6.1). Similarly, during black public processions in 18th- and 19th-century Brazil, xylophones, *sanzas*, and membrane percussion instruments were also frequently played (Fig. 6.2; see also Fryer 2000: 78-85). Consequently, it is possible to infer that these Central African instruments counted among those which accompanied the dances in the “idiom of Angola.”



Fig. 6.1. Musicians in the Kingdom of the Kongo during the 1670s.¹⁴

¹⁴ Musicians, Kingdom of Kongo, 1670s; Image Reference Bassani-19, as shown on www.slaveryimages.org, compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite, and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the University of Virginia Library. (Accessed September 25, 2012).

In his 1804 narrative from Santa Catarina, Prussian traveler G.H. von Langsdorff writes a remarkably vivid description of a public African/Afro-Brazilian celebration. Despite the racist language, Langsdorff's account intricately details many aspects of the participants' dances, singing style, costumes, and musical instruments:

Commonly the slaves rush into the street with great noise and impetuosity . . . A monotonous cry, a wild, noisy, yet measured kind of drumming, a sound like that of hammering copper, a clapping of hands, distinguished the place of assembly. . . .

The king, or leader of the dance, was to be distinguished immediately from the rest by his greater height and more athletic form. He stood like a hero in the midst of his followers, who were all collected in a circle round him. Instead of the helmet of steel, his head was ornamented with gold paper and feathers. . . . In his left hand he held a reed about two feet long, in which were a great many notches pretty close to each other. On this he scraped continually with a little stick which he held in his right-hand. The rest of the dancers had either like sticks, rattles, or little bells, any thing, in short, that would make a clattering and noise. Instead of musicians, some of the negroes sat in a corner of the room upon the ground, and struck with their hands upon an ox-hide, which was stretched over the hollow trunk of a tree, serving as a drum. The whole company were ornamented with feathers and ribbands, and wore diadems of gold paper. . . .

Both negroes and negresses having formed a circle round the king, afterwards began, first one, then another, according to the degree of agility they possessed, to come forwards in the circle as solo-dancers, when they made the strangest gestures that can well be conceived. The rest sung, or screamed some incomprehensible African songs. They drew the hip and anklebone with incredible celerity into a circle horizontally, while the upper part of the body remained almost motionless, seeming as it were, to balance themselves upon the lower part. The neck, the shoulders, and the back, were equally shaken with such celerity, that they seemed to have every joint and muscle about them perfectly at command. The greatest dexterity was shewn by a half-naked negress, who united with the most rapid movement of the hips a very exactly measured and equally rapid motion of the feet. The distortions of the countenance, the swelling out of the cheeks, and other hideous gestures, seemed to constitute, according to the ideas of these people, the perfection of the performances. (Langsdorff 1817: 55-57)

Langsdorff appears to be describing a type of Central African-derived crowning ceremony that was common in black brotherhoods throughout the Colony (Souza 2001). And in this description, the traveler underscores the prominent use of feathered headdresses by both the king and the "whole company," which are probably of Central African provenance (Bettelheim

2010; D. H. Brown 2003: 48).¹⁵ For as Kiddy (2005: 131) notes, “plumed figures appeared in the late eighteenth-century stylized watercolors depicting the festival of the rosary and the Day of Kings celebration that were painted by Carlos Julião, a captain of the royal army” (see Fig. 6.2). Juxtaposing Langsdorff’s southern description with Julião’s paintings from the Brazilian southeast, it seems probable that black celebrants in wildly different parts of Brazil dressed in similar costumes for religious processions. Might they also have been dancing the same dances and using the same musical instruments? Might black confraternities throughout the Colony have performed in a circle with a solo dancer who danced with the upper part of the body remaining “almost motionless,” while also clapping, singing, and playing “any thing that would make a clattering and noise”? If so, the dancing during the Colony’s black brotherhood-sponsored public saint festivities must have looked remarkably similar to modern day Bahian samba. That black Catholic dancing in the Colony took on a Central African aesthetic would certainly not have been happenstance. It would instead have been an expected result of the prominent institutional and demographic presence of Central Africans, who had come from a long history of Catholicism.

¹⁵ Judith Bettelheim (2010: 299) warns that “not all feathered headdresses worn by descendants of Africans in the Americas relate to Central African roots.” However, considering the context of a Kings Day celebration as well as the use of the xylophone, it does not seem unreasonable to insist on a Central African, rather than Amerindian, reading of the cultural practice.



Fig. 6.2. “Coronation of a Black Queen on the Day of Kings.” Painting by Carlos Julião (c. 1770). Courtesy of the Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

The Catholic Church reached Central Africa by the late-15th century and flourished especially in the Kingdom of the Kongo (Thornton 1988). Over the course of the 17th century, brotherhoods for the Rosary were established in São Salvador (Kongo) and Luanda (Angola) (Kiddy 2005: 32-33; Reginaldo 2011: 60-62). And perhaps expectedly, African-Catholic brotherhood processions were accompanied by, as one brotherhood’s petition from 1701 phrased it, “dances of those same blacks” (Reginaldo 2011: 61). This reference is vague, but it does suggest that the inclusion of Angolan dances and instruments in Brazilian brotherhood festivities were less an innovation than a continuation or adaptation of Central African Catholicism.

It cannot be assumed that in Brazil, Central African aesthetics were simply uprooted intact and forced upon other African groups and succeeding generations of Afro-Brazilians. Indeed, as is apparent in a late-18th-century description of a public celebration, African ethnic groups continued to play their own musics and dance in their own ways. In a 1780 letter from Povolide, Pernambuco, Count José da Cunha Grã Ataíde e Mello explains that during a Catholic brotherhood procession, “the blacks divided into nations and each of them with their own instruments, dance and spin like harlequins, and others dance with diverse body movements”

(Souza 2001: 232). The letter suggests a negotiation of collective and individual identity; blacks dance together, but separately. As Kiddy suggests for Minas Gerais, black brotherhoods acted simultaneously as means for asserting “their unity as blacks and making room for a collective memory that linked the heirs to the tradition with an African homeland” (Kiddy 2005: 136). This does not mean, however, that common links—aesthetic or devotional—were not sought out among different ethnic populations within a single institution. In fact, if the origins of Catholic samba are partially to be found in brotherhoods, it is precisely this process of negotiation among ethnicities and aesthetics that led to a coherent *Brazilian* art form that was indeed distinct from, but still rooted in, Central African aesthetics. I thus posit that Catholic *samba* began to form during the 18th century, when brotherhoods were at their apex. In other words, with a mixed population of African ethnicities and Brazil-born crioulos dancing and celebrating together, following a Central African “aesthetic template” for saint devotion, the involved members were in fact creating something new, something Brazilian. Thus the Catholicism brought to Brazil by Central Africans, which had already been, as Thornton (1988: 266) puts it, “highly mixed with African religions,” was in fact “creolized”; it was “*Afro-Brazilianized*” through New World collaborative negotiations with other Africans and even whites, but especially in the hands of the Brazilian crioulos.¹⁶

¹⁶ Parés (2005) points out that in the Recôncavo, the demographics demonstrate a “pendular” oscillation between the growth of crioulo and African populations. Thus rather than a singular growth model, Parés notes that between 1740 and 1800, Bahia witnessed a “creolization” (i.e., growth of crioulo population), while 1800 to 1850 was an Africanization, followed by another period of creolization. It is therefore worth asking what happened to Catholic saint celebrations (and the types of dancing) at specific periods of African or crioulo dominance. May these also have oscillated?

CALUNDÚS

Central African dancing in the 18th century was not limited to festivals associated with the Catholic calendar. In fact, one of the first descriptions of a samba-like Brazilian dance comes not from a patron saint day festival, but rather from a *calundú*. “Brazilian *calundú* ceremonies,” explains historian James Sweet (2003: 145), “were scripted in much the same manner as possession rituals in Central Africa, with the medium invoking the spirit to enter his or her body, followed by a direct conversation between the spirit and the client.” Music was an integral part of this ritual. In the 1680s, a *calundú* was documented in Rio Real, in the interior of Bahia. Sweet explains that a slave named Caterina cured with *calundús*, during which she “sang and danced to the playing of the *canzás*. In the language of her homeland (Angola), she spoke in the voices of her deceased relatives” (p. 151). This late-17th-century case underscores the presence of the “*canzá*” (shaker), but all types of percussion instruments were common during *calundús*. In 1728, for example, traveling priest Nuno Marques Pereira described a terrible night of sleep that had resulted from the percussion instruments (*tabaques* [conical membranophones], tambourines, *canzás*, jugs, and castanets) played by the “blacks” as they performed “their Calundús” (Pereira 1939: 123). With the exception of the jugs and castanets, these percussion instruments are commonly encountered in 21st-century Bahian samba performances.

But how was a *calundú* performed? Utilizing Inquisition documents, Laura de Mello e Souza reproduces a description of a “typical” *calundú* in Bahia around 1740:

[T]hey were festivities very frequent in the city of Bahia [Salvador] and its nearby areas; at these, blacks would jump around a lot, would grimace with their bodies and yell until falling to the ground as if dead: “they would stay this way for some time, and when they would get up afterwards, they would say that the spirits of their relatives had come to speak to them” while they had been unawake. (Souza 1987: 263-264)

Calundús in Bahia were thus religious dance “parties” that included possession by ancestors. The same seems to have been the case throughout Brazil during the 1700s. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, a ceremony, which appears also to have been a *calundú*, is explained as being performed within a circle comprising “various people,” in the middle of which, next to a container of water, “a demonized woman who called herself Capitão, . . . was dancing and jumping” (p. 264). This *calundú* from Rio de Janeiro, with its circle of participants and dancer in the middle, shows striking resemblance to present-day samba.

In Minas Gerais, around the mid-1700s, Inquisition records document a case of a “black man [who] cured with sorcery, [and] got together blacks, dances, and batuques in his house” (Souza 1987: 265). In another earlier case, from 1734, Violante Coutinho, “‘danced and did calundures,’ and in her house the blacks played atabaques,” while “[i]n 1753, the slave Maria Canga earned some gold by divining in a ritualistic way: ‘she invented a batuque dance, during which something would enter and leave her head, something which she called wind, and entered for the sake of divining that which was desired’” (Souza 1987: 265-266).

Perhaps the most fascinating *calundú* in contemplating the roots of domestic Catholic samba is the well-documented 1739 case of Luzia Pinta, who was accused of “conjuring diabolical apparitions by way of some dances, which they call vulgarly calundus” (Souza 1987: 267). Souza describes the ritual:

[P]laced on a little altar with its canopy and a cutlass in her hand, with a wide lace wrapped around her head with the ends toward the back, dressed as an angel, and two black women singing, also Angolans, and a black man playing atabaque, which is a small drum, and they say that the black women and the black man are slaves of the abovementioned, and playing and singing they are in that place from one to two hours, she would go crazy, saying things that no one understood, and they directed to the ground those people who were going to be cured, passing over them various times, and on these occasions is when she would speak of the winds for divining. (Ibid.)

But the cures were not affected solely by divine winds and laying on the ground. *Calundús*, at least that of Luzia Pinta, even called on Catholic saints and the Catholic Church in their healing rituals:

[W]hen the Angolan illness comes to them, which they call *calunduz*, with which they go out of their heads and begin speaking remedies that are to be applied to the sick, that on the occasions in which they conduct said cures, they always request of the sick two-eighths of gold, with which they go say split Masses, half for Saint Anthony and the other half for Saint Gonçalo, and it is with the intervention of these saints that they conduct said cures. (Mott 1996: 131)

The implications of Luzia Pinta's *calundú* are significant: by the early 1700s, Angolans who were singing and dancing in what Sweet (2003: 145) describes as a *non-syncretic* Central African healing ritual, were also appealing to Catholic saints for help. It is unclear whether their dancing also somehow involved saints or if their ritual followed some form of Catholicism-inspired liturgy. And it is difficult to know whether the individuals understood this as a singular, all-encompassing cosmological vision or if they saw these as discrete spiritual spheres. Nonetheless, Luzia Pinta's *calundú* demonstrates that *even in private settings* Central African dancing, singing, and spirit possession comfortably integrated practices (Mass) and symbols (saints) derived from the Catholic Church's "universe."

While the source material does not provide detailed information regarding the rituals practiced in *each* case, and though the *calundú* appears to have been heterogeneous, some of the loose—yet significant—similarities should be emphasized here. In cases where the African diviners and participants are identified, they are always Angolan. The possession appears to have been by ancestral spirits, rather than gods, and for the purpose of divining and curing. And the term "batuque," which was often used to describe the *calundú* dance, is of Central African

origin.¹⁷ Interestingly, many of these *calundús* appear to resemble 21st-century Caboclo activity at rezas (see Ch. 5). Taken together, these facts indicate that *calundús* comprised what appears to have been entirely Central African elements: the provenance of the participants, the style of dancing, the drumming, and the divination practices. Could the *calundú*, whose ritual integrated dancing, have eventually incorporated Catholic saints and prayers beyond saying Masses in saints' names? One mid-18th-century example of a different African dance offers some insight.

The summary I offer here is of an “Acotundá,” or a “Tundá Dance,” in Minas Gerais, which mainly involves West Africans. Luiz Mott explains that in late-September, 1747, authorities raided the house of the slave Josefa Maria, where a ritual was being practiced. After the home invasion, nine people were detained and questioned. The testimony of Rosa Pinheira is particularly illustrative:

Josefa Maria . . . entered into the Dance uttering some words that find our Holy Catholic Faith and others that she did not understand. In the same Dance she played dead, falling to the ground . . . and after this dance a woman left named Quitéria and there she climbed on top of the house and began to preach in her language, saying she was God and daughter of Our Lady of the Rosary and of Saint Anthony. (Mott 1988: 90)

Mott further offers a list of twenty Africans and Afro-Brazilians who frequented Josefa Maria's home. Among them was a significant West African majority, and three times as many women as men. Two participants appear to have been Central African, and one was a crioulo (p. 100).

Although Parés (2007: 116) convincingly argues that this is one of the first examples of the West African-based gatherings that would eventually become Candomblé, the case illustrates something more relevant to my argument. This *acotundá* demonstrates that as early as 1747 not only were blacks of a variety of ethnic origins participating in religious ceremonies together, but also that Catholic saints and symbols were integral components, as obviated in Quitéria's

¹⁷ Yeda Pessoa de Castro (2005: 172) explains that “batuque” derives from the Kimbundu and Kikongo terms “vutuka” and “baticum.”

embodiment of God, Our Lady of the Rosary, and Saint Anthony. In other words, Catholic saints may have been incorporated in unique and fascinating ways at any number of *private* African gatherings, whether *acotundás* or *calundús*.

This information suggests that Catholic saints could even have acted as a point of convergence between public brotherhood festivities and *calundús*. Perhaps public devotions to particular Catholic saints were related to incorporation of the *same* saints at private *calundús*, helping set the precedent for many 21st-century devotions in the Recôncavo. No doubt devotion to Catholic saints also acted as a common denominator by which Africans of all ethnicities and crioulos could relate to each other, while also partaking in Colonial Catholic society.

Considering that until the 18th century enslaved Africans in Brazil were nearly all of Central African provenance,¹⁸ it is no wonder Central African logics and aesthetics helped establish what Mintz and Price (1992 [1976]: 50) called “the core of a new language and a new religion” (see also Reginaldo 2011). Indeed, I am arguing that this “core” of Central African cosmology and aesthetics was cultivated, disseminated, and developed through interethnic, intergenerational, and interclass institutions such as lay brotherhoods and *calundús*, providing a precedent for the 21st-century *association* of Catholic saints and “Caboclos” to Central African-derived samba (see Ch. 4, Ch. 5). Might samba to have developed as something of a musico-choreographic lingua franca?

It is also worth considering Central African *rhythm* as a common denominator. As Rath (1993) shows in his study of 17th-century African music in Jamaica, as distinct ethnic groups

¹⁸ As Sweet notes (2003: 16), “Until around 1680, more than 90 percent of Brazil’s slave arrivals came from Central Africa.” Bahia’s involvement with the Atlantic slave trade is typically divided into the four phases originally suggested by Pierre Verger’s (1987 [1968]: 9): (1) A numerically small 16th-century trade with the West African Guiné Coast; (2) the 17th-century arrival of large numbers of Central Africans; (3) the 18th-century Bahian trade with the Mina Coast; and (4) from the late-18th to the early-19th century, a slave majority coming from the Bight of Benin and Lagos (see also Reginaldo 2011: 289-290; Sweet 2003: 18).

performed together, they negotiated in interesting ways, what he identifies as the process of “pidginization in action” (p. 724). In a similar way, one might consider the ways in which West Africans and Central Africans (broadly considered) collaborated in the creation of colonial Brazilian (samba-like) music. As Kubik (1979) has generalized, West African rhythms tend toward twelve-pulse cycles while Central African rhythmic cycles favor sixteen-pulses. If this is indeed the case, the superposition of one over the other can create a polyrhythm based on a greatest common divisor of four. The West African twelve-pulse cycle occupies the same musical space as the sixteen-pulse Central African cycle if the former is divided into four groups of *three* beats and the latter into four groups of *four* beats. For samba, this means eighth-note triplet patterns over sixteenth note patterns. This suggests that the relative frequency of triplet variations in samba performances may be resounding evidence of a New World collaboration. Furthermore, this four beat grouping quite conveniently fits with the duple-metered European marches that continue to characterize public celebrations and domestic cantigas (see Ch. 4).

2. The Appropriation of Catholic Saints in Brazil and Africa

I would like to take my argument a step further. As shown in the previously cited brotherhood letter requesting permission to dance in the “idiom of Angola,” clearly it was important to the celebrants to dance in a specific way. And as scholars have demonstrated, the historical record is ripe with conflict between ecclesiastical authorities and brotherhoods regarding *how* they could celebrate (Reginaldo 2011: 227-241; Souza 2001: 228-248). This suggests that brotherhoods were not simply employing African dances because they *knew* nothing else, but instead that they *wanted* nothing else. I posit that this insistence on racialized modes of celebration, counter modes to the white slavocracy, was a result of an African worldview that emplaced saints into *their* history rather than within that of the hegemonic

powers. Lucilene Reginaldo (2011: 139-140), for instance, points out, in a reading of the Statutes of the Brotherhood of St. Benedict of Ribeirão do Carmo, in Minas Gerais, that brotherhoods were known to refashion their saints *as* relatives. Extrapolating, African and African-descendent appropriation and resignification of European Catholic saints appears to have been somewhat common. And this may be due in no small part to a Western African tradition of radical reinterpretation.

AFRICAN PRECEDENTS OF APPROPRIATION

If indeed this is an example of black appropriation and reinterpretation in the 18th century, certainly there was historical Old World precedent, going back at least to the early-18th century. In August 1704, a Kongolese aristocrat, Kimpa Vita, better known as Dona Beatriz, died. Shortly thereafter, rising from the dead, Dona Beatriz insisted she was no longer herself; she was now St. Anthony. For the next few years, Dona Beatriz traveled to various Kongolese cities, evangelizing. But her message was what John Thornton (1998: 113) has characterized as a “radical reinterpretation” of that which was preached by the European priests (see also Reginaldo 2011; Vainfas and Souza 2006). Beyond her radical politics about the empire, Dona Beatriz insisted that the Catholic saints her people had grown to worship were black Kongolese and not white Europeans. Eventually Dona Beatriz was put to death and her followers imprisoned. In the first decades of the 18th century, the imprisoned “Antonians,” as they were called, were among the thousands sold into slavery in the Americas. And in fact, written documentation indicates that Bahia served as a definite destination for many of these enslaved Antonians (Thornton 1998: 206). What this means for the Bahian context is that many of the Central Africans arriving in the early-18th century had experienced Dona Beatriz’s form of “radical reinterpretation,” an approach that valued appropriation and transformation *from the inside out*.

While the early demographic importance of Central Africans makes their particular experience with Catholicism and “radical reinterpretation” especially significant for our study, we cannot dismiss the importance of West Africans in the revisionist approach to Catholic saint devotions. Convincingly, anthropologist Andrew Apter (1992, 2004 [1991]) has argued that the Yoruba arrived in the Americas with a long tradition of cultural revisionism. He argues, in relation to the “syncretism” found in African-inspired religious traditions in the Americas (i.e., Candomblé, Regla-de-Ocha, Vodou, etc.), that Catholicism “was not an ecumenical screen. . . . It was the religion of the masters, revised, transformed, and appropriated by slaves to harness its power within their universes of discourse. In this way the slaves took possession of Catholicism and thereby repossessed themselves as active spiritual subjects” (Apter 2004 [1991]: 178). The salient point is that while Central Africans and West Africans (who were themselves not homogeneous groups) certainly had distinct historical trajectories, the groups could relate along subtle and perhaps not entirely explicit pan-African lines of social and cosmological *defense* by means of radical reinterpretation and revision. In other words, the “black cultural logics” that guided the African appropriation and resignification of Catholic saints in the New World seems to have been a part of both West and Central African practical logics long before these groups arrived to Brazil.

Before moving on to the 19th-century, I would like to offer a brief return to my argument. I have looked specifically at public brotherhood celebrations and private *calundús*. And though both were rooted in Central African cosmology and aesthetics, they were never exclusively bound to this population. Consequently, my analysis of the available data has so far led me to suggest that “Catholic samba” was consolidated over the course of the 18th century as a form of radical reinterpretation, in which saints were celebrated publicly and privately by means of

dances that were structured primarily in Central African cultural modes of expression. Additionally, I have argued that this was part of a process of cosmological revision that *remade* saints as sympathetic to the emergent New World Afro-Brazilian culture of the 18th century. If indeed this fed into the creation of what was becoming Afro-Bahian culture, a uniquely black set of cultural logics used to interpret and understand Catholic saints in Bahia, then certainly it would have extended to the larger society outside of Catholic brotherhoods. And indeed, over the course of the 19th century, this is precisely what happened.

3. Catholic Samba in the 19th century

In 1805, the English traveler Thomas Lindley published his *Narrative of a Voyage to Brazil*, in which he describes a fascinating Bahian scene:

The chief amusements of the citizens are the feasts of the different saints, professions of nuns, sumptuous funerals, the holy or passion-week, etc. which are all celebrated in rotation with grand ceremonies, a full concert, and frequent processions. . . . On grand occasions of this kind, after coming from church, they visit each other, and have a more plentiful dinner than common under the term banquet; during and after which they drink unusual quantities of wine; and, when elevated to an extraordinary pitch, the guitar or violin is introduced, and singing commences: but the song soon gives way to the enticing *negro dance*. . . . It consists of an individual of each sex dancing to an insipid thrumming of the instrument, always to one measure, with scarcely any action of the legs, but with every licentious motion of the body, joining in contact during the dance in a manner strangely immodest. The spectators, aiding the music with an extemporary chorus, and clapping of the hands, enjoy the scene with an undescribable [*sic*] zest. (Lindley 1805: 275-277; see also Grant 1809: 231-233)¹⁹

As José Ramos Tinhorão (2008, 66-67) notes, this description seems to suggest that while never designated explicitly as such, this “negro dance” is an early-19th-century samba. After all, Lindley calls attention to traits that, save the pair dancing,²⁰ are today strongly associated with samba: handclaps, call-and-response singing, and the *miudinho* dance step (Sandroni and

¹⁹ Grant appears to reproduce Lindley’s description but with some minor changes.

²⁰ Though pair dancing is uncharacteristic of Bahian samba, it was observed by Sarmiento (1880) in the Kongo, when he reported seeing multiple pairs in the middle of the dancing ring.

Sant'Anna 2006: 29).²¹ While this seems strikingly to resemble the Santa Catarinan celebration described by Langsdorff, nowhere in Lindley's description is there any reference to brotherhoods. In other words, the Englishman observed what appears to have been a more generalized practice, performed independently of any formalized structure or organization. Furthermore, this dance is associated with Catholic celebrations conducted in *private homes* (remember, "they visit each other"). This means that by the 19th century, the choreographic movements associated with Catholic brotherhoods had become common in Catholic contexts in the wider Bahian society.

The next example comes from a scene documented by the Captain of Militias, José Gomes, around Christmas 1808, in Santo Amaro, a city located about 42 miles from Salvador. João Reis (2002) notes, "[O]n one of the nights of Christmas week . . . a large number of slaves descended from the plantations to the Vila of Santo Amaro to celebrate in the African mode. . . . [T]he Angolans occupied the area near the Church of the Rosary, a devotion very dear to these Africans" and the Hausa and Nagôs, wrote Captain Gomes, "half-way dressed, with a large atabaque . . . continued with their dances not only during the day but also during a large portion of the night, banqueting in a home near said situation, which was believed to be empty, on the same road behind it, and there was much to drink" (pp. 105-106). Although these African Christmas celebrations were divided into "nations" (as Candomblé would later be), it is clear that these were semi-public festivities (neither processions nor clandestine) with what were probably libations, no fixed location (as would be the case were it Candomblé), and no association to any particular brotherhoods. And this is "African" dancing in direct connection to the Christian calendar. As Döring (2004: 70) attentively notes, "[I]t is highly improbable that [African]

²¹ Tinhorão (2008) emphasizes that the detail regarding the dancing with "scarcely any action of the legs" is, for him, "a clear reference to the miudinho, which would later be passed along to the sambas de roda" (pp. 66-67).

religious festivities would occur in public squares . . . since they would be conducted in sacred spaces and maintained in Candomblé temples, which were generally in distant and hidden places.”²² Not being Candomblé, then, this scene, like that described by Lindley, was probably the description of the type of “sacred playing” characteristic of today’s samba for the saints.

By the mid-1800s, the terms “samba” and “batuque” were in ample use as synonyms and although the usage of the terms may have been relatively clear to 19th-century contemporaries, it is difficult from a 21st-century perspective to know exactly what is meant by the designations. At the very least, the terms refer to African-derived drumming and dancing. In August 1854, the deputy of Santanna, José Eleuterio, wrote to the Justice, requesting reinforcements for the Festa de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte (Festival of Our Lady of Good Death), which would take place in Salvador later that month. The extra policemen were needed so that “the peace can be maintained” and “avoid groups of batuques, which ordinarily appear after the Novena.”²³ The deputy’s concern that these batuques “ordinarily appear” after the novena makes salient that this was, by this time, quite common. In other words, by the mid-19th century, some sort of African-derived percussion music would ensue following this Catholic procession. Of course it is worth noting that today samba ritually closes the activities of the Festival of Good Death, which is now held in Cachoeira (see Marques 2008). Might this be similar to the batuques to which the deputy referred?

In another example, from December 1864, the newspaper *O Alabama* reports on an incident in which “two soldiers . . . brutally beat a man” in the city of Maragogipe (located 12

²² Parés (2007: 140-141) explains that “the majority of central urban ‘candomblés’ were congregations of a domestic character, located in small spaces, inside homes, stores, warehouses or hideouts, without woods” and that “it was on the camps of the semi-rural parishes that the religious congregations were able to develop greater organizational complexity.”

²³ APEBa, Colonial e Provincial, Polícia, Maço 6230. Regarding this document, see Santos (1997: 29). Pierre Verger (1999 [1981]: 95) further mentions that samba was a regular part of the Festivities for Our Lady of Good Death.

miles from Cachoeira), when they went to samba dance at the Church's front steps "where there were novenas."²⁴ It is clear that the newsworthy information was the fight, not the samba in front of the Church, thus implying that sambas commonly occurred there during novenas.

Furthermore, during larger citywide festivities for Catholic saints in Salvador, such as those for Our Lady of the Conception and St. Barbara, there were always, as the satirical magazine *A Coisa* phrased it in 1898, "beautiful chulas [verses] in the arrogance of the sensual samba" (see also Couto 2010).²⁵ Also, according to the magazine *Papão* in 1904, people regularly samba danced at the annual Festa de Nosso Senhor do Bonfim (Our Lord of the Good End).²⁶ With such information, it should be clear that batuques/sambas commonly occurred after *novenas* and at Catholic Church-inspired events by the mid-19th century. This suggests that the patterns developed in 18th-century lay brotherhoods carried into the mainstream as the number of brotherhoods began to diminish in the 19th century.

Of course one could reasonably argue that these *public* sambas on saint days demonstrate nothing more than the fact that Africans and Afro-Brazilians took advantage of holidays to practice their *secular* activities. After all, during the 19th century, batuques would also often occur on any given Saturday or Sunday.²⁷ I thus turn to *private*, residential sambas for saints, which would indicate that the practices did more than simply *coincide* with saints' days, but were instead part of the logic of celebrating saints. In July 1838, the newspaper *Correio Mercantil* published the following: "On the night of the 29th past, a noisy [*estrepidoso*] batuque near the area of Engenho da Conceição e Fiaes, frightened and terrorized the numerous families in that

²⁴ OA, December 24, 1864, p. 3.

²⁵ AC, n. 24, February 7, 1898, p. 1.

²⁶ *Papão*, February 6, 1904. Below a drawing of the parade toward the Bonfim Church is a short poem that begins with the following verses (translated): "Let's samba at Bonfim / Let's take caipora / With Captain Alvarenga / From the Bulangé of bassoura."

²⁷ APEBa, Colonial e Provincial, Polícia, Maço 6230. A document from the Chief of Police, in 1851, reports on the problem that during the "nights from Saturday to Sunday, and Saint days of Guard, many suspect individuals" gather "to do batuques all night, and day."

area . . . This ‘lawful’ merrymaking, lasted until after two o’clock in the morning of the 30th” (Reis 2002: 121). Reis deduces that “[t]he party probably was in relation to the night of St. Peter” (Ibid.). Given what I have reviewed regarding the popularity of samba dancing after Catholic events by the 19th century, it certainly would be no stretch to suggest that this “noisy batuque” might have been a samba celebration for St. Peter.

On May 3, 1864, the newspaper *O Alabama* documented what it considered a problem in Salvador’s Sé Parish. A woman named Josefa Boi frequently gathered, in her private residence, “dissolute women, lost men, police soldiers and *tout le mond* for *sambas*, uproars [*algazarras*] and debauchery, from which results continued disorder” (emphasis in original). The newspaper story goes on to explain that on the 29th (presumably of April), one of these disorders occurred between two sailors when they went to Josefa’s house “on the occasion of a party for the saints Cosmas and Damian.”²⁸ While not entirely explicit, it seems reasonable to infer that the “party” for Sts. Cosmas and Damian at Josefa’s house would also have included samba. And though it is difficult to know how widespread the practice was, if “*tout le mond*” (and not just Afro-Brazilians) participated in these sambas for Catholic saints, the practice must have been fairly common.

In 1897, *A Coisa* published a dialogue—perhaps only *based* in reality—regarding a so-called *forrobodó* for Sts. Cosmas and Damian.²⁹ Although the piece is chiefly concerned with food etiquette at the event, it offers evidence of the importance of the social gathering in late-19th-century Bahian society. And because the term “*forrobodó*” suggests a large dance party (*baile*), one can infer that there was probably dancing. While it is difficult to know what kind of dancing occurred, given the apparent popularity of samba at late-19th-century Catholicism-

²⁸ OA, May 3, 1864, p. 1. Many thanks to Luis Nicolau Parés for this reference.

²⁹ AC, n. 7, October 10, 1897, pp. 1-2. I offer an edited transcription of the dialogue in Iyanaga (2010).

inspired events, and the presence of samba at 20th-century Cosmas and Damian celebrations, *forrobodós* in 1897 probably included samba.

My claim is not that samba was *only* sacred in the 19th century. Indeed, just as Jocélio Teles dos Santos (1997) has observed, 19th-century sambas and batuques could be events that were either secular or sacred. The evidence reviewed here suggests a dance that would eventually be called samba became increasingly common for saints (and at Catholic events in general) over the course of the 19th century. As Lindley's narrative suggests, samba dancing appears to have been restricted to the black population at the beginning of the century, but was no longer isolated to brotherhoods or divination. Indeed, given this increased public exposure of Afro-Brazilian celebration, the practice seems to have spread to the population more generally by the mid-19th century. This is clear in the accounts from public festivities, such as the 1864 samba after the novena in Maragogipe, and from private ones, such as the samba at Josefa Boi's home earlier that same year. By the end of the 19th-century, samba dancing and singing, *regardless of race*, seems to have been the norm for commemorating Catholic saints, whether in public or in private. And this explains why domestic Catholic samba becomes increasingly visible in the 20th century.

4. Catholic Samba in the 20th century

The 20th century ushers in an impressive amount of information regarding *residential* samba dancing for saints. In 1918, the monthly magazine *Bahia Illustrada* published a story exalting Bahia's thirteen-day celebrations (from June 1st to the 13th) for St. Anthony. The magazine notes that St. Anthony "gives, always, motives for the popular festivities, for the dances, the modinhas, the 'circles' [*rodas*], and, if it is in the city, the phonograph vibrates, the orchestra intones, and if it is on the farm [*roça*], the guitars moan, and the dishes chop [*repicam*],

and the violas, playing musical duels [*desafio*], and the harmonica's 'polkas' ring through."³⁰

This quotation makes clear two broad aspects of early-20th-century parties for St. Anthony: different social environments (i.e., urban vs. rural) were home to different forms of celebration, and not only does St. Anthony appear to like parties with a wide variety of dances, just as is believed by many today,³¹ but it seems that at least one form of dance—strongly suggested by the reference to dishes that “repicam”—was samba.³² Confirming that these Bahian celebrations were residential, the Cachoeiran newspaper *A Ordem* reported, in 1926, that “[a]s happens every year, Saint Anthony . . . is being widely celebrated, in this city, in private homes.”³³

Two years later, in 1928, the newspaper *A Tarde* documented an accident involving a plowman, Pedro Sant’Anna de Jesus. During a party for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, while “[t]he harmonica attacked a rollicking samba and the partygoers, moving wildly, danced tightly in the shy room, . . . [a] firecracker . . . exploded in [Pedro’s] hand.”³⁴ On September 27, in 1933, an editorial in *A Tarde*, by someone signing as “F,” writes about what Sts. Cosmas and Damian’s day will be like:

Today is the day of “dous-dous” [two-two]³⁵ . . . At night will be the party. One of those batucadas [drumming] . . . The samba will in fact be black and blue, my lord!...And the

³⁰ BI, June 1918 (no page number). For the reader, I have replaced with quotation marks the symbols (< >), which are found in the original citation.

³¹ At one reza for St. Anthony, after the saint’s brief samba, the homeowner played a *forró* CD for the rest of the night. In another case, a St. Anthony devotee told to me that she would be playing *forró* at her next reza, rather than samba. Unfortunately I have yet to attend her reza to see if this ever happened.

³² Wadley (1980, 1981) observes that the “common table plate” (*prato-e-faca*), “preferably enamelware” (1980: 210), is an important samba instrument. The author goes so far as to include the *prato-e-faca* in a list of the instruments that comprise “[a]n ideal minimal ensemble” (1981: 253), as well as explains its technical execution (pp. 253-254) and offers a transcription of the rhythm (p. 273). Though I recognize that the plate is an important part of samba both historically and currently, I would hesitate to call it part of an *ideal minimal* ensemble. For although it is often included in professional ensembles (usually outside of the Cachoeira region), it is regarded in many ways as a *novelty* that harkens back to a nostalgic samba past in which “real” instruments were not available to Afro-Brazilians thus necessitating the use of plates. This does not mean, however, that most *sambadores* and *sambadeiras* today would not be quite skilled at accompanying or even leading a samba with a knife and plate.

³³ AO, June 9, 1926, p. 4.

³⁴ AT, October 15, 1928, p. 2.

³⁵ The term “dois-dois” (here as “dous-dous”) was often used—and continues to be employed today—to refer to twins. According to Jorge Amado (1961 [1945]: 159), the term was originally coined by Candomblé priestesses.

pretas [black women] with their showy skirts and their doubled petticoats, all straightened up, done up in hoops and bows and bracelets and rattling jewelry [*barangandans*] and amulets from the Congo, Ethiopia, Abyssinia and from this whole great savage world that the foreigner civilized . . . the black women with their torsos . . . are going to swing their hips fantastically in the Samba, in the Samba, in the crazy Samba, that doesn't ever end...³⁶

The repeated word “Samba” effectively emphasizes the prominence of the dance form in this generic representation of what a “party” in 1933 is like for Sts. Cosmas and Damian.

Furthermore, while the writer seems to be referring pejoratively (and with explicit racial overtones) to the clothing and jewelry of the attendees, who seem to be primarily of African descent, it is clear that those who will be attending the parties will want to dress to the nines. Indeed, much of the focus here is on what appears to be a stereotypical representation of the Bahian *preta*, or black woman, reflecting stereotypes vis-à-vis Bahia's representation on the national stage during the 1930s.³⁷

The day after this report, a poem by Francisco de Mattos was published in *A Tarde*, entitled “São Cosme...São Damião.” In the verses, the author describes the ritual procedure: “The Mass...the procession...the firecracker handler [*fogueteiro*] / Is the prologue to the party. The prayer, in the oratory. / Afterwards, at home...and the efó [Bahian dish]...and the acarajé [fried bean cake]...”³⁸ The party, to which the other aspects are merely a “prologue,” is probably a large samba. The salient point thus being that the clearly European-inspired religious aspects of the saints' party—Mass, processions, prayers—are not separate from, but rather an integral part of, the eventual samba.

While Sts. Cosmas and Damian were certainly among the most popularly celebrated saints of the era, they were not the only Christian martyrs celebrated with large domestic parties.

³⁶ AT, September 27, 1933, p. 2.

³⁷ Dorival Caymmi was already quite active in Bahia, disseminating many of the stereotypes that continue to haunt Bahia to this day. Moreover, Gilberto Freyre published *Casa Grande & Senzala* in 1933.

³⁸ AT, September 28, 1933, p.4.

A quasi-ethnographic account from *A Tarde* in 1936 offers a vivid depiction of a celebration for St. Anthony in Salvador, at the house of someone named Badú. As in the aforementioned report from 1918, still in the 1930s the celebrations went for thirteen days; they were *trezenas*. The narrative explains: “For thirteen days, the first dominates. He lives in every heart, dominates the whole city. He sits at the top of every altar, decorated in every home. . . . After the reza, the farra [party] heats up. The dances are animated. Pairs gather at the windows. Dona Chica’s husband has his eye on a guy from the city, who is dancing in a scandalous way.”³⁹ It is unclear whether this *farra* was samba, but oral tradition suggests it is a likely possibility.

The presence of a samba “party” did not necessarily mean *only* samba. As Dona Marilza, who lives in Salvador, explained to me in July 2011, her mother’s reza for St. Anthony always had a variety of dances, including pair dancing *and* samba.⁴⁰ This appears to have been true for St. Anthony celebrations during the first half of the 20th century, as is demonstrated in the below photo (Fig. 6.3), taken by Pierre Verger at a reza for St. Anthony sometime before 1950. If in fact the reza photographed by Verger was anything like other rezas that have been described to me, the samba for the saints (i.e., obligatory work) was sung *before* this dancing took place.

³⁹ AT, June 13, 1936, p. 2. For a more detailed analysis of the event, see Iyanaga (2010: 139-141).

⁴⁰ This interview was conducted on July 22, 2011, at Marilza’s home in Salvador.

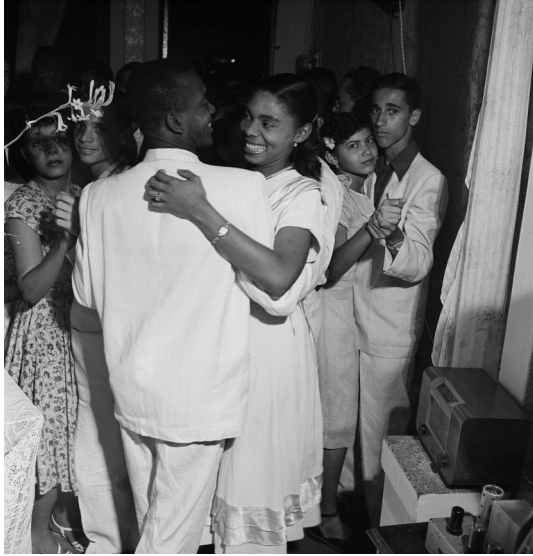


Fig. 6.3. Pair dancing during a reza for St. Anthony in Salvador, c. 1930-1950. Foto Pierre Verger © Fundação Pierre Verger. (FPV, Photo 29563)

Later in the same year, on September 18, 1936, *A Tarde* published another description of a saint's "farra," but this one was for Sts. Cosmas and Damian: "At night is the party. [J]azz, dances, food and drink. A party of the people who accept all motives, profane or sacred, for a *farra* [party]. . . . Sometimes, there's noise, pancadaria [hitting], police intervention. None of this matters. It's part of the program."⁴¹ The reference here to the "noise" and "hitting" of physical violence, even if merely a stereotype promulgated by the journalist, suggests, at the very least, that these were indeed large parties. The "jazz" noted by the writer is probably a reference to a type of *ensemble* that played a range of internationally popular 1930s dance rhythms (such as waltzes, tangos, foxtrots, and sambas), and not necessarily to the jazz genre.⁴²

Jumping ahead a decade and a half, to 1950, another *A Tarde* reference explains the era's parties for Sts. Cosmas and Damian: "To celebrate [Sts. Cosmas and Damian], the traditional

⁴¹ AT, September 18, 1936, p. 2.

⁴² The term "jazz" likely referred more to a type of ensemble than a genre of music. The largest radio station of the era, the Rádio Sociedade, printed lists of its programming from 1939 to 1942, which included artists' names, song titles, and musical genres. In these lists, the term "jazz" is used only to describe the type of band, such as "Yacy Jazz Band," or "Roberto Santos with jazz orchestra." These groups could play any number of styles, including foxtrots, sambas, tangos, waltzes, marches, etc. (For a discussion of the genres listed on these programming lists, see Iyanaga and Sotuyo Blanco 2007.)

carurú holds primary importance . . . and the constant presence of domestic dances and merrymaking.”⁴³ While we might only speculate that the domestic dances included samba (as in a large samba party) and perhaps pair dancing, we can be certain that Bahian parties for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, at mid-20th century, included samba for the saints similar to that which is sung today (see Party Interlude 1, pp. 55-61). Odorico Tavares, in a 1950 essay originally published in the variety magazine *O Cruzeiro*,⁴⁴ explains a moment of merrymaking: “And now the kids are eating . . . and the adults, around them, sing songs [*toadas*]. They go wild, raise the basin and sing . . . Earlier, other songs are intoned, with great enthusiasm of those present, kids or adults” (Tavares 1964: 149-150). Tavares goes on to list some of the song lyrics, many of which are still part of the repertoire today (see Iyanaga 2010).

I have restricted my investigation of 20th-century domestic saint celebrations to St. Anthony and the twin saints Cosmas and Damian. This is because these are the available references in the written record. However, it is worth noting that the oral historical record is unequivocal regarding other saints which were also celebrated by way of samba throughout Bahia. One of the most important saints, absent in the written record but vibrant in oral testimony, is St. Roch. And as I will demonstrate in Ch. 7, Saint Roch appears to have been celebrated via samba dancing throughout the 20th century (see also Jesus 2006). Oral testimonies suggest that other important saints included St. Barbara, Our Lady of the Conception, and St. John the Baptist.

Samba was a *typical* mode by which to celebrate saints domestically by the 20th century. However, as the documentation shows, it was not the only one. There were polkas, modinhas, orchestral music, jazz ensembles, and probably a number of other types of music. But samba, *as*

⁴³ AT, September 27, 1950, p. 2.

⁴⁴ FPV, *O Cruzeiro*, November 18, 1950, pp. 35-38, 40, and 44.

an integral part of the celebrations, appears to have been the most widespread. Certainly there must have been distinctions by social class and ethnic identity, as the 1933 characterization of a celebration for St. Cosmas and St. Damian suggested. The Euro-Brazilian elite might have been more likely to contract orchestras, while less wealthy individuals and/or Afro-Brazilians may have been more inclined to have samba. And not every saint may have been treated equally. Therefore, while St. Anthony may not always have been celebrated with samba, Sts. Cosmas and Damian, with their cult's African origins (see Lima 2005), may have been celebrated with samba regardless of class or ethnicity.⁴⁵

In summary, what I am calling “Catholic samba,” a musical-choreographic-poetic cultural expression rooted in Central African aesthetics and performed for Catholic saints, was articulated in Colonial institutions, helping construct the cultural logic that associated saints with what would be known as samba starting the mid-19th century. As a consequence of such logic, residential patron saint celebrations included samba. And these private samba parties may very well have included forms of divination and possession trance dancing. Regardless, by the mid-19th century, samba dancing for saints appears to have spread beyond the sphere of African and Afro-Brazilian social interaction, perhaps due in part to the era's growing black elite (see Parés 2007: Ch. 5), but also a result of the continuing interactions among Bahia's various racial and social groups. After all, cultural practices associated with black social spheres were never entirely isolated to only black populations. James Sweet (2003: 145) points out, for example, that

⁴⁵ For example, in an *A Tarde* newspaper article from January 11, 1933 (BPEB), the author discusses a Spiritualism Session at which “cantigas” are performed. It is of course unclear if these are sambas or not, but given the context, the rhythmic and melodic content is probably related to what would be recognized today as samba. It is worth emphasizing once more the ambiguity with the term samba. As elaborated in Ch. 4, there are clear distinctions that people make between “our” samba and the saint's samba. In many cases people do not refer to the saint's samba as “samba,” but rather as “cantigas.” This suggests that, assuming semantics have not changed drastically, if there was no “human samba,” a newspaper or observer may not have reported on it. Thus many of the events I have just presented (and even those I did not), while not explicitly mentioning samba, may in fact have included at least the less elaborate saints' sambas.

even during the early-17th century, “whites . . . began to adopt Central African forms of curing, seeking out calundeiros (practitioners of calundú) to heal their illnesses.” And for the 19th century, Reis (2001: 132) notes the occurrence of “the diffusion of all kinds of spiritual and magical services to persons from all kinds of racial and social backgrounds.” Indeed, particularly regarding Candomblé, Reis emphasizes that “[t]his openness and flexibility represented a crucial strategy of survival, because it facilitated negotiation with the local population, including the powerful” (Ibid.). Consequently, it seems that by the 20th century, *Catholic* samba had become a generalized Bahian “institution” which could be encountered among racial mixed private residences throughout the state.

5. Rethinking Resistance and Assimilation

I have argued that this social institution is rooted in an active African and Afro-Brazilian assertion of self-repossession in the revision of Catholic saints. As such, the proliferation of the practice through Bahian culture is an extension—whether explicit or not—of African resistance to Colonial domination. Phrased in this way, the worship of Catholic saints appears to be a form of resistance. But is it not also assimilation? While the appropriation and transformation of European saints *through* samba is an act of resistance, is not the “reproduction” of European traditions, such as commemorative feasts for Catholic saints,⁴⁶ even if modified with Central African dance, simply a case of assimilation? The oppositional binary is more than problematic. Parés (2007: 93) poses the problem as thus:

[T]his conceptual polarity, assimilation and resistance . . . is normally conceived of as mutually exclusive, which is to say, blacks, or the associations they constituted, assumed positions of assimilation *or* of resistance. . . . [I]t is worth considering that the same individual could, as one can today, adopt successively at various points of his/her life, or even simultaneously, positions of assimilation or resistance. (underscore emphasis added)

⁴⁶ Christian (1989: Ch. 2) discusses the importance of large community commemorative feasts held for saints in order to satisfy vows, which have probably been part of Christianity since its inception.

It seems to me that Parés' key observation is in suggesting the possibility of *simultaneous* resistance and assimilation. And if this is possible, it is because cultural agents are often simply “making do” (de Certeau 1984), rather than embracing any *explicit* positions of “resistance” or “assimilation.”

How does this dynamic of simultaneity play out in the topic at hand? It is worth remembering that when we talk about samba, the discussion is primarily about movement: hand claps, dancing, gathering in a circle.⁴⁷ Is this, as Browning (1995) would have it, “resistance in motion?”⁴⁸ While slavery was psychologically disastrous, it was, first and foremost, a physical technology of control. If discipline “dissociates power from the body” (Foucault 1979 [1975]: 138) and the most naturalized human social dispositions are inscribed in the body (Bourdieu 1990 [1980]), samba was most certainly *explicit* physical resistance, especially considering the repeated attempts to pass legislation that prohibited samba.

For example, Santos (1997: 20-21) observes that “[given that] legislation [was] created, and always renewed to prohibit [batuques and sambas] . . . one notes how much batuques bothered the ruling groups throughout the nineteenth century.” Indeed, Reis (2002) has even encountered proof of a discussion on the topic of *batuques* that occurred in the Provincial Assembly of Bahia in August 1855. Consequently, the act of samba dancing for Catholic saints embodies two levels of “resistance,” one *physical* and the other *ontological*. By *knowing* Catholic saints enjoy samba, Africans and their descendants could be sure that *their* black culture was blessed by the “masters’ gods,” thus rejecting—on one level—the bodily control instituted

⁴⁷ Veit Erlmann, for the South African context, suggests that simply *forming a circle* is resistance, for it can kinetically reshape the “rectangular architectural frameworks of the alien order” (Erlmann 1996: 190).

⁴⁸ Browning (1995: 2), poetically describing the movements associated with samba dance, argues that “[s]amba narrates a story of racial contact, conflict, and resistance, not just mimetically across a span of musical time but also synchronically, in the depth of a single measure.”

by the slavocracy (and continued through other technologies after slavery), while also—on another level—ontologically repossessing themselves and their humanity under sub-human conditions.

But a shift in the looking glass makes the assimilation all too clear. Evidence shows that the veneration of Catholic saints going back to brotherhoods was an act of sincere devotion on the part of the sodalities' members. They had, for all practical purposes, been “converted” to Catholicism; they had *assimilated* the oppressor's religion. At Josefa Boi's samba for St. Cosmas and St. Damian, for example, it is doubtful she did not have an altar erected in her home in homage to the saints. These are quite clearly assimilationist attitudes. While the saint has been co-opted and resignified, s/he is still *externally* the same European (white) saint found in and celebrated by the Church.

This suggests that Catholic samba is an institution that *simultaneously embodies resistance and assimilation*. In other words, for the reasons already mentioned, it would be incorrect to say that samba dancing for saints is *not* resistance; but it would be equally misguided to claim it is not *also* assimilation. By reconceptualizing European saints as more than sympathetic to a clearly African-derived dance form, individuals *challenge the hegemony while simultaneously reproducing it*. Apter (2004: 179) eloquently articulates this irony regarding syncretism in the New World: “[I]f hegemony is unmade through syncretic ritual, it is also remade, and it would be wrong to equate its religious impulse with proto-revolutionary struggle pure and simple. . . . [T]he ritual revision of dominant discourses also reproduces their grammar and syntax, which it reconstructs from below.” Indeed, these African and Afro-Brazilian cultural agents were “converted” in the sense that they, certainly for the great majority of cases, embraced in earnest these European saints, but the saints were also reinvented and refashioned.

Still, if the practice is both resistance *and* assimilation, it is also neither. How best to deal with this epistemological problem?

Meditating on the question of what constitutes “resistance” in a colonial context, John and Jean Comaroff point out that:

Early on in the colonizing process, wherever it occurs, the assault on local societies and cultures is the subject of neither “consciousness” nor “unconsciousness” on the part of the victim, but of recognition . . . Out of that recognition, and the creative tensions to which it may lead, there typically arise forms of *experimental practice* that are at once techniques of empowerment and the signs of collective representation. (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991: 31)

For Africans and Afro-Brazilians in Colonial and early-Republican Bahia, samba dancing for saints was one such “experimental practice” and was not only empowering, but also served as a locus around which a New World collective black identity could be constructed. The advantage of the conceptual substitutions suggested by the Comaroffs – recognition and empowerment instead of assimilation and resistance – is that they direct attention to *internal states of existence*. In other words, it is not the *act* of resistance or assimilation that best expresses the experience of the colonized victim. Rather the experience is reworked into ontological terms; it is a “state-of-being.”

While I may not know the thoughts of the aforementioned 19th- or early-20th-century cultural agents, it is certain that *today*, there is a consensus among people (of all ethnic identities) living in the Bahian Recôncavo that European saints give preference to an Afro-Brazilian dance called “samba.” I posit that it was a logic of empowerment that facilitated the “strangely immodest” negro dance Lindley first documented in the 19th century, implying furthermore that the saints were (and are) believed to *identify* with the plight of the oppressed, who of course remained marginalized even after slavery.

6. The Field of Black Empowerment in Bahia

Before concluding, I wish to examine the field of black empowerment in Bahia during the 18th and 19th centuries. By doing so, it is possible to contemplate domestic sacred samba as part of the broader field of quotidian black life. As a research topic in Brazilian scholarship, “black resistance” has found a comfortable academic home in the past decades, though not without some fallout. Concerning resistance via religion, there have tended to be two approaches, one, which examines African-inspired alternatives such as divination and Candomblé (the principal African-inspired religious institution in Bahia), and another, which considers European-inspired options, generally having meant black Catholic brotherhoods. All of these—be they interpreted as resistance, assimilation, negotiation, etc.—are modes of empowerment, of self-repossession in an oppressive and racist society. Thus it is important to think of a broad “field” that is anything but mutually exclusive.

I begin with African-inspired alternatives. Historian João Reis reports that while Candomblé houses occasionally served as loci for violent uprisings, such cases were few and far between (Reis 2001: 130, 2011: 59-60).⁴⁹ Indeed, historical documentation suggests that the majority of African-inspired challenges to the slavocracy included individual actions, particularly a reliance on sorcery (Reis 2011: 69). This does not mean, however, that collectivities were not also a means of empowerment. For example, the aforementioned 18th-century African gatherings known as *calundús* served essentially “therapeutic and oracular” functions (Parés 2007: 115). In the 19th century, with the gradual establishment of Candomblé houses, blacks used these stable collectivities to “create channels of communication with the powerful and incorporated Afro-Bahians in their rituals, thus weakening the actions of the

⁴⁹ Reis has found two cases of violence connected with Candomblé houses. The first, from 1826, involves a Candomblé house in the plotting of an uprising. A second example, from 1859, shows that Candomblé practitioners were involved in physical resistance to a police invasion.

intolerant slavocrats” (Reis 1989: 53; see also Reis 2001). In other cases, Candomblé houses served as hiding grounds and as an “alternative space” that allowed for “the development of alternate meanings of human community and black identity within the matrix of slavery” (Harding 2000: xvii; see also Reis 2001: 130). While these African-inspired—and New World modified—solutions were a significant means of empowerment for Africans and their descendents in 18th- and 19th-century Bahia, they were hardly the only options.

Though I have already addressed brotherhoods, they are worth revisiting here with a slightly different theoretical frame. Perhaps the most well known reading of blackness and brotherhoods is that of French sociologist Roger Bastide, who suggested that “black Catholicism in general veiled, rather than penetrated, the African religion” (Bastide 1971 [1960]: 183). According to this view, the acceptance of Catholicism was nothing more than superficial, allowing Africans a public outlet for the preservation of their mother religions (p. 202). More recently, scholars have utilized the groundbreaking work in both Brazilian and African history to suggest subtler readings of the brotherhood context. Recognizing the profound impact of Catholicism in Central Africa starting the late-15th century, historians have suggested that the Catholic brotherhoods established in Brazil had their roots in the already Africanized Catholicisms reproduced and modified in the Americas. Thus the seemingly incompetent (or at best veiled) assimilation of Central Africans in Catholic brotherhoods, apparent in African-derived forms of celebration, was not farce (as Bastide would have it). Lucilene Reginaldo, for example, interprets this situation as the simultaneous reproduction of African antecedents and resistance: “[T]he supposed religious assimilation of the Central Africans[] would not necessarily be an aspect of their docility, but much to the contrary, a variation, even if imposed, and, at the same time, conscious [*sic*] of the fight from a particular place within a society led by

white masters” (Reginaldo 2011: 262). According to this view, Catholic brotherhoods allowed for the elaboration of Africanized (and Afro-Brazilianized) Catholic practices and the construction of mutual support communities, much like other more clearly African-inspired practical spaces.

There no doubt existed a plurality of possible modes of empowerment, which worked in socio-temporal moments distinct from Catholic sambas. In other words, a person could participate, as one can today, in all of these institutions (or in none). Each one offers a different and/or complementary mode of empowerment. Regardless of how one wishes to term the actions I have just reviewed—resistance, assimilation, negotiation, etc.—it seems clear that there has never existed a single “approach” to dealing with a situation involving multiple actors situated in variable positions of power. Empowerment, again, comes not from any single “experimental practice,” but may instead involve a number of such practices. Africans and their descendents made sense of their world and their positions in it by appealing to a plurality of “experimental practices” and New World institutions, ranging from sorcery to Catholic mass. But none of these solutions was ever mutually exclusive.

To take a plausible hypothetical example, an African slave could participate in the Latin liturgy of the local Catholic Mass in the morning, samba dance in front of the Church afterwards, seek out a Yoruba-speaking African diviner before dinner, and say the rosary in Portuguese just before bedtime. These should be regarded as discrete institutionalized practices that complemented—not opposed—one another, and that, over time, *precisely because of this transit between institutions*, ended up in fact transforming and innovating the institutions and practices themselves. Furthermore, no broad category of institution—i.e., brotherhoods, Candomblé, family units—is necessarily internally homogeneous. Thus a given social institution may offer its

“members” different modes of empowerment dependent on both the particularities of its establishment and the member’s position of power (see Sewell 2005: 205-213). Tools of empowerment are extracted from an ample field of diverse and heterogeneous institutions. The reconfiguration of Catholic saints as samba-loving partiers—along with the samba dancing used to please the saint— should be construed as an empowering experimental practice that developed into an Afro-Bahian institution. Still, as I have shown, it is simply one among many different institutions within the broad field of experimental practices creatively molded by Africans and their descendents in Bahia.

7. Concluding Thoughts

No doubt more historical data and more contextualization of concrete cases is needed. For example, to what degree have people’s actions and cosmologies been affected by macro-factors such as Brazilian Independence, Catholic Church phases, and abolition? And on the micro level: Who were Josefa Boi (from the 1864 samba), Pedro Sant’Anna de Jesus (in whose hand a firecracker exploded), Badú (who prayed to St. Anthony), and the other people whose names are salient in the historical record?

For now, I wish only to conclude with succinct answers to my initial questions: *Since when does a domestic samba that can be described as Catholic exist?* The earliest clearly documented examples of these domestic sambas for Catholic saints begin in the mid-19th century. But dances in the idiom of Angola occurred in Colonial brotherhoods and Catholic symbols were included in *calundús* at least as early as the 1700s. *What does this say about how the black experience in Bahia is embodied in the reza?* If indeed the reason Catholic saints love samba is because Africans and their descendents recreated them to do so, then the struggle and resilience of black agents in Brazil is evoked every time a devotee sings a saint’s samba. And

given samba's necessity at all rezas, one might furthermore suggest that the liturgy of the reza is fundamentally built on the experience of being black in Brazil. *What does this reveal regarding the broader African and African-American foundational contributions to society in Bahia, Brazil, and the Americas?* By transforming and appropriating the saints, Africans and their descendents were able to create meaningful spaces for themselves while at the same time effectively inserting themselves into mainstream Colonial society. This process was possible and indeed desirable because Africans and their descendents were never simply passive objects in the colonizing mission; they never just "assimilated" their oppressor's saints. To the contrary, it was in fact the Africans and their descendents who did the converting. By molding Catholic saints into samba-loving gods, the saints were Africanized and Afro-Brazilianized.

On a final note, while I have argued that samba dancing for Catholic saints developed as a specifically Afro-Bahian institution, the aforementioned presence of "tout le mond" at Josefa Boi's 1864 festivities demonstrates that the institution never remained isolated to an Afro-Bahian community. Indeed, it increasingly became part of a general way in which Euro- and Afro-Brazilian Catholic practitioners venerated their saints, a form of Catholicism that had been Africanized. Africans and their descendents were fundamental to the creation of Bahian—and Brazilian—society in myriad ways that reach far beyond those aspects usually recognized in hyphenated form as "Afro-Brazilian." I hope that this case study compels scholars to rethink other European institutions that history asserts to have been "assimilated" by colonized New World populations in order to question whether these might not instead have been cases of appropriation and transformation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Micro-History of a Black Atlantic Devotion: Emília Vieira dos Santos and St. Roch

In memory of Maclino Bispo dos Santos (1947-2010)

“‘Beloved?’ Denver would whisper. ‘Beloved?’ and when the black eyes opened a slice all she could say was ‘I’m here. I’m still here.’”

–Toni Morrison

“a memória é um curso em parte navegável”

memory is a partly navigable course

–Edimilson de Almeida Pereira

This chapter traces a single Afro-Brazilian family’s devotion to Saint Roch as a means of comprehending the processes by which Black Atlantic history is tacitly localized and personalized. This “prosopographical study of Atlantic lives” (Putnam 2006: 619) illustrates how an African past is woven into the local context of Catholic ritual as a transgenerational saint devotion. The narrative I present here regarding Emília Vieira dos Santos (c.1921-1993), her ancestors, her descendents, and her devotional practices has been carefully pieced together through extensive discussions with her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, as I shared with them the archival treasures I could find about their ancestors. As I encountered written documentation that confirmed unknown (or uncertain) dates, names, and places, Emília’s descendents—particularly her only living daughters, Marlene and Margarida—animated the lifeless documents through character descriptions, songs, and laughter.

The oral testimonies used to construct the present narrative were collected over the course of three years. Aside from direct quotes, I rarely cite explicitly my “collaborators.” This is because the information I present is frequently a composite version of innumerable formal and informal conversations, which often took place as group discussions during which ideas and memories were bounced from one person to another. My principal interlocutors were Emília’s

living offspring, Marlene Bispo dos Santos, Margarida Bispo dos Santos, and Maclino Bispo dos Santos,¹ and two of her granddaughters, Jocimere and Jaciara. The archival research, except for contextual material, was done almost exclusively at the Fórum Teixeira de Freitas in Cachoeira. Housed at this institution are official birth, death, and marriage certificates, as well as inventories, wills, and property records. Finally, I use my ethnographic research and fieldwork experiences to sort through some of the more confusing details. The narrative I present here is thus the result of a truly collaborative effort.

It would be inaccurate, however, to consider this chapter a *co-authored* work, for I alone conducted all of the planning, writing, and final edits, as well as most of the thinking. However, I wrote this chapter first in Portuguese (though without most of the theoretical, reflexive, or contextualizing information) and distributed it to the family so they could approve, adjust, and contest the story I was telling. (The Portuguese-language version is included as Appendix 2.) The family members read my work with much more interest and excitement than I had anticipated, and were never shy about suggesting alterations or corrections.² While I hardly cede my “authoritative” voice as narrator, I do feel this chapter has been, in many ways, an experiment in dialogic editing.³

While I was unable to find birth, death, and marriage certificates for all of this history’s characters, that which I did find was often quite problematic. Due to a lack of rigor in the original writing of the documents for the period of documentation (1850s-1950s) in a town where government oversight was not particularly arduous, documents would sometimes belie

¹ Maclino Bispo dos Santos passed away in November 2010.

² On one particular occasion, I was explicitly asked to adjust an aspect of the narrative that had made the family uncomfortable.

³ My reference here is less to Feld’s (1990 [1982]) dialogic editing than to Lühning’s (2006) conception of a “Brazilian ethnomusicology.” After all, this is not so much a “negotiation” of what the Emília’s descendents and I “said to, about, with, and through each other” (Feld 1990 [1982]: 241). Instead, it is an attempt to do a “participative ethnomusicology,” which includes the participation of the Brazilians who are the “objects” of the proposed ethnomusicological study (Lühning 2006).

each other or be patently false. In one case, for instance, the births of two sisters were registered—with the incorrect dates—more than a decade after they had actually been born. In another instance, a man’s filiation is listed as that of his deceased wife’s. Such errors made cross-referencing among documents and with oral testimony a necessary methodological measure. And where cross-referencing did little to help, I constructed my narrative in a way that took into account the limited possibilities suggested by the documentation. It bears mention that this biographical venture, based on interpretations of contradictory written documents and fallible memories, is something of an exercise in historical imagination. More than an accurate history, it is an opportunity to understand devotions, obligations, and people in a Black Atlantic context.

Relying rather faithfully on *their* oral history, I endeavor to give life to a story that might not otherwise be told. Indeed, much of my narrative comes directly from oral testimonies about private and personal events that were nearly, if not entirely, impossible to crosscheck with historical documents. Where contradictions arose, I gave preference to the written record, for these, “being contemporaneous to the facts, allow the supposition of a greater veracity or at least a greater probability of veracity” (Parés 2007: 170). I interpret the narratives according to “[t]he canons of judgment,” which include “likelihood [and] reasonableness” (Tonkin 1992: 114). But in a general way, I take oral testimony at face value rather than problematize it. After all, I am less concerned with an “objective truth” than in understanding how individuals interact with their own past as they understand it.

1. Bringing Gods Back in: The Phenomenology of the Symbolic Life

Again, my goal is *not* to examine critically the oral testimonies. I am not setting out to use written documents to “correct” the veracity of the oral histories related to me. Instead, I am interested in exploring a less empirical historical reality. I seek to understand the ambiguous

frontier between the supernatural and the natural by investigating how humans use their memories of the divine to shape their quotidian existence. People inevitably construct their empirical realities by contemporizing their *subjective interpretations* of history—or what they understand as history. A person’s memory of *what happened* influences or even dictates how s/he will act today and tomorrow. And for many people in the Recôncavo, and particularly for the family discussed in this chapter, *what happened* frequently contemplates the divine in one way or another. Thus saints and Orixás, in an indirect yet quite concrete way, end up being actors in the creation of history. But how to bring gods back into history without resorting to intellectual mysticism?

This question poses an epistemological challenge to the post-Enlightenment axiom that “belief” lies in a realm outside of “real material life” (see Asad 1993). In other words, I insist that the sacred world of beliefs, spirituality, and the supernatural, can often construct the profane world of community, history, and social obligation. My inquiry is not *if* the sacred can construct the profane world, but rather *how* it does so. Specifically, I ask how gods might create history.

As Keith McNeal keenly observes:

The secularism of modern historiography—the idea that it is people, not gods, who make and remake history—may impede our understanding and appreciation of the manifold ways myth and history are not insulated from one another. If we study history-making people whose actions are predicated upon religious ontologies, paradigms characterized by culturally postulated superhuman agents whose actions affect and impinge upon the actions of their votaries as well as others, then our accounts of history and mythology must be intimate and intertwined indeed. (McNeal 2010: 228)

In exploring histories that involve cosmologically motivated actors, which is indeed a great many histories, one must be open to conceiving of a reality that is grounded in history and mythology, the natural and the supernatural. Belief is often quite difficult to disentangle from empirical reality. This is because cosmology, activated through human action, can construct history.

In the final chapter of *Islands of History*, Marshall Sahlins embarks on what he terms a “semiphilosophical excursion” in order to explore the “phenomenology of the symbolic life.” Although Sahlins’ foremost aim is to underscore the mutability of symbols, the author makes a more general point: the “experience of human subjects . . . involves an appropriation of events in the terms of *a priori* concepts. Reference to the world is an act of classification, in the course of which realities are indexed to concepts in a relation of empirical tokens to cultural types” (Sahlins 1985: 145-146). Sahlins, it seems, is articulating something that might already be rather intuitive: all humans understand the world in ways that are familiar; culture (which is historically constituted) shapes individual interpretations of life events.

As Sahlins notes in a later publication, quoting Jean Molino, “one cannot separate something in the event that would be ‘what really, materially happened’ from something else that would be the meaning the actors and spectators attributed to it; the two are indissociable” (Sahlins 1991: 43). He subsequently rephrases his assertion: “Once introduced into the human domain, given a definite cultural value, the natural phenomenon will assume some particular effect, as orchestrated by the relations of the particular cultural scheme” (p. 44). Elaborating on Sahlins, Apter (1992: 219) notes that “specific accounts of what ‘actually’ happened . . . can never be separated from cultural logics and schemes. The content of history is a form of interpretation which recalls and ‘documents’ the past and which shapes the power of the past to bear upon the present.” Put differently, what “actually happened” is a subjective interpretation grounded in culturally—and thus historically—structured hermeneutical perspectives. People are always enmeshed in an ideologically (and often cosmologically) fashioned *life hermeneutics*.

Interpretation is exercised in response to both symbolic (human) and “extrasymbolic” (nature) activity (Biersack 1991: 7). As we humans experience life through our own socio-

historically constituted frames of reference, we lay the groundwork for future interpretations. In this way, the past (i.e., our interpretation of what “actually happened”) bears on our present, shaping our actions. As Pierre Bourdieu argued, human dispositions (the habitus), which regulate both the possible *and* the “unthinkable,” are the “active presence of the whole past of which [they are] the product” (Bourdieu [1980] 1990: 56). Interpreting a storm as having been caused by systems of atmospheric pressure or by an angry god will bear determinately on how we *interpret* and subsequently *act* when confronted with a similar situation in the future. Belief, therefore, does more than simply construct a subjective reality; it can result in very real, empirical consequences. The final interpretation of what “actually happened” shapes the conditions for material ramifications on the history which the human interpreter creates.

If history is simply our memories, interpretations, and beliefs about what “actually happened” in the past, then surely not only do men (and women) make their own history, but so too can history be made by saints, Orixás, and God. And this chapter serves as a cogent example of this. Emília Vieira dos Santos’ offspring and descendents annually celebrate St. Roch because of how they understand their own history and the gods’ actions in it. In this way, Emília’s past quite seamlessly intertwines history with mythology.

2. A Note on Afro-Atlantic Micro-History

Emília Vieira dos Santos was not what has sometimes been termed a “great (wo)man.” She did not affect great political change nor does she appear to have altered the course of history. Indeed, her sphere of influence was limited chiefly to her family and friends. Nevertheless, “insignificant” individuals like Emília are the primary movers and creators of societies, histories, and cultures, even if the scanty record of their lives exists mostly as an archived reminiscence in the memories of a small community of close relations. It was Emília’s hands, after all, as well as

those of her “nameless” predecessors and contemporaries, that built the Black Atlantic, as they arduously rolled cigars, loaded cargo onto transatlantic vessels, turned the pages of the Holy Bible in the slaves’ quarters, sacrificed chickens, harvested sugarcane, and tightened animal skins over conical drums. As such, a study of Emília’s life is a study of the Black Atlantic. And her fascinating spiritual journey, though singular, is representative of the way in which personal histories embody fragments of a collective past.

I follow Emília’s fascinating devotional journey as part of her quotidian life. Her participation in the Catholic Church, devotion to Saint Roch, and inheritance of an African Orixá, were an integral facet of her experiences as an orphan, cigar roll, and wife and mother of four. Sacred and profane do not exist apart from each other, a foundational postulate of the social sciences at least since Durkheim. Rather, the two are entangled in a singular social experience. Moreover, this Emília’s life story demonstrates how one individual, like so many others in the Bahian Recôncavo, can freely transit a multiplicity of *religious worlds* that constitute a single *religious universe*.

How does a family, or even a single lifetime, encapsulate a compression of New World ideas, practices, and values? How can this exceptionally localized study—isolated to a tiny neighborhood in a small Brazilian city—address the transnational context of the Black Atlantic? Is it in fact possible, as historian João Reis (2008: 315) claims, “to use these personal histories as a strategy to understand the historical process that constituted the modern world and, in particular, the societies planted in the slavery out of which it has sprouted”? Emília’s religious trajectory—an intertwined bricolage of West Africa-inspired Orixás, Kardecian Spiritism, and Catholic priests, prayers, and saints—serves as a lucid example that indeed such an endeavor is no doubt worthwhile.

3. Maria Porciana dos Passos (1853-1915)

Emília's maternal grandmother, Maria Porciana dos Passos, was born during the mid-19th century, in the *vila*, or town, of Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Porto da Cachoeira, referred to simply as Cachoeira. By the mid-19th century, this town had already become the principal entrepôt linking Bahia's capital, Salvador, with the rest of Brazil. As such, Cachoeira was, in the words of anthropologist Luis Nicolau Parés, the "most important economic pole of the Recôncavo" (Parés 2007: 179). But *this* Cachoeira differed significantly from the one Emília and her descendents would come to know nearly a century later. Born during the first half of the 1850s, probably in 1853, Maria Porciana dos Passos would know first hand what life was like in a slavocracy.⁴ Maria, a black Brazilian rather than African, would have been called a *crioula*.⁵ Having been born thirty-five years before Brazil's tardy abolition (in 1888), and 18 years prior to the much more significant Law of the Free Womb (*Lei do Ventre Livre*) in 1871,⁶ which granted free status to all children of enslaved women, Maria was perhaps born into slavery. It is equally possible, however, that Maria was but one of many free crioulos living in Cachoeira at the time. After all, the majority of slaves in the mid-1800s were born in Africa, with crioulos composing 15 percent of the free Cachoeiran population (Wimberly 1988: 51). Unfortunately, Maria's records are virtually silent on her parents, perhaps further suggesting she had indeed been born into slavery.⁷

⁴ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231. Maria's death certificate, from August 20, 1915, asserts that she was 62 years old when she died. This places her birth year in 1853 or 1852 if she had not yet celebrated her birthday by the time of her August death.

⁵ While there is no official record of Maria's "color," it is possible to infer that since her daughter is officially recognized (on her death certificate) as "black" rather than *parda* (mixed), Maria was probably also "black."

⁶ While symbolically significant, the May 13, 1888 passing of abolition was not a transformative law. The more significant date, in fact, was September 28, 1871, when the Law of the Free Womb was passed. This would explain, for example, why the Cachoeiran newspaper *A Ordem*, at the beginning of the 20th century, published larger celebratory reports each year on September 28, than those for May 13.

⁷ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231. When Maria's son, Pedro, reported his mother's death in 1915, he registered her parents as "unknown" (*desconhecidos*).

BAHIA AND CACHOEIRA IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY

Maria's Bahia was tumultuous and her first memories were probably quite tragic. Not only a witness to the suffering that resulted from the collapse of Bahia's economy from 1800 to 1870, Maria was also born during the catastrophic cholera epidemic that ravaged the Bahian Recôncavo in 1855 (Parés 2007: 191; Reis 2003 [1991]: 26). The two-year epidemic so impacted Bahian social life that nearly three-quarters of a century later, José Wanderley de Araujo Pinho (1920), writing for the prestigious *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia*, explained that the "tragic occurrence of 1855 and 56 . . . with all of its Dante-esque darkness, marks a memorable era of indescribable suffering" (p. 142). In vivid detail, Pinho details the panic that ensued after the arrival and spread of what he calls the "sad emissary of death":

During the final days of August, the death toll rose dramatically, the fear reached maddening proportions . . . The doctors fled, the important people exiled themselves, the authorities abandoned their posts, and the populous, in a resounding clamor of anguish, conducted itself in droves on the roads, toward the ports, went everywhere, leaving the sick, abandoning the dead, forgetting their greater affections, in the weakened torrent of the collective fear that dominated them and in their terrific vortices all were taken. (Pinho 1920: 144)

Might this epidemic have led people to seek assistance from St. Roch, the patron saint of pestilence? Also, might Maria's parents have been among the tens of thousands who fell victim to this cholera outbreak? It is difficult to tell. Nonetheless, it was but one of many significant moments of 19th-century Bahia. After all, Maria also lived through the largest war in Brazilian history and the abolition of slavery.

In 1865, Brazil went to war with Paraguay over land disputes. Eventually designated as the Paraguayan War (*A Guerra do Paraguai*), the fighting lasted until 1870. The number of Brazilians soldiers who served in the bloody battle is estimated at 90,898, including at least 15,267 Bahian soldiers. This means that more Bahian soldiers participated in the war than the

combined number of inhabitants (approximately 12,475) in the urban centers of Cachoeira and São Félix during roughly the same period.⁸ Many of the Bahian soldiers were black, for a majority of the new recruits—distinct from volunteers—were indeed free and freed blacks (Graden 2006: 53-82). One of the effects of the war was the stimulation of a nationalist attitude throughout the country, and Maria probably developed a strong sense of patriotism. And it is a further possibility that some of Maria’s immediate family members joined the war effort. Might her father, her brothers, or her uncles have fought in the infamous war?

A year after the war’s end, the Law of the Free Womb (*Lei do Ventre Livre*) was passed on September 28, 1871, rattling the Brazilian slavocracy. By this time, Cachoeira had begun to recover from its economic downturn due in large part to the construction of a number of cigar factories during the 1870s and 1880s (Wimberly 1988: 81, 1998: 77). Beyond the economic boost provided by the cigar industry, transportation was significantly expanded—via railways—in the 1860s. By 1875, the rail company Central da Bahia had established track that linked Cachoeira to important cities such as Feira de Santana, and had further extended it southwest in the direction of Curralinho (Castro Alves) by 1881 (Wimberly 1988: 81-102).

On May 13, 1888, 35-year-old Maria witnessed the legal end of slavery. For Africans and crioulos, the import of the legal abolition of slavery in Brazil rested more in its symbolism than its calculable ramifications. Historian Wlamyra Albuquerque (2009: 96-97) explains:

“[T]hroughout the country, the May 13th law freed few blacks in relation to the total population of color. The majority had already achieved manumission before 1888. . . [But] the impact that

⁸ According to Brazil’s first national census, there were 451,678 Bahian inhabitants in 1872 (Barickman 1998: 15). As Dain Borges (1992: 15) observes, in the municipalities of Salvador, there were 139,000 inhabitants, while the municipality of Cachoeira had 88,000 and of Santo Amaro held a population of 58,000. However, these numbers, which include many rural districts, are much higher than those of the urban centers. As Wimberly (1998: 77) notes, “The central parish of Cachoeira grew from 9,270 inhabitants in 1872 to 12,607 in 1890, while that of São Félix expanded from 3,205 to 4,358 during the same period.”

the extinction of slavery caused in a society built on the legitimacy of human property does not fit in words.” Therefore, whether enslaved or not, Maria was probably quite thrilled to see the collapse of the old institution.



Fig. 7.1. Photograph of the city of Cachoeira in 1860/1865 (Ferrez 1988: 89). Maria would have not yet have been a teenager when this photograph was taken.

MARIA'S LIFE

For Maria, the year of 1888 would have been celebratory for personal reasons as well; it marked her son Pedro's first birthday.⁹ While it is uncertain how many children Maria had or even how many she raised, records indicate that she had at least two children with João Francisco dos Santos.¹⁰ The first, Pedro Nolasco de Assis, was probably born in 1887, and his sister, Anna Portella dos Santos was born nearly a decade later, presumably in 1895.¹¹ It appears that João never legally married Maria, which was in fact quite common among blacks of the

⁹ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B8, no. 728. According to his marriage certificate, Pedro Nolasco de Assis was 24 years old when he married Igenes Neves das Neves on May 20, 1911.

¹⁰ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B8, no. 728, and Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932.

¹¹ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932, and Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669. Although Anna Portella dos Santos's death certificate is marred with errors, listing, for example, her husband's parents as her own, it is worth considering that she may have been, as the document indicates, 40 years old at time of death (on December 20, 1933), placing her birth year in 1892 or 1893. However, I choose to give preference to the age listed on her marriage certificate, which indicates that Anna Portella dos Santos was 18 years old when she was legally married to Firmino José Vieira dos Santos on September 20, 1913, which would make her birth year 1895, or 1894, if she married before her birthday.

time. Indeed, in late-19th-century Cachoeira “90 percent of creole births were out of wedlock” (Wimberly 1988: 116).¹² This does not mean, however, that João and Maria did not reside together in a common-law marriage. After all, on both of their children’s marriage certificates the two are listed as “legitimate” parents. If in fact João lived with Maria, the two shared a residence in the Caquende, a Cachoeiran neighborhood whose waters “were thought to have curative powers for skin diseases” (Wimberly 1988: 109). And it was indeed in this same neighborhood that in 1915, at age 62, Maria passed away.

João and Maria were both intimately linked to one of the city’s most important confraternities, the Brotherhood of the Good Patient Lord Jesus (*Irmandade do Senhor Bom Jesus da Paciência*). As is well known, beyond acting as a mutual aid organization, the principal purpose of a brotherhood in society was—and still is—to sponsor annually a public celebration for its patron saint. At the beginning of the 20th century at least, like other Cachoeiran brotherhoods of the era, the Brotherhood of Patience (*Irmandade da Paciência*) celebrated its annual Mass in the Church of the Ordem Terceira do Carmo. After the Brotherhood’s elaborate Mass for the Good Patient Lord Jesus, held three weeks before Easter,¹³ the community could expect an animated procession accompanied by one of the many local philharmonic bands. The two most prestigious bands of the era were the Lyra Ceciliana and the Minerva Cachoeirana, but there were also others. In 1902, for example, the philharmonic União das Artes provided the musical excitement for the Brotherhood of Patience’s street festivities.¹⁴

¹² For Cachoeira, Wimberly (1988) explains that “[m]ost of the population was single, although the largest number of marriages were found among the wealthiest segment, whites. Half as numerous as pardos, they were three times more likely to be married and when compared with creoles the rate inc[r]eased eight to one” (pp. 115-116).

¹³ AO, March 8, 1902, p. 1; AO, March 28, 1906, p. 1; AO, March 6, 1907, p. 1. While I am certain the Mass was held in the same Church every year, I am merely making an educated inference with the available data regarding the date of the Mass.

¹⁴ AO, March 8, 1902, p. 1.

João Francisco dos Santos was an active member of the brotherhood, even being elected, in 1903, to serve as one of the brotherhood's three "fiscal officers" (*procurador-fiscal*).¹⁵ It is unclear whether Maria also occupied a position of leadership, but she was probably a member in the brotherhood. After all, when she succumbed to tuberculosis on the Caquende Hill (*Ladeira do Caquende*) on August 20, 1915, she was buried in a Brotherhood of Patience tomb at the cemetery of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia.¹⁶ It seems reasonable to deduce, therefore, that João and Maria participated in the Mass and procession on a yearly basis, no doubt accompanied by their two children, Pedro and Anna.

Of course Maria's involvement in the Catholic Church was not limited to the Brotherhood's activities. She probably went to weekly Masses and participated in the citywide saints' day commemorations. In Cachoeira, between 1900 and 1907, among the largest celebrations were those for Our Lord of the Navigators, Our Lady of Amparo, Our Lady of the Help, Our Lady of the Conception, Our Lady of the Good Death, St. Barbara, Good Jesus of the Steps, and of course Good Patient Jesus.¹⁷ Each of these generally included nine consecutive nights of Church prayer, so-called *novenas*, which would be followed by group celebration, each night sponsored by different members of the local community. And every saint celebration ended with spectacular processions. Furthermore, if João and Maria had godchildren, as is more than likely to have been the case, they would both also have participated in Church baptisms.

Maria's spiritual life undoubtedly reached beyond the confines of Church walls. She probably possessed an altar or oratory in her home, however humble it might have been. And she certainly participated in domestic celebrations for saints Cosmas and Damian, and St. Anthony, for these were among the most important Bahian social events of the late-19th and early-20th

¹⁵ AO, May 17, 1902, p. 3.

¹⁶ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231.

¹⁷ AO. This information is based on a review of the newspaper *A ordem*, from 1900 to 1907.

centuries. She may even have had personal devotions to these saints. Evidence indicates that the domestic celebration of St. Anthony was frequent in Cachoeira by the first decades of the 20th century,¹⁸ and certainly the twin saints Cosmas and Damian were celebrated with large banquets in Salvador by the late-19th century, a trend that probably extended to the Recôncavo region in general (see Iyanaga 2010).¹⁹

Yet Cachoeira's spiritual landscape during Maria's lifetime was not limited to saints and the Catholic Church. What might have been Maria's connection to the emergent Candomblé community, whose sacred temples, known as *terreiros*, were increasingly numerous over the course of the 19th century? When Maria was born, there were few—if any—organized Candomblé terreiros in Cachoeira. According to historian Luis Cláudio Dias do Nascimento, Nagopé, one of the first Candomblé terreiros in Cachoeira began operating in the 1830s or 1840s. The terreiro is said to have been of the *Jeje-modubi* nation, and was located in the maroon slave community (*quilombo*) known as Obá Tedô, in the area of the city known as the Galinheiro (Nascimento 1999: 16-17; Parés 2007: 180).

Another *Jeje* terreiro, about which quite a bit more is known, appears in the written (and oral) historical record sometime later. This terreiro, known as Roça de Cima, was located in Cachoeira, “on the road that led to the Engenho do Rosário” (Parés 2007: 182). And the terreiro, according to Parés, was in operation by at least the 1860s (p. 184). At about the same time, on the other side of the Paraguaçu River, there existed at least one other terreiro, this one of the *Nagô* nation, which was known as the Candomblé of Capivari (Parés 2007: 196; Wimberly 1998: 82). The oral record suggests that Roça de Cima and Capivari were the only Candomblé terreiros in the region from the mid-19th-century until after 1870, when nine Nagô terreiros were founded

¹⁸ AO, June 9, 1926, p. 4.

¹⁹ By the mid-19th century, saints Cosmas and Damian were as important in Bahia as St. Anthony and St. John.

either by Africans who arrived with the final slave embarkations or by first generation crioulo descendants of these Africans (Wimberly 1998: 82). These Nagô terreiros, Parés (2007: 197) argues, only began to operate after abolition. And thus during the last two decades or so of the 19th century, Maria would have seen (and heard) the gradual expansion of the institutionalized Candomblé religion in her city.

At the turn of the 20th century, what might Maria's relationship have been with these old and new terreiros of Cachoeira? Maria, a nearly 50-year-old mother of two, might have participated in parties for Orixás as either an adept (*filha de santo*) or a guest. Though no evidence suggests that she was a priestess herself, might Maria have regularly consulted with a Candomblé priest or priestess, or perhaps a non-denominational diviner? After all, as João Reis (2001: 128) observes for the second half of the 19th century, "People of all social ranks consulted with diviners and healers and attended funerals, initiation rites, and festivals celebrating specific divinities throughout the year." At the very least, Maria was well aware of Candomblé and probably heard the drumming whenever there were festivities. It is safe to assume that Maria's relationship with Candomblé was more than casual given that her own daughter, Anna, was a *filha de santo* "by birth" (*de nascença*). Might Maria have taken her daughter to be "treated" at a Candomblé terreiro? If so, Maria no doubt had affective ties with *somebody* at the terreiro to which she took her daughter. Could it possibly have been a neighbor, a friend, a godson, or even a member of her Catholic brotherhood?

With so little information about Maria, I cannot possibly go beyond suppositions. For example, might she have participated in the then rapidly popularizing Spiritualism movement? After all, Spiritualism took off in Bahian and Brazilian society right about the time Maria was coming of age between 1866 and 1874, when Luiz Olimpio Telles de Menezes translated Allan

Kardec's work into Portuguese (see Fernandes 2002; Lewgoy 2008). In her time, an epoch marked by some of the most significant social and political changes in Brazilian history, Maria's spiritual universe was hardly limited to the Catholic Church. Maria Porciana dos Passos transited among overlapping religious institutions in a Black Atlantic society.

4. Anna Portella dos Santos (1895-1933)

Maria's daughter, Anna Portella dos Santos, the eventual mother of this story's protagonist, was born in 1895. At 18 years old on September 20, 1913, Anna was legally wed to Firmino Vieira dos Santos and thereafter, having taken his name, became known as Anna Vieira dos Santos. At the time of the marriage ceremony, the groom's mother, Maria Eugênia Vieira dos Santos, was already deceased, and Anna's mother Maria would pass away just two years after the wedding. As a result, none of Anna's three children²⁰ would know either a maternal or paternal grandmother.²¹ The couple's first child, Adalberto Vieira dos Santos, known affectionately by his family as Lequinha, was born on September 10, 1917.²² A few years later, Anna gave birth to Lequinha's younger sisters, Emília and Maria de Lourdes.²³ The information in the sisters' birth records not only diverges from the memory of their descendents, but it is also

²⁰ Using written and oral evidence, I was able to confirm the birth of only three children. If in fact Anna gave birth to others, which is quite probable, they probably fell victim to the common illnesses of the time.

²¹ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932.

²² FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. A9, no. 298.

²³ FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. A9, no. 298.

clearly incorrect.²⁴ Thus I can only approximate that the two were born sometime in the early 1920s, Emília probably in 1921 and her younger sister, Maria de Lourdes, in 1922 or 1923.²⁵

On May 3rd, 1925, a surely grief-stricken Firmino reported that his son had succumbed to an “intestinal fever” at 11pm on Caquende Street the night before.²⁶ The young boy was not even eight years old. By the mid-1920s, the tragic death of their son notwithstanding, Firmino Vieira dos Santos and Anna Vieira dos Santos had established a rather stable family life with their two daughters, Milú (aka Emília) and Marinha (aka Maria de Lourdes). Indeed, they appeared to lead a rather typical 1920s Cachoeira lifestyle. And based on events that I will illustrate shortly, they appeared to have loved each other in quite the same way one might think a loving relationship would transpire today. While Anna stayed at home caring for household tasks and the couple’s two daughters,²⁷ Firmino worked—as he had for many years—as a “fundidor” (plate-/tracklayer) with the Leste Brasileiro railroad company.²⁸ This choice of employment is hardly surprising, given that this was the most expansive period of railroad growth in Bahia’s history. Due to heavy government investments in railways at the beginning of the 20th century, the number of railroad kilometers more than doubled in Bahia between 1895 and 1930 (Tavares 2008: 371). Like his in-laws before him, Firmino also shared an affinity for the Brotherhood of Patience. He was both an active member of the Brotherhood and chose to be buried in a Brotherhood of Patience tomb in

²⁴ FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. A17, nos. 912 and 913. Registered by their uncle Pedro Nolasco de Assis in 1936, Emília and Maria de Lourdes are listed as being minors born in September 1917 and October 1914, respectively. Surely they were minors, for their uncle was caring for them at the time. It would thus have been impossible for either to have been a minor with 1917 and 1914 birth years (making them 19 and 21 years of age at the time of the official documentation in September 1936). Furthermore, the oral record indicates that Emília was the older of the two, rather than the inverse, as the birth certificates suggest.

²⁵ As far as I am aware, these estimates contradict *every* one of their official documents, ranging from Emília’s marriage and death certificate to Maria de Lourdes’ work document (*carteira de trabalho*). But this is because all of these documents simply reproduced the erroneous data of the birth certificates.

²⁶ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C25, no. 260. Here Adalberto’s age is listed at six years, but this is probably because his birth was only registered in 1919.

²⁷ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669.

²⁸ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.

the Santa Casa de Misericórdia cemetery.²⁹ Anna was not buried with him, perhaps indicating that she was not an official member of the brotherhood, but like her parents, she probably participated in the brotherhood's annual procession and mass.

ANNA'S REZA AND SAINT ROCH (1920-1933)

Anna Vieira dos Santos was a devotee of St. Roch, a Catholic saint that remains dear to her descendents today, holding a domestic reza for this French saint on a yearly basis. It is difficult to know from where her devotion derived. Maybe it was a vow she had made. Or perhaps she was simply giving continuity to her mother's devotion. It is also possible that Anna's reza began as part of an obligation to her Orixá, Obaluaiê (as I will discuss to follow). At any rate, Anna no doubt began her reza only after marriage (see Ch. 1) and therefore, married by late-1913, might Anna have begun hosting her reza as early as August 1914?

Oral accounts indicate that Anna was at least hosting her reza by the mid-1920s and did so until her death in 1933. My exploration of Anna's reza will thus focus on this period. I have little information about Cachoeiran rezas of the early-20th century, and I have yet to encounter a single datum (oral or written) on rezas for St. Roch before the 1940s. Regarding rezas for other saints, primarily St. Anthony and Sts. Cosmas and Damian, I do have some scant documentation concerning Salvador from the late-1800s onward. And while social life in Cachoeira was surely different from that in Bahia's capital, the two cities' commercial and social proximity no doubt ensured some general cultural homogeneity (as is the case today). Therefore, although I have no *concrete* information about Anna Vieira dos Santos' devotion to St. Roch, I can make some educated guesses regarding how it may have been realized during the 1920s and 1930s.

²⁹ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.

The annual party almost certainly took place on August 16, a tradition maintained by Anna's descendents today. Anna probably celebrated her saint with the "old man's flower" (*flor do velho*), or popcorn, which would be used to bathe people, the home, and the street. St. Roch's altar would have been decorated with flowers and candles, and with the most beautiful cloths that Anna could afford. It is very probable that this cloth, for St. Roch, would have been red, yellow, and/or white. At the beginning of the month of August, Emília and Maria de Lourdes, perhaps together with other children in the neighborhood, probably went out in the streets to conduct "begged Masses" (*missas pedidas*), a ritual begging for alms. As explained in a 1933 article from the Bahian newspaper *A Tarde*, a "begged Mass" was a tradition for which children would take to the streets "with portraits and little boxes with stamps and images of saints,"³⁰ in order to solicit contributions for the saint's party (see Fig. 7.2). The received donations would alleviate some of the financial burden of the festivities, but the presumable petty amounts were probably more symbolic than significant.



Fig. 7.2. Photo of a young girl conducting a *missa pedida*. She is carrying a "little box" (*caixinha*) with images of St. Cosmas and St. Damian in 1933 Bahia.³¹ This offers a glimpse of how Emília and Maria de Lourdes may have conducted their *missas pedidas*.

³⁰ AT, September 26, 1933, p. 2.

³¹ AT, September 26, 1933, p. 2.

The event's basic structure has probably changed little in the past century.³² Consequently, before the altar, where a statuette of St. Roch surely stood, was the singing of the novena, which would either be limited to a single night or extend over many consecutive nights. Samba music and dancing would follow. Anna's novena, led by a rezadeira, was probably sung in both Latin and Portuguese.³³ But this domestic Latin was probably quite different than its genteel counterpart, presuming it was something like the Latin sung at a 1936 reza for St. Anthony in Salvador, characterized by one journalist as "unrecognizable."³⁴ Certainly the novena ended with firecrackers, which were sold commonly for saints' nights since at least the 19th century.³⁵

The novena was probably followed by samba that went until the wee hours of the morning. With the whole family participating, this was most likely where Maria de Lourdes, Anna's youngest daughter, learned to love samba. "Wherever she would go," one of Emilia's granddaughters once told me, "Aunt Marinha samba danced!" It is difficult to know exactly how Cachoeira's samba differed from the synonymous dance nearly a century later, though historical sources suggest it has changed little since the mid-19th century (see Ch. 6). In his book, *Negros bantus*, first published in 1937, folklorist Édison Carneiro describes a samba he happened upon in downtown Salvador's Piedade Square:

³² AO, June 9, 1926, p. 4. Evidence demonstrates that in Cachoeira during the mid-1920s, St. Anthony was widely celebrated in private homes. This documentation, coupled with the oral historical record, suggests that indeed praying for saints privately was probably quite common in Cachoeira.

³³ Sotuyo Blanco (2002) observes that in "Senhor Bom Jesus dos Navegantes," a 19th-century ecclesiastical novena composed by Daimão Barbosa de Araújo, the "Litany" is to be sung in Latin and the "Lord's Prayer," "Ave Maria," and "Jaculatórias" are to be in Portuguese.

³⁴ AT, June 13, 1936, p. 2.

³⁵ ES, June 10, 1881, p. 3. Advertisements for the sale of firecrackers, for use in celebrating saints, were common in the 19th century, particular in relation to St. Anthony, St. John, and St. Peter. For instance, in an 1881 edition of the *Echo Santamarense*, from Santo Amaro (Bahia), there is an announcement that at the S. Torquaio warehouse, "firecrackers of every quality are on sale for the nights of Saint Anthony, St. John, and St. Peter. Good quality is guaranteed and the prices are lower than in any other part."

With the “ring” [*roda*] formed—the orchestra could be a tambourine [*pandeiro*], guitar and shaker, although sometimes castanets and berimbaus would partake—one of the black women would fall into the middle of the circle of spectators and would samba. The musicians would lead a song [*cântico*], while those of the circle would respond in chorus. After a few steps, the black woman would come, give an indefectible belly bounce [*embigada*] in the other, bringing their bellies together, and would retake her place, while the other substituted her. (Carneiro 1991: 202)

This description of an apparently non-religious mid-1930s samba in a public square in Salvador is hardly ideal for my effort to estimate the nature of a residential religious samba in Cachoeira during the 1920s and early-1930s. Still, given some salient similarities among Carneiro’s description, others from the past century, and 21st-century samba in Cachoeira, it seems possible to make some generalizations about Anna’s annual samba. The samba was played without any formal organization—a strong contrast to today’s samba-de-roda performance groups—and on whatever instruments they could find, though tambourines were probably always present. Anna’s samba was undoubtedly responsorial and danced in the way described by Carneiro.

The 1920s and 1930s were marked by police oppression and social intolerance of African-derived cultural practices. Might Anna’s samba also have suffered the same denouncements to which other samba events were subject in Cachoeira during the 1920s? Samba musicians were often characterized negatively. In the terms of a June 1926 article in the Cachoeiran newspaper *A Ordem*, samba musicians were “disturbers [*pertubadores*] of public silence” (Santos 2009: 65). Although police had little problem with samba at the turn of the 20th century, their position changed radically in 1921.

In 1921, Cachoeira experienced an overhaul of government officials, which also resulted in significant legislative changes. The new lieutenant, Laudelino de Paiva, would soon be lauded in *A Ordem*, for resuscitating the policing of the city, where he cut down on “gambling [*jogos de azar*], sambas, Candomblé practices, the thieves and the swindlers,” all of which were seen as

barriers to Cachoeira's "progress" (Santos 2009: 132). At roughly the same time, only 66 miles away, Bahia's capital also had a new "savior" to lead the campaign against black culture, with Candomblé as the primary target. The infamous Pedro Azevedo Gordilho, better known as Pedrito, was active from 1920 to 1926, as he raided a legendary number of Candomblé terreiros in Salvador (see Lühning 1995/1996). It was within this socio-political context, one which was categorically hostile toward Afro-Brazilian culture, that Anna practiced Candomblé.

ANNA'S CANDOMBLÉ AND OBALUAIÊ (1920-1933)

Anna is remembered by her descendents as an adept of Candomblé. She placed "presents" (probably candles) at the foot of her *umbu*, or Brazil plum (*spondias tuberosa*), tree that still grows on the property that would eventually be inherited by her two daughters. As discussed in Ch. 5, there are two ways of receiving an orixá, by birth or initiation. Anna was a *filha-de-santo* from birth (*filha de santo de nascença*) and thus never passed through a process of initiation. In other words, Anna was born with an *orixá* named Obaluaiê (or Abaluayê). And it is not unimportant that this *orixá* is "syncretized" with St. Roch. While I have no intention to develop here a discussion of syncretism, it is worth noting that in popular discourse, people often explain syncretism as being the same deity with a Catholic name and a Candomblé name. I have therefore repeatedly been told that "in Candomblé, it's Obaluaiê, but in Catholicism he's called St. Roch." As such, Anna's reza for St. Roch was probably intimately linked to her relationship with Obaluaiê. Put otherwise, having been born with Obaluaiê, Anna might very well have learned early on that she was required to *serve* St. Roch by way of a reza, a logic that exists for some 21st-century Bahians.

I can do little more than speculate about how Anna knew she was born with Obaluaiê. It could have been through illness, divine revelation, or dreams (see Ch. 5). But regardless, it seems

Anna's contact with Candomblé was infrequent, and she did not participate regularly in any terreiro. But when Obaluaiê "called" (manifested in her), Anna would go always to the *same* terreiro, Seja Hundé. Seja Hundé, also known as Roça do Ventura (Ventura Farm) or simply Ventura, is the oldest terreiro of the Jeje ritual lineage still operational in Cachoeira. As such, the terreiro carries notable prestige within the Candomblé community and in 2011, was even declared by the Brazilian National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) to be Brazilian patrimony.³⁶ As already noted, the first Jeje terreiro in Cachoeira was Roça de Cima, which was already operating in the 1860s. And although Roça de Cima was non-operational by the early-1900s, it was there that Seja Hundé's first two priestesses (*mães de santo*), Maria Agorensi and Abalhe, were initiated (Parés 2007: Ch. 5). The first priestess of Seja Hundé, Maria Agorensi, led from the end of the 1800s until 1922. This, Parés (2007: 219) affirms, closed one of the most important "chapters in the Seja Hundé's history." Anna was born at roughly the same time that Seja Hundé opened its doors for the first time, and, impressively, it took little time for the terreiro to become established. This means that Anna would have been raised with an awareness of Seja Hundé's fame. Could this local notoriety have been the impetus for Anna to go to a terreiro located not only distant from her home but inaccessibly atop a very big, steep hill?

According to Anna's granddaughters, who learned about their grandmother by way of stories told to them by their mother and aunt, Obaluaiê would take hold of Anna's body whenever his music was played. While incorporated, Anna would climb the Ladeira da Cadeia (Prison Hill) with the help of her youngest daughter, Maria de Lourdes, in order to attend the

³⁶ This profound notoriety raises the issue of whether Anna's descendents, none of whom was alive to see her participate in the Candomblé at Seja Hundé, might have constructed (consciously or not) their narrative in order to include their ancestor in a prestigious Afro-Brazilian religious history. However, considering that none of Anna's blood-related descendents participates actively in any Candomblé congregations and are rather unconnected with the larger Afro-Brazilian religious discourses, I am inclined to discard this possibility

ceremony at the terreiro. Emília, who did not like “these things,” would stay in the Caquende neighborhood with her father, who abhorred the practice. Even if Anna could not actually *hear* the distant sounds from the terreiro, which may have been a possibility at the time, surely she always knew when certain parties (*festas*) were to take place. According to Jeje tradition, the playing would have involved three different sized *atabaques*, the *rum*, *rumpi*, and *lé*, together with the time-line played on the *gã* (iron bell). The percussionists would play with *aguidavis* (sticks made of branches from guava trees, tamarind trees, or liana) (Parés 2007: 320-321).³⁷ Anna, manifested from the moment she was “grabbed” by the *orixá*, would go to the terreiro to let her Obaluaiê dance.

In Jeje terreiros, after a priestess’ death, “the Candomblé activities are typically stopped [for seven years], in other words, public festivities are not celebrated nor are new vodúnsis [adepts] initiated, although certain internal rituals . . . can be maintained” (Parés 2007: 219). Yet when Seja Hundé’s first priestess, Maria Agorensi, died in 1922, the terreiro ceased its activities for over a decade, recommencing only in 1934 or 1937. Even if Parés’ dates are off by a few years, this underscores a glaring problem in the oral history. Maria de Lourdes was born around 1922 and Anna died before 1934. If the activities were entirely stopped during this period, how could Anna—with her daughter in tow—have participated at all? Could it be that the terreiro to which Anna would go was not Seja Hundé, and that this terreiro has become part of the oral historical record solely because of its notoriety? Or, if indeed Anna did participate, this could be an indication of what might have been some of the “internal rituals” of the terreiro while its doors were closed to the public. Regardless, everything would change in 1933.

³⁷ The *rum* player would use only one *aguidavi*, leaving his other hand free.

At 11pm on December 19, 1933, Anna left her two young daughters motherless, surrendering to what her death certificate describes as a “fever.”³⁸ But her two daughters were certain this “fever,” which took their mother’s life before her 40th birthday, was not simply happenstance. And they were careful to educate their children years later on the true cause of Anna’s death. As already indicated, Firmino, Anna’s husband, never approved of his wife’s involvement in Candomblé. In this way, he seemed to embody the period’s anti-Candomblé stance. It is worth noting that this shows just one of the era’s possible family dynamics: a wife who is a Candomblé adept and a husband who is a member of the Brotherhood of Patience and rigidly anti-Candomblé. But the ideological friction finally reached a boiling point sometime in 1933. One night Firmino found out there would be a Candomblé celebration and, as his granddaughter Marlene explained to me, “He stood there at her feet without letting her go to the terreiro. And then the saint grabbed her. He threw her body back and forth. But Firmino didn’t let her go. Then the ‘saint’ came and said, ‘I have a response for you.’ Just a short time later, she died.”³⁹ In a fascinating moment of divine confrontation, mortal versus deity, Firmino refused to allow his wife to celebrate her Obaluaiê—to complete her obligation—causing the deity to “respond” by taking Anna’s life.

As if one loss in the family had not been enough, however, a little over four months after his wife’s passing, Firmino Vieira dos Santos also died. On April 28, 1934, Pedro Nolasco de Assis reported that his brother-in-law had, on Caquende Street the night before, fallen victim to tuberculosis.⁴⁰ Firmino’s tuberculosis, his granddaughters were repeatedly told, was caused by his unshakable remorse and consequent alcoholism. The ramifications of these deaths on the couple’s two young daughters were immeasurable. Emília and Maria de Lourdes, neither one yet

³⁸ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669.

³⁹ Interview with Dona Marlene and Dona Margarida at their home in Cachoeira, Bahia, on September 3, 2009.

⁴⁰ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.

a teenager, had suddenly become orphans. They were sent to live with their maternal uncle, Pedro Nolasco de Assis. Little is known about what life was like with Uncle Pedro, but within a few short years, and still as teenagers, Emília and Maria de Lourdes set out on their own, finding work as cigar rollers in Cachoeira's booming tobacco industry.

Before moving on to this next generation, allow me to review a few of the details just presented. Anna, whose parents were active members of the Brotherhood of Patience, was born with an Orixá named Obaluaiê. Whenever Obaluaiê “grabbed” Anna, she would go with her youngest daughter Maria de Lourdes to Seja Hundé, a terreiro that was relatively distant from her home in the Caquende neighborhood. As a complement to this spiritual commitment, Anna also had a devotion to St. Roch, during which she probably prayed a novena and samba danced all night long. The society in which she lived and raised her children was intolerant of Afro-Brazilian practices and indeed evidence suggests that her husband, a member of the Brotherhood of Patience, agreed with society's hostile stance toward Afro-Brazilian practices. Firmino probably liked the reza for St. Roch, even if he merely tolerated the samba, but was completely against his wife's “witchcraft” (i.e., *macumba*). This does not mean, however, that he was a disbeliever. After all, the repentance that led him to his fatal drinking habit was catalyzed by his belief that his actions of impeding a spiritual obligation were responsible for his wife's death. Anna was born with a responsibility from which she could not simply walk away. And indeed spiritual responsibilities never just disappear, even from one generation to the next.

5. Emília Vieira dos Santos (c. 1921-1993)

Emília Vieira dos Santos and her sister Maria de Lourdes Vieira dos Santos found themselves parentless on April 27, 1934. Being adolescents, around 12 and 11, respectively, the young girls were unable to care for themselves. They thus went to live with their Uncle Pedro

who lived down the hill from their parents' home on the Alto da Levada. Uncle Pedro fed and clothed them, even making sure, in 1936, to register their births, which their parents had neglected to do.⁴¹ The dates of the sisters' births are wildly inaccurate, however. Maria de Lourdes has the official birth date of 1914, while her *older* sister is registered as having been born three years *later*.⁴² The girls spent little time with Uncle Pedro. Less than a year and a half after going to get their birth certificates, the girls set out on their own. They moved back up the hill to their parents' home on the Alto da Levada. But soon their lack of income began to take its toll, and they both looked toward the principal employment option for Afro-Brazilian women in the 1930s: the booming cigar industry.

CIGARS, THE RECÔNCAVO, AND EMÍLIA

The cultivation of tobacco in the Recôncavo began during the second decade of the 17th century, when small growers in the area began to produce the crop. The industry indeed centered on Cachoeira and by the 1670s was an important port for tobacco producers. "Production by the beginning of the eighteenth century had reached about 2,400 tons, almost all of which went to Portugal. But Bahian tobacco increasingly found a market in West Africa, and by mid-century about 3,000 tons were also going to the Bight of Benin" (Schwartz 1986: 85).⁴³ And as Barreto and Aras (2003: 153) note, "From 1840 onward, the exportation of Brazilian tobacco was, with near exclusivity, destined for Germany." Thus Cachoeira, São Félix, and Muritiba not only remained relevant ports for the dissemination of goods from Salvador to the rest of the Brazilian

⁴¹ It is entirely unclear why Firmino registered the birth of his first son but not the births of either of his two daughters.

⁴² FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. 17, nos. 912 and 913. The dates are quite impossible, for according to the written record, Emília would have been born six days before her older brother Lequinha.

⁴³ As Luis dos Santos Vilhena (1969: 199) observed in the late-1700s, "In this Captaincy [Bahia], there are different stops, where tobacco is plowed; the sites however where there are the largest number of these plantations, preferred over any others in Brazil, are the campos of Cocheira [*sic*: Cachoeira]; besides which are the small campos of Santo Amaro da Purificação, in Inhambupe, and in the district of Sergipe del Rei."

interior, but they had also become valuable exportation hubs for Brazil's involvement in the global tobacco market.

The first factories of fine cigars were built in Bahia during the late 1800s. By 1892, Bahia was home to twelve cigar factories, and activities only intensified at the turn of the century. During the first half of the 20th century, the Recôncavo region was home to at least five important factories, Dannemann, Suerdieck, Costa Ferreira & Penna, Leite & Alves, and C. Pimentel & Cia. Both Danneman and Suerdieck were German factories, the former arriving to Bahia in 1873 and the latter in 1888, and these, along with Costa Ferreira & Penna, at the apex of their production, employed around ten thousand people in the cities of Cachoeira, São Félix, Maragogipe, Muritiba, and Cruz das Almas (Silva 2001: 49-53). The industry boomed following World War I, such that Suerdieck was producing over 10,000,000 cigars per year (p. 54). In her study on female cigar rollers (*charuteiras*) in the Recôncavo, Elisabete Silva observes that of the 2,852 employees of the Suerdieck factory in Maragogipe, between 1905 and 1950, 79.3% were women (p. 62). And certainly this statistic is representative of the region's various cigar factories.

In the late 1930s, hired as cigar rollers, Emília and her sister became part of this transnational cigar industry. According to official factory records, Emília was hired by the Danneman cigar factory in São Félix on March 2, 1938. Emília was then around 17, and, according to the records, was literate and earned \$143 mil réis per month.⁴⁴ Though I have yet to encounter the records for Maria de Lourdes, who was also employed as a cigar roller at Danneman and later at the Costa Ferreira & Penna cigar factories, it seems reasonable to presume that she began working at roughly the same time. Both needed to make a living, after all. This would have meant that Maria de Lourdes was not older than 15 years old when she

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Walter Fraga for providing me with the information from this document.

began working. And indeed, the photograph in her employment record book (*carteira de trabalho*) was taken on April 9, 1935, when she would have been around 13 years old, shows how young she was when she felt she needed legal documentation for employment (Fig. 7.3).



Fig. 7.3. Maria de Lourdes' *carteira de trabalho*. The photograph is dated April 9, 1935, thus she was around thirteen years old. (Photo courtesy of Iraíldes Silva da Cruz)

When Emília was hired at the Danneman cigar factory, she was single and six months pregnant with her first daughter, Malvina, who, at birth, would be registered with only her mother's last name, Vieira dos Santos.⁴⁵ Shortly thereafter, on October 31, 1939, Emília married Graciliano Bispo dos Santos, the father of her sixteen-month-old daughter and someone with whom she had been living for some period of time before officially marrying.⁴⁶ Emília was barely 17 years old and her husband, born on August 12, 1913, was 26. Graciliano was the son of Maria Rita dos Santos and Guilherme de Oliveira Bispo. On his marriage certificate, his profession is listed as "artist,"⁴⁷ though his children remember him mostly for the many years he

⁴⁵ FTFC, Registro de Nascimento, vol. A21, no. 596.

⁴⁶ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B16, no. 59. According to her marriage certificate, Emília Vieira dos Santos married Graciliano Bispo dos Santos on October 31, 1939. Including as an annex to the usual information legalizing their marriage is a request that their daughter, Malvina Vieira dos Santos, who had been born on June 15, 1938, be "legitimized by subsequent matrimony."

⁴⁷ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B16, no. 59.

worked as a railroad coppersmith, particularly with the railway company Viação Férrea Federal Leste Brasileiro, which operated in the city of Alagoinhas, to Cachoeira's northeast.

Emília and her husband lived in the home on the Alto da Levada that her parents had left to her and her sister. After Malvina, Emília gave birth to a number of other children, though only three survived: Marlene (b. 1941), Margarida (b. 1942), and Maclino (b. 1947). Emília's sister, Maria de Lourdes, lived down the hill, on the banks of the Paraguaçu River. Married, with three children of her own, Iraíldes, Manuel Ramos Filho, and Maria D'Ajuda, Maria de Lourdes remained close to her older sister. The living offspring of these sisters, Marlene, Margarida, and Iraíldes, often remember how difficult life was when they were growing up. Cachoeira was a different place, marked particularly strongly by frequent floods, as the Paraguaçu River would overflow into the city streets.

Graciliano, working on the railroad in Alagoinhas, left his wife in Cachoeira to raise the children. During the 1950s, when the cigar industry declined and a number of factories closed, Emília, like most cigar rollers, lost her job. But with her vocational training, she was able to enter the informal cigar market, thus making money by selling homemade cigars.⁴⁸ Finally, around 1960, Emília decided to move to Alagoinhas to be with her husband, leaving her three by-now-adult daughters to care for the home and their younger brother. When Graciliano eventually retired after forty years of work on the railroads, the couple moved back to Cachoeira. On March 19, 1973, just five months before his sixtieth birthday, Graciliano succumbed to cancer.⁴⁹ Two decades later, on May 26, 1993, after 72 years of a Black Atlantic life, Emília fell victim to a “cardio respiratory arrest,” leaving her five children (including an adopted daughter),

⁴⁸ This might be considered part of the so-called “fabricos,” which were clandestine locales that could be set up in a residence or in a specific place, where twelve to fifteen women would get together and make cigars for selling on the street. These were cigar *houses* rather than factories (Silva 2001: 57-58).

⁴⁹ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C46, no. 12.343.

six grandchildren, two great grandchildren (with more to come), and many other close relatives and friends.⁵⁰ Her sister, Maria de Lourdes, died fifteen years later, at 86 years old.



Fig. 7.4. Emília, sitting in a chair at her home, c. 1975-1990. (Photo courtesy of Marlene and Margarida Bispo dos Santos)

EMÍLIA'S REZA AND ST. ROCH, ERA #1 (1939-1957)

Emília's reza for St. Roch was the focal point of her annual calendar. It was something that always made her happy. Beginning January of each year, she would begin to accumulate small quantities of expensive dried shrimp so that she would have enough by the time her saint's feast came around in August. Emília would even repaint her home every year before the party. After moving out of Uncle Pedro's home, Emília and Maria de Lourdes reclaimed their mother's devotion to St. Roch. And while Maria de Lourdes always participated, it was her older sister who really embraced the family responsibility. It is not entirely clear when they began holding their reza again, but Emília's living daughters have no recollection of a time when there was no family reza for St. Roch.

⁵⁰ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C50, no. 17.354.

As I explained in Chapter 1, rezas are personal responsibilities that never simply end with the person's death. These devotions are *designed* to be transgenerational. As vibrant family heirlooms, patron saints must be cared for and celebrated until the next generation comes along to assume the responsibility. Although Anna Vieira dos Santos died while her girls were still adolescents, they were certainly old enough to remember their mother's annual devotional party to St. Roch. At the time of their mother's death, as juvenile, dependent girls, they would not have been expected to uphold their inherited responsibilities to their mother's patron saint. However, now they were living on their own, raising families, and working. St. Roch would expect to be remembered and celebrated. Maria de Lourdes, who was always much more interested in Anna's spiritual universe, reminded her sister that their mother had wanted it to continue, and with the help of Mamãe (Mommy) Laura, a local resident and probably a friend of Anna, the sisters reinitiated the inherited obligation that had remained dormant since 1933.

Mamãe Laura, Maria Laura de Jesus, was a well-known member of Cachoeiran society in the early-20th century. She was a midwife (*parteira*) and had been responsible for delivering many of the babies in the Caquende neighborhood. Mamãe Laura was also a priestess and member of the well-known Sisterhood of Our Lady of Good Death (Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte). Born in Cachoeira in 1888, Mamãe Laura was only a year younger than Emília's Uncle Pedro, and nine years older than Emília's own mother.⁵¹ Consequently, Mamãe Laura was, for Emília, akin to a mother, even serving as godmother of Emília's third daughter, Margarida. Mamãe Laura lived in the Caquende neighborhood of Cachoeira, not too far from the main square, down the hill from Emília's home on the Alto da Levada. As mentioned, Mamãe Laura was a priestess, a *mãe-de-santo*, who worked with deities to serve clients. She ran "Caboclo sessions" (*sessões de caboclo*) (see Ch. 5). During these "sessions," she would

⁵¹ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C40, no. 7516.

incorporate a deity—probably Obaluaiê—and offer counsel and healing for those in need of help. These events are often described as “quiet” sessions, for unlike Candomblé ceremonies, which rely on loud drumming, these white table sessions often involve little more than gentle unaccompanied group singing. Mamãe Laura is remembered as being very spiritually powerful, with a number of powerful “Caboclos.”

As already noted, Mamãe Laura was also a member of the Sisterhood of Good Death. During Mamãe Laura’s time, the Sisterhood had nowhere near the fame or citywide acceptance that it gained in the final decades of the 20th century (see Castro 2006). Instead of having their own chapel and headquarters, as they have today, the sisterhood members would meet in private residences. The Boa Morte festival, originally formed in Salvador, moved to Cachoeira at some point during the 19th or early-20th century.⁵² The event, which scholars argue has strong links to Candomblé (Nascimento 1999), is held over the course of three days, during which time the sisters celebrate the Virgin Mary’s assumption to Heaven (see Fig. 7.5). The women who participated in the Sisterhood were regarded as some of the most spiritually powerful of the city.

⁵² Often the existence of the Boa Morte celebration in Cachoeira is treated as the result of the movement from Salvador to the interior. Yet some claim, as Marques (2008: 61, n. 25) observes, that the Boa Morte was in fact created in Cachoeira. Others insist that the movement occurred sometime during the first decades of the 1800s (around 1820) (see Marques 2008: 61). An archival document originally located by Jocélio Teles dos Santos (1997), and confirmed by me (see Ch. 6), makes reference to the celebration of Our Lady of the Good Death, which is intended to take place in Salvador, in 1854. This suggests that the celebration moved to Cachoeira only in the second half of the century. This suggests that Sebastião Heber Vieira Costa’s (2009: 34) interpretation is probably valid, that “[s]ome sisters, in the beginning of the 20th century, had moved from Salvador to Cachoeira, re-establishing there the Brotherhood of the Good Death.” Certainly, by the early 1900s, the Good Death was very much a part of Cachoeira’s annual festive cycle.



Fig. 7.5. Boa Morte celebration in Cachoeira during the mid-20th century. Foto Pierre Verger © Fundação Pierre Verger (FPV, Photo 24020)

As a *mãe-de-santo*, a sister of the Good Death, and probably Anna's friend, Mamãe Laura had the knowledge, spiritual qualifications, and practical experience to make sure Emília and Maria de Lourdes conducted their mother's reza in the "correct" way. After all, beyond the reza (i.e., novena and samba), the event included animal sacrifice and the singing of *cantigas* for Obaluaiê. At 5 a.m. on the day of the reza, August 16, the family would gather for the sacrifice of a rooster, two male chicks, and a pullet. Each chicken was meant to symbolize a saint: the rooster for St. Roch, the two male chicks for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, and the female chick for St. Crispina.⁵³ The devotion to the twin saints (and their mythological sister, St. Cripiana) had originally been a part of Graciliano's spiritual history, and was now incorporated into Emília's

⁵³ "The sex of the sacrificed animal," notes Roger Bastide (2001 [1958]: 32), "should be the same as the divinity that receives the spilt blood." It is worth noting that this is not entirely dissimilar from Evans-Pritchard's (1956) well-known assertion that for the East African Nuer, twins are—metaphorically—birds. Indeed, particularly with Lévi-Strauss' later analysis that points to the cosmological reason that twins are "terrestrial birds" (Lévi-Strauss 1964 [1962]: 80), it is interesting to consider why chickens, over some other animal, are used to represent the saints. Not only is the sex the same, but chickens, like humans, walk on two feet and do not fly. This compels me to wonder if Lévi-Strauss' reasoning is not at least partially relevant. After all, as Jan-Lodewijk Grootaers (2011: 196) notes, "The choice of birds is neither irrational nor arbitrary, nor is it stimulated by naturalism." A further exploration of the topic could no doubt be quite fruitful.

reza for St. Roch. The animals had to be bled in a precise way, specific prayers had to be conducted, and particular songs had to be sung. All of this was led by Mamãe Laura and accompanied by Emília and her family. While singing and clapping, Mamãe Laura would briefly incorporate Obaluaiê. When the sacrifice had ended, the fowl were treated in a ritual fashion and prepared for the so-called *axé*, or food offering, which would be placed on the floor in an outdoor shed with the door closed. Subsequently, as day broke, the family would make preparations for breakfast, for later in the morning they would attend St. Roch's Mass at the nearby Catholic Church and then lead the whole congregation—including the priest—up the hill to Emília's home on the Alto da Levada for a communal breakfast. This meant that the sacrificial objects needed to be cleaned up quickly and hidden away, for although the practice was never quite a secret, Emília was quite aware that the Church frowned upon these types of practices.

Even before St. Roch's official day, however, the ceremony had already been well under way. From the first of the month to the fifteenth, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the available children—whether her own or those from the neighborhood—would set out with a cardboard shoebox to ask for “begged Masses,” just as Emília and her sister had probably done for their mother's reza decades earlier. For this all-day affair, the children would venture out into the Caquende neighborhood, as well as into the surrounding rural areas known as Terra Vermelha and Tororó. The children would approach each door and announce: “Missa pedida do Senhor São Roque!” (Begged Mass for the Lord St. Roch!). They would receive loose change and would sometimes be invited in for refreshments. The money usually never added up to more than enough to buy candles and flowers, but was an important ritual act nonetheless. Two days before the reza, a pig was killed and prepared for the impending celebration. While this was not a sacrificial slaying per se, it is worth noting that pigs are sometimes associated with Obaluaiê.

The pig meat was used to make the lunch preparations: bean stew (*feijoada*), stewed pig intestine (*sarapatel*), stewed pig (*ensopada*), and pig's feet (*mocotó de porco*).

Returning to the day of the *reza*. After the animal sacrifice, possession, Catholic Mass, and group breakfast, many congregants—usually close to three or four dozen—would stay with the family to help prepare the rest of the food. This included the lunchtime pork as well as the evening's okra stew (*caruru*) and all of its trimmings.⁵⁴ The okra stew typically comprised around 4,000 diced okra. Throughout the day of food preparation, helpers would come and go, but the food had to be prepared by the afternoon high tide (on the river), when the seven children would be ritually fed in honor of Sts. Cosmas and Damian. The children, four boys and three girls, would sit on the floor huddled around a basin in which the okra stew and other ritual foods were placed. As the children ate with their hands, the adults circled around them singing and clapping songs for St. Cosmas and St. Damian until the children finished all of the food. Afterwards, the children would be brought a basin of water for clean up (see Fig. 7.6).



Fig. 7.6. A ritual feeding of children for Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Salvador. This photograph was taken at roughly the same time period during which Emília began her own *reza*. Foto Pierre Verger © Fundação Pierre Verger (FPV, Photo 28954)

⁵⁴ This usually includes, *vatapá* (manioc flour paste with palm oil), *xinxim de galinha* (palm oil-stewed chicken), black-eyed peas cooked in palm oil, white rice, *farofa de Xangô* (palm oil-simmered toasted manioc flour), etc.

While this is hardly the place for an in depth analysis, it is at least worth looking briefly at the reason for this seven-child ritual. According to practitioners, the number seven is cosmologically important because this is the number of siblings Cosmas and Damian had. And each child is a symbolic representation of that divinity on earth. Children are the ideal humans to satisfy such a role because they are believed to be sinless (see Ch. 1). Journalist Odorico Tavares, writing in the mid-20th century, offers some insight:

Why are seven children the guests of honor for Cosmas and Damian's lunch? We are told by Miss Aurora Martins, who is a twin [*mabaça*] and who commemorates the party with great care, that there were seven siblings: Cosmas, Damian, Doú, Alabá, Crispin, Crispinian and Talabi, all twins, and it consequently becomes necessary to give caruru in honor of seven children, specially invited, thus placating the saints' possible wrath. (Tavares 1964: 151)

The names of the seven siblings differ from home to home. For instance, Crispin and Crispinian were, for Emília, female saints: Crispina and Crispiniana. But generally speaking, most people recognize Cosmas, Damian, Doú, and Alabá as the first four of the seven siblings, as is clear not only in discourse about the tradition, but also in many of the cantigas people sing.

According to Catholic hagiographies, Cosmas and Damian were two adult twin brothers, who had no other known siblings (see Ch. 3). So why do people in the Recôncavo celebrate Doú and Alabá along with Cosmas and Damian? Furthermore, why are Cosmas and Damian portrayed in song as rambunctious children who spend their time in the forests, the ocean, and on the moon, where they hang out, play ball, swim, and have fun? Simply put, Yoruba cosmology has played an important role in recreating the cult of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Bahia. These twin adult medics have been transformed into sacred twin children, called, in Yoruba, “Ìbeji.” And these saints have been incorporated into a sacred family that includes Doú, Alabá, St. Crispin, and St. Crispinian.

For the Yoruba, “Idowu” is “the name which must be given to the child which follows the twins, and ‘Alaba’ for the child that follows ‘Idowu’” (Oruene 1985: 211-212). In Bahia, the term “Alaba” seems to have suffered little linguistic modification while “Idowu” has become “Doú”.⁵⁵ Regarding this alteration, Vivado da Costa Lima (2005: 28) makes the interesting observation that the Brazilian “Doú” comes from “Idoú” just as the Yoruba term “ipadê” has, in Bahia, become “padê.” On a final note, all over the Recôncavo, the twin saints Cosmas and Damian are intrinsically linked to the Afro-Brazilian okra dish *caruru*. It is, like St. Roch’s popcorn, the main symbolic dish for Sts. Cosmas and Damian.⁵⁶ This seems a further Yoruba link, for in Yoruba-inspired Cuban Lucumí religious culture during the early 20th century at least, the *jimagüas*, or sacred twins, were venerated with African-derived cuisine in which okra figured prominently (Ortiz [1906]: 126; see also Flores-Peña 2011).

Following the ritual feeding at Emília’s reza for St. Roch would be a period of rest, during which the family (and helpers) would change their clothing and prepare for the novena, which would often begin close to midnight. It would begin at this late hour because Emília depended on Constância, a local rezadeira, to lead the novena’s liturgy. However, since August 16 is St. Roch’s official day, many other families in the area also needed Constância to lead their rezas. Thus the in-demand rezadeira obligatorily traveled from home to home, leading prayers and socializing, before ultimately making it up to Emília’s home to lead the novena. The hour-

⁵⁵ CM, August 12, 1836, p. 4. In a regular column that listed “Escravo Fugidos” (Runaways Slaves), a reward is offered for an 18-year-old runaway Nagô slave named Felipe, but “will be more properly known by his name Dohú, from his land.” The Nagô identity is generally presumed to designate Africans of Yoruba descent. This information, beyond suggesting that the name “Dohú” (Doú) was employed in Bahia to designate Nagô Africans as early as 1836, also raises the possibility that the term “Doú” might come directly from “Nagô” Africa rather than having been modified in Bahia.

⁵⁶ Wilson Caetano de Sousa Junior (2011: 96) has suggested that the veneration of twins is linked to okra because they both represent continuity and descent. The anthropologist encourages the reader to do an experiment and put okra seeds in a glass of water. “In time, they [the seeds] gather, forming a web, or the futu . . . a type of pakot that Nganga Zambi made at the beginning of the world, where everything was placed.” This interpretation is no doubt interesting, though without a bit more historical evidence it seems somewhat lofty.

long novena would end sometime after midnight on August 17th. After the novena, the family would sing sacred sambas for St. Roch and Sts. Cosmas and Damian. And the “humans’ samba,” performed acoustically by neighbors and friends, would continue often until daybreak.

In the afternoon, on August 17th, the family would walk down to the Paraguaçu River at high tide, singing “Eu vou pra a Pedra da Baleia!” (I’m going to Whale Rock). The Pedra da Baleia was—and continues to be—a large rock located in the middle of the river, just south of Cachoeira’s urban center. When the tide is low, the rock sits exposed. When the tide is high, however, one can only see the small light tower that rests atop the rock (Fig. 7.7). The family would then take a boat out to the rock to deposit the *axé*, or food offering, from the night before. Afterwards, the family would march back up the hill singing, “Eu vim da Pedra da Baleia” (I’m coming from Whale Rock).



Fig. 7.7. Pedra da Baleia, Cachoeira, Bahia. The photo was taken at high tide in 2012, thus the “whale rock” sits hidden under the water. (Photo by Michael Iyanaga)

This is a composite description of Emília’s *reza* for St. Roch between 1939 and 1957. A number of people were central to the festivities, Mamãe Laura, who took care of the “heavy” spiritual work, the Catholic priest who held Mass for St. Roch then went up to Emília’s house for

breakfast, Emília's children (and the neighborhood children) who would collect money and eat from the basin during the ritual feeding, and Constância, who led the novena. Things changed drastically in June 1957, when Mamãe Laura passed away at 69 years old.⁵⁷ Not only was the motherly figure's death a sad moment for everyone in the family, but it also significantly impacted Emília's annual reza. Indeed, the animal sacrifice, handled by Mamãe Laura, was placed on hold for what most people remember as having been nearly seven years. Therefore, until at least 1964, there was no animal sacrifice and no possession.

EMÍLIA'S REZA AND ST. ROCH, ERA #2 (C.1964–1986)

The next important sacerdotess for Emília's reza was Edinha, about whom I have been able to discover very little. Edinha was born in Cachoeira but lived in Alagoinhas. She was not a Candomblé priestess but understood the spiritual world of Candomblé. Although a woman known as Bebê (also from Alagoinhas) also served as a sacerdotess, she only infrequently conducted the ritual during the interim years. Thus until Edinha arrived, Emília conducted her reza—with Mass, novena, and samba—without animal sacrifice or possession. During this period, Emília's three daughters—Malvina, Marlene, and Margarida—became proficient prayer leaders (see Ch. 3). With her daughters' newly acquired skills, Emília could begin her reza at any time, for she no longer depended on Constância. The 1960s and 1970s also marked the beginning of a new generation of children. Thus soon Emília's grandchildren were doing the things that her own children did in the 1940s and 1950s, and which she herself did in the 1920s, such as knock on neighbors' doors for “begged Masses” and eat the ritual food for St. Cosmas and St. Damian.

Except for these personnel changes, the reza's basic routine changed very little. Emília still went to Mass, she still had a communal breakfast at her home, she still had her novena, she

⁵⁷ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C40, no. 7516.

still had her samba, and she still conducted her ritual feeding for Sts. Cosmas and Damian. Indeed, while little was different vis-à-vis the reza itself, the events that transpired at 5am were noticeably altered. Without Mamãe Laura, the family now depended on Edinha, who happily led the animal sacrifice. Edinha herself incorporated an Orixá, Ogum, during the early morning spiritual work. But also a *new* Orixá began to attend, using Emília as a medium. Thus Emília, now in her 40s, and with no history of mediumship, was the annual host to Obaluaiê, whom her descendents remember as “an old African woman.” Emília’s Obaluaiê spoke an unintelligible “African,”⁵⁸ and thus was incapable of communicating with her Brazilian interlocutors. Furthermore, as with many Obaluaiê spirits, Emília’s “velha” (old woman) was so old that she would curl up on the ground, unable to move.

Since the Orixá could not speak clearly and could barely move, Edinha would help facilitate the ritual activities with Emília’s spiritual companion. For instance, Edinha would indicate when Obaluaiê wanted to be greeted with a hug, as is common with Afro-Brazilian possession. And the whole ceremony was full of song, such as this plea for mercy:

*Meu pai Obaluaiê
Venho rogar e venho pedir
Vós tenha penha de todos
Vós tenha penha de mim*⁵⁹

Obaluaiê would never stay for long, however. After all, spiritual entities tend only to return to earth for extended periods of time when they are dancing, playing, or working. Such an old Obaluaiê, unable to walk or communicate, could do on earth. As Obaluaiê departed, Emília’s family would sing a request that the Orixá leave its medium’s body in peace:

⁵⁸ One family member affirmed the language to be “Nagô” (i.e., Yoruba), though the other family members do not agree this was the case.

⁵⁹ My father Obaluaiê / I come to beg and to plead / that you have mercy on all / that you have mercy on me.”

*Obaluaiê,
De Nossa Senhora
Tenha dó do corpo
Quando for embora*⁶⁰

No one knew exactly why Emília had this Orixá, though the family was well aware that her mother had one. Emília, different from her sister Maria de Lourdes, never had an explicit interest in Candomblé or anything related to it. Her primary religious activities were her participation in two Catholic Church confraternities, the Holy Heart of Jesus (*Sagrado Coração de Jesus*) and the Brotherhood of Good Patient Jesus (*Irmandade de Bom Jesus da Paciência*). But inherited deities such as Emília's Obaluaiê have little concern for what a person's interests are. Indeed, these deities, arriving unsolicited, come from ancestors. Emília thus accepted her inheritance and served as the Orixá's medium on a yearly basis.

The appearance of this spiritual entity seems to have served as a vivid reminder that however latent the past may be, it never disappears. Obaluaiê, the same entity that accompanied Emília's mother Anna and her mother-like Mamãe Laura, was now a lucid part of Emília's life. This Orixá was the dramatic embodiment of the Atlantic context from which the Bahian reza tradition developed, offering, through the allegorical articulation of this poetic historicity, what Derby (2010: 12), in another context, terms "flashes of memory." The *old African* woman who could neither communicate nor freely move about served as a living metaphor of the brutality of a distant transatlantic past, of the enslaved Africans whose voices were silenced and whose bodies were bound, which continues not only to *be* present but also to *construct* the present. The Catholic saint Roch appeared to be only half of her story, half of her legacy.

After years of animal sacrifice and receiving Obaluaiê, Emília gradually felt it could not continue. In small part, she felt uncomfortable with the censoring eyes of her church peers. But

⁶⁰ "Obaluaiê / Of Our Lady / Care for the Body / When you leave."

more importantly, she knew she was approaching the end of her life. And, as Emília herself is remembered to have said, “When I end up dying, this will still be around for you to do, but you don’t know how to do it.” So she sought to remove the sacrifice, and Edinha was able to facilitate this process. Indeed, as Emília’s descendents explain today, “Our mother knew that if we had to do it, it would be difficult for us because we don’t understand any of these things. We don’t do Candomblé or anything like that. How can you do the right thing when you don’t understand anything?” In other words, the sacrifice is serious spiritual business that must be handled by an outsider if no one in the family is capable. But how to find an outside confidant? It is never easy to find a trustworthy helper. Removing the sacrifice, Emília also ceased to incorporate her Obaluaiê. While such a decision can sometimes have dire consequences from a wrathful deity, Edinha and Emília took great spiritual prudence and to this day, as one of her daughters phrased it, “It was removed and no one has been hurt. Thank God! Those who were supposed to die did, and those who were supposed to live, are still alive. And life goes on!” As such, even in its absence, the past is a constituent part of interpreting the present.

EMÍLIA’S REZA AND ST. ROCH, ERA #3 (C.1987-PRESENT)

The chronology regarding the removal of the sacrifice is unclear, but Emília’s descendents claim that it occurred somewhere between six and ten years before her death. As such, it seems the sacrifice and possession were permanently removed from the reza during the mid-1980s. Without the animal sacrifice or the visit from an old African, the reza, her descendents affirm, looked very much like it does today. The reza begins in the morning, when the family gets together to make the breakfast that will be eaten communally after St. Roch’s morning Mass. Subsequently they make lunch and prepare the okra stew for later that night. Although the family no longer ritually feeds the seven children for St. Cosmas and St. Damian,

they do sing the twin saints' "Bendito" and perform the twins' samba. But the reza no longer belongs to Emília and Maria de Lourdes, who had inherited it from Anna Vieira dos Santos. Indeed, the reza now pertains to the sisters' descendents.

Emília died in May 1993, a year after her dear friend Edinha. Before passing away, however, Emília spent some time in the hospital. On one occasion, when a number of relatives were visiting her, the oxygen machine in the hospital room began to shake violently. Emília, at peace, informed, "Oh everyone, don't be afraid. It's just my divinities who have come to visit." Soon after, Margarida remembers:

She said to me, "Margarida, where is my St. Roch?" I said, "Oh, mom, it's on top of the china cabinet." "Oh, dear, since you're the one who is here, don't leave St. Roch. You can't stop. Do it however you can. It's important that you pray [*rezar*]; just do something. Don't let St. Roch go un-prayed." I said, "What are you talking about, mom, you're not dying yet, you still have a lot of time to pray." "No, but I'm telling you, mind to him with care. You know it was your grandmother's." So how can we forget it? We have to do what she asked, right? So there you go, it's what we do. We do it the way we can.⁶¹

And indeed they do the reza every year. The family gets together and makes sure everything gets done: the altar, the breakfast after Mass, the lunch, the novena, and the samba.

One crucial component of the reza that I have underemphasized here is the emotion. Emília loved her devotion; it elated her. She conducted her reza with respect for her mother, her saint, and her own family. Emília always knew how important this devotion was for her family and indeed it is clear from her own words that she wanted the devotion to go on. The devotion is not just a procedure, however. It is a living memory of the past and of the family. The current bearers of the family tradition also value the social union; the whole family participates. The reza is no longer held in the home at Anna's home on the Alto da Levada; it is now held in the home of Vera, Emília's widowed daughter-in-law. There is no "begged Mass," which was removed at least a decade and a half ago because the family felt the neighborhood is less welcoming to saint

⁶¹ Interview with Dona Margarida on November 14, 2011, at her home in Cachoeira, Bahia.

devotions and more dangerous in general. Sometimes Mass is in the morning, sometimes at night. A death in the family means no okra stew and no samba. Yet *that* the reza is conducted at all does not change. It is a family obligation to itself and to St. Roch.



Fig. 7.8. The author with Emília's two living daughters in 2012. From left to right, Dona Margarida Bispo dos Santos, Michael Iyanaga, and Marlene Bispo dos Santos. (Photo by Cheryl Perez)

6. Concluding Thoughts

The reza was, for Emília, largely about remembering. It was about remembering her mother and an obligation to her. By serving as a medium for an old African, Emília also remembered—and served as a vivid reminder for her family members—that the reza is not just a result of the European conquest of the Americas. It is also the result of centuries of brutal enslavement and social marginalization. It is neither European nor African; it is entangled in a uniquely complex American history of negotiations, between people and gods, saints and Orixás, celebration and sacrifice. And today's reza, as practiced by Emília's descendents, tells the same story if only in different words.

The reza for St. Roch that occurs every year on August 16, at Dona Vera's home in the Caquende, has no sacrifice, no possession, and no delivery of offerings to the river. It has been

ritually “cleansed” of these elements that so clearly index Candomblé, that so clearly index Africa and the consequences of treating humans as commercial “peças” (pieces). But this *remembering to forget* enslavement is hardly akin to actually forgetting. As Emília’s offspring conduct their grandmother’s devotion, a grandmother whom they never met due to the wrath of an angry Orixá, they must ritually *remember to forget* the animal sacrifice and all of its interrelated events. By remembering to forget, people make sense of their present—for they must justify the reason for forgetting in the first place—while never actually forgetting. By *forgetting*, Emília’s daughters and nieces reaffirm their own identities as devout Catholics, participants in confraternities, daily churchgoers, viewers of Catholic broadcasting on television, and people who “don’t do Candomblé or anything like that.” But by *remembering to forget*, they are simultaneously acknowledging that this is all a constituent part of their devotion. Many people in the Recôncavo would be quick to say that St. Roch *is not* Obaluaiê. Meanwhile, people might just as swiftly interchange the two gods in conversation *as though they were the same*. This is because “history,” however it has come to be, has indivisibly linked the two. In Bahia, Saint Roch would be a different saint were it not for his relationship with Obaluaiê. The two deities are bound up in each other by way of characteristics, iconography, foodstuffs, and celebration. Indeed, these spiritual entities, whatever trajectory they may have followed in order to reach Bahia, were developed locally and dialogically.

On a final note, I first heard this story in fragments. I heard the parts that mattered to the storytellers, the bearers of the memory. I then followed up with archival research and questions about specifics. But I had a difficult time getting to the details. I seemed to get the same basic story repeated over and over, told with the same excitement as they told me the first time: a mother who loved her St. Roch so much that while in the hospital she made the family promise

they would continue her devotion, a man who drank himself to death for not allowing his wife to venerate her Orixá, a miraculous Catholic saint who is able to get the family together every year to celebrate, an animal sacrifice that existed but has since been removed, the love of a mother for her children, etc.

With repeated frustration I would ask the same questions about ritual order, song repertoire, and specific dates. What mattered to them, however, seemed to be geography, emotions, and descriptions of people. And the more time I spent with them at graduation parties, a niece's dance show, the breakfast table, Mass, and watching the nightly soap opera, the more what they said made sense to me. The reza is not something that can be understood hermetically. It must be comprehended within its quotidian context. It is a *part of* the people they knew, the emotions they felt, and the experiences they had. The reza is not just something they do; it is part of who they are. Still, this realization did not dissuade me. Eventually—with archival data, more *instinctive* knowledge, and new approaches to the same questions—I was able to piece together the chronologies and details. But I never lost sight of the differences between their priorities and mine. Their narratives often gave me little in terms of detail, but as Rosaldo (1986: 98) notes, “[N]arratives often reveal more about what can make life worth living than about how it is routinely lived.” Indeed, I quickly learned why the reza mattered to them.

I also learned how to think about “change” and “difference” in a way that shifted my understanding of the reza itself. Whenever I asked about what was modified from Mamãe Laura's animal sacrifice to Edinha's, I received the same answer: “Nothing really.” In my analytical arrogance, I didn't believe them then and I still don't believe them now. There had to have been differences. After all, in the short time I have known this family, I have attended their annual reza several times and it is clearly distinct each year: choices of melody, location of the

reza, the time of day the Mass is held, the people who can attend, etc. But a “change” is subjective. The value to Emília’s descendents was never entangled in *what* Edinha sang or did not sing. Instead, what mattered was *that* Edinha sang, just like Mamãe Laura did. The unchanging “nothing really” related to categorical values: obligations, expertise, joy, etc. These were the aspects that remained unchanged and these were *what really mattered*. And today the reza is still that which their beloved mother passed on to them, one that comes from their grandmother, who died before her time for disobeying an Orixá. In other words, to decide *what is different*, one has to learn to recognize a so-called “difference.”

Emília’s story is all her own. And mine is only one version of it. Certainly I hope to have demonstrated how Emília’s story can help to rethink Catholicism-inspired rezas in the Recôncavo. Still, I would not dare suggest that the genealogical study of any randomly chosen saint devotion in Bahia would link it in the *same* way to the Black Atlantic. Fragments of the past can be codified in any number of ingenious and innovative ways; this is simply one way. Motivations for every individual are different, just as are histories and resources. The reza is but a malleable ritual practice that coexists, intersects, and/or opposes any number of other practices and institutions in the rich religious universe of the Recôncavo. Finally, a methodological lesson can be drawn from this study. In trying to understand a musical practice, ethnography alone may only reveal half—or less—of the complete story. Adding historical depth to an ethnographic study can reshape the resulting interpretation in transformative ways.

CONCLUSION

Leaving the Party Early: Concluding without Concluding

As the axiom goes, the researcher is never *done*, s/he simply *decides* to be done. While certainly this “decision” is often the result of institutional impositions, financial barriers, and personal commitments, the premise seems true nonetheless. In effect, I’m not staying until the end of the party; I’m leaving early, taking with me all I can. But how many times have I left a social gathering only to find out about some wild antics that occurred *after* having left? There are also those instances when I leave a party only to learn the following day that I missed something entirely simply because I never ventured to the other side of the house. Inevitably, and perhaps expectedly, there is much I did not see, hear, or experience during my time at the party in the Recôncavo. But this comes with the territory; fieldwork is always incomplete. The party continues but the researcher leaves early. People will continue to hold their devotions however different they may be in the future. Or maybe they won’t. Culture is always in motion, after all. It is subject to changes in the physical and social world. But for now, this dissertation has come to an end.

In Chapter One, I addressed—through Anthony Seeger’s journalistic questions—the reza as an event. My primary point was that the reza is all about remembering. It is a performative remembering of the saint, the family, and of a collective past. Chapter Two looked at the altar, without which the reza cannot happen. Through their likenesses on the altar, saints take part in the event while also helping people remember the individual memories that have been aggregated to the statuettes and lithographs. I deconstructed the novena in Chapter Three. Here I was interested primarily in the how the aesthetic values of loudness and quantity of voices guided particular decisions of repertoire and singing styles. Furthermore, I analyzed the

performed liturgy of the novena, demonstrating how it compresses centuries of Church liturgical orders and texts, while the eclectic melodies result from particular logics of participation. Chapter Four was an analysis of the three defining aspects of samba: rhythm, song, and happiness. I moreover analyzed how sacred samba is practiced in context. In Chapter Five, I affirmed that *obligation* is one of the guiding principals of how these Catholic reza participants understand their tradition within the context of evangelical Christianity and Candomblé. Evangelical Christians are seen as anti-social for having turned their backs on social and family obligations. Candomblé practitioners, on the other hand, are distrusted for they rely on sorcery that exceeds obligation, seeking to evoke a traumatic past of slavery. In Chapter Six, I focused on four centuries of Catholic samba. I showed that domestic samba at rezas developed as an experimental practice of black empowerment in which practitioners appropriated and transformed the Catholic saints. Finally, Chapter Seven was a microhistory of a Black Atlantic devotion to St. Roch. I demonstrated the complexities of the ritual world of saint devotions, emphasizing that the past seems always to bear on the present.

I offered a number of different arguments in these seven dissertation chapters, though they were all undergirded by three main objectives: (1) the writing of a musical ethnography of a little known Brazilian tradition; (2) the demonstration of why the Catholicism-inspired reza is indeed a Black Atlantic, “creole” tradition and can help elucidate aspects of New World African and African-descendent life; and (3) a theoretical exercise in conducting research on the past through contemporary performance while offering a flexible historical ethnomusicological methodological approach to studying musical performance.

1. The Writing of a Musical Ethnography

In 1973, Frank Harrison published *Time, Place, and Music*, which collected excerpts of “exotic” music descriptions written by 16th-, 17th-, and 18th-century world travelers. While the book’s contents are not uninteresting, I feel the value of Harrison’s project lies in its primary theoretical underpinning, which is made clear in the book’s subtitle: “an anthology of *ethnomusicological* observations c. 1550 to c. 1800” (emphasis added). Harrison’s assertion, in other words, is that world travelers were the first (Western) ethnomusicologists. Indeed, ethnographic accounts—excepting the soon-to-be-outdated theoretical postulations—often read like travelers’ accounts. Aren’t ethnographers really just modern day travelers?

Modern day ethnographers, just as their pioneering ancestors, are guided by contemporary interests and blinded by prejudices that will probably be rebuked at some future date. While I have written my dissertation in the hopes that it will contribute to 21st-century academic discourses, I am quite cognizant of the fact that the “data” it contains—transcriptions, descriptions, names, dates, photos, audio recordings—are likely to be of much greater future value than my theoretical musings. As a traveler’s account, then, one of my primary goals in this dissertation was to be a keen observer, for like Henry Koster (1816), Thomas Lindley (1805), or G. H. von Langsdorff (1817), I, from my own ideological perspective and limited knowledge, saw and heard things in Brazil that I felt were interesting enough to commit to writing. And I am indeed hopeful that my ethnographic details will be useful to someone now *and* in the future.

In writing a musical ethnography of the reza tradition in Bahia, I have been consciously driven by a desire to bring to light a musico-devotional practice that is not only interesting to me, widespread, and important to its practitioners, but also grossly understudied and neglected in academic literature. I hope my writing is adequately interesting and my interpretations

sufficiently provocative to stimulate other researchers to undertake related ethnographic and historical endeavors, thus contesting, confirming, and expanding assertions I have made here.

Researchers of Catholicism-inspired traditions—so-called popular Catholicism—have historically emphasized *exchange*, via the vow, as a guiding logic (see Brandão 1981; Gross 1971; Maués 1995; Pierson 1966 [1951]; Reily 2002; Zaluar 1973, 1983). And while this is certainly important to reza practitioners, I have sought to underscore a different practical logic, that of responsibility and obligation. As Mauss (2002 [1923]) insightfully remarked nearly a century ago, systems of gift exchange, as “total services,” are rooted in obligations not only to reciprocate gifts, but also the simpler obligation to give gifts or to receive them. Thus obligation would be a constituent part of exchange, and vice-versa. But are the *motivations* driving Catholicism-inspired traditions *primarily* rooted in reciprocal exchange (i.e., the process of giving and receiving) or by an *obligation to give* which extends beyond the expected return “gift” (i.e., blessing from the saint)? It seems to me that the majority of past studies have emphasized the former, while I am advocating an interpretation of the reza according to the latter. Put otherwise, rezas are *more* about fulfilling obligations to the past than about divine reciprocity. This is abundantly clear in transgenerational devotions, ancestral Caboclos, and the critical view—not to mention the assumed consequences—of abandoning an obligation.

This study was also designed as a contribution to the ethnomusicological study of the musical “occasion” (or event). The “musical occasion” as a focal point of ethnomusicological analysis began in earnest during the early 1970s, most notably articulated in an article by ethnomusicologist Marcia Herndon (1971), in which she asserts that the occasion, an “isolatable segment of human behavior” (p. 339), is “a valid point of departure for musical investigation” because it “may be examined as a cultural or social unit” that “exhibits some of the basic values

of a society” (Herndon 1971: 341).¹ Subsequently, at least two distinct ethnomusicological approaches to the “occasion” developed, one in which the occasion is viewed as entirely hermetic, while the other treats it as integral to larger social and cultural processes. The first approach emphasizes that musical events offer a space for *temporary* reversals, critiques, and subversion that have no significant lasting effects on society after the event has ended (Erlmann 1996; Kisliuk 1998; Stone 1982; Wong and Lysloff 1991). The second approach treats musical events as entirely integrated into the social fabric of life such that they are anything but self-contained (DjeDje 1998; Rees 2000; Reily 2002; A. Seeger 2004 [1987]; Spiller 2010; Turino 1993). My study looked to contribute to the latter of these two approaches, demonstrating that for reza practitioners in the Recôncavo, yearly musical performances not only affect quotidian health and finances but can even shape a family’s entire history. After all, as I detailed in Chapter 7, had Anna Vieira dos Santos celebrated her Obaluaiê, her daughters would likely never have had to live as orphans, may possibly never have worked in the cigar industry, and Emília may never have begun incorporating her Caboclo.

This dissertation further looked to demonstrate the complex relationship a “popular” Catholic tradition can have with the Catholic Church, justifying, I believe, my choice to call the reza a Catholicism-inspired tradition. More than simply a corrupted offshoot of Catholic Church practices, the reza is explicitly designed to reproduce many aspects of Church liturgy and Church teachings. But the reza is a *tradition*, not a self-contained *religion*. It is, like West African Vodun, “a malleable network of places, spaces, times, images, objects, practices, and discourses that embrace multiple levels and domains of life and death, exchange and kinship, personhood and

¹ Ethnomusicologists have typically traced the origins of the “musical occasion” to Norma McLeod’s 1966 doctoral dissertation (Béhague 1984: 6; Herndon 1971: 339). Yet a closer analysis of McLeod’s own writings reveals that the genealogy is somewhat flawed. In her dissertation, McLeod (1966) favors terms such as “situation” (p. viii) and “context” (p. 47). In fact McLeod’s theorization of the “occasion” seems salient only in later publications (see McLeod 1975).

mimesis, illness and healing” (Rosenthal 2010: 157). As such, it intersects with and creatively articulates different domains of practice in a loosely coherent whole, always open to innovation and change, whether catalyzed by Church changes, an ancestral Caboclo, or some other authoritative source. The dominant narrative for these self-identifying Catholics nevertheless comes from the Church, offering institutionalized interpretations of symbols, discourses on the sacred, modes of worship, and ideological perspectives. On a competing plane is a socially shared notion of obligation, which compels practitioners to negotiate creatively between practices and discourses that may sometimes be antithetical or incompatible, thus giving rise to idiosyncratic cosmological views and experimental actions. Consequently, while the *reza* is inspired in Catholic Church practices and dogma, it is also embedded in the fabric of social life, of family obligations, and of unique historical circumstances.

Finally, this was a musical ethnography of just one of many religious practices in Bahia. A cursory examination of the anthropological and ethnomusicological literature about religion in Bahia would no doubt suggest that only Candomblé exists in that State. I have shown this is not the case. Yet this study is but one small slice of the ever-expanding pie, and certainly a lopsided, ideological look at that slice. It seems to me unquestionable that extensive ethnomusicological investigations could be conducted on a number of other widespread and understudied Bahian religious traditions. Among the most prominent would be processions, healers (*benzedadeiras*), pilgrimages, Catholic and Evangelical church repertoires, and mass mediated evangelical Christian music. But surely there are many other important and significant traditions. Since no tradition exists in isolation from others, for practices are always mutable and adaptable, the in-depth study of one tradition will always potentially offer insight regarding another. I thus hope to

have provided some relevant fodder for future scholarly work on music not only in Bahia, but also in Brazil and the world.

2. The Reza as Part of the Black Atlantic

One of my explicit goals, perhaps most salient in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, has been to demonstrate how a study of Catholic saint veneration can be linked to concerns of import for scholars of the Black Atlantic. And this is precisely why I suggested a heuristic reconfiguring of the reza as a “creole” practice, related directly to the transatlantic slave trade in the New World. With impressive new historical data from the Atlantic world, research on Black Atlantic traditions has become increasingly sophisticated and nuanced, particularly since the turn of the 21st century. But the cultural terrain of the Black Atlantic has often been traced outside of those practices that do not exhibit a transparently “African” character, excluding cultural institutions such as the reza from the intellectual map.

Such a narrow purview no doubt limits the boundaries of academic research. But worse, this unrealistically “neat” treatment homogenizes the multifaceted and innovated ways in which Africans and their descendents negotiated the horrors of enslavement and its aftermath. Thus inasmuch as the study of Orixás and Voduns surely elucidates a great deal about the New World black experience, it is, like all narratives, also a “bundle of silences” (Trouillot 1995: 27). These cannot tell the Black Atlantic story of the institutions bearing the colonizer’s face: grammar, time, garments, economics, Catholicism, etc. In this respect, a driving force behind my historical and ethnographic approach was a desire to “hear” the silenced Black Atlantic past evoked in the performance of Catholicism-inspired domestic saint devotions. As I have shown, this past is a non-discursive part of altars, hagiographies, “Benditos,” samba, ancestor veneration, ritual forgetting, and the saint devotions themselves.

In re-imagining the Black Atlantic, I am also advocating new units of comparative analysis. What new perspectives would be revealed about black innovation, adaptation, appropriation, and/or subversion were scholars to take seriously (and comparatively) the study of saints' cults (or public processions, spices, or modes of farming) in the Afro-Atlantic? While surely now is not the moment for such a comparative analysis, I nonetheless would like to introduce briefly here two traditions from the Black Atlantic world that reveal the potential saints' cults offer music scholars, in particular, who are interested in understanding the black experience in the Americas.

As Max Brandt (1998) notes, the Venezuelan town of Curiepe—an important slave-trading center during the 18th century—is well known for its annual feast of Saint John the Baptist. Curiepe's celebration of St. John is a public procession accompanied by a rhythm known as *malembe*, a term of Bantu derivation. Like Catholic saints in the Recôncavo, St. John in Venezuela is said to love dancing and, Brandt affirms, the saint's various designations, such as San Juan Congo, San Juan Congolé, and San Juan Guaricongo, reveal a “connection to the Congo basin of central Africa” (pp. 536-537). Meanwhile, in the Dominican Republic, people practice a domestic patron saint celebration known as the *velación*. In a way remarkably similar to *rezas*, *velaciones* proceed in two distinct sections, an a cappella liturgical “Salve Regina” and a non-liturgical Salve, which has polyrhythmic percussion accompaniment (Davis 1981, 2012). Ethnomusicologist Martha Ellen Davis affirms that elements of African provenance are, like the Bahian *reza*, facets of the practice's “social, economic, and spatial organization; altar structure and iconography; ritual procedure; and the verbal, structural, melodic, rhythmic, and kinetic components of prayer, music, and dance” (Davis 2012: 165).

These Black Atlantic practices, though hardly carbon copies of the reza, demonstrate a number of interesting parallels that go beyond what can be explained by an Iberian foundation. Indeed, given the early significance of Central Africans in the formation of Bahia and the Dominican Republic, as well as a seemingly similar influence in parts of Venezuela, I am compelled to question the degree to which the development of Catholic samba in Bahia was part of a somewhat more general (and transatlantic) Central African-catalyzed mode of New World adaptation. Lacking extensive ethnographic and historical information, I cannot now offer anything but speculative inquiry. Still, it seems to me that these three examples from geographically and linguistically distinct locations at the very least provide evidence that the comparison of saints' cults could reveal often ignored aspects of the Black Atlantic world.

3. Historicity: Doing History and Ethnography

The third primary objective of this dissertation engaged a theoretical presumption about the historicity of contemporary performances. Rooted in recent Black Atlantic anthropological explorations (esp. Apter and Derby 2010; Shaw 2002), I posited that musical performances could be read as activations of the past. This included not only those Catholic and family pasts which are vibrant parts of individual identities in the present, but also of an unofficial and non-discursive Black Atlantic past that is tacitly tucked away in iconography, repertoire, dances, ideologies, and interactions with the spiritual world. While this research was no doubt an interpretive exercise in metaphorically "mining" performances as archives of the past, it was also the very real experience of mining actual archives for relevant historical information in newspapers, correspondences, and magazines, as well as in birth, marriage, and death certificates. As such, this dissertation was not designed only as a contribution to a theoretical perspective, but also as a methodological approach to doing historical ethnomusicology.

My research spanned the gamut of methods and sources. On any given day, I might have spent the morning in the archive and the afternoon conducting interviews or observing processions and other devotional activity. I would delve into the past through written historical documents, oral histories, historical iconography, and historical recordings, while also engaging with living people through participant observation, interviews, audio-visual documentation, correspondences, and friendships. And although there were certainly times I felt overwhelmed, I never felt my research in one “time” was irrelevant to my work in the other. My historical research always seemed to make my ethnography better just as my approach to the (physical) archive was effectively oriented by what I had experienced in the field. I hope that as an ethnomusicological investigation *relying* on an eclectic array of integrated historical and ethnographic sources, this historical ethnomusicological dissertation not only can offer methodological tools for future studies, but can also serve to foment discussion (and betterment) of the effectiveness of sources that may of be of particular use for ethnomusicologists, whether historical recordings, travelers’ accounts, newspapers, or oral histories.

4. Concluding Thoughts

I conclude by returning to the questions I posed at the outset of the dissertation. *How do people practice the reza?* With song, food, and happiness. *How do people sing?* With joy and loudness, emphasizing always the value of social interaction. *How does it sound (i.e., what does it sound like?)?* Loud. Often it is limited to handclaps and singing, but percussion and chordal instruments are certainly a welcome part of the reza. *How do they prepare for it?* Altars, decorations, birthday cakes, food, nice clothing, inviting the rezadeira and/or the samba-de-roda group, and sometimes Mass. *How is it executed?* With song. *Why do people hold rezas?* Because they respect their obligations to their saints and family. *Why are they important?* Rezas keep the

spiritual world in balance, preventing hardships and problems. They also bring the community together and allow people to consolidate their religious identities. *Why do they sing in that way?* It is a confluence of historical processes and contemporary social notions of aesthetics. *Why not do it another way?* People sometimes do, but the reza is an articulation of a particular set of historical circumstances and practices that create a tradition that appears “logical” to contemporary practitioners. *Why that saint and not others?* Although people choose saints according to divine specialties, mostly they choose them based on family and community devotional histories. *Why not just play soccer?* They might; I just have yet to see it.

This dissertation is the product of what has effectively been over four years of thinking, talking, and writing about patron saints and why people care for them as they do. No doubt much has been left unsaid, as is always the case when one leaves the party early (after showing up late). Yet it would be disingenuous on my part to claim that I am not at least satisfied with my research findings and interpretations. I believe I have shown, first and foremost, that Old World saints have been created anew, transformed to accommodate the New World circumstances encountered in Brazil. When people in the Recôncavo gather in private homes to sing their New World songs to their Catholic saints, they are performing both devotion and history.

APPENDIX 1

Ethnographic Description of an Animal Sacrifice at a Reza

January, 2012. Cachoeira, Bahia

It was the beginning of Dona Sara's¹ two-day reza for Sts. Cosmas and Damian and I arrived at her home around 5:50am, well before sunrise. Only Dona Sara was awake, so as she went from room to room awaking her children and grandchildren, I was put to work in the back patio, tending to the coal fire which would later be used to cook all of the food for that night's activities. Soon, seeing everyone was up and enjoying a quick breakfast, I left the blazing fire to join the family in a small cup of coffee and the idle conversation about a movie that had been broadcast on the Globo television network the night before.

A large white cloth was spread out on the dining room floor, just outside the kitchen. On top of the cloth were placed three empty enamelware plates and a fourth on which were set two lit candles. Next to these candles sat a tall glass of water, which seemed to denounce the Kardecian Spiritism that played a role in the ritual's development. Dona Sara's grandson incensed the area while her daughters brought in the five chickens which were to be slaughtered. Each bird was designated for a saint: two male chicks for the twin saints Cosmas and Damian, a pullet for St. Crispina, a hen for St. Barbara, and a rooster for St. Roch. Dressed in white pants, a white Cosmas and Damian tank top (with a red collar), and a colorful head-wrap, Dona Sara sat on the floor waiting for the birds.

¹ I have used a pseudonym for the host of the reza. Although Dona Sara, as I call her here, gave me permission to discuss any aspect of her reza, animal sacrifices (*matanças*) are not usually aspects of a reza about which people have the same pride as that which they show regarding their altars, novenas, sambas, or food. As I have discussed in this dissertation, animal sacrifice is an obligation and is not underscored or boasted about. Out of respect for the privacy of "Dona Sara," then, I have altered her name and left ambiguous the exact date of the reza.

One by one, family members—two daughters and three grandchildren—leaned down to the floor to help stabilize the poultry as Dona Sara slit the throats. Securing the necks of the fowl, the 69-year-old sacrificer let the blood fill the empty plates before placing the lifeless carcasses together into a large aluminum bowl. The solemnity of this early-morning event was interrupted when one of Dona Sara’s daughters, who had apparently fallen asleep while holding a chicken, suddenly awoke with a declaration, “My goodness! I think I just dozed off!” The room erupted in laughter. Dona Sara chuckled while still unwavering in her task at hand.

The entire event was filled with participatory song, specifically *cantigas* for Sts. Cosmas and Damian and, when the rooster was slaughtered, for St. Roch and Obaluaiê. The *cantigas* were chiefly performed in the S-2 rhythm and the Congo time-line, which were sounded through handclaps or pounding on the dining room table. But the singing was half-hearted. Indeed, Dona Sara repeatedly chastised the dozen or so guests for their lack of participation.

When Dona Sara began to sacrifice the penultimate bird, the hen for St. Barbara, an elderly neighbor who had been participating in the event went into trance. I asked the other guests what entity it was but no consensus could be reached. Some told me it was Ogum; others told me it was Iansã. It could very well have been both. The elderly woman unsteadily stood trembling until one of the other guests rushed over to secure her in a dining table chair until eventually the deity left its medium. Meanwhile, the sacrifice of the hen, which was taking place on the floor, continued unaffected by the appearance of this unnamed entity.

At last it was the cock’s turn. People began to sing *cantigas* for St. Roch and just after the rooster’s throat had been slit, Dona Sara, still seated on the ground, began to quiver as she received her “velho” (old man). With the rooster in her lap, Dona Sara continued to shake and shudder as her grandson steadied her body and whispered quietly in her ear. He then announced

to the room that he had talked to the Velho to request that he leave immediately. He furthermore assured everyone that this appeal had been heeded. Singing ensued, but Dona Sara continued in her dazed state, speaking a few incomprehensible words. Noticing this, someone exclaimed, “He hasn’t gone yet!” Even after several minutes of bleeding, the cock remained alive. And it became apparent to the attendees that as long as the rooster continued to live, Dona Sara’s Velho would not leave. Consequently, all just stood watching and waiting for the cock’s slow death, with the occasional *cantiga*. For me, this was nothing short of fascinating. And the other participants shared in my wonderment as they giggled to each other and commented quietly: “see that?”

As day broke, the rooster eventually died and Dona Sara’s body was released from the clutches of her spiritual companion, which marked the beginning of the sacrifice’s final moments. The fowl was placed in the bowl with the other four cadavers. The room was once again incensed before the poultry was taken to the back patio in order to be plucked. As is typical with the preparation of chicken, whether for gods or people, each of the five birds was dipped into boiling hot water so that the feathers were loose enough to be removed. Dona Sara and her daughter emphasized to all of the helpers that the birds had to be kept upright (with the feet in the bowl) as they were being de-feathered. The featherless poultry was then divided among three bowls, one for the three chicks, another for the hen, and the third for the rooster.

The contents of each bowl were then cooked separately, seasoned as if for humans. While palm oil was utilized for the chicks and the hen, virgin olive oil was used to cook the cock. According to Dona Sara’s daughter, this was because everything for Obaluaiê/St. Roch should be white, for it is very “fine” (*fino*). When ready, around midday, this chicken was put onto plates and organized into an “axé,” a ritual offering of a number of different food plates (the blood was included here). The axé was arranged on the floor in Dona Sara’s bedroom and was dumped into

the river the following afternoon. The ritual itself, ending around 7am, lasted just under an hour. There was no recognizable “end” to the sacrifice, as people began doing the other preparations, such as cutting the okra and decorating the home while the sacrificial chickens were being cooked for the gods.

APPENDIX 2

Emília Vieira Dos Santos e São Roque: uma micro-história de uma devoção Afro-Atlântica

Este capítulo é uma tentativa de usar uma narrativa micro-histórica – traçando uma devoção a São Roque de uma única família – para compreender questões abrangentes sobre a história afro-atlântica. As “peças” apresentadas aqui sobre Emília Vieira dos Santos (c. 1921-1993), seus ancestrais, seus descendentes e suas práticas devocionais foram juntadas cautelosamente através de documentos arquivísticos e discussões com seus filhos, netos e outros familiares. Esta realmente foi uma pesquisa em conjunto. Com as evidências escritas que eu encontrava, conseguimos confirmar ou descobrir datas, nomes e lugares. E os descendentes de Emília – principalmente as suas duas filhas, Marlene e Margarida – animavam os documentos “mortos” com descrições, cantos e muitas risadas.

As evidências orais usadas para construir esta narrativa foram coletadas durante três anos. Em geral, a não ser uma fala transcrita ao pé da letra, não citarei (usando aspas) as palavras dos meus “colaboradores.” Isto é porque a informação que apresento é muitas vezes uma “versão compósita” que foi construída após várias discussões formais e informais e também em muitos casos as informações não vêm de uma única fonte, mas sim de uma conversa em grupo. Meus interlocutores principais foram os filhos de Emília, Marlene Bispo dos Santos, Margarida Bispo dos Santos e Maclino Bispo dos Santos,¹ sua sobrinha Iraíldes e duas de suas netas, Jocimere e Jaciara. A pesquisa documental, fora o material secundário que o contextualiza, foi feita quase inteiramente no Fórum Texeira de Freitas em Cachoeira. Nesta instituição, pode-se encontrar certidões de nascimento, óbito e casamento, como também inventórios, testamentos e documentos de propriedade. Além disso utilizei-me das minhas próprias pesquisas históricas e etnográficas no Recôncavo Baiano.

Emília Vieira dos Santos não foi o que muitos considerariam, em termos históricos, uma pessoa “importante”. Ela não tem grande nome fora a comunidade em que foi criada e viveu. Portanto, ela quase que não deixou nenhuma documentação escrita. E até a lembrança dela, guardada com amor e saudade nos corações e memórias dos que a conheciam, está limitada a algumas dezenas de pessoas. Nem por isso ela é menos interessante ou significativa. Ao mesmo tempo que ela foi pessoa singular, ela também incorporava a história da sociedade em que viveu. Alguns aspectos da presente narrativa, tais como as descrições sobre a vida de Emília e os seus descendentes, são de primeira mão, e talvez por isso mais “fideis” à memória oral do que as reconstruções que ofereço sobre os ancestrais de Emília. Mesmo assim, a minha narrativa – como um todo – não vai muito além de uma hipotética. Isto é, não é uma biografia profunda ou completa. De fato, o meu interesse em destacar as práticas devocionais de Emília faz com que eu desenfatize e deixe de lado muitos detalhes que podiam ser muito interessantes. Decerto, os familiares de Emília poderiam construir uma biografia muito mais viva e profunda sobre esta pessoa que tanto amam. E embora eu tente expressar algumas destas nuances humanas sobre a nossa protagonista, não é isto a minha meta final.

A nossa busca é outra. Conseqüentemente, nós acompanharemos Emília na sua fascinante jornada espiritual onde ela simultaneamente participa da Igreja Católica, assume a sua “responsabilidade” a São Roque e incorpora os seus ancestrais africanos. E todos estes aspectos esotéricos aconteciam em conjunto com a sua vivência social em que viveu uma vida de órfã, charuteira, mãe e mulher. Esta magnífica história de vida demonstra como um indivíduo, como tantos outros no Recôncavo Baiano, pode transitar livremente por entre uma multiplicidade de *mundos religiosos* que não são apenas interdependentes, mas de fato constituem um único *universo religioso*.

Maria Porciana dos Passos (c.1853–1915)

Começamos a nossa jornada em meados do século XIX, com a avó materna de Emilia, Maria Porciana dos Passos. Maria nasceu na vila de Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Porto da Cachoeira. Já nesta época Cachoeira era um porto importantíssimo, ligando Salvador, a capital baiana, ao resto do interior brasileiro. Assim Cachoeira era, nas palavras do antropólogo Luis Nicolau Parés, o “pólo econômico mais importante do Recôncavo”.² Mas *esta* Cachoeira era muito diferente da que Emilia e seus descendentes conheceriam um século depois. Nascida na década de 1850, provavelmente em 1853, Maria Porciana dos Passos sentiria na pele o que era uma sociedade escravocrata.³ Maria era uma crioula. Ou seja, era uma pessoa negra que nasceu no Brasil e não na África. Lembremos que Maria nasceu 18 anos antes da Lei do Ventre Livre de 1871 e 35 anos antes da abolição em 1888.⁴ Sendo assim, é possível que Maria nasceu escrava, mas por outro lado, também podia fazer parte do crescente número de crioulos livres na sociedade cachoeirana. Afinal, a maioria dos escravos em meados do século XIX era africana, e os crioulos já compunham 15 por cento da população livre cachoeirana.⁵ Infelizmente, não sabemos a filiação de Maria. E quando a morte dela foi registrada pelo filho em 1915, ele designou os pais dela como “desconhecidos”.⁶

A Bahia em que nasceu Maria era tumultuosa e é provável que as suas primeiras lembranças eram tristes. Além do sofrimento causado pela queda econômica baiana que aconteceu entre 1800 e 1870, Maria nasceu no seio da catastrófica epidemia de cólera-morbo que devastou o Recôncavo Baiano em 1855.⁷ Será que os pais de Maria sobreviveram a epidemia? Pode ser que não. Mas o abalo não terminou por aí. Maria também experienciou dois outros grandes marcos históricos: a maior guerra da história brasileira e a abolição da escravidão. De 1865 a 1870, o Brasil estava em guerra com o Paraguai por causa de disputas territoriais. O

número de brasileiros que lutaram neste evento sangrento é estimado em 90.898, contando com pelo menos 15.267 soldados baianos. O patriotismo era tamanho no país inteiro, e Maria provavelmente carregava um sentimento de orgulho e amor pela sua pátria. Muitos soldados baianos eram negros, pois a maioria dos recrutados (não sendo “voluntários”) era de negros livres e libertos.⁸ É possível que a família de Maria se envolveu na guerra. Será que o seu pai, seus irmãos ou seus tios lutaram nesta guerra infame? Caso afirmativo, será que voltaram?

O ano depois do término da guerra, a Lei do Ventre Livre foi decretada no dia 28 de setembro de 1871, abalando a sociedade escravocrata. Já nesta época Cachoeira estava recuperando da sua depressão econômica graças ao grande número de fábricas de charuto que foram construídas nas décadas de 1870 e 1880.⁹ Sem contar com a expansão, na década anterior, das ferrovias pelo estado. A empresa ferroviária Central da Bahia completou a ferrovia ligando Cachoeira a Feira de Santana em 1875, estendendo em direção a Curralinho (Castro Alves) até 1881.¹⁰ No dia 13 de maio de 1888, Maria, então com cerca de trinta e cinco anos, viu o fim da escravidão. É fato que, como ressalta a historiadora Wlamyra Albuquerque, “[e]m todo o país a lei de 13 de maio libertou poucos negros em relação à população de cor. A maioria já havia conquistado a alforria antes de 1888”.¹¹ Porém, como enfatiza Albuquerque, “[o] impacto que a extinção da escravidão causou numa sociedade constituída a partir da legitimidade da propriedade sobre pessoas não cabe em cifras”.¹² Portanto, sendo ela escrava ou não, Maria certamente gostou de ver o fim da velha instituição.

A VIDA DE MARIA

Para Maria, o ano de 1888 não só data a abolição como também marcou o que provavelmente foi o primeiro aniversário do seu filho, Pedro.¹³ Não temos certeza do número de filhos que Maria deu à luz, nem quanto criou, mas sabemos ao menos de dois filhos que ela teve

com João Francisco dos Santos.¹⁴ O primeiro, Pedro Nolasco de Assis, nasceu em 1887, enquanto Anna Portella dos Santos nasceu por volta de 1895.¹⁵ João nunca se casou com Maria, o que era muito comum para pessoas negras no final do século XIX. Na época, 90 por cento dos negros (brasileiros) nasceu em casas onde os pais não eram casados.¹⁶ Isto não quer dizer, porém, que João e Maria não residissem juntos. Afinal, nos registros de casamento dos dois filhos, João e Maria aparecem como pais “legítimos”. Se de fato João morava com Maria, os dois tinham uma residência no bairro cachoeirano do Caquende, um bairro então famoso pelas águas que tinham poderes curativos.¹⁷

Maria e João tinham uma ligação íntima com uma das mais importantes irmandades da cidade, a Irmandade do Senhor Bom Jesus da Paciência. Como se sabe, a principal atividade para qualquer irmandade sempre foi a anual celebração pública do seu santo padroeiro. A Irmandade da Paciência (como se chamava), celebrava – ao menos no início do século XX – a sua missa todos os anos para o Senhor Bom Jesus da Paciência na “venerável” (como era conhecida) Igreja da Ordem Terceira do Carmo. No dia da missa, que era celebrada três semanas antes da Páscoa,¹⁸ sempre havia a animada procissão acompanhada por uma das bandas filarmônicas da cidade, as principais das quais eram a Lyra e a Minerva. Mas às vezes era outra filarmônica, como foi o caso em 1902, quando a procissão da Paciência foi acompanhada pela filarmônica União das Artes.¹⁹ João Francisco dos Santos foi membro muito ativo da irmandade, chegando até a ocupar o cargo de procurador fical na festa de 1903.²⁰ Não sabemos se Maria também ocupava algum cargo mas é provável que era irmã da confraria. Pois quando ela faleceu na Ladeira do Caquende de tuberculose em 20 de agosto de 1915, aos 62 anos, ela foi enterrada em carneiro da Irmandade da Paciência no cemitério da Santa Casa de Misericórdia.²¹ Podemos dizer, então, que João e

Maria provavelmente participavam das missa e procissão da Irmandade da Paciência todos os anos, certamente acompanhados pelos dois filhos.

Decerto, Maria também se engajava em outros eventos da Igreja, tais como a missa matinal nos domingos e as frequentes celebrações nos “Dias Santos”, as principais da época sendo Nossa Senhora do Amparo, Nossa Senhora d’Ajuda, Nossa Senhora da Conceição, Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte, Santa Bárbara, Bom Jesus dos Passos e a já mencionada Bom Jesus da Paciência.²² Muitas vezes estas celebrações tinham lugar as novenas, as nove noites de celebração, cada noite paga por pessoas da comunidade, e sempre tiveram as pomposas procissões. Se João e Maria tinham afilhados, o que é bem provável, Maria também participaria dos batismos. Mas a vida espiritual dela não deve ter sido isolada à própria Igreja. Decerto, ela possuía um altar ou oratório em casa, quanto humilde que fosse. E certamente ela participava de celebrações domiciliares para os santos Cosme e Damião, e Antonio, pois eram estas festas dentre os grandes acontecimentos comunitários baianos. Talvez até ela mesma tivesse devoções a estes santos. Afinal, sabemos que nas primeiras décadas do século XX era muito comum rezar Santo Antônio em residências particulares cachoeiranas,²³ assim como sabemos que no final do Oitocentos São Cosme e Damião, que já eram contados dentre os santos mais queridos da Bahia, eram celebrados com grandes banquetes na capital baiana.²⁴

Por outro lado, qual foram as relações de Maria para com o povo de santo, cujas *instituições*, conhecidas como candomblés, cresciam ao longo do século XIX? Ela tinha nascido numa época em que ainda eram poucos os terreiros de candomblé. Um dos primeiros candomblés em Cachoeira, segundo argumenta o historiador Luis Cláudio Dias do Nascimento, teria sido o Nagopé, um terreiro da nação jeje modubi, que se localizava no quilombo Obá Tedô na área conhecida como o Galinheiro.²⁵ Mais tarde aparece outro terreiro jeje, sobre o qual

sabemos bem mais, que era a Roça de Cima, que existia “no caminho que leva ao Engenho do Rosário”.²⁶ E este terreiro, afirma Parés, funcionava “pelo menos desde a década de 1860”.²⁷ Ao mesmo tempo, do outro lado do Rio Paraguaçu, teria existido também pelo menos um terreiro, este da nação nagô, conhecido como o candomblé do Capivari.²⁸ A informação oral sugere que só apareceram na região outros terreiros após 1870, todos (os nove) da nação nagô, e fundados por africanos que chegaram nas últimas embarcações escravistas ou então pela primeira geração descendente destes africanos.²⁹ Estes terreiros nagô, argumenta Parés, só começaram a funcionar após a abolição. Portanto, já nas últimas décadas do século XIX, Maria teria visto (e ouvido) o rápido crescimento de terreiros na sua cidade (e em São Félix).³⁰

Chegada já no século XX, agora com dois filhos e quase cinquenta anos, como será que Maria interagia com os novos e velhos terreiros cachoeiranos? Talvez Maria participasse de festas de *orixás* como filha de santo ou como visitante. Não existe nenhuma evidência que sugira que ela mesma fosse mãe de santo, mas será que Maria não consultava algum pai ou mãe de santo? Ela certamente conhecia o candomblé e ouvia os toques nas noites das festas. Além disso, como veremos adiante, a filha dela, Anna, era uma filha de santo “de nascença” e provavelmente manifestou o seu “santo” desde pequena. Será então que foi Maria que a levou para uma casa de candomblé a fim de ser tratada? Se foi assim, Maria certamente tinha laços com alguém da casa à qual levou. Será que este alguém era um vizinho, um afilhado ou até mesmo um irmão da Irmandade da Paciência?

Com tão poucas informações sobre Maria, não podemos ir muito além de suposições. Por exemplo, será que ela não participava também do movimento crescente do espiritismo? Afinal, foi depois da tradução das obras de Allan Kardec para o português pelo baiano Luiz Olimpio Telles de Menezes entre 1866 e 1874 – quando Maria já era quase “moça” – que o espiritismo

começou a ter cada vez mais visibilidade na sociedade baiana e brasileira.³¹ Podemos dizer sobre Maria apenas que no tempo dela, marcado por grandes mudanças sociais e políticas, o seu universo espiritual certamente não se limitava à Igreja Católica. Maria Porciana dos Passos transitava – assim como pessoas sempre transitaram – dentre esferas religiosas distintas dentro de uma sociedade em que estas práticas religiosas interagiam e interligavam.

Anna Portella dos Santos (c.1895-1933)

A filha de Maria, Anna Portella dos Santos, a eventual mãe de nossa protagonista principal, nasceu meia-década antes do século XX. Aos 18 anos no dia 20 de setembro de 1913, Anna se casou com Firmino Vieira dos Santos, tomando o nome do novo marido, passando a ser, a partir daí, Anna Vieira dos Santos. A mãe do noivo, Maria Eugênia Vieira dos Santos, já falecera, e Maria, a mãe de Anna, morreria apenas dois anos depois do casamento. Portanto nenhum dos três filhos³² de Anna conheceria nenhuma avó, nem materna nem paterna.³³ Durante o quarto ano do seu casamento, Anna engravidou com um menino. E no dia 10 de setembro de 1917, Anna deu à luz o primeiro filho, Adalberto Vieira dos Santos, conhecido carinhosamente como Lequinha.³⁴ Depois de Lequinha vieram Emília e Maria de Lourdes. As informações encontradas nos registros de nascimentos destas irmãs não só contradizem a memória dos seus descendentes como também apresentam contradições internas.³⁵ Poranto podemos apenas aproximar que as duas nasceram no início da década de 1920, Emília talvez por volta de 1921 e a sua irmã mais nova, Maria de Lourdes, provavelmente em 1922 ou 1923. Pelo que eu saiba, estas aproximações contradizem *todos* os documentos oficiais delas, tais como o registro de óbito de Emília, a carteira de trabalho de Maria de Lourdes, o registro de casamento de Emília etc. Mas isto é porque todos estes documentos reproduzem os dados errôneos dos registros de nascimento.

No dia primeiro de maio de 1925, às vinte e três horas da noite, na Rua do Caquende, aconteceu uma tragédia na família Vieira dos Santos. Lequinha, o primeiro filho de Anna e Firmino, morreu de “febre intestinal”.³⁶ O menino não tinha nem oito anos. Passada a morte de Lequinha, a família Vieira dos Santos já era uma família cachoeirana típica das décadas de 1920 e 1930. Anna cuidava da casa e das duas filhas, Milu (apelido de Emília) e Marinha (apelido de Maria de Lourdes).³⁷ Havia muitos anos que Firmino trabalhava como fundidor na Leste Brasileiro, empresa ferroviária.³⁸ Era período de grande crescimento das ferrovias na história baiana. Afinal, o governo baiano tinha investido muito dinheiro nas ferrovias desde o final dos Oitocentos, dobrando o número de quilômetros de ferrovia entre 1895 e 1930.³⁹ Assim como os seus sogros, Firmino também tinha uma afinidade pela Irmandade da Paciência. Ele era irmão da Irmandade e foi enterrado em carneiro da mesma no cemitério da Santa Casa de Misericórdia.⁴⁰ Anna não foi enterrada pela Irmandade, talvez por não ser irmã, mas ela, assim como os seus pais, provavelmente participava da missa e da procissão anuais em nome do Senhor Bom Jesus da Paciência.

ANNA, A REZA E SÃO ROQUE (1920-1933)

Anna Vieira dos Santos cultuava na sua residência um santo que ficaria com a família até hoje. A mãe de Emília era muito devota de São Roque; todo ano ela “rezava” este santo, protetor contra as pestes. Mas não sabemos de onde vem a devoção dela. Talvez tenha sido uma promessa que ela mesma fez. Ou será que a mãe dela, Maria, rezava também São Roque e Anna apenas dava continuidade? Talvez a reza dela fizesse parte da sua obrigação para com o seu orixá, Obaluaiê (discutirei isso mais adiante). De qualquer maneira, presumindo que a tradição era igual à de hoje-em-dia, ela só pode ter começado a rezar depois de casar. O consenso geral é que

uma devoção a um santo é uma responsabilidade grande e casamento é prova simbólica da sua capacidade de ser responsável.

Casada desde setembro de 1913, será que Anna começou a rezar já em agosto de 1914? De acordo com a história oral, Anna rezava ao menos desde meados da década de 1920 até o início da década de 1930 (ela faleceu em dezembro de 1933). Por isso a nossa exploração da reza de Anna é focada neste período. É difícil saber como eram as rezas em Cachoeira nas primeiras décadas dos Novecentos. E informações sobre rezas para São Roque, particularmente, são inexistentes antes dos anos 1940. Em relação a rezas para outros santos, principalmente Santo Antônio e São Cosme e Damião, nós temos algumas informações a partir do final do século XIX em Salvador. E embora Cachoeira certamente fosse um pouco diferente da capital baiana, a sua próxima relação comercial e social sugere uma certa homogeneidade cultural. Com base nestas informações, discutirei como possivelmente era a reza de dona Anna Vieira dos Santos na década de 1920 e início de 1930.

A estrutura básica do evento provavelmente parecia muito com a de hoje. Isto é, em frente ao altar, que teria ao menos uma imagem de São Roque (provavelmente junto a vários outros santos também), acontecia uma “novena”, que durasse uma noite ou várias. E depois havia o samba até altas horas. A festa provavelmente acontecia *sempre* no dia 16 de agosto, assim como a fazem os descendentes de Anna até hoje. Decerto, teria celebrado o santo com a “flor do velho” – conhecida fora o sagrado como “pipoca” (mas sempre sem sal) – qual seria jogada nas pessoas, na casa e na rua. O altar de São Roque certamente seria enfeitado com flores e velas e com os panos mais bonitos que Anna tinha condições de comprar. É bem provável que este pano (sendo para São Roque) seria vermelho, amarelo ou branco. Decerto, também havia as chamadas “missas pedidas”. A partir do primeiro de agosto Milu e Marinha, talvez junto com

outras crianças do bairro, saíam à rua para realizar as “missas pedidas” (ver fig. 1). Como um quadro do jornal *A tarde* de 1933 nos explica, uma missa pedida era quando as crianças saíam “com quadros e caixinhas com estampas e imagens de santos”.⁴¹ As doações que lhes são concedidas iriam para ajudar nas despesas da festa. Mas, se era como seria algumas décadas depois, a contribuição era mais um gesto simbólico do que uma maneira de ganhar dinheiro.

Já no dia da festa, como teria sido a novena nestas primeiras décadas do século XX? Podemos imaginar que certas coisas não tenham mudado muito. Por exemplo, a novena devia ser cantada na residência de Anna com a participação de todos os presentes. Quem puxava a reza provavelmente era um(a) especialista, rezador ou rezadeira, que sabia todas as melodias locais. Assim como na maioria de casas hoje, a novena deve ter sido cantada em uma mistura de latim e português. Afinal, o mesmo uso do latim para a “Ladainha de Nossa Senhora” e do português para o “Pai Nosso”, a “Ave Maria” e os “Benditos” (i.e., “Jaculatórias”) que existe no século XXI pode ser identificado numa “Novena” feita para uso na festa eclesiástica de Senhor Bom Jesus dos Navegantes, composta pelo baiano Damião Barbosa de Araújo no século XIX.⁴² Este latim residencial devia ter sido diferente do latim culto da época, pois um jornalista na ocasião de uma reza soteropolitana para Santo Antônio em meados da década de 1930 descreveu o latim como um “latim irreconhecível”.⁴³ A novena devia ter terminado com foguetes, sendo que a celebração de santos com foguetes vem ao menos desde o século XIX.⁴⁴

Depois da novena, devia ter samba. Este samba provavelmente durava até altas horas da madrugada. Certamente a família toda participava da festa. E deve ter sido nestes eventos que Marinha, a filha mais nova de Anna, aprendeu a gostar do samba. Pois até a sua morte em 2003, Marinha adorava farra. “Onde ela ia”, uma das netas de Emilia me falou, “Tia Marinha sambava”! É difícil saber o quanto que era diferente o samba cachoeirano nas décadas de 1920 e

1930 em relação ao samba de hoje. Édison Carneiro descreve, em *Negros bantus*, publicado pela primeira vez em 1937, um samba que ele encontrou, por ventura, na Praça da Piedade no centro de Salvador:

Formada a “roda”, — a orquestra podia ser pandeiro, violão e chocalho, embora às vezes entrassem castanholas ou berimbaus, — uma das negras caía no meio do círculo dos espectadores e sambava. Os tocadores puxavam o cântcio, enquanto os do círculo respondiam em coro. Depois de alguns passes, a negra vinha, dava noutra qualquer a indefectível *embigada*, unindo os ventres, e retomava o seu lugar, enquanto a outra substituía.⁴⁵

A descrição é de um samba numa praça pública soteropolitana, num ambiente aparentemente inteiramente lúdico, na segunda metade da década de 1930. Portanto, é claro que não é ideal para entender um contexto residencial, cachoeirano e religioso das décadas de 1920 e os inícios da década de 1930. Porém a descrição serve para ter uma idéia geral do samba na reza de dona Anna. Hoje-em-dia a maioria dos sambas grandes que se encontra na Bahia, seja nas rezas ou não, é feita por grupos organizados, com músicas próprias, arranjos musicais, roupas combinadas e uma orquestra bem definida.⁴⁶ De acordo com a descrição de Carneiro, era o que existisse por perto.⁴⁷ Ressalto que o folclorista explica a orquestra como uma que “podia ser” tais instrumentos ou outros. Reparámos que continua a ser o responsorial, que tocavam pandeiro e que a coreografia parece ser a mesma. E se a dança é a mesma, certamente também era o mesmo padrão rítmico.

Mas antes deste samba com instrumentos de corda, é provável que tinha o samba dos santos, ou talvez o samba de caboclo pois será que não descia Obaluaiê em Anna, como acontece com pessoas que hoje têm caboclos que as acompanham? Podemos ainda fazer mais perguntas: será que Anna fazia matança de manhã cedo no dia da reza? Será que ia para a missa de São Roque todo 16 de agosto? Quais seriam as comidas que ela servia além da “flor do velho”? Será que o samba de Anna era sofria as mesmas denúncias que outros sambas sofriam na sociedade

cachoeirana dos anos 1920? Afinal, em uma notícia do jornal *A Ordem* de junho de 1926, os sambadores são caracterizados como “perturbadores do silêncio público”, que tinham, o que outra notícia de 1930 explicou como “vozes dos altos árbitros”.⁴⁸ Embora a polícia, durante os primeiros anos do século XX, não se importasse tanto com os sambas, a partir de 1921, a postura mudou. As décadas de 1920 e 1930 foram marcadas por severas intolerância para com a cultura negra, isso incluía não só o samba como também o candomblé, outro aspecto espiritual da vida de Anna.

No ano de 1921, aconteceu em Cachoeira uma troca significativa de oficiais governamentais, o que resultou também em uma grande mudança nas leis e prioridades. O novo tenente Laudelino de Paiva recebeu a fama, ao menos pelo jornal *A Ordem*, de “ressuscitar o policiamento da cidade”, onde ele impedia “os jogos de azar, os sambas, os candomblés, os gatunos e os malandros”, todos os quais vistos como atrasamentos do “progresso” de Cachoeira.⁴⁹ Durante a mesma época, a 110 quilômetros de Cachoeira, Salvador tinha também o seu novo “salvador” contra os candomblés, o infame Pedro Azevedo Gordilho, melhor conhecido como Pedrito. Ativo entre 1920 e 1926, Pedrito virou um mito por suas “batidas” de casas soteropolitanas de candomblé, mesmo que muitos policiais também participassem de candomblés.⁵⁰ Então foi neste âmbito social e político, absolutamente hostis às atividades culturais negras por serem retratadas como atrasos à “marcha da civilização”,⁵¹ que Anna praticava o seu candomblé.

ANNA, O CANDOMBLÉ E OBALUAIÊ (1920-1933)

Anna é lembrada pelos seus descendentes como uma adepta do candomblé. Ela colocava “presentes” (provavelmente velas) no pé de umbu que até hoje fica na propriedade que eventualmente seria herdada pelas suas duas filhas, Milú e Marinha. Anna era uma filha de santo

de nascença e portanto nunca passou por um processo de iniciação. Em outras palavras, Anna nasceu com um orixá, Obaluaiê. E não é de pouca importância que este orixá (assim como sua variação, Omolu) está “sincretizado” com São Roque. Embora não seja interessante desenvolver aqui uma discussão sobre o “sincretismo”, cabe salientar que esta associação entre santo e orixá pode explicar a devoção que Anna tinha a São Roque. Ou seja, nascendo com Obaluaiê, talvez Anna achasse “necessário” rezar também para São Roque.⁵² Sem entrar nos pormenores das hierarquia e iniciação no candomblé, vale ressaltar que há duas maneiras de receber um orixá. Como explica antropólogo Roger Sansi: “Uma [maneira] seria a capacidade inata, o ‘dom’ para encontrar e incorporar espíritos – a mediunidade dos espíritas. A outra seria a ‘iniciação’, o processo ritual através do qual a mãe-de-santo, como iniciadora, ‘põe a mão na cabeça’, mostra os segredos do culto e dá os elementos necessários para que a pessoa ‘assente’ os santos”.⁵³

Esta distinção, “dom – iniciação”, talvez possa ser entendida também pela oposição “obrigação – escolha”. Embora sempre haja graus de escolha ao aceitar uma obrigação e vice-versa, é uma distinção que nos ajuda a entender a maneira pela qual os descendentes de Anna concebem do envolvimento dela com o candomblé. Assim, Anna incorporava o seu orixá não necessariamente porque queria, mas porque não tinha escolha. É difícil especular como Anna soube do Obaluaiê que ela “carregava” consigo. Muitas vezes pessoas manifestam doenças e são “tratadas” por um pai ou mãe de santo, aprendendo a “cuidar do santo”. “Cuidar” freqüentemente contempla a preparação e entrega presentes, matanças ou a incorporação do “santo”. Em outros casos, pessoas têm o dom de sonhar certas coisas e sabem que têm estas capacidades espirituais. Sendo assim, filhos de santo *de nascença* podem ou não pertencer a uma casa de candomblé. Pois embora carregar um “santo” não seja escolha, onde se cultua geralmente é escolha. O caso de Anna era mais ou menos assim. Isto é, em geral ela não freqüentava nenhum terreiro de

candomblé como filha, mas quando Obaluaiê “chamava” (i.e., incorporava ela), Anna subia sempre para o mesmo terreiro, o Seja Hundé.

O Seja Hundé – também conhecido como a Roça do Ventura, ou simplesmente o Ventura, é o terreiro Jeje mais velho de Cachoeira ainda em funcionamento. O terreiro comanda um prestígio importante dentro da comunidade de santo e foi, em 2011, tombado pelo IPHAN. Como já mencionei, o primeiro terreiro jeje importante de Cachoeira foi a Roça de Cima, que existia desde a década de 1860. Embora a Roça de Cima deixasse de funcionar até o início do século XX, muitos membros da sua congregação, em particular Maria Agorensi, tinham fundado o Seja Hundé até o final do século XIX na propriedade do Ventura, localizada na fronteira da Roça de Cima. As suas primeiras mães de santo, Maria Agorensi e Abalhe, foram inciadas na Roça de Cima.⁵⁴ De acordo com a cronologia reconstruída por Parés, a primeira mãe de santo do Seja Hundé, Maria Agorensi,⁵⁵ liderava a partir dos últimos anos do século XIX até 1922, quando ela faleceu. Este era um dos “capítulos mais notáveis da história do Seja Hundé” (Parés 2007: 219)⁵⁶. Lembre-se que Anna nasceu por volta do mesmo ano em que o Seja Hundé foi fundado e o terreiro demorou um pouco para estabelecer-se, mas será que essa fama não foi o que levou Anna para um terreiro que era tão longe da sua casa? Afinal, recordam os seus descendentes, Anna subia para o terreiro “fosse qualquer hora da noite” quando Obaluaiê descia nela.

De acordo com as suas netas, que aprenderam ouvindo as histórias que Milú e Marinha contavam, Obaluaiê descia na sua avó sempre que tocavam para o santo no Seja Hundé. Depois de manifestada, Anna subia a Ladeira da Cadeia, com a ajuda da sua filha Marinha, até chegar ao terreiro. Emília, que não gostava “dessas coisas”, ficava no Caquende com seu pai, que também não gostava. Não está claro se Anna mesma *ouvia* o som de lá de cima, que talvez fosse possível

na época, mas aparentemente Obaluaiê sabia sempre quando tocavam. De acordo com as práticas jeje, o toque seria tocado em três atabaques, o *rum*, *rumpi* e *lé*, junto com o *gã* (sineta de ferro), que segura o *time-line*. Os tocadores usariam *aguidavis* (varetas de goiabeira, tamarindo ou cipó duro) para tocar.⁵⁷ Anna, em transe desde quando o “santo pegou”, iria até o terreiro presumivelmente para fazer Obaluaiê dançar. É possível que ela ia também para outras casas, mas a tradição oral lembra só do Seja Hundé.

Depois da morte de Maria Agorensi em 1922, como é de costume nos terreiros jeje, durante sete anos “as atividades do candomblé são normalmente paralisadas, isto é, não são celebradas festas públicas nem são iniciadas novas vodúnsis, embora certos rituais internos . . . possam ser mantidos”.⁵⁸ No caso do falecimento de Maria Agorensi, porém, a casa paralizou as atividades por mais de uma década, recomeçando em 1934 ou 1937. Encontramos então um possível problema na história oral dos descendentes de Anna. Tia Marinha nasceu após 1922 e Anna faleceu antes de 1934. Se as atividades foram paralizadas durante este período, é possível que Anna de fato participou? Será que não era este terreiro ao qual Anna subia, indicando a fama do terreiro na memória das pessoas? Caso negativo, afirmando que Anna de fato participou do Seja Hundé nesta época, o caso dela nos dá uma pista interessante sobre quais eram os “rituais internos” durante o período em que o terreiro permaneceu fechado. Esta “verdade” tem pouco peso na nossa história, pois tudo mudaria em dezembro de 1933.

Às vinte e três horas no dia 19 de dezembro de 1933, Anna deixou as suas duas meninas sem mãe, cedendo fatalmente ao que é descrito no seu registro de óbito como uma “febre”.⁵⁹ Mas a família toda sabe que esta febre não foi resultado apenas de azar. Como já notei, Firmino, o marido de Anna, não gostava da participação que sua esposa tinha nos candomblés. Lembre-se que este período, as décadas de 1920 e 1930, era o auge da repressão policial e opinião pública

negativa *contra* o candomblé. Portanto a atitude de Firmino conformava à da sociedade. Esta discordância dentro de uma só família ilustra a interessante dinâmica política que podia existir na época: uma esposa que era filha de santo e um marido que era irmão da Irmandade da Paciência e totalmente contra o candomblé. Então ele finalmente decidiu que as coisas não podiam ficar assim. Em um dia no ano de 1933, Firmino soube que ia ter um candomblé e, como explica Dona Marlene: “ficou ali no pé dela para não deixar ela subir. Aí o santo pegou. Ele veio de lá, veio de cá. [Firmino] não deixou ela subir. Aí o santo chegou [e] disse ‘dou a resposta’. Aí com pouco tempo, ela morreu”.⁶⁰ Resumindo, quando Firmino não deixou a sua esposa festejar Obaluaiê, a “resposta” do orixá era a morte da sua média.

Mas a tristeza não parou por aí. Um pouco mais de quatro meses após a morte da sua mulher, Firmino Vieira dos Santos também faleceu. No dia 28 de abril de 1934, Pedro Nolasco de Assis registrou que seu pai tinha falecido na noite anterior na Rua do Caquende, vítima de tuberculose.⁶¹ Tuberculose, extrapola as netas de Firmino, causado pelo tamanho remorso e o alcoolismo consequente. As ramificações para as duas filhas menores foram tremendas. Emília e Maria de Lourdes, as duas com menos de 13 anos eram órfãs. A opção escolhida (provavelmente por terceiros) foi de morar com Tio Pedro, irmão da sua falecida mãe. É difícil saber como era a vida das duas irmãs com Tio Pedro, mas sabemos que pouco tempo depois, Milú e Marinha decidiram sair da casa do tio para construir as suas próprias famílias.

Antes de seguir ao próximo passo, vamos revisar. Anna, cujos pais eram ativos na Irmandade da Paciência, nasceu com um “santo,” o orixá Obaluaiê. Sempre que Obaluaiê “pegava” ela, Anna subia com sua filha mais nova para o Seja Hundé, um terreiro relativamente longe da sua residência no Caquende. Em complemento a esta “obrigação”, Anna também tinha uma devoção a São Roque, durante a qual ela provavelmente rezava uma novena e sambava até

altas horas. A sociedade em que vivia e criava os seus filhos não tolerava as práticas oriundas da África e tudo indica que seu marido, irmão da Irmandade da Paciência, incorporou este olhar suspeito para com o candomblé. Firmino provavelmente gostava da reza de São Roque, mesmo que fosse só uma tolerância quanto ao samba, mas não aceitava a “macumba” da sua esposa. Porém, não parece que Firmino desacreditasse. Isto é, o remorso que encaminhou ele à cachaça, causando a sua eventual morte, foi instigado pelo fato de assumir que ele estava impedindo a obrigação da sua esposa. Anna nasceu com uma responsabilidade que não podia largar. Veremos a mesma lição ao considerar a vida espiritual de Emília.

Emília Vieira dos Santos (c.1921-1993)

Emília e sua irmã se encontravam órfãs no dia 27 de abril de 1934. Sendo adolescentes, ainda com em torno de 12 e 11 anos, respetivamente, as meninas não poderiam cuidar de si mesmas. Portanto, foram morar com seu tio, Pedro Nolasco de Assis, que morava também no Caquende. Tio Pedro cuidou das comidas e roupas das sobrinhas, até registrando, em 1936, os nascimentos dela, pois os pais nunca o fizeram. A razão da qual Firmino registrou o primeiro filho, Lequinha, mas não registrou as filhas não está clara. Porém os dados registrados são errados. A data oficial do nascimento de Maria de Lourdes é 1914, enquanto o registro de Emília indica que a irmã mais velha tinha nascido três anos *depois* de Maria de Lourdes.⁶² Seria o caso impossível, então, que Emília teria nascido seis dias antes do seu falecido irmão Lequinha. Mas as meninas ficaram pouco tempo com Tio Pedro. Menos que um ano e meio depois de criar as certidões de nascimento, as meninas foram morar sozinhas. Elas se mudaram de volta à casa dos pais no Alto da Levada. Mas sem nenhum tipo de renda, e sendo que na época o emprego mais comum para mulheres negras era na indústria de charutos, foi lá que encontraram emprego.

As primeiras fábricas de charutos finos foram construídas na Bahia no final do século XIX. Até 1892, a Bahia já tinha 12 fábricas de charuot, e as atividades intensificaram no início do século XX. Durante a primeira metade do século XX, havia pelo menos cinco fábrica importantes: Dannemann, Suerdieck, Costa Ferreira & Penna, Leite & Alves e C. Pimentel & Cia. A Danneman e a Suerdicek eram fábricas alemãs, a primeira chegando à Bahia em 1873 e a segunda em 1888, e estas, junto à Costa Ferreira & Penna, no auge da sua produção, empregavam cerca de 10.000 pessoas nas cidades de Cachoeira, São Félix, Maragogipe, Muritiba e Cruz das Almas.⁶³ A indústria teve êxito quando surgiu a demanda internacional após a primeira guerra mundial, tanto que a Suerdieck produzia anualmente mais que 10.000.000 charutos.⁶⁴ No seu estudo sobre as charuteiras do Recôncavo, Elisabete Silva nota que dos 2.852 funcionários da fábrica Suerdieck em Maragogipe, entre 1905 e 1950, 79,3% eram mulheres.⁶⁵ E sem não resta dúvida que esta estatística é representativa da região como um todo.

No final da década de 1930, Emília e sua irmã faziam parte da indústria transnacional de charutos quando foram contratadas como charuteiras. De acordo com os documentos oficiais da Danneman, Emília foi contrada por esta fábrica, localizada então em São Félix, no dia 2 de março de 1938. Emília tinha por volta de 17 anos e era alfabetizada quando começou a trabalhar como charuteira, ganhando um salário de 143 mil réis.⁶⁶ Embora ainda não tenha encontrado os dados sobre Maria de Loudes, que também foi charuteira na Danneman e mais tarde na Costa Ferreira & Penna, é provável que as datas são parecidas com as da sua irmã. Isso significaria que Maria de Lourdes não dia mais que 15 aninhos quando começou a trabalhar. E de fato, podemos perceber pela foto da sua carteira de trabalho, tirada em 9 de abril de 1935, quando ela teria cerca de 13 anos de idade, mostra o quanto que era nova já precisando de documentação legal para trabalhar.

Quando Emília foi contratada pela Danneman, ela estava com uma barriga de seis meses, a sua primeira filha, Malvina, que, ao nascer, seria registrada apenas com o nome da mãe, Vieira dos Santos.⁶⁷ Esta informação nos sugere que Emília provavelmente era solteira quando começou a trabalhar na Danneman. Em 31 de outubro de 1939, Emília se casou com Graciliano Bispo dos Santos, que, indica a certidão de casamento, era o pai da sua filha de 16 meses e alguém com quem já morava um período antes do casamento oficial.⁶⁸ Emília mal tinha 17 anos e seu marido, que tinha nascido em 12 de agosto de 1913, estava com 26. Graciliano era filho de Maria Rita dos Santos e Guilherme de Oliveira Bispo. Na sua certidão de casamento, a profissão de Graciliano é anotada como “artista,”⁶⁹ embora os seus filhos lembrem dele principalmente como caldeireiro na Viação Férrea Federal Leste Brasileiro, que operava na cidade de Alagoinha.

Emília e seu marido moravam na casa no Alto da Levada que os pais tinham deixado para ela e sua irmã. Depois de Malvina, Emília teve muito outros filhos embora somente três tenham sobrevivido: Marlene, nascida em 1941, Margarida, em 1942 e Maclino, em 1947. Maria de Lourdes já morava à beira do Rio Paraguaçu, mantendo uma relação próxima à irmã. Ela tinha casado e teve três filhos, Iraíldes, Manuel Ramos Filho e Maria D’Ajuda. As suas filhas lembram hoje como era difícil a vida na época. De fato a cidade era um lugar bem diferente, marcado pela enchentes frequentes. Graciliano, trabalhando na ferrovia em Alagoinhas, deixou Emília só para criar os filhos. Durante os anos 1950, quando a indústria de charutos estava em declínio e muitas fábricas fecharam, Emília, como muitas outras charuteiras, perdeu o emprego. Mas sabendo já fazer charuto, ela entrou no mercado informal de charutos, e vendia charutos em casa.⁷⁰ Depois, por volta de 1960, Emília resolveu se mudar para Alagoinhas para ficar com seu marido, deixando as filhas, que então tinham cerca de 18 anos, para cuidar da casa. Eventualmente, quando Graciliano se aposentou depois de 40 anos de trabalho nas ferrovias, o casal se mudou de

volta para Cachoeira. Em 19 de março de 1973, apenas cinco meses antes do seu 60º aniversário, Graciliano faleceu de câncer.⁷¹ Duas décadas mais tarde, em 26 de maio de 1993, Emília, provavelmente com 72 anos, também faleceu de uma parada cardio respiratória, deixando seus cinco filhos (incluindo uma filha de criação), seis netos, dois bisnetos (e mais a chegar) e muitos outros parentes e amigos próximos.⁷² A sua irmã, Maria de Lourdes, então faleceu 15 anos mais tarde, com 86 anos.

EMÍLIA E SUA REZA PARA SÃO ROQUE, ÉPOCA Nº1 (1939-1957)

Sem dúvidas, a reza que Emília fazia para São Roque era marco do seu calendário anual. Era, como lembram seus descendentes, algo que sempre lhe fez muito feliz. Começando já em janeiro de cada ano, ela guardava – conforme o dinheiro deixava – quantidade pequenas de camarão seco, que era muito caro, para que ela tivesse o suficiente para fazer seu caruru oito meses depois. Ela também pintava a casa todo ano para a festa. A devoção de São Roque era muito importante para ela. E embora Maria de Lourdes sempre tenha participado, era Emília que abraçou esta responsabilidade familiar. Depois de sair da casa de Tio Pedro, Emília e Maria de Lourdes retomaram a devoção que sua mãe tinha a São Roque. Não é claro quando começaram a rezar de novo, mas certamente foi depois de uma delas casar. E de fato, nenhuma das filhas de Emília lembra de um tempo em que não tinha a reza.

Rezas são responsabilidade pessoais que nunca apenas acabam com a morte da pessoa. Estas devoções são concebidas como trans-geracional. Como heranças, os santos padroeiros têm que ser cuidados e comemorados até a próxima geração. Anna Vieira dos Santos tinha uma reza anual para São Roque além do seu envolvimento com o candomblé. E embora Anna tenha falecido enquanto as meninas ainda eram adolescentes, certamente elas tinha a idade de lembrar um pouco da festa anual de devoção. Como crianças, dependentes, não poderiam assumir a

responsabilidade quando a mãe morreu, mas sendo que agora estavam casadas, criando suas famílias e trabalhando, podiam voltar à tradição. São Roque precisava ser lembrado e celebrado, assim como também precisava servir o Obaluaiê da sua mãe. Maria de Lourdes, que sempre teve mais interesse no mundo espiritual da sua mãe, entendia que a mãe queria que continuasse e com a ajuda de Mamãe Laura, uma residente local e provavelmente uma amiga de Anna, as irmãs reiniciaram a sua obrigação, que tinha parado desde 1933.

Mamãe Laura, Maria Laura de Jesus, era um membro conhecido da sociedade cachoeirana do início do século XX. Ela era parteira e ajudou nos partos de muitas crianças no Caquende. A suas filhas deram continuidade a este trabalho anos depois. Mamãe Laura também era uma mãe de santo e irmã da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte. Mamãe Laura, cachoeirana nascida em 1888, era um ano mais nova que Tio Pedro e nove anos mais velha que a mãe de Emília.⁷³ Consequentemente, Mamãe Laura era como uma mãe para Emília, servindo também como madrinha da sua terceira filha, Margarida. Laura morava no Caquende, perto da praça. Como já mencionado, Mamãe Laura era uma mãe de santo que fazia sessões de caboclo. Durante tais sessões, ela incorporava uma entidade – provavelmente Obaluaiê – para oferecer conselho e cura para os que precisavam. Estas eram sessões quietas, pois diferente dos tambores de candomblé, estas contemplavam apenas canto Assim, Mamãe Laura era conhecida pelo poder espiritual, tendo inclusive muitos “caboclos”.

Como já notei, Mamãe Laura também era membro da Irmandade da Boa Morte. Na época dela, a Irmandade não tinha a fama que começou a ganhar no final do século XX.⁷⁴ Ao invés de funcionar de uma sede, como têm hoje, as irmãs se encontravam nas casas pessoais. A Festa da Boa Morte, originalmente de Salvador, se mudou para Cachoeira em algum momento do século XIX ou início do século XX.⁷⁵ O evento, o qual os estudiosos dizem ter ligação forte ao

candomblé,⁷⁶ acontece durante três dias, e as irmãs comemoram a assunção de Maria aos céus (see Fig. 7.4). As mulheres que participavam da Irmandade eram vistas como umas das mais espiritualmente poderosas da cidade.

Mamãe Laura, como uma *mãe-de-santo*, irmã da Boa Morte e provavelmente amiga de Anna, tinha as qualificações espirituais e experiências práticas para conduzir a festa de Emília e Maria de Lourdes na maneira “correta”. Afinal, além da reza, o evento também incluía matança e as cantigas para Obaluaiê. Às cinco horas da manhã no dia da festa, 16 de agosto, a família se reunia para fazer matança de um galo, dois pintos e uma pinta. Cada animal representava um santo: o galo de São Roque, os pintos de São Cosme e São Damião e a pinta de Santa Crispina. A devoção aos santos gêmeos (e a sua irmã mitológica Santa Crispina), que fazia parte da história espiritual de Graciliano, foi incluída na reza de São Roque. Os animais tinham que ser sangrados de maneira precisa, rezas específicas necessitavam ser oradas e certas cantigas precisavam ser cantadas. Tudo isso foi puxado por Mamãe Laura e acompanhado por Emília e sua família. Durante o canto e as palmas, Mamãe Laura incorporava rapidamente Obaluaiê. Quando a matança acabava, as aves tinham que ser tratadas de acordo com o ritual e preparadas para o chamado *axé*, uma oferenda, que seria colocado no chão em um dos quartos da casa com a porta fechada. Subsequentemente, enquanto ainda amanhecia, a família fazia as preparações do café da manhã. Afinal, mais tarde iriam todos para a missa de São Roque na igreja católica, depois da qual a congregação toda – inclusive o padre – iria para a casa de Emília no Alto da Levada para tomarem café juntos. Para tal, os objetos da matança tinha que ser limpados e guardados, pois embora o ritual nunca tivesse sido um segredo, Emília sabia muito bem que a Igreja não gostava destas práticas.

Mesmo antes do dia oficial de São Roque, a cerimônia já estava andando. Desde o primeiro dia do mês até o décimoquinto, nas quartas-feiras e sábados, as crianças disponíveis – sendo os próprios filhos ou da vizinhança – contanto que tivesse menos de 15 anos, saíam para a rua com uma caixa de sapato de papelão para as “missas pedidas”, assim como Emília e sua irmã provavelmente faziam para a reza de sua mãe décadas antes. Para este evento, que durava o dia inteiro, as crianças iam para o bairro do Caquende e também para as regiões mais rurais da Terra Vermelha e o Tororó. As crianças iam de casa em casa anunciando: “Missa pedida do Senhor São Roque!” Elas receberiam trocados e às vezes recebiam refrescos. O dinheiro tipicamente não era muito e com ele Emília só comprava velas e flores. Dois dias antes da reza, um porco era matado e preparado para a celebração. Certamente isso não era uma matança ritual, mas deveríamos notar que às vezes porcos têm uma associação a Obaluaiê. Com a carne do porco fazia feijoada, sarapatel, ensopada e mocotó de proco.

Voltando ao dia da reza. Depois da matança, caboclo, missa católica e café da manhã, muitas pessoas – trinta ou quarenta – ficavam com a família para ajudar na cozinha. Isso incluía o almoço usando o porco que tinha matado e também o caruru (e seus acompanhamentos) para a noite.⁷⁷ O caruru geralmente era feito com 4.000 quiabos e demorava o dia todo para fazer. Os ajudantes iam e vinham, mas a comida tinha que estar preparada até à tarde quando a maré estava alta e as crianças iam comer o caruru dos sete meninos, em homenagem a São Cosme e Damião. As crianças, quatro meninos e três meninas, sentariam no chão ao redor de uma bacia na qual era colocado o caruru completo. Enquanto as crianças comiam, à mão, os adultos ficavam ao redor deles, só que de pé, cantando cantigas de São Cosme e Damião e batendo as palmas até as crianças terminassem a comida. Depois, os adultos traziam outra bacia com água para as crianças lavarem as mãos.

Depois deste ritual de comelança seria um tempo de descanso, durante o qual a família (e os ajudantes) trocariam de roupa e se preparar para a novena, que começaria por volta de meia-noite. Começava tarde assim porque ninguém da família sabia puxar a reza e tinham que esperar Constância, a rezadeira local. E sendo que isso era o dia 16 de agosto, o dia oficial de São Roque, muitas outras casas também rezavam São Roque. Portanto, Constância tinha que ir em muitas casas, rezando e socializando, até chegar na casa de Emília para ela puxar a sua última novena da noite. A novena que durava mais ou menos uma hora terminava depois de meia-noite já no dia 17 de agosto. Após a novena, a família cantaria as cantigas de São Roque e de São Cosme e Damião. E depois o samba, tocado acusticamente por vizinhos e amigos, ia até altas horas.

Já no outro dia, a família ia toda para o Rio Paraguaçu na maré alta, cantando “Eu vou pra a Pedra da Baleia!” A Pedra da Baleia é – e continua a ser – uma grande pedra no meio do rio, ao sul do centro de Cachoeira. Quando a maré está baixa a pedra fica exposta e quando a maré está alta dá apenas para ver o farol que fica em cima da pedra. A família ia de barco até a pedra para oferecer o axé da noite anterior. Depois a família subiria para o Alto da Levada cantando “Eu vim da Pedra da Baleia!”

Este é uma viagem resumida pelas atividades que caracterizavam a reza de Emília entre 1939 e 1957. Havia muitas pessoas centrais às festividades, Mamãe Laura, que cuidava das partes que eram mais espiritualmente finas, o padre que fazia a missa de São Roque e depois subia para tomar café, os filhos de Emília’s (e as crianças vizinhas) que faziam as missas pedidas e comiam da bacia e finalmente, havia Constância que puxava a novena. As coisas mudaram muito em Junho de 1957 quando Mamãe Laura faleceu com 69 anos.⁷⁸ Decerto a morte desta figura mãe era triste para todos da família, mas também tinha desdobramentos significativos para

a maneira pela qual Emília praticava a sua reza. E de fato, a parte espiritual da qual Mamãe Laura cuidava, ficou interdita por não menos de sete anos. Portanto ao menos até 1964, não tinha nem matança nem incorporação de entidades.

EMÍLIA E SUA REZA PARA SÃO ROQUE, ÉPOCA Nº2 (C.1964–C.1986)

A próxima sacerdotista importante para a reza de Emília foi Edinha, sobre a qual sei muito pouco. Edinha nasceu em Cachoeira mas morava em Alagoinhas. Embora não fosse mãe de santo, ela certamente entendia este mundo espiritual. Teve também uma outra pessoa, Bebê (também de Alagoinhas), que ajudou a conduzir o ritual durante os anos provisórios, mas foram poucas vezes. Portanto até a chegada de Edinha, Emília fazia a sua reza – com missa, novena e samba – sem os elementos sacrificiais. Durante este período, as três filhas de Emília – Malvina, Marlene e Margarida – aprenderam a rezar a novena. Por ocasião na qual Constância deixou o seu caderno na casa depois da reza, as meninas copiaram tudo do livro e praticavam de noite na cama (à luz de vela) até que conseguissem puxar a reza sem Constância. Consequentemente nunca mais teve que esperar até meia-noite para começar a reza. As décadas de 1960 e 1970 também iniciou outra geração. E logo os netos de Emília estavam fazendo aquilo que seus filhos faziam nas décadas de 1940 e 1950, e o que ela também provavelmente fazia na década de 1920, tais como sair pelas ruas pedindo missas e comendo o caruru da bacia.

Menos estas mudanças de pessoas, pouco mudou na reza de Emília com a adição de Edinha. Ela ainda ia para a missa, assim como tomava café com todos depois. Ela ainda rezava a sua novena, fazia o samba e dava a comida dos sete meninos de São Cosme e Damião. Porém, o ritual da matança mudou de uma maneira marcante. Sem Mamãe Laura, a família agora dependia de Edinha, que fazia a matança. Edinha incorporava Ogum durante este trabalho espiritual de manhã cedo. Mas agora um *novo* orixá começou a comparecer, utilizando de Emília como

média. Portanto Emília, agora já com 40 e tantos anos, e que não tinha nenhum histórico para com este tipo de atividade, anualmente recebia Obaluaiê, descrito pelos seus descendentes como “uma velha africana”. Este Obaluaiê de Emília falava “africano”,⁷⁹ e conseqüentemente era incapaz de comunicar-se: “Bociava tudo. Bububububu...”. Além disso, assim como muitos Obaluaiês, a velha de Emília era tão velha que ficava com o corpo todo entortado, arrastando no chão.

Sendo que o orixá não falava direito nem se movimentava muito, Edinha facilitava as atividades rituais com este espírito que tinha ficado dormente durante tantos anos. Assim Edinha sabia quando Obaluaiê queria ser salvo com um abraço, como é comum nos casos afro-brasileiros de possessão. E a cerimônia toda era cheia de canto, tais como este pedido de pena:

*Meu pai Obaluaiê
Venho rogar e venho pedir
Vós tenha pena de todos
Vós tenha pena de mim*

Este Obaluaiê nunca ficava muito tempo. Afinal, as entidades tendem a ficar muito tempo apenas quando estão dançando, brincando ou trabalhando. Uma velha Obaluaiê assim, sem poder comunicar-se, tinha pouca coisa a fazer na terra. E conseqüentemente, uma das cantigas de despedida, que pede que o orixá tenha compaixão pelo corpo que vai deixar, era assim:

*Obaluaiê,
De Nossa Senhora
Tenha dó do corpo
Quando for embora*

Ninguém sabia exatamente porque Emília tinha este “Caboclo”, mesmo que a família soubesse que a mãe dela tinha também. Lembre-se, na infância era Maria de Lourdes que acompanhava a mãe ao candomblé. Emília nem gostava de candomblé assim. A suas atividades

religiosas principais eram a sua participação nas irmandades da igreja, o Sagrado Coração de Jesus e a Irmandade de Bom Jesus da Paciência (como o seu avô antes dela). Porém, como todos sabem, estes tipos de entidades, que vêm sem iniciação, são ancestrais. Emília então aceitou a sua herança e servia como a média do orixá todos os anos, mas só durante a sua reza. Ou seja, esta velha africana só aparecia na casa de Emília (no dia da reza), nunca em outros espaços.

A chegada desta entidade espiritual parece ser uma lembrança nítida de que independente de quanto latente o passado possa parecer, nunca desaparece. Obaluaiê, a mesma entidade que acompanhava Anna, a sua mãe, e Mamãe Laura, que era como uma mãe, agora fazia parte importante da vida de Emília. Este orixá era como um exemplo dramático do contexto atlântico do qual desenvolveu a tradição da reza. Articulou, por alegoria, um passado distante com o presente. A velha africana, que não falava nem se movimentava, servia como uma metáfora viva da brutalidade do passado distante transatlântico, dos africanos escravizados cujas vozes eram silenciadas e cujos corpos eram amarrados, que não continua a ser não apenas presente como também parte da construção do presente. Foi como um lembrete de que o seu São Roque católico é apenas parte da história.

Logo Emília achava que a matança deveria ser tirada. Este sentimento foi cultivado em pequena parte pelos repressivos olhares da Igreja, mas principalmente era porque sabia que estava chegando ao fim da sua vida. Como Emília a lembrada de ter falado: “quando acabar eu morro fica aí pra vocês fazer isso sem saber”. Portanto, procurou tirar a matança, e Edinha facilitou o processo. De fato, como os descendentes de Emília dizem hoje, “A gente não é de Candomblé, nem de nada, nem entendia nada, né? Então pra fazer uma coisa, tinha que fazer uma coisa certa. Como é que vai fazer uma coisa se você não está entendendo?” Em outras palavras, matança é negócio sério que se não conhecia tem que achar alguém que conheça. E isso

não é fácil. Emília mesma, durante 50 anos, nunca teve mais que três pessoas que ajudasse na hora. Tirando a matança, Emília também parou de receber Obaluaiê. Embora este tipo de decisão possa ter consequências sérias de uma entidade colérica, Edinha e Emília tiveram muito cuidado e até hoje, como uma de suas filhas me falou, “Tirou e nunca ninguém se deu mal. Graças a Deus! Morreu quem teve de morrer. Viveu que teve de viver. E a vida continua!” Assim, mesmo na sua ausência, o passado continua a fazer parte constituinte da interpretação do presente.

EMÍLIA E SUA REZA PARA SÃO ROQUE, ÉPOCA Nº3 (C.1987-PRESENT)

Sem a matança nem a visita da africana velha, a reza, segundo afirmam seus descendents, parecia muito com a reza de hoje. A reza começa pela manhã, quando a família se reúne para fazer o café que será tomado com a congregação toda depois da missa de São Roque. Depois fazem um almoço e preparam o caruru para mais tarde. A família não dá mais o caruru dos sete meninos mas ainda puxa o “Bendito” dos santos gêmeos e canta as suas cantigas depois da novena. Mas a reza não é mais de Emília e Maria de Lourdes, que também a herdaram da sua mãe. A reza agora pertence aos que vieram depois.

Emília faleceu em maio de 1993, um ano depois da sua cumadre Edinha. Porém, antes de falecer, Emília passou um tempo no hospital. Houve uma vez, quando muitos parentes estavam a visitando, o aparelho de oxigênio começou a sacudir fortemente. Emília, sossegada, acalmou todos, “Oh gente, não tenha medo não, que são meus divinos”. E depois, lembra Dona

Margarida:

Ela morreu falando tudo. Aí ela disse assim, Margarida, Onde é que tá meu São Roque? Eu digo, “oh mãe está em cima da cristaleira.” “Oh minha filha, você que está aqui, não pare com São Roque. Não pode parar. Você faça como você puder. Importante que reze, alguma coisa você faça. Não deixe o São Roque sem rezar.” Eu disse, “A senhora vai rezar muito tempo”. “Não, mas eu tô falando com você. Tome conta direitinho. Não deixe sem rezar. Você sabe que esse foi da sua avó.” Então como é que a gente pode

deixar? Então a gente tem que fazer o que ela pediu, né? Aí pronto, é como a gente faz. Faz do jeito que a gente pode.⁸⁰

E reza todo ano. A família se reúne para fazer tudo direito: o altar, o café depois da missa, o almoço, a novena e o samba.

Eu não ressaltar um dos aspectos mais importante – talvez a mais importante – desta reza. Emília amava a sua devoção; fazia-lhe feliz. Ela fazia a reza com respeito pela mãe, pelo santo e pela família toda. Emília sempre soube como era importante esta devoção para a sua família e é claro, nas palavras dela supracitadas, o quanto que queria que continuasse. E uma grande parte desta devoção não é apenas a parte social e cosmológica mas também a felicidade e respeito pelo passado, todos que compõem esta devoção anual. Os atuais praticantes da tradição familiar também valorizam a união social; a família toda participa. The current bearers of the family tradition also value the social union; the whole family participates. A reza não é mais feita na casa no Alto da Levada; agora é feita na casa de Vera, a nora de Emília. Não há mais “missas pedidas”, que foram tiradas a mais de uma década porque a vizinhança é cada vez mais hostil às devoções de santos e também porque é, em geral, mais perigosa do que era antigamente. Às vezes a missa é pela manhã ou então pela noite. Uma morte na família significa que não vai ter nem caruru nem samba. Mesmo assim, o fato de ainda fazer a reza não muda. É uma obrigação familiar à si mesma e a São Roque.

Notas

¹ A participação de seu Maclino foi mais curta devido ao seu falecimento em novembro de 2010.

² Luis Nicolau Parés, *A formação do candomblé: história e ritual da nação jeje na Bahia*, 2ª edição (Campinas: Editora da UNICAMP, 2007), p. 179.

³ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231. O seu certidão de óbito, do dia 20 de agosto de 1915, afirma que quando faleceu, tinha 62 anos. Isto indica que o seu ano de nascimento foi 1853 ou 1852, caso não tenha feito aniversário até o dia da sua morte.

⁴ Wlamyra R. de Albuquerque, Albuquerque, Wlamyra R. de. 2009. *O jogo da dissimulação: Abolição e cidadania negra no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2009), p. 96. Embora simbolicamente importante, a abolição de 1888 não foi um decreto transformativo. A data mais importante, de fato, foi o dia 28 de setembro de 1871, quando a lei do Ventre Livre foi aprovada. Isto explica, por exemplo, o porquê que o jornal cachoeirano *A Ordem*, desde o início do século XX, publicava reportagens festivas para o 28 de setembro, muito mais que para o dia 13 de maio.

⁵ Fayette Darcell Wimberly, “The African Liberto and the Bahian Lower Class: Social Integration in Nineteenth-Century Bahia, Brazil, 1870-1900” (PhD dissertation, UC Berkeley, 1988), p. 51

⁶ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231. Foi Pedro, o filho de Maria, que registrou a morte da sua mãe, informando que os pais de Maria eram “desconhecidos.”

⁷ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 191; João José Reis, *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003 [1991]), p. 26.

⁸ Dale Torston Graden, *From Slavery to Freedom in Brazil: Bahia, 1835-1900* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), pp. 53-82.

⁹ Wimberly, Op. Cit., p. 81.

¹⁰ Wimberly, Op. Cit., pp. 81-102.

¹¹ Albuquerque, Op. Cit., p. 96.

¹² Albuquerque, Op. Cit., p. 97.

¹³ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B8, no. 728. Segundo o seu certidão de casamento, Pedro Nolasco de Assis tinha 24 anos quando casou com Igenes Neves das Neves no dia 20 de maio de 1911.

¹⁴ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B8, no. 728 e Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932. Esta informação se encontra no certidão de casamento dos filhos de Maria e João, Pedro Nolasco de Assis e Anna Portella dos Santos.

¹⁵ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932, and Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669. Embora o certidão de óbito de Anna Portella dos Santos esteja cheio de erros, por exemplo registrando os pais do seu marido como de si mesma, nós devemos considerar que a idade indicada (40 anos) no dia da sua morte (20 de dezembro de 1933) pode estar certa. Isto significaria que o seu ano de nascimento foi 1892 ou 1893. Eu estou dando preferência, porém, à idade indicada no seu certidão de casamento, que afirma que Anna tinha 18 anos quando casou com Firmino José Vieira dos Santos no dia 20 de setembro de 1913. Então ela teria nascido em 1895 ou, caso fizesse aniversário depois do dia 20 de setembro, 1894.

¹⁶ Wimberly, Op. Cit., pp. 115-116.

¹⁷ Wimberly, Op. Cit., pp. 108-109.

¹⁸ *A Ordem*, March 8, 1902, p. 1; *A Ordem*, March 28, 1906, p. 1; *A Ordem*, March 6, 1907, p. 1. Embora eu tenha certeza que a missa acontecia na mesma igreja todo ano, quanto à questão da data estou apenas inferindo das informações que temos.

¹⁹ *A Ordem*, 8/3/1902, p. 1.

²⁰ *A Ordem*, 17/5/1902, p. 3.

²¹ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C19, no. 231.

²² *A Ordem*. Esta se basea em um levantamento neste jornal de 1900 a 1907.

²³ *A Ordem*, 9/6/1926, p. 4.

²⁴ Michael Iyanaga, “O samba de caruru da Bahia: tradição pouco conhecida”, *ICTUS*, v. 11, n.2 (2010), pp. 120-150. Os santos gêmeos eram tão importantes na Bahia quanto Santo Antônio e São João.

²⁵ Luis Cláudio Dias do Nascimento, *Candomblé e Irmandade da Boa Morte* (Cachoeira: Fundação Maria Cruz, 1999), pp. 16-17; ver também Parés, Op. Cit., p. 180.

²⁶ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 182.

²⁷ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 184.

- ²⁸ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 196; Fayette Darcell Wimberly, “The Expansion of Afro-Bahian Religious Practices in Nineteenth-Century Cachoeira,” in Hendrik Kraay (ed.), *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics: Bahia, 1790s to 1990s*, 74-89 (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), p. 82.
- ²⁹ Wimberly, Op. Cit., “The Expansion...”, p. 82.
- ³⁰ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 197.
- ³¹ Ver Bernardo Lewgoy, Bernardo, “A transnacionalização do espiritismo kardecista brasileiro: uma discussão inicial”, *Religião e Sociedade*, v. 28, n. 1 (2008), pp. 84-104.
- ³² Usando evidências orais e documentais, posso confirmar o nascimento de apenas três dos filhos de Anna. Se de fato pariu outros, o que é muito provável, possivelmente sofreram as doenças que eram tão comuns na época.
- ³³ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B9, no. 932. De acordo com o certidão de casamento de Anna de 1913, sua sogra, a mãe de Firmino, já falecera.
- ³⁴ FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. A9, no. 298.
- ³⁵ FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. A17, nos. 912 e 913. Registradas pelo tio Pedro Nolasco de Assis no ano de 1936, Emília e Maria aparecem como menores de idade nascidas em Setembro de 1917 e Outubro de 1914, respectivamente. É muito provável que eram de fato menores de idade, sendo que moravam com o tio. Os testemunhos orais indicam que Emília era a mais velha, e não o inverso como os certidões mostram. Além do mais, seria impossível elas serem menores se de fato tivessem nascido em 1917 e 1914, pois teriam 19 e 21 anos de idade quando foram registradas em 1936. Estas contradições sugerem que a oralidade está mais precisa que a documentação escrita.
- ³⁶ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C25, no. 260. Aqui a idade de Adalberto aparece como seis anos, mas isso provavelmente resultou do tardio registro em 1919.
- ³⁷ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669.
- ³⁸ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.
- ³⁹ Luís Henrique Dias Tavares, *História da Bahia*, 11ª edição (São Paulo: Editora da UNESP; Salvador: Edufba., 2008), p. 371.
- ⁴⁰ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.
- ⁴¹ *A Tarde*. 26/9/1933, p. 2.
- ⁴² Pablo Sotuyo Blanco, “‘Novena para o Snr. Bom Jezuz dos Navegantes’: mais uma obra de Barbosa de Araújo”, *Revista Eletrônica de Musicologia*, v. 7, disponível em <<http://www.humanas.ufpr.br/rem/REMV7/Blanco/blanco.html>>, (acessado em 13 de fevereiro de 2012).
- ⁴³ *A Tarde*, 13/06/1936, p. 2. A ortografia foi atualizada pelo autor.
- ⁴⁴ Encontra-se muitos anúncios para vendas de fogos em jornais do século XIX.
- ⁴⁵ Édison Carneiro, *Religiões negras / Negros bantus*, 3ª edição (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização brasileira, 1991), p. 202.
- ⁴⁶ Raiana Maciel do Carmo, *A política de salvaguarda do patrimônio imaterial e os seus impactos no samba de roda do Recôncavo Baiano* (dissertação de mestrado, UFBA, 2009). Ver Carmo sobre o grande número de grupos de samba de roda desde que a tradição foi declarada pela UNESCO como Patrimônio da Humanidade.
- ⁴⁷ Katharina Döring, “O samba da Bahia: Tradição pouco conhecida”, *ICTUS* n. 5 (2004), p. 73. Ver a análise de Döring.
- ⁴⁸ Edmar Ferreira Santos, *Sambas, batuques e candomblés em Cachoeira – BA: A construção ideológica da cidade do feitiço* (dissertação de mestrado, UFBA, 2007), p. 58.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- ⁵⁰ Angela Lühning, “‘Acabe com este santo, Pedrito vem aí...’: mito e realidade da perseguição policial ao candomblé baiano entre 1920 e 1942”, *Revista USP*, v. 28 (1995/1996), p. 202.
- ⁵¹ Ver Edmar Santos, Op. Cit.
- ⁵² Esta lógica existe para algumas pessoas vivendo no século XXI.
- ⁵³ Roger Sansi, “‘Fazer o santo’: dom, iniciação e historicidade nas religiões afro-brasileiras”, *Análise Social*, v. 19, n. 1 (2009), p. 141.
- ⁵⁴ Parés, Op. Cit., cap. 5
- ⁵⁵ Maria Agorensi era apenas o seu apelido. O nome completo dela era Maria Luiza Sacramento.
- ⁵⁶ Parés, Op. Cit., pp. 320-321.
- ⁵⁷ O tocador do *rum* usaria apenas um *aguidavi*, deixando a outra mão livre.
- ⁵⁸ Parés, Op. Cit., p. 219.
- ⁵⁹ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 669.
- ⁶⁰ Entrevista com Dona Marlene e Dona Margarida em Cachoeira da Bahia. 3 de setembro de 2009.

-
- ⁶¹ FTFC, Registros de Óbito, vol. C29, no. 801.
- ⁶² FTFC, Registros de Nascimento, vol. 17, nos. 912 and 913.
- ⁶³ Elizabete Rodrigues da Silva, “Fazer charutos: uma atividade feminina”, (dissertação de mestrado, UFBA, 2001), pp. 49-53.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ⁶⁶ Agradeço a Walter Fraga pela informação contida neste documento.
- ⁶⁷ FTFC, Registro de Nascimento, vol. A21, no. 596.
- ⁶⁸ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B16, no. 59. Segundo a sua certidão de casamento, Emília Vieira dos Santos se casou com Graciliano Bispo dos Santos em 31 de outubro de 1939. Incluído como anexo à informação típica que legaliza o casamento é um pedido que a sua filha, Malvina Vieira dos Santos, que tinha nascido em 15 de junho de 1938, seja “legitimada por subseqüente matrimônio”.
- ⁶⁹ FTFC, Registros de Casamento, vol. B16, no. 59.
- ⁷⁰ Silva, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 57-58. Talvez esta atividade possa ser considerada como parte dos chamados “fabricos”, que eram localidades clandestinas dentro de residências ou outros lugares onde doze a quinze mulheres se uniam para fazer charutos que seriam vendidos na rua. Estas eram casas, e não fábricas, de charutos.
- ⁷¹ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C46, no. 12.343.
- ⁷² FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C50, no. 17.354.
- ⁷³ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C40, no. 7516.
- ⁷⁴ Ver Armando Castro, *Irmãs de fé: tradição e turismo no Recôncavo Baiano* (Rio de Janeiro: E-Papers, 2006).
- ⁷⁵ Ver Sebastião Heber Vieira Costa, *A festa da Irmandade da Boa Morte e o Ícone Ortodoxo da Dormição de Maria / The Brotherhood of the Good Death Holiday and the Orthodox Icon of Mary's Dormacy / La Fiesta de la Hermandad de la Buena Morte y el Icono Ortodoxo de la Dormición de María* (Salvador: Vento Leste, 2009), p. 34; Francisca Marques, Marques, Francisca. 2008. “Festa da Boa Morte e Glória: Ritual, música e performance.” (tese de doutorado, USP, 2008), p. 51 (n. 25), p. 61; Jocélio Teles dos Santos, “Divertimentos estrondosos: Batuques e sambas no século XIX”, in Livio Sansone e Jocélio Teles dos Santos (orgs.), *Ritmos em trânsito: Sócio-antropologia da música baiana*, 17-38 (São Paulo: Dynamis Editorial; Salvador: Programa A Cor da Bahia e Projeto S.A.M.BA., 1997).
- ⁷⁶ Nascimento, *Op. Cit.*
- ⁷⁷ Geralmente incluem vatapá, xinxim de galinha, feijão fradinho, arroz branco, farofa de Xangô etc.
- ⁷⁸ FTFC, Registro de Óbito, vol. C40, no. 7516.
- ⁷⁹ Um membro da família afirmou que a língua era “Nagô” (i.e., iorubá) mesmo que outros membros da família não concordasse com esta.
- ⁸⁰ Entrevista com Dona Margarida em 14 de novembro de 2011, na sua casa em Cachoeira, Bahia.

GLOSSARY

A

Acarajé – bean cake fried in palm oil

Atabaque – conical membranophone with an animal skin head. Commonly used in Candomblé ritual contexts

B

Batuque – non-descript term for African-derived drumming and dance. Also a 19th-century synonym for samba

Bendito – type of hymn that is sung for a saint. The term literally translates as “blessed,” though is perhaps best understood as “blessed song”

C

Caboclo – inherited deity which incorporates individuals

Caruru – okra stew made with dried shrimp, palm oil, and onions

Cavaquinho – plucked lute with four steel strings. It is about the size of a ukulele.

Calundu – Central African-derived possession ritual common in Colonial Brazil. Today, the term in quotidian Bahian usage generally signifies a “bad mood”

Cantiga – samba song

Capoeira – Central African-derived sport/dance/martial art in which two participants “jogam” (play) in the center of a circle to the sound of musical instruments such as a pandeiro, *berimbau* (musical bow), and conical membrane drum.

Carteira de trabalho – employment record book

Cento e cinco; 105 – large bass drum played with mallet

Crioulo – Brazil-born African-descendent

F

Farofa – stir fried and flavored manioc meal

Farofa de Xangô – manioc meal stir fried with palm oil and dried shrimp

Filho/a de santo – an initiated Candomblé adept

I

Imagem (pl. *imagens*) – literally, “image.” An *imagem* is any depiction (statuette, chromolithograph, painting) of a saint

J

Jeje – ethnic identity denomination which designated people from Gbe-speaking areas of West Africa and which has now become a Candomblé nation

M

Macumba – black magic; witchcraft; sorcery

Mãe de santo – Candomblé priestess

Mesa branca – literally “white table.” The term refers to white table healing sessions held by mediums/Caboclos in the Recôncavo

Missa pedida – literally a “requested” or “begged” Mass. This is a ritual begging for alms in the name of a Catholic saint

Miudinho – dance movement used in Bahian samba in which the feet shuffle back and forth in short motions while the upper body remains relatively motionless

Mugunzá – sweet white corn and clove porridge

N

Nagô – ethnic identity denomination which designated people from Yoruba-speaking areas of West Africa and which has now become the dominant Candomblé nation in Bahia

Novena – in the Catholic Church, a *novena* is nine nights of consecutive prayer. During the reza, a novena is the liturgical a capella singing that begins the musical ritual and usually precedes the samba

P

Pandeiro – Brazilian style tambourine

R

Reza – literally “prayer.” The term also refers to a domestic prayer ritual which comprises communal singing, dancing, and feasting

Recôncavo – culturally, historically, and politically important region of Bahia that encompasses Todos os Santos Bay.

S

Samba – musical mode of celebration

Samba de Caboclo – samba which is performed by and for Caboclos

Samba de roda – a professional performance of samba

Sambadeira – female samba performer

Sambador – male samba performer

T

Tábuas (a.k.a. *tábuas* or *taubinhas*) – wooden clappers

Terreiro –Candomblé temple. *Terreiro* also means a home's yard

Timba – cylindrical membranophone which is strapped to the shoulder and played with either the left or right hand

Timbal – conical membranophone with a nylon head which is set in a short stand on the ground and played with both hands

Toada – term which generally acts as a synonym for what in English would be “melody”

V

Vatapá – manioc (or wheat) flour paste made with palm oil and dried shrimp

Viola – plucked lute with five double courses of steel strings, and is roughly the size of an acoustic guitar

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This study relies upon a range of historical newspapers, magazines, and state records, the majority of which are housed in Salvador, though also in Cachoeira. In Salvador, I primarily worked at the Public Library (Biblioteca Pública do Estado da Bahia), the Geographical and Historical Institute of Bahia (Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia), and the State Public Archive (Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia). For the entirety of my research period, Cachoeira's public archive was closed for renovations. Still, I was still able to conduct an extensive amount of work at the Teixeira de Freitas Forum (Fórum Teixeira de Freitas).

My main source of historical documentation comprised 19th- and 20th-century newspapers, especially *A Tarde*, *O Alabama*, and *A Ordem*. The first two were published in Salvador, while the latter in Cachoeira. My research with *A Tarde*, as well as with 19th- and 20th-century satirical and variety magazines, was conducted almost exclusively at the Biblioteca Pública do Estado da Bahia. The Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia has an extensive and very pristine collection of the mid-19th-century *O Alabama*, and I primarily consulted this newspaper at this institution. For my work with *A Ordem*, I relied on both of these institutions. My work at the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia was much more limited. Nonetheless, the research I did there was focused chiefly within the impressive collection of 19th-century police correspondences. At the Fórum Teixeira de Freitas, I worked with birth, death, and marriage certificates.

PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

Amado, Jorge. 1961 [1945]. *Bahia de Todos os Santos: guia das ruas e dos mistérios da cidade do Salvador*. 10th edition. São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora.

Grant, Andrew. 1809. *History of Brazil*. London: Henry Colburn.

Kidder, Daniel P. 1845. *Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil, Embracing Historical and Geographical Notices of the Empire and Its Several Provinces*. Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball; London: Wiley & Putnam.

Koster, Henry. 1816. *Travels in Brazil*. London: Paternoster-Row.

Langsdorff, G. H. von. 1817. *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World, during the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, and 1807*. Carlisle, UK: George Philips.

Lindley, Thomas. 1805. *Narrative of a Voyage to Brasil*. London: J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard.

Peixoto, Afrânio. 1947. *Livro de Horas*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Agir Editora.

Pereira, Nuno Marques. 1939. *Compêndio narrativo do Peregrino da América*. Vol. 1. 6th edition. Rio de Janeiro: Publicações da Academia Brasileira.

Sarmiento, Alfredo de. 1880. *Os sertões d'Africa (apontamentos de viagem)*. Lisbon: Francisco Arthur da Silva.

Tavares, Odorico. 1964. *Bahia: Imagens da terra e do povo*. 4th edition. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

Vilhena, Luís dos Santos. 1969. *A Bahia no Século XVIII*. Vol. I. Salvador: Editora Itapuã.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Adams, Laurie Schneider. 2011. *A History of Western Art*. 5th edition. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Agawu, Kofi. 2003. *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*. New York: Routledge.
- Albuquerque, Wlamyra R. de. 2009. *O jogo da dissimulação: Abolição e cidadania negra no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Almeida, Sheila Cristina Pereira de, and Lucilene Reginaldo. 2010. "Memória do samba de roda da matinha." *Annals of the 14th Seminário de Iniciação Científica da Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana* (available at <http://www.uefs.br/semic/cd/resumos/446.pdf>). Feira de Santana: Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana.
- Amaral, Luciano do. 2002. *Dons espirituais de serviço*. 7th edition. São Paulo: Edições Loyola.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. 2003. "Religious Identities and Religious Institutions." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, edited by Michele Dillon, 207-224. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Amoroso, Daniela Maria. 2009. "Levanta mulher e corre a roda: dança, estética e diversidade no samba de roda de São Félix e Cachoeira." PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- Amos, Alcione M. 2007. *Os que voltaram: a história dos retornados afro-brasileiros na África Ocidental no século XIX*. Belo Horizonte: Tradição Planalto.
- Andrade, Maristela Oliveira de. 2002. *500 anos de catolicismos e sincretismos no Brasil*. João Pessoa (PB), Brazil: Editora Universitária.
- Andrews, George Reid. 1991. *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo Brazil, 1888-1988*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

- Apel, Willi. 1958. *Gregorian Chant*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Apostolos-Cappadona, Diane. 1998. *Dictionary of Christian Art*. New York: Continuum.
- Apter, Andrew Herman. 1992. *Black Critics & Kings: The Hermeneutics of Power in Yoruba Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 2004 [1991]. "Herskovits's Heritage: Rethinking Syncretism in the African Diaspora." In *Syncretism in Religion: A Reader*, edited by Anita M. Leopold and Jeppe S. Jensen, 160-184. London: Equinox.
- Apter, Andrew Herman, and Lauren Derby, eds. 2010. *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars.
- Araújo, Alceu Maynard. 1967. *Folclore nacional, vol. II: danças recreação, música*. 2nd edition. São Paulo: Melhoramentos.
- Asad, Talal. 1993. "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category." In *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, 27-54. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Azzi, Riolando. 1978. *O catolicismo popular no Brasil: Aspectos históricos*. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Baker, Philip, and Peter Mühlhäusler. 2007. "Creole Linguistics from its Beginnings, through Schuchardt to the Present Day." In *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, edited by Charles Stewart, 84-107. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Barickman, B. J. 1998. *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780-1860*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Barreto, Maria Renilda Nery, and Lina Maria Brandão de Aras. 2003. "Salvador, cidade do mundo: da Alemanha para a Bahia." *História, Ciências, Saúde—Manguinhos* 10(1):151-172.

- Barros, José D'Assunção. 2009. *A construção social da cor: Diferença e desigualdade na formação da sociedade brasileira*. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Bastide, Roger. 1945. *Imagens do nordeste místico em branco e preto*. Rio de Janeiro: Empresa Gráfica O Cruzeiro.
- _____. 1971 [1960]. *As religiões africanas no Brasil: Contribuição a uma sociologia das interpenetrações de civilizações*. São Paulo: Pioneira / Editora da USP.
- _____. 2001 [1958]. *O candomblé da Bahia: Rito nagô*. Translated by Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Becker, Judith. 2004. *Deep Listeners: Music, Emotion, and Trancing*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Béhague, Gerard. 1980. "Improvisation in Latin American Musics." *Music Educators Journal* 66(5):118-125.
- _____, ed. 1984. *Performance Practice: Ethnomusicological Perspectives*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- _____. 1993. Review of Vernon W. Boggs, *Salsiology: Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in New York City* (New York: Greenwood Press). In *Latin American Music Review* 14(1):172-175.
- Belém, Maria. 2005. *São Cosme e São Damião: Biografia e novena*. São Paulo: Paulinas.
- Berger, Harris M. 1999. *Metal, Rock, and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience*. Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Bettelheim, Judith. 2005. "Caribbean Espiritismo (Spiritist) Altars: The Indian and the Congo." *The Art Bulletin* 87(2):312-330.

- _____. 2010. "Espiritismo Altars in Puerto Rico and Cuba: The Indian and the Congo." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 295-318. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Bettencourt, Gastão de. 1947. *Os três santos de junho no folclore brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Agir.
- Biancardi, Cleide Santos Costa. 2001. "Liturgia, arte e beleza: O patrimônio móvel das sacristias barrocas no Brasil." In *Arte sacra colonial: Barroco memória viva*, edited by Percival Tirapeli, 42-57. São Paulo: Editora UNESP/Imprensa Oficial do Estado.
- Biersack, Aletta. 1991. "Introduction: History and Theory in Anthropology." In *Clio in Oceania: Toward a Historical Anthropology*, edited by Aletta Biersack, 1-36. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Blacking, John. 1969. "The Value of Music in Human Experience." *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 1:33-71.
- _____. 1973. *How Musical Is Man?* Seattle: University of Washington.
- Borges, Dain. 1992. *The Family in Bahia, Brazil, 1870-1945*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990 [1980]. *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- _____. 1991. "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field." *Comparative Social Research* 13:1-44.
- Boyer, Véronique. 1996. "Le don et l'initiation. De l'impact de la littérature sur les cultes de possession au Brésil." *L'Homme* 36(138):7-24.

- Braga, Julio. 1995. *Na gamela do feitiço: repressão e resistência nos Candomblés da Bahia*. Salvador: Edufba.
- Brandão, Carlos Rodrigues. 1981. *Sacerdotes de viola: Rituais religiosos do catolicismo popular em São Paulo e Minas Gerais*. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- Brandt, Max H. 1998. "Venezuela." In *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*. Vol. 2: South America, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, edited by Dale A. Olsen and Daniel Sheehy, 523-546. New York: Routledge.
- Brazeal, Brian. 2003. "The Music of the Bahian Caboclos." *Anthropology Quarterly* 76(4):639-669.
- _____. 2007. "Blood, Money and Fame: Nagô Magic in the Bahian Backlands." PhD dissertation, University of Chicago.
- _____. 2010. "A Goat's Tale: Diabolical Economies of the Bahian Interior." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 267-293. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Brown, David Hilary. 1996. "Toward an Ethnoaesthetics of Santería Ritual Arts: The Practice of Altar-Making and Gift Exchange." In *Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art*, edited by Arturo Lindsay, 77-146. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- _____. 2003. *Santería Enthroned: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro-Cuban Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brown, Diana DeG. 1986. *Umbanda: Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- Brown, Karen McCarthy. 1996. "Altars Happen." *African Arts* 29(2):67.

- Brown, Peter Robert Lamont. 1981. *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Browning, Barbara. 1995. *Samba: Resistance in Motion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Brugada, Martiriã. 2003. *São Roque, serviço ao próximo*. São Paulo: Paulinas.
- Budasz, Rogério. 2001. "The Five-Course Guitar (Viola) in Portugal and Brazil in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries." PhD dissertation, University of Southern California.
- Campos, João da Silva. 1941. *Procissões tradicionais da Bahia*. Publicações do Museu da Bahia, n. 1. Salvador: Secretaria de Educação e Saúde.
- Candelario, Ginetta E. B. 2007. *Black Behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Capone, Stefania. 2010 [1999]. *Searching for Africa in Brazil: Power and Tradition in Candomblé*. Translated by Lucy Lyall Grant. Durham: Duke University Press.
- _____. 2011. "Divine Children: The *Ibejis* and the *Erês* in Brazilian Candomblé." In *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, edited by Philip M. Peek, 290-305. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Cardozo, Manoel S. 1947. "The Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Bahia." *The Catholic Historical Review* 33(1):12-30.
- Carmo, Raiana Maciel do. 2008. "Etnomusicologia e patrimônio cultural: considerações sobre o samba de roda do Recôncavo Baiano." In *Anais do IV Encontro Nacional da Associação Brasileira de Etnomusicologia*, 525-531. Maceió: ENABET.
- _____. 2009. "A política de salvaguarda do patrimônio imaterial e os seus impactos no samba de roda do Recôncavo Baiano." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.

- Carneiro, Edison. 1961. *Samba de umbigada*. Rio de Janeiro: Ministério da Educação e Cultura / Campanha de Defesa do Folclore Brasileiro.
- _____. 1974. *Folgedos tradicionais*. Rio de Janeiro: Conquista.
- _____. 1978 [1948]. *Candomblés da Bahia*. 6th edition. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.
- _____. 1991. *Religiões Negras e Negros Bantos*. 3rd edition. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.
- Carvalho, Augusto de Silva. 1928. *O culto de S. Cosme e S. Damião em Portugal e no Brasil: História das sociedades médicas portuguesas*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra.
- Castillo, Lisa Earl. 2010. *Entre a oralidade e a escrita: a etnografia nos candomblés da Bahia*. 1st Reprinting. Salvador: Edufba.
- Castro, Armando. 2006. *Irmãs de fé: tradição e turismo no Recôncavo Baiano*. Rio de Janeiro: E-Papers.
- Castro, Mauricio Barros. 2011. "O samba no Atlântico [sic] Negro: Patrimônio [sic] imaterial e Diáspora Africana." In *Anais do XI Congresso Luso Afro Brasileiro de Ciências Sociais* (available at http://www.xiconlab.eventos.dype.com.br/resources/anais/3/1308332993_ARQUIVO_OSAMBANOATLANTICONEGRO1.pdf). Salvador: Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- Castro, Yeda Pessoa de. 2005. *Falares africanos na Bahia (um vocabulário afro-brasileiro)*. 2nd edition. Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks.
- Catlin-Jairazbhoy, Amy. 2004. "Sacred Songs of Khoja Muslims: Sounded and Embodied Liturgy and Devotion." *Ethnomusicology* 48(2):251-270.

- Chappel, T. J. H. 1974. "The Yoruba Cult of Twins in Historical Perspective." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 44(3):250-265.
- Chesnut, R. Andrew. 1997. *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Chiang, Connie Y. 2008. "The Nose Knows: The Sense of Smell in American History." *The Journal of American History* 95(2):405-416.
- Christian, William A., Jr. 1989. *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Clarke, Peter B. 1999. "'Pop-star' Priests and the Catholic Response to the 'Explosion' of Evangelical Protestantism in Brazil: The Beginning of the End of the 'Walkout?'" *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 14(2):203-216.
- Colombo Filho, Egydio. 2001. "Sobre os objetos barrocos." In *Arte sacra colonial: Barroco memória viva*, edited by Percival Tirapeli, 146-165. São Paulo: Editora UNESP/Imprensa Oficial do Estado.
- Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. 1991. *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. Vol. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Comaroff, John L., and Jean Comaroff. 1992. *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Connerton, Paul. 1989. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Consorte, Josildeth Gomes. 1999. "Em torno de um manifesto de ialorixás baianas contra o sincretismo." In *Faces da tradição afro-brasileira: religiosidade, sincretismo, anti-sincretismo, reafricanização, práticas terapêuticas, etnobotânica e comida*, edited by Carlos Caroso and Jeferson Bacelar, 71-91. Rio de Janeiro: Pallas.
- Cosentino, Donald J. 1998. *Vodou Things: The Art of Pierrot Barra and Marie Cassaise*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- _____. 2010. "Conversations with Congo Manuel: Kings and Slaves in the Eschatology of Espiritismo." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 415-422. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Costa, Sebastião Heber Vieira. 2008. *Imagística de Cachoeira: Ilá Deleci*. Salvador: Faculdade 2 de Julho.
- _____. 2009. *A festa da Irmandade da Boa Morte e o Ícone Ortodoxo da Dormição de Maria / The Brotherhood of the Good Death Holiday and the Orthodox Icon of Mary's Dormacy / La Fiesta de la Hermandad de la Buena Morte y el Icono Ortodoxo de la Dormición de María*. Salvador: Vento Leste.
- Couto, Edilece Souza. 2010. *Tempo de festas: Homenagens a Santa Bárbara, Nossa Senhora da Conceição e Sant'Ana em Salvador (1860-1940)*. Salvador: Edufba.
- Crane, Susan. 1997. "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory." *The American Historical Review* 102(5):1372-1385.
- Croce, Benedetto. 1995 [1913]. *Guide to Aesthetics*. Translation by Patrick Romanell. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing.

- Crowley, Daniel J., and Doran H. Ross. 1981. "The Bahian Market in African-Influenced Art." *African Arts* 15(1):56-62, 88.
- Dantas, Beatriz Góis. 2009 [1988]. *Nagô Grandpa and White Papa: Candomblé and the Creation of Afro-Brazilian Identity*. Translated by Stephen Berg. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- David-Danel, Marie-Louise. 1958. *Iconographie des Saints médicins Côme e Damien*. Lille, France: Imp. Morel et Cordauant.
- Davis, Martha Ellen. 1976. "Afro-Dominican Religious Brotherhoods: Structure, Ritual, and Music." PhD dissertation, University of Illinois.
- _____. 1981. *Voces del purgatorio: estudio de la salve dominicana*. Santo Domingo: Ediciones Museo del Hombre Dominicano.
- _____. 2012. "Diasporal Dimensions of Dominican Folk Religion and Music." *Black Music Research Journal* 32(1):161-191.
- de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 2004 [1980]. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Continuum.
- Derby, Lauren Robin. 2010. "Male Heroism, Demonic Pigs, and Memories of Violence in the Haitian-Dominican Borderlands." *CSW Update* (May):1, 4-14.
- DjeDje, Jacqueline Cogdell. 1998. "Remembering Kojo: History, Music, and Gender in the January Sixth Celebration of the Jamaican Accompong Maroons." *Black Music Research Journal* 18(1/2):67-120.

- Döring, Katharina, dir. 2009. "Cantador de chula." DVD. Salvador: Associação socio-cultural Umbigada.
- Döring, Katharina. 2004. "Samba da Bahia: Tradição pouco conhecida." *ICTUS* 5:69-92.
- Drobnick, Jim. 2002. "Toposmia: Art, Scent, and Interrogations of Spatiality." *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 7(1):31-47.
- Droogers, André. 2006. "The Third Bank of the River: Play, Methodological Ludism and the Definition of Religion." In *Playful Religion: Challenges for the Study of Religion*, edited by André Droogers, et. al., 75-96. Delft, Netherlands: Eburon.
- Eller, Jack David. 2007. *Introducing Anthropology of Religion: Culture to the Ultimate*. New York: Routledge.
- Erlmann, Veit. 1996. *Nightsong: Performance, Power, and Practice in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Eugênio, Alisson. 2002. "Tensões entre os visitantes eclesiásticos e as irmandades negras no século XVIII mineiro." *Revista Brasileira de História* 22(43):33-46.
- Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1956. *Nuer Religion*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Fanon, Frantz. 2008 [1952]. *Black Skin White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. London: Pluto Press.
- Farmer, David Hugh, ed. 1998. "August." *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, revised by John Cumming. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.
- _____. 2000. "September." *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, revised by Sarah Fawcett Thomas. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.
- Feld, Steven. 1990 [1982]. *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression*. 2nd edition. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Fernandes, Henry Luydy Abraham, and Ana Cristina Audebert Ramos de Oliveira. 2007. "Aspectos da 'Vila de Cachoeira' no final do século XVII: Apontamentos e releções." *Revista do Centro de Artes, Humanidades e Letras* 1(1):1-13.
- Fernandes, Magali Oliveira. 2002. "Vozes do céu – Os primeiros momentos do impresso kardecista no Brasil." *Anais do XXV Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação*. Available at <<http://hdl.handle.net/1904/18735>> (accessed on February 13, 2012).
- Ferreira, Emília Biancardi, et al. 1971. *Cantorias da Bahia*. Salvador: Centro Estudantil de Folclore do Colégio Estadual Severino Vieira, Departamento de Educação Musical.
- Ferreira, Luzia Gomes, and Joseania Miranda Freitas. 2010. "O samba de roda na celebração de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte em Cachoeira – Bahia". *Políticas Culturais em Revista* 1(3):37-46.
- Ferretti, Sérgio Figueiredo. 1995. *Repensando o sincretismo: Estudo sobre a Casa das Minas*. São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo; São Luís (MA), Brazil: FAPEMA.
- _____. 1999. "Sincretismo afro-brasileiro e resistência cultural." In *Faces da tradição afro-brasileira: religiosidade, sincretismo, anti-sincretismo, reafricanização, práticas terapêuticas, etnobotânica e comida*, edited by Carlos Caroso and Jeferson Bacelar, 113-130. Rio de Janeiro and Salvador: Pallas.
- Ferrez, Gilberto. 1988. *Bahia: velhas fotografias, 1858-1900*. Rio de Janeiro: Kosmos; Salvador: Banco da Bahia Investimentos.
- Flores-Peña, Ysamur. 2011. "'Son dos los Jimagüas' ('The Twins Are Two'): Worship of Sacred Twins in Lucumí Religious Culture." In *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, edited by Philip M. Peek, 99-115. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Foucault, Michel. 1979 [1975]. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Freston, Paul. 2004. "Evangelical Protestantism and Democratization in Contemporary Latin America and Asia." *Democratization* 11(4):21-41.
- Freyre, Gilberto. 1971. *A casa brasileira: tentativa de síntese de três diferentes abordagens, já realizadas pelo autor, de um assunto complexo: a antropológica, a histórica, a sociológica*. Rio de Janeiro: Grifo.
- _____. 1979. *Oh de casa! Em torno da casa brasileira e de sua projeção sobre um tipo nacional de homem*. Recife (PE), Brazil: Instituto Joaquim Nabuco de Pesquisas Sociais.
- _____. 2006 [1933]. *Casa-grande & senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime da economia patriarcal*. 51st edition. São Paulo: Global.
- Fry, Peter. 1995/1996. "O que a Cinderela negra tem a dizer sobre a 'política racial' no Brasil." *Revista USP* (28):122-135.
- Fryer, Peter. 2000. *Rhythms of Resistance: African Musical Heritage in Brazil*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press; Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.
- Garcia, Sonia Maria Chada. 1996. "A música dos Caboclos: O Ilê Axé Dele Omí." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- _____. 2001. "Um repertório musical de Caboclos no seio do culto aos orixás, em Salvador da Bahia." PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- _____. 2008. *A Música dos Caboclos nos candomblés baianos*. 2nd Reprint. Fundação Gregório de Mattos, Edufba: Salvador.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

- Gerischer, Christiane. 2006. "O Suingue Baiano: Rhythmic Feeling and Microrhythmic Phenomena in Brazilian Percussion." *Ethnomusicology* 50(1):99-119.
- Goldstein, Donna M. 2003. *Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence, and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gradante, William. 2001. "Coplas." In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie, 397-398. Vol. 6. 2nd edition. New York: Grove Dictionaries.
- Graden, Dale Torston. 2006. *From Slavery to Freedom in Brazil: Bahia, 1835-1900*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Gray, Lila Ellen. 2007. "Memories of Empire, Mythologies of the Soul: Fado Performance and the Shaping of Saudade." *Ethnomusicology* 51(1):106-130.
- Grele, Ronald J. 1998. "Movement without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History." In *The Oral History Reader*, edited by Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 38-52. London: Routledge.
- Grootaers, Jan-Lodewijk. 2011. "Snake, Bush, and Metaphor: Twinship among Ubangians." In *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, edited by Philip M. Peek, 183-205. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Gross, Daniel R. 1971. "Ritual and Conformity: A Religious Pilgrimage to Northeastern Brazil." *Ethnology* 10(2):129-148.
- Grout, Donald Jay, and Claude V. Palisca. 1988. *A History of Western Music*. 4th edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Halbwachs, Maurice. 1992. *On Collective Memory*. Translated by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Hale, Lindsay, 2001. "Mama Oxum: Reflections of Gender and Sexuality in Brazilian Umbanda." In *Òsun across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas*, edited by Joseph M. Murphy and Mei-Mei Sanford, 213-229. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hanna, Judith Lynn. 1979. *To Dance Is Human: A Theory of Nonverbal Communication*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Hannerz, Ulf. 1987. "The World in Creolisation." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 57(4):546-559.
- Harding, Rachel Elizabeth. 2000. *A Refuge in Thunder: Candomblé and Alternative Spaces of Blackness*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Harrison, Frank. 1973. *Time, Place and Music: An Anthology of Ethnomusicological Observation c. 1550 to c. 1800*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Frits Knuf.
- Harvey, Susan Ashbrook. 2006. *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Heckenlively, Lura F. [1900?]. *The Fundamentals of Gregorian Chant: A Simple Exposition of the Solesmes Principles Founded Mainly on "Le Nombre Musical Grégorien" of Dom André Mocquereau*. Tournai, Belgium: Society of St. John Evangelist, Desclée & Co.
- Henderson, Clara. 2012. "A Brief History of the Dance, Movement, Gesture Section of the Society for Ethnomusicology." *SEM Newsletter* 46(3):4, 8-9.
- Henry, Clarence Bernard. 2008. *Let's Make Some Noise: Axé and the Roots of Brazilian Popular Music*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

- Herbert, David Gabriel. 2010. "Mapping Historical Ethnomusicology: Definitions and Debates."
 Unpublished paper presented at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Society for
 Ethnomusicology, Los Angeles.
- Herndon, Marcia. 1971. "The Cherokee Ballgame Cycle: An Ethnomusicologist's View."
Ethnomusicology 15(3):339-352.
- Herskovits, Melville. 1937. "African Gods and Catholic Saints in New World Negro Belief."
American Anthropologist 39:635-643.
- Hess, David. 1987. "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24(2):15-
 34.
- Hilgers, Joseph. 1911. "Novena." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 11. New York: Robert
 Appleton Company. Available at <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11141b.htm>>
 (accessed on October 6, 2012).
- Hills, Helen. 2007. "The Baroque." *Fabrications: The Journal of the Society of Architectural
 Historians, Australia and New Zealand* 17(2):48-71.
- Hoornaert, Eduardo. 1979a. "Terceiro período: A cristandade durante a primeira época colonial."
 In *História da igreja no Brasil: Ensaio de interpretação a partir do povo, Primeira
 época*, edited by Eduardo Hoornaert, Riolando Azzi, Klaus van der Grijp, and Benno
 Brod, 243-411. 2nd edition. Petrópolis: Vozes.
- _____. 1979b. "Primeiro período: A evangelização do Brasil durante a primeira época colonial."
 In *História da igreja no Brasil: Ensaio de interpretação a partir do povo, Primeira
 época*, edited by Eduardo Hoornaert, Riolando Azzi, Klaus van der Grijp, and Benno
 Brod, 19-152. 2nd edition. Petrópolis: Vozes.

- Houaiss, Antônio, Mauro de Salles Villar, and Francisco Manoel de Mello Franco. 2004. *Minidicionário Houaiss da língua portuguesa*. 2nd edition. Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva.
- Houlberg, Marilyn Hammersley. 1973. "Ibeji Images of the Yoruba." *African Arts* 7(1):20-27, 91-92.
- _____. 1995. "Magique Marasa: The Ritual Cosmos of Twins and Other Sacred Children." In *Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou*, edited by Donald J. Cosentino, 267-283. Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History.
- Hubert, Henri, and Marcel Mauss. 1964 [1898]. *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*. Translated by W. D. Halls. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hutchinson, Harry William. 1957. *Village and Plantation Life in Northeastern Brazil*. Seattle: University of Washington.
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. 1990. "Religious Practice: A Human Capital Approach." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29(3):297-314.
- Iyanaga, Michael. 2009. "International Politics and Intangible Heritage: UNESCO, Religion, and the Brazilian *Samba-de-Roda*." Unpublished paper presented at the 54th annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM), Mexico City.
- _____. 2010. "O samba de caruru da Bahia: tradição pouco conhecida." *ICTUS* 11(2):120-150.
- _____. 2012. "O homem no lar? Questões de gênero nas festas domiciliares aos santos católicos." *XVII Simpósio Baiano de Pesquisadoras(es) sobre mulheres e relações de gênero* (Caderno de Resumos):224-226.
- Iyanaga, Michael, and Pablo Sotuyo Blanco. 2007. "Os 'Programmas de Studio' da Rádio Sociedade no contexto político baiano desde 1939 a 1942." *Anais do XVII Congresso da ANPPOM*.

- Janzen, John M. 1992. *Ngoma: Discourses of Healing in Central and Southern Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Jarrard, Alice. 2003. *Architecture as Performance in Seventeenth-Century Europe: Court Ritual in Modena, Rome, and Paris*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jesus, Elivaldo Souza de. 2006. "'Gente de promessa, de reza e de romaria': experiências devocionais na ruralidade do Recôncavo Sul da Bahia (1940-1980)." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- Karasch, Mary C. 1987. *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kaufmann, Thomas DaCosta. 2011. "Discomfited by the Baroque: A Personal Journey." In *Rethinking the Baroque*, edited by Helen Hills, 83-98. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Keil, Charles. 1987. "Participatory Discrepancies and the Power of Music." *Cultural Anthropology* 2(3):275-283.
- Kiddy, Elizabeth W. 2005. *Blacks of the Rosary: Memory and History in Minas Gerais, Brazil*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Kisliuk, Michelle. 1998. *Seize the Dance! BaAka Musical Life and the Ethnography of Performance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Klieman, Kairn A. 2003. *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Time to c. 1900 C.E.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kroesbergen, Willem, and Jed Wentz. 1994. "Sonority in the 18th Century, un poco più forte?" *Early Music* 22(3):482-495.

- Kubik, Gerhard. 1979. *Angolan Traits in Black Music, Games and Dances of Brazil: A Study of African Cultural Extensions Overseas*. Lisboa: Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar.
- _____. 1993. "Transplantation of African Musical Cultures into the New World – Research Topics and Objectives in the Study of African-American Music." In *Slavery in the Americas*, edited by Wolfgang Binder, 421-452. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.
- _____. 2010. *Theory of African Music*. Vol. 2. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Landes, Ruth. 1994 [1947]. *City of Women*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Lawal, Babatunde. 2011. "Sustaining the Oneness in Their Twones: Poetics of Twin Figures (Ère Ìbejì) among the Yoruba." In *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, edited by Philip M. Peek, 81-98. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- LaWall, Charles H. 1934. "St. Cosmas and St. Damian, Patron Saints of Medicine and Pharmacy." *Journal of Chemical Education* 11(10):555-557.
- Leroy, Fernand, Taiwo Olaleye-Oruene, Gesina Koeppen-Schomerus, and Elizabeth Bryan. 2002. "Yoruba Customs and Beliefs Pertaining to Twins." *Twin Research* 5(2):132-136.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1964 [1962]. *Totemism*. Translated by Rodney Needham. London: Merlin Press.
- Lewgoy, Bernardo. 2008. "A transnacionalização do espiritismo kardecista brasileiro: uma discussão inicial." *Religião e Sociedade* 28(1):84-104.
- Lima, Rossini Tavares de. 1961. "Alguns complexos culturais das festas joaninas." *Revista Brasileira de Folclore* 1(1):17-28.

- Lima, Vivaldo da Costa. 2005. *Cosme e Damião: O culto aos santos gêmeos no Brasil e na África*. Salvador: Corrupio.
- List, George. 1963. "The Boundaries of Speech and Song." *Ethnomusicology* 7(1):1-16.
- Lody, Raul. 1981. *Devoção e culto a Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte: pesquisa sócio-religiosa*. Rio de Janeiro: Altiva.
- _____. 1992. *Tem dendê, tem axé: Etnografia do dendezeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Pallas.
- Loza, Steven. 2009. "From Merriam to Guadalupe: Toward a Theory for Religion as Art." In *Religion as Art: Guadalupe, Orishas, and Sufi*, edited by Steven Loza. 73-86. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Lühning, Angela. 1993. "O mundo fantástico dos erês." *Revista USP* 18:92-99.
- _____. 1995/1996. "'Acabe com este santo, Pedrito vem aí...': mito e realidade da perseguição policial ao candomblé baiano entre 1920 e 1942." *Revista USP* 28:194-220.
- _____. 2006. "Etnomusicologia brasileira como etnomusicologia participativa: Inquietudes em relação às músicas brasileiras." In *Músicas africanas e indígenas no Brasil*, edited by Rosângela Pereira de Tugny and Ruben Caixeta de Queiroz, 37-55. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG.
- MacGaffey, Wyatt. 2002. "Twins, Simbi Spirits, and Lwas in Kongo and Haiti." In *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, edited by Linda M. Heywood, 211-226. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mann, Kristin Dutcher. 2010a. "Christmas in the Missions of Northern New Spain." *The Americas* 66(3):331-351.
- _____. 2010b. *The Power of Song: Music and Dance in the Mission Communities of Northern New Spain, 1590-1810*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

- Marcelin, Louis Herns. 1996. "A invenção da família afro-americana: Família, parentesco e domesticidade entre os negros do Recôncavo da Bahia, Brasil." PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.
- _____. 1999. "A linguagem da casa entre os negros no Recôncavo Baiano." *Mana* 5(2):31-60.
- Marques, Francisca. 2003. "Samba de roda em Cachoeira, Bahia: uma abordagem etnomusicológica." MA thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.
- _____. 2008. "Festa da Boa Morte e Glória: Ritual, música e performance." PhD dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo.
- Martínez, Isabel Cecilia. 2008. "La composición temporal del habla, el canto y el movimiento en la musicalidad de las interacciones tempranas adulto-infante." In *Objetividad – Subjetividad y Música* (Actas de la VII Reunión de SACCoM), edited by María de la Paz Jacquier y Alejandro Pereira Ghiena, 73-82. Santa Fe, Argentina. Available at <www.sacom.org.ar/2008_reunion7/actas/15.Martinez_Isabel.pdf> (accessed on November 5, 2012).
- Marx, Karl. 1954 [1852]. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. 3rd Revised Edition. Moscow: Progress.
- Matory, James Lorand. 2005. *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism, and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Matthews, Leslie G. 1942. "The Patron Saints of Pharmacy." *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences* 31:89-91.
- Maués, Raymundo Heraldo. 1995. *Padres, pajés, santos e festas: catolicismo popular e controle eclesiástico. Um estudo antropológico numa área do interior da Amazônia*. Belém, Brazil: Cejup.

- Maués, Raymundo Heraldo, and Gisela Macambira Villacorta. 2004. "Pajelança e encantaria amazônica." In *Encantaria brasileira: O livro dos Mestres, Caboclos e Encantados*, edited by Reginaldo Prandi, 11-58. Rio de Janeiro: Pallas.
- Mauss, Marcel. 2002 [1923]. *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge.
- Mayblin, Maya. 2010. *Gender, Catholicism, and Morality in Brazil: Virtuous Husbands, Powerful Wives*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- _____. 2011. "Death by Marriage: Power, Pride, and Morality in Northeast Brazil." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17:135-153.
- McAlister, Elizabeth. 2002. *Rara! Vodou, Power, and Performance in Haiti and Its Diaspora*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- McDaniel, Lorna. 1995. "Memory Spirituals of the Ex-Slave Soldiers in Trinidad's Company Villages." *Black Music Research Journal* 14(2):119-143.
- McLeod, Norma. 1966. *Some Techniques of Analysis for Non-Western Music*. PhD dissertation, Northwestern University.
- _____. 1975. "Keynote address." In *Proceedings of a Symposium on Form in Performance, Hard-Core Ethnography*, edited by Marcia Herndon and Roger Brunyate, 1-17. Austin: Office of the College of Fine Arts, University of Texas.
- McNeal, Keith E. 2010. "Pantheons as Mythistorical Archives: Pantheonization and Remodeled Iconographies in Two Southern Caribbean Possession Religions." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 185-244. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.

- _____. 2011. *Trance and Modernity in the Southern Caribbean: African and Hindu Popular Religions in Trinidad and Tobago*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Melhaus, Marit. 1996. "Power, Value, and the Ambiguous Meanings of Gender." In *Machos, Mistresses, Madonnas: Contesting the Power of Latin American Gender Imagery*, edited by Marit Melhaus and Kristi Anne Stølen, 230-259. London: Verso.
- Mendonça, Elizabete de Castro, et al. 2005. "O ofício de Baianas de acarajé – patrimônio cultural." In *Série encontros e estudos* 6, 55-73. Rio de Janeiro: Centro Nacional de Cultura Popular – IPHAN.
- Merriam, Alan P. 1967. "Use of Music in Reconstructing Culture History." In *Reconstructing African Culture History*, edited by Creighton Gavel and Norman Bennett, 85-114. Boston: Boston University Press.
- Micheli, C. Angelo. 2011. "Double Portraits: Images of Twinness in West African Studio Photography." In *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*, edited by Philip M. Peek, 137-159. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Mintz, Sidney Wilfred. 1974. *Caribbean Transformations*. Chicago: Aldine.
- _____. 1996. "Enduring Substances, Trying Theories: The Caribbean Region as *Oikoumene*." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2(2):289-311.
- Mintz, Sidney Wilfred, and Richard Price. 1992 [1976]. *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Misztal, Barbara A. 2003. "Durkheim on Collective Memory." *Journal of Classical Sociology* 3(2):123-143.
- Monroe, John. 1999. "Making the Seance 'Serious': 'Table Tournantes' and Second Empire Bourgeois Culture, 1853-1861." *History of Religions* 38(3):219-246.

- Moore, Carlos. 2007. *Racismo & sociedade: Novas bases epistemológicas para entender o racismo*. Belo Horizonte: Mazza edições.
- Morrison, Toni. 1998 [1987]. *Beloved*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Mott, Luiz R. B. 1988. “Acotundá: Raízes setecentistas do sincretismo religioso afro-brasileiro.” In *Escravidão, homossexualidade e demonologia*, 87-117. São Paulo: Ícone.
- _____. 1996. “Santo Antônio, o divino Capitão-do-Mato.” In *Liberdade por um fio: história dos quilombos no Brasil*, edited by João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes, 110-138. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- _____. 1997. “Cotidiano e vivência religiosa: Entre a capela e o calundu.” In *História da vida privada no Brasil: Cotidiano e vida privada na América portuguesa*, edited by Laura de Mello e Souza, 155-220. Vol. 1 of *História da vida privada no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- _____. 2010. “Um dominicano feiticeiro em Salvador Colonial (1713).” In *Bahia: Inquisição & Sociedade*, 31-40. Salvador: Edufba.
- Mulvey, Patricia A. 1980. “Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in the Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil.” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 17(2):253-279.
- Naficy, Hamid. 1993. *The Making of Exile Cultures: Iranian Television in Los Angeles*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Nascimento, Luis Cláudio Dias do. 1999. *Candomblé e Irmandade da Boa Morte*. Cachoeira: Fundação Maria Cruz.
- Nettl, Bruno. 2010. *Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Nketia, J.H. Kwabena. 1974. *The Music of Africa*. New York: W.W. Norton.

- Nobre, Cássio. 2008. "Violas nos sambas do Recôncavo Baiano." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- _____. 2009. "Viola nos Sambas do Recôncavo Baiano." *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* 14. Available at <<http://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/journal/volume/14/piece/487>> (accessed January 28, 2013).
- Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*." Translated by Marc Roudebush. *Representations* 26:7-24.
- Omari, Mikelle Smith. 1979. "Ère Ibéjì Ritual and Imagery: West African Yorùbá Retentions in Brazil." *Minority Voices* 3(2):59-71.
- _____. 1984. *From the Inside to the Outside: The Art and Ritual of Bahian Candomblé*. Los Angeles: Museum of Cultural History, UCLA.
- Omari-Tunkara, Mikelle Smith. 2005. *Manipulating the Sacred: Yoruba Art, Ritual, and Resistance*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Orozco Meneses, Jorge, Generao Navia, Gloria Zuñiga de M., and Lilia E. Pardo O. 1993. "Ronda, pedagogia y lenguaje." *Lenguaje y textos* 4:55-66.
- Orsi, Robert A. 2002 [1985]. *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ortiz, Fernando. [1906]. *Los brujos negros (Apuntes para un estudio de etnologia criminal)*. Madrid: Editorial-América.
- Ortiz, Renato. 1978. *A morte branca do feiticeiro negro: Umbanda, integração de uma religião numa sociedade de classes*. Petrópolis: Editora Vozes.
- Ortner, Sherry B. 1984. "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26(1):126-166.

- _____. 2006. *Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Oruene, Taiwo. 1985. "Magical Powers of Twins in the Socio-Religious Beliefs of the Yoruba." *Folklore* 96(2):208-216.
- Palmié, Stephan. 2006. "Creolization and Its Discontents." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35:433-456.
- _____. 2007. "Is There a Model in the Muddle? 'Creolization' in African Americanist History and Anthropology." In *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, edited by Charles Stewart, 178-200. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Parés, Luis Nicolau. 1997. "The Phenomenology of Spirit Possession in the Tambor de Mina (An ethnographic and audio-visual study)." PhD dissertation, University of London.
- _____. 2005. "O processo de crioulização no Recôncavo Baiano (1750-1800)." *Afro-Ásia* 33:87-132.
- _____. 2007. *A formação do candomblé: História e ritual da nação jeje na Bahia*. 2nd Edition. Campinas, São Paulo: Editora da UNICAMP.
- _____. 2010. "Memories of Slavery in Religious Ritual: Comparing Benin Vodun and Bahian Candomblé." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 71-97. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Pateman, Carole. 1989. *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism, and Political Theory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Patton, Tracey Owens. 2006. "Hey Girl, Am I More than My Hair?: African American Women and Their Struggles with Beauty, Body Image, and Hair." *NWSA Journal* 18(2):24-51.

- Pedreira, Carolina Souza. 2010. "Irmãs das Almas: Rituais de Lamentação na Chapada Diamantina." MA Thesis, Universidade de Brasília.
- Pereira, Edimilson de Almeida. 2010. *Homeless*. Belo Horizonte: Mazza Edições.
- Pierson, Donald. 1966 [1951]. *Cruz das Almas*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio Editora.
- Pinho, José Wanderley de Araujo. 1920. "A cholera morbus de 1855: E o papel de Cypriano Betamio." *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e Histórico da Bahia* 46(1/2):141-153.
- Pinto, Tiago de Oliveira. 1991. *Capoeira, Samba, Candomblé*. Berlin: Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz.
- _____. 1999/2000/2001. "As cores do som: Estruturas sonoras e concepção estética na música afro-brasileira." *África* 22-23:87-109.
- Polk, Patrick Arthur. 2010. "Black Folks at Home in the Spirit World." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 371-413. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.
- Pollak-Eltz, Angelina. 1972. *Cultos afroamericanos*. Caracas: Universidad Católica "Andrés Bello," Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas.
- Porteous, J. Douglas. 1985. "Smellscape." *Progress in Physical Geography* 9:356-378.
- Primiano, Leonard Norman. 1995. "Vernacular Religion and the Search for Method in Religious Folklife." *Western Folklore* 54(1):37-56.
- Putnam, Lara. 2006. "To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World." *Journal of Social History* 39(3):615-630.
- Querino, Manoel. 1919. "Candomblé de caboclo." *Revista do Instituto Geográfico e histórico da Bahia* 45(1/2):235-236.
- _____. 1938. *Costumes africanos no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

- Racy, Ali Jihad. 2003. *Making Music in the Arab World: The Culture and Artistry of Tarab*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ramos, Arthur. 1937. *As culturas negras no novo mundo*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.
- _____. 1940 [1934]. *O negro brasileiro*. 2nd edition. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional.
- Rath, Richard Cullen. 1993. "African Music in Seventeenth-Century Jamaica: Cultural Transit and Transition." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 50(4):700-726.
- Recôncavo Baiano*. 1970. São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros.
- Reddy, William M. 1997. "Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions." *Current Anthropology* 38(3):327-351.
- Reginaldo, Lucilene. 2011. *Os Rosários dos Angolas: Irmandades de africanos e crioulos na Bahia Setecentista*. São Paulo: Alameda.
- Rees, Helen. 2000. *Echoes of History: Naxi Music in Modern China*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Reily, Suzel Ana. 2002. *Voices of the Magi: Enchanted Journeys in Southeast Brazil*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 2006. "Remembering the Baroque Era: Historical Consciousness, Local Identity and the Holy Week Celebrations in a Former Mining Town in Brazil." *Ethnomusicology Forum* 15(1):39-62.
- Reis, João José. Reis, João José. 1988. "Magia Jeje na Bahia: A invasão do Calundu do Pasto de Cachoeira, 1785." *Revista Brasileira de História* 8(16):57-81.

- _____. 1989. "Nas malhas do poder escravista: a invasão do candomblé do Accú." In *Negociação e conflito: a resistência negra no Brasil escravista*, edited by João José Reis and Eduardo Silva, 32-61. São Paulo: Schwarcz.
- _____. 2001. "Candomblé in Nineteenth-Century Bahia: Priests, Followers, Clients." *Slavery & Abolition* 22(1):91-115.
- _____. 2002. "Tambores e temores: A festa negra na Bahia na primeira metade do Século XIX." In *Carnavais e outras f(r)estas: ensaios de história social da cultura*, edited by Maria Clementina Pereira Cunha, 101-155. Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, CECULT.
- _____. 2003 [1991]. *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*. Translated by H. Sabrina Gledhill. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- _____. 2008. *Domingos Sodré, um sacerdote africano: Escravidão, liberdade e candomblé na Bahia do século XIX*. São Paulo: Companhia Das Letras.
- _____. 2011. "Candomblé and Slave Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Bahia." In *Sorcery in the Black Atlantic*, edited by Luis Nicolau Parés and Roger Sansi, 55-74. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Reis, João José, and Eduardo Silva, eds. 1989. *Negociação e conflito: a resistência negra no Brasil escravista*. São Paulo: Schwarcz.
- Reisman, Karl. 1970. "Cultural and Linguistic Ambiguity in a West Indian Village." In *Afro-American Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Norman E. Whitten, Jr. and John F. Szwed, 129-142. New York: The Free Press.
- Ribeiro, Carmem. 1983. "Religiosidade do índio brasileiro no candomblé da Bahia: influências africana e européia." *Afro-Ásia* 14:60-80.

- Ricoeur, Paul. 2004. *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Rocha, Ewelter de Siqueira e. 2010. “Deus me livre de cantar essas coisas.” *Iluminares* 11(25):1-12. Available at <seer.ufrgs.br/iluminuras/article/view/15533/9212> (accessed on November 28, 2012).
- _____. 2012. “Vestígios do sagrado: uma etnografia sobre formas e silêncios.” PhD dissertation, University of São Paulo.
- Rodrigues, Raymundo Nina. 1945 [1905]. *Os Africanos no Brasil*. 3rd edition. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional.
- Roitman, Gisela. 2007. “Poéticas y pedagogías del juego infantil: entre la tradición argentina y la española.” *Culturas Populares – Revista Electrónica* 4:1-19. Available at <www.culturaspopulares.org/textos4/articulos/roitman.pdf> (accessed on November 5, 2012).
- Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist. 1974. “Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview.” In *Woman, Culture, and Society*, edited by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, 17-42. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1986. “Ilongot Hunting as Story and Experience.” In *The Anthropology of Experience*, edited by Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, 97-138. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Rosenthal, Judy. 2010. “Vodu Angels of History: Ghana, Togo, Benin.” In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 157-184. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars.

- Ruskin, Jesse D., and Timothy Rice. 2012. "The Individual in Musical Ethnography." *Ethnomusicology* 56(2):299-327.
- Russell-Wood, A. J. R. 1974. "Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods in Colonial Brazil: A Study in Collective Behavior." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54(4):567-602.
- Sahlins, Marshall. 1981. *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- _____. 1985. *Islands of History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 1991. "The Return of the Event, Again: With Reflections on the Beginnings of the Great Fijian War of 1843 to 1855 between the Kingdoms of Bau and Rewa." In *Clio in Oceania: Toward a Historical Anthropology*, edited by Aletta Biersack, 37-99. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Sandroni, Carlos. 2001. *Feitiço decente: Transformações do samba no Rio de Janeiro, 1917-1933*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor.
- _____. 2005. "Questões em torno do dossiê do Samba de Roda." In *Série encontros e estudos* 6, 45-53. Rio de Janeiro: Centro Nacional de Cultura Popular – IPHAN.
- _____. 2010. "Samba de roda, patrimônio imaterial da humanidade." *Estudos avançados* 24(69):373-388.
- Sandroni, Carlos, and Marcia Sant'Anna, eds. 2006. *Samba de Roda do Recôncavo Baiano*. Dossiê IPHAN 4. Brasília: IPHAN.
- Sansi, Roger. 2007. *Fetishes and Monuments: Afro-Brazilian Art and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- _____. 2009. "'Fazer o santo': dom, iniciação e historicidade nas religiões afro-brasileiras." *Análise Social* 44(1):139-160.

- _____. 2011. "Shrines, Substances, and Miracles in Afro-Brazilian Candomblé." *Anthropology & Medicine* 18(2):271-283.
- Sansi-Roca, Roger. 2005. "Catholic Saints, African Gods, Black Masks and White Heads: Tracing the History of Some Religious Festivals in Bahia." *Portuguese Studies* 21:182-200.
- Sansone, Livio. 2003. *Blackness without Ethnicity: Constructing Race in Brazil*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- _____. 2005/2006. "Desigualdades duráveis, relações raciais e modernidades no Recôncavo: O caso de São Francisco do Conde." *Revista USP* 68:234-251.
- Santana, Charles D'Almeida. 1998. *Fatura e ventura camponesas: Trabalho, cotidiano e migrações, Bahia: 1950-1980*. São Paulo: Annablume.
- Santana, Lizandra. 2012. "As disputas de poder simbólico no campo religioso cachoeirano 1980-2000." *Anais dos Simpósios da ABHR* 13. Available at < <http://www.abhr.org.br/plura/ojs/index.php/anais/article/view/360>> (accessed on December 9, 2012).
- Santos, Denilson Lessa dos. 2005. "Nas encruzilhadas da cura: crenças, saberes e diferentes práticas curativas – Santo Antônio de Jesus – Recôncavo Sul – Bahia (1940-1980)." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- Santos, Edmar Ferreira. 2009. *O poder dos candomblés: Perseguição e resistência no Recôncavo da Bahia*. Salvador: Edufba.
- Santos, Jocélio Teles dos. 1995. *O dono da terra: o caboclo nos candomblés da Bahia*. Salvador: SarahLetras.

- _____. 1997. "Divertimentos estrondosos: Batusques e sambas no século XIX." In *Ritmos em trânsito: Sócio-anthropologia da música baiana*, edited by Livio Sansone and Jocélio Teles dos Santos, 17-38. São Paulo: Dynamis Editorial; Salvador: Programa A Cor da Bahia e Projeto S.A.M.BA.
- Schafer, R. Murray. 1977. *The Tuning of the World*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Schechner, Richard. 1986. "Magnitudes of Performance." In *The Anthropology of Experience*, edited by Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner, 344-369. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Schwartz, Stuart B. 1985. *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Scribner, Robert W. 1987. *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*. London: Hambledon Press.
- Seeger, Anthony. 1980a. "Pesquisa de campo: uma criança no mundo." In *Os índios e nós: Estudos sobre sociedades tribais brasileiras*, 25-40. Rio de Janeiro: Campus.
- _____. 1980b. "Sing For Your Sister: The Structure and Performance of *Suya Akia*." *The Ethnography of Musical Performance*, edited by Norma McLeod and Marcia Herndon, 7-42. Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions.
- _____. 1991a. "Styles of Musical Ethnography." In *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*, edited by Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman, 342-355. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. 1991b. "When Music Makes History." In *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, edited by Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman, 23-34. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

- _____. 1997. "A Reply to Henry Kingsbury." *Ethnomusicology* 41(2):250-252.
- _____. 2004 [1987]. *Why Suyá Sing: A Musical Anthropology of an Amazonian People*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- _____. 2008. "Theories Forged in the Crucible of Action: The Joys, Dangers, and Potentials of Advocacy and Fieldwork." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, edited by Gregory Barz and Timothy J. Cooley, 271-288. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Seeger, Charles. 1958. "Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing." *The Musical Quarterly* 44(2):184-195.
- Selka, Stephen L. 2005. "Ethnoreligious Identity Politics in Bahia, Brazil." *Latin American Perspectives* 32(1):72-94.
- Senna, Ronaldo de Salles. 1998. *Jarê—uma face do cadomblé: manifestação religiosa na Chapada Diamantina*. Feira de Santana (BA), Brazil: Universidade Estadual de Feira de Santana.
- Serra, Ordep. 2009. *Rumores de festa: o sagrado e o profano na Bahia*. 2nd edition. Salvador: Edufba.
- Sewell, William H., Jr. 2005. *The Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shannon, Jonathan H. 2003. "Emotion, Performance, and Temporality in Arab Music: Reflections on *Tarab*." *Cultural Anthropology* 18(1):72-98.
- Shapiro, Dolores J. 1995. "Blood, Oil, Honey, and Water: Symbolism in Spirit Possession Sects in Northeastern Brazil." *American Ethnologist* 22(4):828-847.

- Shaw, Rosalind. 2002. *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shelemay, Kay Kaufman. 1980. "'Historical Ethnomusicology': Reconstructing Falasha Liturgical History." *Ethnomusicology* 24(2):233-258.
- _____. 1986. *Music, Ritual, and Falasha History*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Silva, Elizete da. 2001. "Protestantismo em Feira de Santana: Algumas considerações." *Annals of the 3rd Simpósio Nacional de História das Religiões*. Recife. Available at <http://www.uesb.br/anpuhba/artigos/anpuh_II/elizete_da_silva.pdf> (accessed on December 9, 2012).
- Silva, Elizabete Rodrigues da. 2001. "Fazer charutos: uma atividade feminina." MA thesis, Universidade Federal da Bahia.
- Silva, Giselda Shirley da. 2007. "Um cotidiano partilhado – Entre práticas e representações de benzedeiros e raizeiros (Remanescente de Quilombo de Santana da Caatinga – MG/1999-2007)." MA thesis, Universidade de Brasília.
- Silva, Marília T. Barboza da, and Arthur L. de Oliveira Filho. 1983. *Cartola: os tempos idos*. Rio de Janeiro: FUNARTE.
- Silveira, Renato da. 2006. "Sobre o exclusivismo e outros ismos das irmandades negras na Bahia colonial." In *Formas de crer: Ensaios de história religiosa do mundo luso-afro-brasileiro, séculos XIV-XXI*, edited by Lígia Bellini, Evergton Sales Souza, and Gabriela dos Reis Sampaio, 161-198. Salvador: Edufba/Corrupio.
- Simpson, George E. 1978. *Black Religions in the New World*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Singer, Milton. 1972. *When a Great Tradition Modernizes*. New York: Praeger.
- Siqueira, Batista. 1978. *A origem do termo "samba."* São Paulo: Instituição Brasileira de Difusão Cultural.
- Skidmore, Thomas E. 1983. "Race and Class in Brazil: Historical Perspectives." *Luso-Brazilian Reviews* 20(1):104-118.
- _____. 1990. "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870–1940." In *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, edited by Richard Graham, 7-36. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- _____. 1998 [1974]. *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*. 3rd printing. Durham: Duke University.
- Slenes, Robert W. 2007. "'Eu venho de muito longe, eu venho cavando': jongueiros cumba na senzala centro-africana." In *Memória do jongo: As gravações históricas de Stanley J. Stein. Vassouras, 1949*, edited by Silvia Hunold Lara and Gustavo Pacheco, 109-156. Rio de Janeiro: Folha Seca; Campinas (SP), Brazil: CECULT.
- Somers, Margaret R. 1994. "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach." *Theory and Society* 23:605-649.
- Sotuyo Blanco, Pablo. 2002. "'Novena para o Snr. Bom Jezuz dos Navegantes': mais uma obra de Barbosa de Araújo." *Revista Eletrônica de Musicologia* 7. Available at <<http://www.humanas.ufpr.br/rem/REMV7/Blanco/blanco.html>> (accessed on February 13, 2012).
- _____. 2003. "Modelos pre-composicionais nas lamentações de Jeremias no Brasil." Vol 1. PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal da Bahia.

- _____. 2004. “Tríduos e Novenas em Salvador: Aspectos diacrônicos nessa prática religiosa e musical.” In *Anais do II Encontro Nacional da ABET*. Salvador.
- Sousa Júnior, Vilson Caetano de. 2004. “Roda o balaio na porta da igreja, minha filha, que o santo é de Candomblé.” In *De preto a afro-descendente: Trajetos de pesquisa sobre o negro, cultura negra e relações étnico-raciais no Brasil*, edited by Lúcia Maria de Assunção Barbosa, Petronilha Beatriz Gonçalves, and Silva Valter Roberto Silvério, 261-276. São Carlos (SP), Brasil: EdUFSCar.
- _____. 2011. *Na palma da minha mão: temas afro-brasileiros e questões contemporâneas*. Salvador: Edufba.
- Souza, Laura de Mello e. 1987. *O diabo e a Terra de Santa Cruz: feitiçaria e religiosidade popular no Brasil colonial*. 1st Reprint. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Souza, Maria Beatriz de Mello e. 2002. “Mãe, mestra e guia: uma análise da iconografia de Santa’Anna.” *Topoi* 5:232-250.
- Souza, Marina de Mello e. 2001. *Reis negros no Brasil escravista: História da festa de coroação de Rei Congo*. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG.
- Sovik, Liv. 2009. *Aqui ninguém é branco*. Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano.
- Spiller, Henry. 2010. *Erotic Triangles: Sundanese Dance and Masculinity in West Java*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stark, Rodney, and Roger Finke. 2000. *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Steil, Carlos Alberto. 1996. *O sertão das romarias: um estudo antropológico sobre o santuário de Bom Jesus da Lapa – Bahia*. Petrópolis: Vozes/Centro de Investigação e Divulgação.

- Stevenson, Robert M. 1964. "European Music in 16th-Century Guatemala." *Musical Quarterly* 50(3):341-352.
- Stølen, Kristi Anne. 1996. "The Power of Gender Discourses in a Multi-Ethnic Community in Rural Argentina." In *Machos, Mistresses, Madonnas: Contesting the Power of Latin American Gender Imagery*, edited by Marit Melhaus and Kristi Anne Stølen, 159-183. London: Verso.
- Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of evangelical Growth*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stone, Ruth M. 1982. *Let the Inside Be Sweet: The Interpretation of Music Event among the Kpelle of Liberia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- _____. 2008. *Theory for Ethnomusicology*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Sweet, James H. 2003. *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Szwed, John F., and Roger D. Abrahams. 1976. "After the Myth: Studying Afro-American Cultural Patterns in the Plantation Literature." *Research in African Literatures* 7(2):211-232.
- Tambiah, Stanley J. 1981. "A Performative Approach to Ritual." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65:113-165.
- Tavares, Luís Henrique Dias. 2008. *História da Bahia*. 11th edition. São Paulo: Editora da UNESP; Salvador: Edufba.
- Taylor, Diana. 2003. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- _____. 2006. "Performance and/as History." *The Drama Review* 50(1):67-86.

- Telles, Edward E. 2004. *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Thornton, John Kelly. 1988. "On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas." *The Americas* 44(3):261-278.
- _____. 1998. *The Kongolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tinhorão, José Ramos. 2000. *As festas no Brasil Colonial*. São Paulo: Editora 34.
- _____. 2008. *Os sons dos negros no Brasil: cantos, danças, folguedos: origens*. 2nd edition. São Paulo: Editora 34.
- Tonkin, Elizabeth. 1992. *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Travassos, Elizabeth. 1997. "Baianas no samba de roda." In *Língua Mar: Criações e confrontos em português*, edited by Ana Maria Galano, Graça Capinha, Leonardo Fróes, Lorelai Kury, 217-226. 2nd edition. Rio de Janeiro: Funarte.
- _____. 2008. "Um objeto fugidio: voz e 'musicologias.'" In *Palavra cantada: Ensaio sobre poesia, música e voz*, edited by Cláudia Neiva de Matos, Elizabeth Travassos, and Fernanda Teixeira de Medeiros, 99-123. Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras.
- Travassos, Elizabeth, et. al. 1994. "Samba-de-roda no recôncavo baiano." CD. Rio de Janeiro: Funarte.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Turino, Thomas. 1993. *Moving Away from Silence: Music of the Peruvian Altiplano and the Experience of Urban Migration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- _____. 1999. "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory for Music." *Ethnomusicology* 43(2):221-255.
- _____. 2008. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turner, Kay F. 1982. "Research Note: Mexican American Home Altars: Towards Their Interpretation." *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 13(1-2):309-326.
- Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- _____. 1975. *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.
- _____. 1986. *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.
- Vainfas, Ronaldo, and Marina de Mello e Souza. 2006. "Catolização e ressurreição: o reino do Congo da conversão coroada ao movimento antoniano, séculos XV-XVIII." In *Formas de crer: ensaios de história religiosa do mundo luso-afro-brasileiro, séculos XIV-XXI*, edited by Lígia Bellini, Evergton Sales Souza, and Gabriela dos Reis Sampaio, 47-68. Salvador: Edufba/Corrupio.
- Vansina, Jan. 2006 [1961]. *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology*. Translated by H. M. Wright. New Brunswick: Transaction.
- Veiga, Manuel Vicente Ribeiro, Jr. 1981. "Toward a Brazilian Ethnomusicology: Amerindian Phases." PhD dissertation, UC Los Angeles.
- Verger, Pierre. 1987 [1968]. *Fluxo e refluxo do tráfico de escravos entre o golfo do Benin e a Bahia de Todos os Santos: dos séculos XVII a XIX*. 3rd edition. Translation by Tasso Gadzanis. São Paulo: Corrupio.

- _____. 1999 [1981]. *Notícias da Bahia de 1850*. 2nd edition. Salvador: Corrúpio.
- Verter, Bradford. 2003. "Spiritual Capital: Theorizing Religion with Bourdieu Against Bourdieu." *Sociological Theory* 21(2):150-174.
- Viarnes, Carrie. 2010. "Muñecas and Memoryscapes: Negotiating Identity and History in Cuban Espiritismo." In *Activating the Past: History and Memory in the Black Atlantic World*, edited by Andrew Apter and Lauren Derby, 319-369. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Wachsmann, Klaus, ed. 1971. *Essays on Music and History in Africa*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Wadley, Ralph. 1980. "'Viola de Samba' and 'Samba de Viola' in the 'Reconcavo' of Bahia (Brazil)." *Latin America Music Review* 1(2):196-212.
- _____. 1981. "'Viola de Samba' and 'Samba de Viola' in the 'Reconcavo' of Bahia (Brazil) Part II: 'Samba de Viola.'" *Latin America Music Review* 2(2):252-279.
- Warren, Donald, Jr. 1968. "Spiritism in Brazil." *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 10(3):393-405.
- Weintraub, Jeff. 1997. "The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction." In *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, edited by Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar, 1-42. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wimberly, Fayette Darcell. 1988. "The African Liberto and the Bahian Lower Class: Social Integration in Nineteenth-Century Bahia, Brazil, 1870-1900." PhD dissertation, UC Berkeley.

- _____. 1998. "The Expansion of Afro-Bahian Religious Practices in Nineteenth-Century Cachoeira." *Afro-Brazilian Culture and Politics: Bahia, 1790s to 1990s*, edited by Hendrik Kraay, 74-89. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Witmer, Robert. 1991. "Stability in Blackfoot Songs, 1909-1968." In *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, edited by Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman, 242-253. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Wolf, Eric. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wolf, Richard K. 2001. "Emotional Dimensions of Ritual Music among the Kotas, a South Indian Tribe." *Ethnomusicology* 45(3):379-422.
- Wong, Deborah. 2001. *Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wong, Deborah, and René T.A. Lysloff. 1991. "Threshold to the Sacred: The Overture in Thai and Javanese Ritual Performance." *Ethnomusicology* 35(3):315-348.
- Zaluar Guimarães, Alba. 1973. "Sobre a lógica do catolicismo popular." *Dados* 11:173-193.
- _____. 1983. *Os homens de Deus: um estudo dos santos e das festas no catolicismo popular*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores.
- Zamith, Rosa Maria. 1995. "O samba-de-roda baiano em tempo e espaço." *Revista Interfaces* 1(2) 53-66.