FAVELA ASSOCIATIONS
BETWEEN REPRESSION, VIOLENCE AND POLITICS

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ABSTRACT

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The article analyzes the dynamics and structures of oppression and marginalization of favela residents in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as well as the modalities of agency that members of favela residents' associations have used to respond to the changing situation. I analyze the spatial differentiation between favelas and the formal parts of the city, and how this is reflected in the notion of how the favelas and their residents are characterized. Some single elements, such as violence, have been taken as markers to define the whole space of the favelas as well as their residents. In state policies, the views as well as the agency of favela residents have often been ignored, thereby treating the favela residents as only subjects of different politics and measures. The study presents the analysis the members of favela associations make of state politics, and how their own modalities of agency have contributed both to maintaining the structures of oppression as well as challenging it. The focus is on the favela residents' associations in two favelas of Southern Rio.

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Keywords: Power, oppression, citizenship, urban politics, governance, resistance, human rights, spatial segregation, agency, Brazil, favelas, drug traffic, violence

Só porque moro no morro A minha miséria a vocês despertou
A verdade é que vivo com fome Nunca roubei ninguém, sou um trabalhador
Se há um assalto ao banco Como não podem prender o poderoso chefão
Aí os jornais vêm logo dizendo que aqui no morro só mora ladrão
Se vocês estão a fim de prender o ladrão Podem voltar pelo mesmo caminho
O ladrão está escondido lá embaixo Atrás da gravata e do colarinho.

Just because I live on a hill My misery woke you up
The truth is that I live hungry I am a worker and never robbed anyone
If there's a robbery in the bank Because they are not able to catch the big boss
Newspapers will soon tell that here on the hill, there only live thieves
If you want to catch the thief You can go back the same way
The thief is hiding down there Behind the tie and the collar.[1]

Bezerra da Silva: *Vítimas da sociedade* (Victims of Society)[2]

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In this article I analyze the dynamics and structures of marginalization of favela[3] residents in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as well as the response that members of favela residents' associations have had to oppression in different historical times. I explore how a boundary between *morro* and *asfalto*, the favelas and the rest of the city of Rio de Janeiro, has been created and then used to define both the space as well as people living in the area. In the dominant discourse, there has been, and still is, a tendency to define the favelas as 'abnormal' spaces, and exclude the residents, both spatially and socially. I examine how this social order is being reproduced, as well as challenged, demonstrating that the repression of favela residents is institutionalized in many legal, political and social practices, and reproduced through mechanisms such as limited access to education and economic capital, cultural practices, and the political system which mixes paternalist leadership with formal democracy. These contribute to the maintenance of hegemony and hinder social ascension. Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus suggests that the existing order is produced and reproduced almost naturally by a culture. Habitus, being a product of history, produces individual and collective practices that go together with the schemes produced by history. It guarantees the active presence of past experiences, which in turn guides the practices in the 'right' direction, in a stronger way than laws or norms, by virtue of habitus functioning largely in an unconscious and unchallenged way (Bourdieu 1990: 54). The social order is thus perceived as natural and even commonsensical and the mechanisms that contribute to the reproduction of established order and the perpetuation of domination remain hidden (Bourdieu 1977: 187–188). The dominant parts of society do not need to exert extra effort to maintain the existing order, the doxa, or hegemony as described by Raymond Williams (1994).

Many scholars have suggested that in Brazil, society is divided in two levels of citizenship: 'second-class' citizens do not manage to attain full citizenship, and they are not fully recognized as holders of citizens' rights, even if that formally is the case (Vieira 2007; Caldeira 2000; Holston 2008).[4] This can be conceptualized with the notions of formal and substantive sides of citizenship, noting the difference between formal citizenship (belonging to the nation-state) and substantive citizenship, meaning access to an array of civil, political and political rights (Holston 1995: 50–53). I argue that in state politics concerning the favelas, there has been a tendency to deprive the favela residents of their agency and citizenship, and to treat them merely as population groups, as subjects of different policies (see Chatterjee 2004: 38). I see state power, however, not as a single acting subject, but as a process of relations between a multiplicity of forces which, through struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses such relations (Foucault 1990).

In my view, the selective status of citizenship is but a mere a reflection of the wider hierarchical nature of Brazilian society, and fully corresponds to ideals of Brazilian sociability. The boundary between the favela resident and a middle/upper class carioca is one of the categories that are used to construct hierarchies in Brazil. As Joel S. Migdal (2004) has noted, social groupings have their own spatial logic, and they introduce mechanisms of separation to mark them off from other groupings. I also use the discussion of the Brazilian type of racism and the concept of Brazilian relational society to shed further light on the phenomenon. In addition, my focus lies on the role of favela residents' associations in the process: I want to show how they have, through different

modalities of agency, both contributed to the maintenance of the hegemonic structures as well as challenged them. Here, I find the definition of Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische of agency to the point:

> the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments—the temporal-relational contexts of action—which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structure in interactive response to the problems posed by historical situations (1998: 970).

The article is based on the twelve months of fieldwork conducted for my master's thesis (Saaristo 2009) in 2007–2008, and an earlier one-year stay in 2005. During that time I lived in the favela of Babilônia, situated in *Zona Sul* (southern Rio area). My research material consists mostly of participant observation as well as in-depth interviews with activists from the residents' association, conducted towards the end of my second stay in Babilônia. A long participant observation period to establish good contacts and trust was key in enabling the conduct of interviews. My fieldwork was undertaken during the second term of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The victory of Lula in the general elections with his *Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT (Workers' Party) was considered historical by many Brazilians and was met with enthusiasm and joy, offering the hope of ending the oppressive rule by the elites and extending citizenship to the poor. Although Lula's first term was also characterized by corruption scandals such as the *Mensalão*,[5] his social welfare programs, such as the *Bolsa Familia (MDS 2014a)* and *Fome Zero (MDS 2014b)*, have become landmarks of successful policies of social inclusion. In 2007, the Federal Government launched PAC (*Programa de Aceleração de Crescimento*, Growth Acceleration Program) that forecasted USD 200 billion for investments in infrastructure, with a focus on water, sanitation, construction, transport, and energy. USD 2 billion came to the city of Rio de Janeiro (Lara 2014: 255).

I did my research with the residents' associations of Babilônia, AMB (*Associação dos Moradores da Babilônia*) and with the association of neighbouring Chapéu Mangueira, AACM (*Associação dos Amigos do Chapéu Mangueira*). Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira are situated side by side on the same hill in the Leme area. In the census of 2000, Babilônia was counted as having 381 households and Chapéu Mangueira 311 households. However, the residents' associations claim that the census was made without even visiting most of the houses in the favelas. Furthermore, they asserted that both favelas have grown significantly, so that by 2008, they would have contained at least 1,000 households each. Both have many public places, such as the residents' associations, nursery schools, sports and culture centre, arts and crafts centre, many shops and bars, as well as a police post and a hostel.

I first moved to Babilônia in 2005 through my capoeira[6] teacher who lived in the neighbourhood, and became familiar with the residents' associations through volunteer work. In 2007, I rented the apartment of an ex-vice-president of AMB, a friend of mine, who lived in the house next door. He and his son practically constituted my family during the year of research. I chose to focus on favela residents' associations in my research, as they have been significant political agents for decades and have had a vital role in the development of these two favelas. They have taken different roles during the changing social, economic and political situations, and their agency has contributed significantly

to challenge, reproduce, weaken and/or strengthen the power structures. The residents' associations were in no way the only form of political organization in these favelas, however: many non-governmental organizations also worked in Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, organizing vocational and computer training, sewing classes, sports clubs or health education. Most projects were much too short in duration to achieve any kind of significant change in the life of the favela residents, but some NGOs working on 'citizenship' have been quite successful in increasing favela residents' mobilization and political awareness, both by organizing training on project planning and creating links to financing opportunities (see e.g. McCann 2006: 161).

Favelas rising

The notion of favela was created in Rio de Janeiro at the end of 19th century, when soldiers and former slaves that had fought in the uprising of *Revolta dor Canudos* started to reside on the hill of *Morro da Providência.* One of the first hills occupied was named 'Morro da Favela' (Xavier & Magalhães 2003: 4). The topography of the city is variable, with hills popping up from the shore or further inland. City construction began on the lowlands, land being reclaimed from the sea to increase the area that was appropriate for construction. The hills were largely left unbuilt. (This was partly because they were thought to be unsuitable for building houses; because of the steep slopes, they were prone to landslides.) When the city of Rio de Janeiro started to grow, many of the immigrants from other Brazilian states built their dwellings on the hills because of the proximity to the city centre and other important neighbourhoods. The outcome has been an unusual situation compared to many other big cities of the world: in *Zona Sul*, the most affluent and the poorest areas of the city are, in some cases, side by side, producing monumental differences as Brazil is one of the most unequal countries in the world in terms of income and consumption.[7] This also applies to the city of Rio de Janeiro: the richest percentile gets 12% of the income, while the poorest 50% get only 13% (Xavier & Magalhães 2003: 6).

The name 'favela' stuck and came to denote a general term for shantytowns or slums. Officially favelas are classified as 'subnormal agglomerates', defined as a group of at least 51 precarious dwellings, benefitting from some essential public services, occupying or, having occupied until recently, land whose ownership belongs to other entities (private or public), and that are generally organized in an disorderly or a dense way (IBGE 2010). According to the last official census (IBGE 2010), 14.9% of the population of the State of Rio de Janeiro lives in subnormal agglomerates. In the popular language, *morro* (hill) also started to be used to denote a slum, as long as it was situated on a hill. The term *asfalto* (asphalt) then emerged as a counterpart, meaning the official parts of the city that usually have paved streets.[8] Other concepts are also used to define the space of the favela as well as its residents, such as *comunidade (*community), *favelado* and *morador de favela* (both meaning a resident of a favela). These concepts suggest different meanings, depending on the social status and worldview of a particular person. The residents of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira (the favelas in which I did my fieldwork) usually referred to their neighbourhoods either by their names, their nicknames ('Babi', 'Chapéu') or with the

terms *morro* or *comunidade*.[9] They also used the word *morro* to describe themselves, their culture and pride in the culture, both in their everyday speech as well as in popular music. In this sense, living in a *morro* means living in a community, suggesting that a shared experience and solidarity exists among the people living in the favelas. Favela residents considered the word favela to be more abstract, and also pejorative to some extent; it would be used when speaking of different politics directed towards the favelas by the municipal or central government, but rarely when speaking about their 'community'. The word *favelado* was still more ambiguous, and the residents of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira would not use it, considering it offensive. They would rather refer to themselves as *moradores de favela*.

Dynamics of marginalisation: relocations and attempts at 'civilisation': *a brief historical overview*

Between 1940 and 1960, Rio de Janeiro was growing and urbanizing fast because of industrialization and the reduction in agricultural work.[10] The city quickly filled with people, and dwellings were built on the hills within the city centre. The government of President Getúlio Vargas (1930–1934 and 1937–1945) responded with the politics of isolation and segregation of the immigrants, which culminated in forced removals of the favela residents. Vargas initiated an experiment called *Parques proletários* (Workers' Parks) which meant moving the favela residents to the suburbs in the outskirts of the city. The theory guiding the politics was that the individuals were poor and marginalized due to certain circumstances, which then in turn justified different kinds of socio-political measures (Valladares 2005: 126–127). In this way, the poor urban masses, formerly seen as dangerous by the elite, were now seen as a population to be manipulated. However, the *Parques proletários* experiment also provoked the favela residents to organise themselves out of fear that it would become general practice. The first residents' committees were formed in 1945 in Pavão/Pavãozinho, then in Morro da Babilônia and Morro do Cantagalo, with the aim to oppose the plan that they attributed to the city government: to move all the favela residents to new areas. A bit later, the committees presented a list of claimed social rights connected with infrastructure problems in their neighbourhoods (Burgos 2006: 28).

The favelas of Chapéu Mangueira and Babilônia received most of their inhabitants from the states of Minas Gerais and Bahia to work on the construction sites of the growing city. Seu Lúcio, the first president of the residents' committee of Chapéu Mangueira, as well as being one of its founders in 1957, told me about the first moments of the residents' mobilisation:

> The infrastructure was almost inexistent: the dirt roads became flooding mud rivers when it rained; there was no electricity, water supply or sewage management. The houses were shacks built with bamboo sticks and clay with roofs made of cans. The communities were under the strict control of the army: the size of houses could not exceed 10 m². We wanted to call these awful living conditions into question, and started to organise ourselves to gain a measure of power.

The first favela residents' association was registered in 1957; *Coligação dos Trabalhadores Favelados do Distrito Federal*, with the objective of developing internal cooperation to improve living conditions (Burgos 2006: 28–31). The name of the association is interesting because it includes the term '*favelado*', one that is conceived pejorative. Its use suggests that at that point, the favela residents had started to create a positive collective identity in order to defend themselves. However, not all the elite of the city viewed the stronger affirmative position of favela residents positively. There was concern over the organizational growth of the favelas, and thus stricter mechanisms were created to control them politically. In academic scholarship, the theory of marginality was created to conceptualize favela populations, abandoning the purely economic perspective on exclusion and adding two others: the spatial and the sociocultural. Instead of justifying oppression on the basis of the poverty of the residents, they were now called 'marginal': thereby acquiring a way of living of their own, defined by values and behaviour that were divergent from the culture of other citizens. They were 'illiterate, promiscuous, alcoholic, bare-footed, superstitious, prone to criminality, and infected by parasites' (Perlman 1979: 200)—anything that might seem shocking to the upper class people of Rio de Janeiro. The theory of marginality was then used as a justification for oppressive and paternalistic politics: 'these people' were obviously not in control of themselves and thus had to be educated and controlled. This resulted in a considerable operation against the favelas in 1960–1975. After the military coup in 1964, the new and centralised government also had sufficient resources to undertake the eradication of the favelas on a large scale. By the early 1970s, 62 favelas had been destroyed and 175,000 people relocated by force (Perlman, 1979: 202). In the 1960s, there were also many forced removals in the area of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira. People were moved far away to Northern and Western Rio de Janeiro and their homes were destroyed. In some cases there were offered ready-built houses as replacements; in others people were just allocated land where they could build their shacks.

The view of the favela as a social problem combined perfectly with the urban planning of the authoritarian government and, in Rio, a boundary was set between the 'marginal' favela residents and the rest of the city. The upper and middle class cariocas conceptualised the favelas as alien territory, the space of dangerous criminals and the uneducated. The residency in a favela thus started to be used to define the social status of the person, alongside with the other attributes such as wealth, race, and gender; it became an automatic sign of class. The boundary between *morro* and *asfalto* became a justification for the subjection of the residents of favelas to different kinds of politics which were often repressive, paternalistic and violent.

However, although the state policies between the 1930s and 1960s did not consider the favela residents worthy of consultation on their situation, the residents were not at all insignificant in the equation. During the politics of forced removals, the residents used tactics resembling James Scott's (1985) 'weapons of the weak', such as not paying the rents in the new housing, or leaving the new dwellings and returning the old neighbourhood. However, other modalities of agency by the residents' associations were much more active, calling for overall change in the politics. In Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, the residents' associations occasionally managed to prevent removals by proving that people had resided in those houses for years. The most powerful strategy had, however, nothing

to do with the favela residents. Seu Lúcio describes how some houses were supposed to be removed because there was a huge rock above them on the hill that had the potential to crush anything in its way:

> I went to talk to the residents of the Leme neighbourhood in the *asfalto*, down the hill from Chapéu Mangueira. I told them that the residents of the one-storied houses of Chapéu Mangueira could run if the stone started to roll, but the case was different for the residents of Leme's apartment houses. The rich people of Leme made a big fuss about this and the stone was removed, rather than our community.

It was thus only through fear on the part of the residents of the *asfalto* that action was taken; had the problem concerned only the favela residents, the solution would have been the forced removal of the people, instead of the stone. The favela residents' federation, Fafeg (*Federação da Associação de Favelas do Estado da Guanabara*), was sometimes successful in mobilising against the forced removals: 52 favelas managed to stay in middle and upper class areas (Burgos 2006: 37). The Fafeg built up its power during the 1960s, eventually incorporating dozens of favela residents' associations and strongly articulating the demands of the residents. Favela residents were thus, to some extent, able to question the politics of relocations to which they were subject. Nevertheless, the social hierarchy has been visible in guiding Brazilian urban politics, and state response to the favela situation—exclusion and attempts to civilize and educate—can be constructed as appropriate responses on the basis that the social group in question is not able to make its own decisions or control its members.

Building the favelas

In the beginning of the 1970s, the favela residents' associations were recognized as independent entities, elected by the residents (McCann 2006: 152). By this time, in Chapéu Mangueira, the residents' association was already very active in improving living conditions, building the first health centre and a simple sanitation network. Babilônia, on the other hand, was still under the strict control of the army: they could not even fix a window without asking the army for permission. Its residents only got some liberty during the 1980s democratization of the state which brought the ideal of universal citizenship and citizens' rights to the city (Carvalho 1998: 17). After the dictatorship came to an end they were also allowed to build houses with bricks instead of bamboo and clay, fix their houses, and also buy, rent and sell the houses. The difference in the rights of the residents of the two favelas was attributed to the different roles the presidents of the AACM and AMB had in relation to the state and city governments: the president of the AACM campaigned for the improvement of the infrastructure while the president of the AMB favoured strict army control.

Coming to the end of the 1970s, the theory of marginality started to be contested and alternative perspectives emerged. The politics of the city began to consider urbanisation of the favelas instead of forced relocations, noting that removing all the favela residents by force would be difficult (IBAM 2002: 7). The government of Leonel Brizola (1983–

1987 and 1991–1995) created special social policies for the favelas, with the aim of improving their infrastructure. *Mutirão 1985* was an infrastructure project financed by the municipality, focusing on sanitation and electricity. From the residents associations' point of view, however, the project was not of much use:

> All that matters here in the community, we have done ourselves. If we had waited for the politicians to come, the community wouldn't even have half of the infrastructure it has now. Mutirão 1985 only built on the same structures we had constructed through our own efforts, putting the water tubes where they had already been. (An ex-president of the AACM)

In 1994, Rio de Janeiro, ahead of other Brazilian cities, instigated a program of urbanization, Favela-Bairro, based on a ground-breaking idea to 'recognize the social, cultural and political importance of the favelas in the city, considering these agglomerations as a part of urban structure and looking to integrate them with the official parts of the city' (Lara 2014: 251). The first phase of Favela-Bairro (1994–1997) had a multisectoral and integrated emphasis, focusing on accessibility, the construction of streets and public spaces that would facilitate the sanitation network, relocation of the minimum number of families and building new dwellings within the same community (ibid., 254).

Favela-Bairro came to Chápeu Mangueira in 2001 and to Babilônia in 2003. AMB and AACM were, again, very critical of its significance:

> It was a joke: they would put cement on top of cement, but did not do anything for the unpaved streets. The works were never concluded, and the residents had to finalize the sanitation system. (Ex-president of the AACM)

> The construction of the water tank was left half-finished and now it serves as a breeding spot for mosquitoes—we could see the results in the dengue epidemic last year. (Ex-president of the AMB)

> The construction of new apartment buildings started but was left unfinished: only the first floor was concluded of the four-floor buildings. Due to this, people who were meant to move to the houses from their dwellings on dangerous cliffs, never moved there; and the buildings were quickly invaded by people from outside the community. The works had a budget of 7 million reais, but only 1.5 million was used. We still don't know where the money went and why the works were not concluded. (Ex-vice president of the AMB)

It is thus a general feeling among the residents' associations that their own initiative has been vital to get any, even basic, social services or infrastructure to the favelas. They have actively engaged in the construction of their neighbourhoods in a very different way than residents in the formal parts of the city. Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira have been essentially built by their residents and the residents associations have had a leading role in the process.

Ultimately Favela-Bairro failed because it did not include residents in the planning process in many favelas. The end results were not nearly as good as foreseen and due to political reasons the next phase of the program received considerably less funding (Lara 2014: 254–255). The next significant program, now on a national scale, was the Growth Acceleration Programme (PAC), initiated by the Federal Government during the second term of President Lula, who had also been responsible for the creation of the

Ministry of Cities, tasked to elaborate alternative proposals for urban reform (Gonçalves 2006: 96). In June 2008, there were ongoing discussions on the possibility of PAC also being implemented in Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira. Benedita da Silva[11] came to the communities to see the possible areas of intervention, assuring residents there would be a new era, an 'era of partnerships', referring to more thorough consultations especially with the residents' associations. An ex-president of the AACM who was accompanying her was quick to respond with a counter argument:

> We don't want to be 'partners' anymore; we want the state to fulfil their responsibility here. We don't want to have *garis comunitários* [a sweeper provided by the community]; we want Comlurb [*Companhia Municipal de Limpeza Urbana*, the sanitation company of Rio de Janeiro] to come here. We want all citizens to have the same services. Now the residents' association is working always as a mediator, and if we work with partners, they will always have part of the funds. In the residents' associations, we are working hard without any compensation.

This ex-president had been a central figure in the mobilization of the residents for many of the construction initiatives in Chapéu Mangueira and also represented the favela to the city government. For him, the state offer to improve the favela working in partnership with the residents was no longer sufficient: now he was campaigning for the full citizenship of the favela residents, questioning the spatial division between the favelas and the *asfalto*. Why should the people of the *morro* only be entitled to 'partnerships', while the state offers the people of the *asfalto* multiple services, including waste management? In his speech, the favelas appear like pockets of insurgent citizenship (Holston 1995, 46): as an alternative space of citizenship trying to assert its legitimacy vis-à-vis the state.

Buying the favelados

In Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, pessimism regarding the political system of the country was commonplace: 'during the election year, the politicians come to the favelas to give their promises, and after the elections, everything stays the same' (the President of AACM). The pessimism is not surprising: the Brazilian political system has been described as *estadania*[12] (Carvalho 2001), whereby the state works as a paternalistic band of economic groups, producing population rights and jobs in an unbalanced and biased way, while picking the recipients so that it can maintain the hierarchical socioeconomic, political and administrative structure. It is not a public power guaranteeing everyone's rights, but a paternalist network where the public assets are shared privately.

Many favela residents saw private donations by the politicians (e.g. buying wheel chair for a disabled resident, supplying snacks for the local nursery) as the *raison d'être* for politicians. For example, according to a nursery school teacher in Babilônia, good politicians are those who give money and commit themselves personally to supporting Babilônia or Chapéu Mangueira. An ex-president of the AMB agreed:

> Teresa Bergher[13] was a good politician because she gave funds to build the nursery school, paid the salaries for the teachers and the lunch for the kids for five months, and bought the windows for the nursery school.

They argued that a politician's party is not important but rather the person. The ex-president of the AMB argued that supporting a party was almost like football fanaticism:

> If you become fanatic, like some football fans, you can see no more mistakes in that party. That is dangerous. I have never seen parties, only people.

In the political system of the municipality, the residents' associations formally represent the favela residents. Through this role, they become one more piece in the political puzzle: being the link between public power and the favelas, they are also, potentially, recipients of favours from the politicians in exchange for support. No common guideline on how this role should be best interpreted within the residents' associations seemed to exist. Many members tried to work within the paternalistic system and use their agency to obtain goods for the communities within its internal logic rather than questioning the political system more broadly. For example, a member of the AMB saw the election campaigns largely as opportunities to extract all possible benefits for the favelas from the campaigning candidates:

> During the next campaign, there might be a chance to conclude the construction of the water tank. AMB got a letter from the mayor saying that they would continue the work, and that the 'costs would not matter'.

According to Roberto DaMatta (2004, 1997), this is a natural way of acting within Brazilian society. He argues that the Brazilian society is based on relationships and hierarchies, not on individuals with individual rights. Therefore Brazilians also invoke relationships in formal encounters to solve conflict: appealing to a universal law is seen as a negative, because it is interpreted as the person's lack of relationships; it is a sign of weakness and failure. DaMatta goes so far as to argue that the notion of citizenship is fundamentally alien to the Brazilian culture: Brazilian society is based on relationships and hierarchies, not on individual rights. 'The superficial equality given in the penal code was inspired by foreign models and is generally far away from the Brazilian social practices' (DaMatta 1997: 50). Following DaMatta's view, the democratic model involving universal rights for citizens would be almost bound to fail in Brazil (and many other countries), because it does not correspond to the way people structure their world. Due to the relational focus of Brazilian society, many would see the paternalistic system as more natural and fitting: politicians and civil servants are expected to favour their families and friends.

However, not everybody in Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira agree with paternalist practices. Many prominent members of the residents' associations rejected clientelism, pointing to the short-sightedness of relying on 'quick-wins' from the system: it implies that real changes rarely materialize. As expressed by an ex-vice-president of the AMB:

> People think that they are being clever cashing in during the election year, but it ultimately never works. During their terms, the politicians steal as much as they can, and during the election year, they invest a small part on campaigning and on projects in the favelas, hiring people to work for them. In this way, the politicians get a lot of visibility, but the benefits for the favela residents are ultimately very insignificant, and most of all, the structure of power does not change: the favelado stays in his marginalized role. (Ex-vice president of the AMB)

> We, our generation, consider ourselves the romantics of the communitarian movement, because we never accept the tips from the politicians, any kind of dole. My administration and I never accepted them, because from the moment they are accepted, the community is sold. (An ex-president of the AACM)

These ex-members of the AMB and AACM were radical in their views and offered an alternative analysis of the structure of the Brazilian politics. They wished to change the role of favela residents in society and, above all, how the favela resident is seen in society, transforming them into full citizens, entitled to substantive citizenship. However, despite having considerable influence in the favelas, they did not succeed in convincing the current leaders of the associations of the need to embrace a more radical view of the Brazilian politics system. The members of residents' associations thus did not share the same vision of the need for far-reaching political transformation and their position regarding the question remained internally incoherent.

Drug gangs and the police: bringing justice and injustice to the favelas

The 80s also saw another, very deeply affecting development in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: organised crime and drug traffic gradually became increasingly visible. Because of their territorial characteristics, favelas became popular places for packing up and distributing cocaine. Drug trafficking in the favelas was not a new phenomenon, but as it grew stronger and the criminal organisations started to dispute the control of certain areas, it also became more visible to those not involved. As expressed by an ex-president of the AMB:

> The drug traffic had also existed previously in the community, but it was very different when it was led by the boys from our community. They respected us because they were our sons, and would not point guns at us. In the mid 90s, the leader of the CV [*Comando Vermelho*][14] in Babilônia was killed and they took a new boss from outside of Babilônia. Everything changed.

In many aspects, the organizations of the drug dealers had become, to some degree, parallel states in the favelas where the formal state has been largely absent, providing very limited social services and no security services to the area. In Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, the drug gangs collect taxes from the shopkeepers in the area, organize the motorbike taxi service and solve arguments between the residents. It is impossible to start any business, construction work or social project before obtaining permission from the drug gang. Paradoxically, the drug gangs also bring safety to the favelas. They might not hesitate to kill rivals, but on the other hand they do not accept any other kind of criminal offences because they do not want the police in the favela. Therefore robberies, rapes and other criminal activity are strictly forbidden, and if they do occur, the drug dealers punish the perpetrators severely—which is why some residents told me they can now happily sleep with their windows and the doors open. Gangs also solve disputes between the residents. It was thus common to intimidate a neighbour by threatening to complain to the *boca de fumo* (the place where the drugs were sold in the favela) in cases of disagreement. Many residents even praised the drug dealers for their 'social work': they

might finance the nursery school or build better houses for the people in the favela. One local drug boss was especially appreciated as he had given alternative apartments to the people living on the most dangerous precipices.

The drug gangs might thus offer safety, but they also introduce further insecurity and marginalisation to all favela residents because, in Rio de Janeiro, the violence in the favelas became yet another excuse to repress those living there. The upper and middle-class citizens of Rio started to demand that the police take measures against what they interpreted as a growing threat to their safety. The old juxtaposition of *morro* and *asfalto* quickly re-emerged in current affairs and scholarly media, in a new form, now presenting the favelas as spaces for drug trafficking, and the residents as violent drug dealers. The idea of a real sociospatial apartheid between the favelas and the rest of the city started to develop (Valladares 2005: 143; see also Souza 2000; Fernandes 2007).

In Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, the situation worsened during my fieldwork, when a rival criminal organization, the ADA (*Amigos dos amigos*)[15], was trying to get a toehold in the favelas. The situation culminated at the beginning of 2008 in violent confrontations between the two rival drug gangs and the police, deeply upsetting the residents of the favelas. The police made flashy entrances to the communities, raiding them with dogs and armoured cars or appearing at 7.30 a.m., when the streets were full of children going to school and nursery, pointing their machine guns at everybody. They would also fly over the favelas by helicopter, descending so close to the houses that the roofs would nearly blow away. Those actions were labelled as 'only showing off' by the favela residents:

> They only want to make nice headlines in the newspapers, showing the elite how they punish the favela residents. If they wanted to do something about the violence, they would come in at night, when the shooting between ADA and CV is going on. Instead, they come in the morning to scare off the kids and the law-obeying residents. (22-year old male resident of Babilônia)

The AMB had an emergency meeting during which many residents complained about the looting of their houses while they were absent:

> The police broke the locks of my door, and searched the house, throwing everything around and leaving it a mess. I had some money in my cupboard and that was gone. (Elderly member of the AMB)

The counter-measures taken by the state in response to the violence have completely failed to take into account the actual victims of the violence. Rio de Janeiro, judging by its homicide statistics,[16] is an extremely violent city and references to killings around the city appear daily in the newspapers. What is often left untold, however, is that those who are killed are mostly poor, black, uneducated young men who live in the favelas, or on the periphery of the city. This part of the population does not benefit from police protection, on the contrary. Indeed, a significant proportion of the homicides are perpetuated by the police forces themselves; for example, in 2008 the police killed 604 people in Rio out of a total of 2,630 violent deaths (ISP 2008), meaning that the police were responsible for 23% of the homicides of the city. Teresa Caldeira (2000: 110–111, 160) cites a number of reports that show that *polícia militar* (the military police patrolling the streets) are

responsible for many on-the-spot executions; and *polícia civil* (the civil police responsible for investigations) frequently engage in torturing alleged perpetrators. High-ranking police and judiciary officials told Leeds (1996: 65) that 'crimes are committed rarely without the permission of the police'; 'when we speak about the organized crime, we are really speaking about the police'; and that 'the biggest problem in Brazil is the impunity'. It is no wonder that Da Silva and Leite (2007: 39) report that their research with 150 favela residents concluded that only one had had positive experiences with the police. Goldstein (2003: 188) describes how her informants used the terms 'criminals', 'police' and 'police-criminals', indiscriminately and interchangeably.[17] She suggests that this demonstrates how fully the favela residents recognize the dysfunction of the justice system: nobody knows any longer who is criminal, who the police are, and who are both. In Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, it was a common understanding among the favela residents that both drug gangs bribed the police, and that the police would take the side of the gang that paid more. The police were thus of no help to the favela residents; on the contrary, they contributed to further increasing the sense of insecurity and marginalisation of the favela residents.

Teresa Caldeira has used the concept 'disjunctive democracy' to describe the mode of governance in Brazil: even if the country is a political democracy, and social rights are fairly legitimized, civil rights are constantly breached. She argues that in Brazil, social and political rights are much more rooted historically than civil rights, and that violence is largely accepted (2000: 339–340). O'Donnell calls the Brazilian situation 'citizenship of low intensity': people have political freedom as part of the democratic form of governance, but are not entitled to even the most basic civil rights: they are not protected from police violence, they do not have access to the justice system, and their homes are violently intruded upon (2001: 601–602).

Many upper and middle-class people strongly support the oppressive measures in the favelas, as was shown in the reactions to the movie *Tropa de elite* (The Elite Squad, José Padilha 2007), a semi-fictional account of the Special Police Operation Squad of the Rio de Janeiro Military Police. The movie shows extreme and unpunished police brutality in the favelas, and even though the movie shocked many, many middle and upper-class cariocas also cheered these actions: 'This is the way to treat these people'. One of my informants living in the *asfalto* area of Zone Sul asked me, 'Why do these people live in favelas if they don't want to get killed?' When human rights organizations campaign for respecting the human rights of the favela residents, upper and middle-class people claim this is 'pampering the criminals'. Here the separation made by Holston (1995) in the formal and substantive sides of citizenship become clearly visible; despite the progressive Constitution of Brazil, the favela residents are deprived of their right to life when deemed necessary by the elite. Setha M. Low (2001) has noted that the discourse about violence frequently seems to be a façade to hide other concerns, in order to maintain the class, racial, ethnic or gender divisions. This is often the case in Rio de Janeiro as well: the upper and middle-classes use the discourse about violence to guard their own positions and to reproduce the social order and hierarchies. Low (2003) describes class-based exclusion strategies and residential segregation in the United States: adding walls, gates and guards produces a landscape that encodes class relations and residential (race/class/ethnic/gender) segregation more permanently in the built environment. The landscape

then, in turn, is legitimated by a discourse of fear of crime and violence. Caldeira notes that her (upper and middle-class) informants shared perceptions about criminality and evil: in their view, crime happened in marginal spaces such as favelas, and the people living in these spaces were seen as potential criminals. They saw crimes as a phenomenon that is linked to evil, and thus insisted on the need for having strong institutions and authorities to control it (2000: 53). In the case of the favelas of Zona Sul, the favelas and the upper-class neighbourhoods still exist side-by-side and thus do not permit full physical exclusion. The separation is achieved through social, political and economical exclusion in the spaces of the favelas.

A research undertaking coordinated by Maria Rezende de Carvalho (1998) concluded that most of the residents of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro do not see themselves as different from the other population groups of Rio de Janeiro. On the other hand, they recognize that their residency is nevertheless used to justify discriminative politics, such as police raids on the favelas, human rights violations, absence of social rights and discrimination in job interviews. While, on the one hand, it is already widely recognized that the favelas of Rio de Janeiro are in very diverse situations, geographically, socially, culturally and economically, often the plural world of the different favelas is still reduced into one category (see, e.g., Zaluar & Alvito 2006; Valladares 2005, 151): the world of *favelados* and their supposedly marginal culture. For the politicians, 'End the violence and drug trafficking!' and 'War against the drugs!' have also been efficient slogans to gain votes, and it has been a common practice to undertake high-profile police raids on the favelas before the elections. On the other hand, the politicians also use the drug gangs to gain access to the favelas (Leeds 1996: 75), and can also ally themselves with powerful drug gangs: in that case their rival candidates will start receiving death threats and the drug gang can also put pressure on the favela residents to vote for 'their' candidate. The politicians gain votes and the drug gangs money, and in the process, the democratic model is further distorted by ever more harmful modes of clientilistic politics (ibid.: 76).

An analysis of racial relations sheds further light on the mechanisms of marginalisation and exclusion in Brazil. The country has been famously described as a 'racial democracy',[18] a concept that was successfully used by President Getúlio Vargas (1930–1934 and 1937–1945) to create Brazilian nationalism, alongside some cultural expressions such as samba and capoeira that were transformed into symbols of nation to create the imagined community (Anderson 1991) of Brazil. Yet, as early as the 1950s, a Brazilian scholar, Oracy Nogueira (1998), had already challenged the notion. He argued that within Brazilian society, there exists a specific type of racism, *preconceito de marca* ('prejudice of sign', referring to the colour) as compared to *preconceito de origem* ('prejudice of origin') in the United States. The Brazilian form of racial discrimination is more like a form of social classification, merging with other categories such as social background, gender, education and wealth. The prejudice of sign does not have the power to divide the society into two totally different castes, but it puts individuals on a continuum where, other conditions being equal, the preference always goes towards the whiter individual (1998: 166–168). Nogueira argues that racial relationships in Brazil are reproduced in the everyday life of the society through both the attitudes of whiter people towards those who are darker, as well as through the image that the darker-skinned people have of themselves, along with their level of ambitions (1998: 197). This can clearly be seen in everyday life. It is

commonplace to call the hair-type of black people *cabelo ruim* (bad hair), and *preto pobre* (a poor black person) is a normal concept in the Brazilian language. It is also easy to note the appreciation of white skin, blue eyes and blond hair; it can be sensed in the everyday life and also reproduced in the media: judging by Brazilian television, one would assume 99% of Brazilians are white.

Nogueira provides examples of how the social order is maintained in subtle ways, avoiding direct confrontations as much as possible (1998: 197), taking two popular proverbs as examples: *Em casa de enforcado, Não se fala em corda* ('At the house of a hanged person, one should not speak about rope'); and *Basta bater na cangalha, para o burro entender* ('Just hit the shoulder yoke, and the donkey will understand'). The first suggests that when a darker-skinned person is listening to a white person, references to his colour should be avoided; the second refers to situations in which it becomes necessary to express to a person that his/her presence is not acceptable or desired in a certain situation (1998: 198–199). DaMatta (2004: 26) notes that a hidden prejudice can be an even more effective form of discrimination than one that is direct and open, as long as people 'know and keep in their place'.

Agency within the war zone

The legitimacy of the drug gangs in the favelas has been analysed in terms of the absence of the state in the communities (Burgos 2006; McCann 2006; Leeds 1996). Castells (2000) also links social marginalisation and income inequality to the withdrawal of the state and to neoliberal free market policies. 'When and where there is no regulation and control by the legitimate forces of the state, there will be ruthless control by the illegitimate forces of violent, private groups' (ibid.: 188). However, I noted that most favela residents did not even consider the option that the police might protect them. The police were considered, almost by definition, alien and hostile to the favela residents, which is understandable given the current reality. Other systems of control thus seemed perfectly natural. People seek a sense of security in social groupings—whether underwritten by the state or some other social group with a different spatial logic (Migdal 2004: 14–15). In the favelas, the gangs contest the state by putting forward an alternative code, and alternative mental maps and checkpoints for the people living in their area. For the favela residents, the situation is a challenging one; as Migdal points out, people would like to think of their mental maps as permanent, but they are very sensitive to changing and uncertain boundaries. Favela residents need to be prepared at a moment's notice to remake the map of the social terrain in order to find security in challenging situations. The absence of state provision of social services would also not surprise anybody in the favelas.

Thus trying to explain away the local legitimacy of drug groups, or the violence within the favelas, by invoking the absence of the state does not do justice to the complex temporal situation of the favelas within the Brazilian state. Da Silva (1999: 120) notes that public order in Brazil was never based on democracy or strong social control, yet, nevertheless, there were no signs of major organised crime before the 1970s. There is thus no single explanation for the growth of the drug gangs, or for the related violence.

In addition to the absence of state presence in the favelas, these situations are linked to economic inequality, difficulties in accessing quality education, racism and lack of opportunities for the youth; furthermore, the important roles that the drug gangs play in the favelas contribute to their local legitimacy and also explains their appeal to the youth. In Chapéu Mangueira and Babilônia, the drug lords are important people and role models for some of the young people, and as mentioned previously, also provide services and jobs. From the point of view of a young favela resident, joining a drug gang can often seen as a reasonable career option. Access to even moderately paid jobs is hard for the people of the favela residents, and young residents of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira told me they are not invited for job interviews if they include their address[19] in the application, and even if they manage to get work, the salary is rarely above subsistence level. Therefore many consider alternative options, and drug bosses seem much closer to the reality of an average favela youth than politicians or businessmen. Goldstein tells us how her informants often rejected the job opportunities traditionally available for the favela residents, such as housekeeper, security guard or construction worker, and chose resistance and more violent options for their future instead of living in the old structures of respect and obedience to the upper classes. Young women might choose to become sex workers and men drug traffickers for much the same reasons: they would feel more independent and free in these jobs (2003: 99–100).

In the context of structural discrimination, joining drug gangs can be seen as a form of resistance to the actual power structures in the society. Although they are aware of the dangers involved, for many youths the drug gangs offer a more credible way to achieving wealth and power than legal means, by working long hours in poorly paid jobs. This rejection of the dominant structure has been called 'resistance identity' or 'exclusion of the excluders by the excluded' by Castells (2004: 8–9). John M. Hagedorn has argued that in certain cities, like in Chicago, Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro, the institutionalized drug gangs have been born out of urbanisation, poverty, weakened states, racial and ethnic discrimination and social marginalisation in cities that have become important gateways to drug traffic wherein the drugs can be sold in spaces that are easily defended by the gangs, such as favelas. In all these cities, the gangs also offered an opportunity to the local youth to find in their local gang a family, job and an identity, as well as excitement (2008: 3–6; see also Misse 2009).

However, it must be noted that this modality of agency has more often than not produced adverse results for favela residents: repressive state measures have increased and favela residents been further marginalised. Moreover, seeing the drug trafficking and the gangs as an effective form of resistance would hardly do justice to the feelings of many other favela residents. The agency of favela residents is heavily limited in a situation in which the favela has become a war zone, with different groups fighting over its control. Not all the favela residents in Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira were favourable to the presence of drug gangs in their community, quite the contrary. Many favela activists were desperate about the new violent developments and older residents in particular were worried about the future of their children. The uncertain situation deeply affected the life of the residents and their prospects. The future was totally unpredictable in a situation where the communities could be invaded at any time by new drug gangs, led by people

from outside. The residents did not know whether they would be able to live in their homes next year or whether the community would have become a full war zone. As expressed by an ex-vice president of AMB:

> Here it's been calm for so long. We have even been proud of being a calm community. I wonder if it all will change now and our communities will follow the paths of so many others, becoming more and more violent? I love my community, but at the same time, I'm considering the option of moving away.

The role of the residents' association gets extremely complicated in this situation. When a president of the AACM called the police and complained about the raid in front of the nursery school, the response was that she was 'protecting the drug gangs'. 'If you talk to a criminal, people will think you are allied with the criminals. If you talk to the police, people will think you are allied with the police', she complained. A president of the AMB told me that he regularly received phone calls from both CV and ADA telling him that he should choose his side. He also would not cooperate with the police, because he regarded them as corrupt: if he gave them information, some of them would certainly tell the drug gangs the name of their informant.

They were concerned, and for good reason: during the 1990s, being a president of a favela residents' association became one of the most dangerous positions in Rio de Janeiro. McCann (2006: 157) cites an investigation according to which around 100 presidents of favela residents' associations were murdered and another 100 expelled from their communities between 1992 and 2001. As expressed by an ex-president of the AACM:

> The president does not have any other option than to have a lot of *jogo de cintura* [cunning/cleverness] and hope that none of the people involved kills them. It is vital to get along with everybody.

Getting too close to any drug gang was also dangerous, because in the case of a successful invasion by a rival gang, the new 'owner' of the community would not be favourable to anyone who had been allied with their rivals. Close cooperation with any of the drug gangs would also expose the president to criticism on the part of the state and the police. This position makes the work of the residents' associations increasingly difficult. On the one hand, as representatives of the favela they need to consult with, and talk to, all the relevant actors in the community; on the other, the different actors who impose on the community (police, rival drug gangs), do not consider each other legitimate and ban any interaction with the opposition.

Conclusion and postscript: the way ahead?

In this article, I have shown how the two (or more, for the different treatment of the citizens also always depends on the case of the individual in question, his/her relationships and other characteristics) classes of citizenship are manifestations of even more profound systems of structural hierarchy. Many structural mechanisms contribute to maintaining class separation and preventing the social ascension of the lower classes in Zona Sul of Rio de Janeiro. The repressive and humiliating measures to which the favela residents

are subjected are legitimated by discourses of the violence and marginality of the favela residents. When it is assumed that the violence is simply a result of drug trafficking, and the favelas are constructed as places where the drug trafficking takes place, the result is that residents of the favelas are seen as criminals, or at least the accomplices or protectors of criminals, a discourse that constructs the favelas as spaces of violence and idleness, contributing to the further marginalisation of their residents. Even though those actually suffering due to violence are the poorer segments of the society, their voices are often not heard when planning counter-measures. The state does not consider favela residents as subjects capable of analysing their own situation and suggesting appropriate responses in terms of practices and policies that might bring about security and increasing opportunities for the youth. Instead, the state has been patronising and violent, thereby contributing to escalating violence, as well as alienating the youth even further and pushing them towards radical resistance.

The actions of the favela residents' associations have both contributed to the reproduction of, and challenged, the power structures in the society. The perception of the 'right direction for the favelas' varies a lot depending on the person offering an opinion and their view of the world. The different modalities of agency used by the residents' associations do not form a unified front of resistance to, or compliance with, the current system, but rather work in different directions. Especially in the past, residents' associations have simply tried to contribute to the improvements in the community by their work, by building the neighbourhood themselves. The current administration of the residents' associations, however, largely seems to adhere to the rules of the game of political paternalism, contributing to maintain the system in place. Some young residents of favelas join the drug gangs, whether as a conscious manifestation of resistance, or just in hopes of progressing in life. Thus, while they might be working within the internal logic of the community, and gaining benefits for themselves and their families, they are contributing to the marginalisation of the favela residents in the bigger picture. Still other favela residents' association activists have made a more thorough analysis of the structural situation in which the favela residents live, and tried to contribute actively to changing the whole notion of second-class citizenship. This has taken the form of resisting the offers of corrupt politicians, entering the public arenas to represent favela residents and campaigning for change.

The favela residents' associations have contributed to changing the image of the favela residents from a mere population group, a subject of paternalist and repressive politics, to agents that are active in politics and in their claims for first-class citizenship. Among some residents, these positive examples of their own power and ability have produced a strong local identity, pride and self-esteem, and also faith in their own agency and the possibility of making changes. However, this progress is far from being consolidated and is constantly threatened by clientelistic politics as well as by the state response to the violence that has suddenly taken the civil rights of the favela residents 30 years back in time. Unfortunately, being able to reflect upon and understand one's social condition does not mean that possible acts of resistance will lead to favourable end results for the dominated. As summed up neatly by Talal Asad (1993: 4): 'Even the inmates of a concentration camp are able, in this sense, to live by their own cultural logic. But one may be forgiven for doubting that they are therefore "making their own history".' In

moments of crisis, the state has shown the tendency to revert to the old power structures and deprive the favela residents of the progress they have gained.

Since I concluded my fieldwork, there have been new developments regarding the engagement of the state in Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira. Since 2011, *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* (UPP, Pacifying Police Units) have been installed in the favelas. The logic of the UPP has been presented as supposedly the opposite of previous measures that only focused on force and oppression; it is a 'concept that goes beyond the community police approach and has its strategy based on the partnership between local residents and law enforcement institutions. The pacifying police approach, which is guided by dialogue and respect to the culture and uniqueness of each community, eases conversations and stimulates the growth of local leaders' (UPP 2014). However, the UPP has been seen as quite controversial and have also lost their credibility in the eyes of the favela residents due to their sometimes resorting to violent tactics (see Ashcroft 2014).

At the same time, 2013 marked the beginning of street activism: June 2013 saw major public demonstrations in nearly all of the various state capitals as well as the federal capital Brasília, in a movement that originally started as a protest against a rise in public transport fares. The citizens demanded better social services and public transport as well as protesting against high taxes, corruption, spending on the World Cup 2014, as well as police violence against the protesters. These new developments are intriguing in terms of citizenship and offer an excellent opportunity to study social change in Brazil. It remains to be seen what the end effects of the events will be and whether Brazil will embark on the journey towards more substantive citizenship for all.

NOTES

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[1] In this article, the translations from Portuguese to English are mine.

[2] This is an extract of a samba song by a very famous Brazilian musician.

[3] Slum, shantytown.

[4] The Constitution of Brazil is very progressive in terms of civil, political and social rights.

[5] "Brazil in crisis over corruption claims". The Guardian 11 July 2005. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jul/11/brazil>

[6] *Capoeira* is a Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, acrobatics and music.

[7] According to the World Bank (2014), the Gini coefficient value of Brazil is 54.7%, or the 13th most unequal country of those for which the data is available.

[8] It is important to note that the geographical social inequality in Rio de Janeiro is not only manifested in the division 'asfalto versus favela', but also between the North Zone, West Zone and the South Zone. Depending on the neighbourhood, living in 'asfalto' can be much worse than living in some favelas in 'Zona Sul' in terms of drug dealing/violence and state absence.

[9] In this article, I will use all these different concepts, depending on the context. In this way, I try to shed light on their different applications.

[10] 31.4 percent of Brazilians were living in the cities in 1940, whereas in 2000, it had risen to 81.3 percent (PNUD 2006).

[11] A PT politician who was born in Chapéu Mangueira. She was the first black person to be elected to the Senate and the Governor of Rio de Janeiro in 2002–2003.

[12] From the words *estado*=state, and *cidadania*=citizenship.

[13] A PSDB (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira*) politician and member of the city council of Rio de Janeiro.

[14] *Comando vermelho,* The Red Command, is one of the oldest criminal organizations in Rio de Janeiro. It originates from the 1970s when political prisoners were held in the same prisons with other criminals. For a long time, especially in the 1990s, it was the strongest criminal organization of Rio de Janeiro, controlling the drug traffic of the city. However, in the 2000s it was considerably weakened when many of its leaders were killed or imprisoned, and other criminal organizations have grown stronger.

[15] *Amigos dos amigos,* The Friends of the Friends, was born in the 1990s in the prisons of Rio de Janeiro, when its founder had been kicked out of the *Comando Vermelho* after he had killed the leader at the time.

[16] Available on the internet: <*Instituto de Segurança Pública http://www.isp.rj.gov.br/*>

[17] In addition, there are also other violent groups that control neighbourhoods in the city, like the *milícias* (militia) in the West Zone. They are mainly composed of police officers, or men expelled from the police and military, extorting the residents by forcing them to buy supposed security services.

[18] This idea originated from the famous book by Gilberto Freyre in 1933in which he presents Brazil as embodying racial harmony.

[19] CEP, the postal code, automatically reveals in which neighbourhood the person lives.

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