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Cartography of the favela

Community resources to resist violence in Recife and Olinda

Cartografia
Skyward

Cartograph of the Favela

Community Resources to resist violencia in Recife and Olinda

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Introduction

Though the statistics on violence in Recife, Brazil, are frightening, we should not make the error of simplifying the situation, for by failing to understand the context and history the problem, we miss many of the most useful and community-based solutions. In the conventional wisdom, this violence occurs mostly between organized groups, imagined as drug gangs and funk brigades, or as domestic violence, but our analysis shows that all of these forms of aggression emerge from the structural violence and inequality of Brazil's northeast. Whether we look at the employment relations of women who work as domestic servants, the way that people treat the recyclers who gather their trash at night, or the walls built between favelas and rich neighborhoods, we see violence at work. In the same way, the police and other state institutions treat people from the favela with destain and brute force, while the media show poor communities only in the worst light. When we combine these problems with the lack of access to public services, we can see the origins of the anger of young men.

In spite of this structural violence – understood and analyzed quite well by people who dwell in the favelas of Recife – most homicides and assaults are not poor people fighting back against a system that oppresses and excludes them. In great part, murder and other violent crimes happen *among* poor people, with young men from the favelas killing other young men from the favelas. This monograph addresses this kind of violence, but we do not want to forget the causes that lie behind it.

When we proposed this study, we hypothesized three root causes of the high levels of violence in Recife:

1. Extreme levels of social and economic inequality
2. Invisibility and social exclusion
3. A system of values based on ideas of reciprocity and moral debt

Strikingly, in interviews with many gang members and ex-gang members, they give exactly the same reasons for joining gangs, though using other words:

1. "Revolt," defined as rage against the injustice they face every day
2. The desire to be "considered", recognized and visible
3. The will to "independence", being able to enter the economy of social reciprocity that makes one a man

Tragically, in their attempt to react to the structural violence exercised against them and their communities, these young men join groups that kill and abuse exactly those communities and families.

This study does not propose solutions to the huge problems at the root of violence in Recife. From the beginning, our goals were much more limited:

1. To understand the motivations of violent actors and members of violent groups
2. To document the strengths that grass-roots civil society has to resist this violence

With this information, foundations and public policy experts can plan actions against violence with more efficiency and effectiveness.

In the course of the research, however, we discovered that we could set a larger goal for the project, based on the will of young men to seek justice and social recognition. The problem of Recife's favelas is not that young men are by nature violent; *the problem is that drug trafficking has become the privileged (and easiest) way for these young men to express their resistance to the oppression and invisibility they face.* As a response to the violence they feel, they fight… but against other poor young men. As such, members of the community, researchers, and even members of gangs we interviewed came to see a new challenge: *how to use the resources in the favelas to channel young people's desire for recognition and justice, into effective and useful methods for changing their world.*

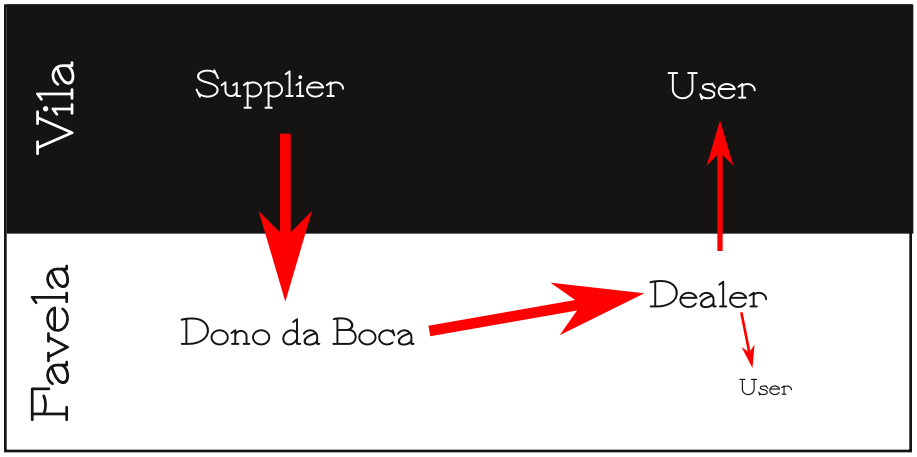
In Recife, people from the favela use the word "Vila" to refer to the rich areas of the city, where people have good public services, paved roads, and are included in political life. In constrast "Community" or "Favela" refers to the informal neighborhoods in which they live.

To understand this argument, we must begin by distinguishing violence from conflict. *Conflict* is natural among human beings, especially when resources are unequally divided. *Violence*, on the other hand, is an action designed to harm the other, an action which may or may not express a conflict. As such, we can see that the fundamental conflict in Recife is between the *Vila* and the favela, a struggle for consumer goods, for land, for the right to earn a just wage, or to define what the city is. In contrast, the most obvious violence in the city happens between one favela and another, or between members of the same poor community. This violence may express a conflict over the distribution of profit (as in a gang war), over prestige (as is the case in the funk brigades), or over honor (murder as payment for unpaid debts). However, we believe that these are truly *displaced* conflicts, a detour from the basic struggle for recognition and justice. People in the favela fight over the left-overs, over the small part of the pie that the rest of society has left them. And sadly, one of the "resources" that has been left to them is the sale of drugs; as places defined as "outside of the law", the favela becomes a center for the illegal activities demanded but not permitted by the formal economy. And as a result, the favela is defined as a place of violence.

Displaced Conflict

As such, though we focus this study on members of gangs and other groups considered to be violent, this direction does not imply that we see these poor young men and women as the source of violence. Much to the contrary: we believe that these "violent actors" may have the key to address the injustice and invisibility faced by poor people all over Recife.

Our research shows that drug trafficking play a much smaller role in the economy of the favela than most observers have imagined, but the sale of drugs offers an excellent example of the displacement of conflict. To illustrate, we can trace the path of a rock of crack cocaine from the time it



comes into Recife until when it is smoked.

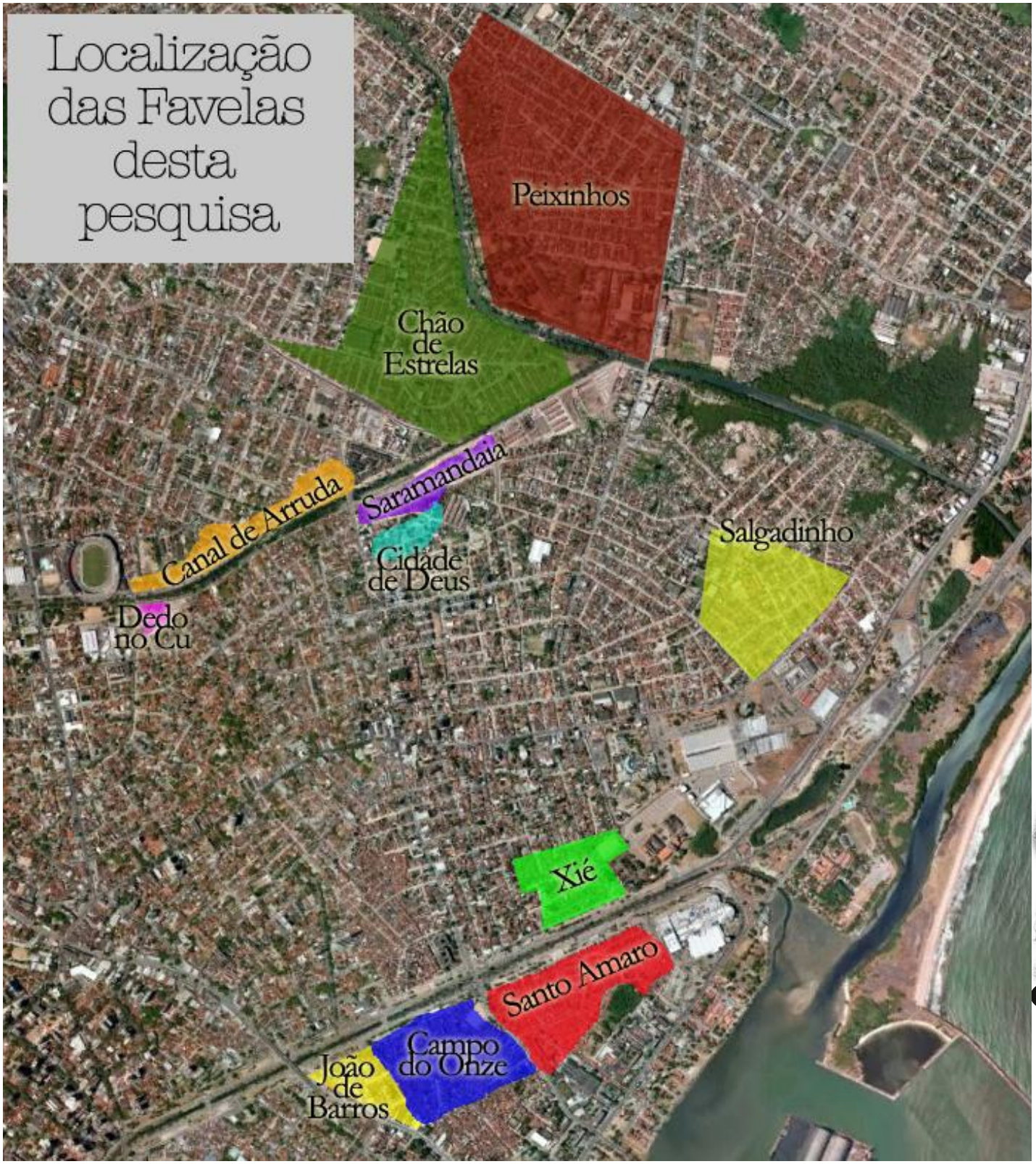
The suppliers of drugs are, almost universally, men and women from the *Vila*, with connections and money. Street level traffickers do not know these people, but they know that they exist, because they see the "*dono da boca*" (the local gang leader) make a call on his cell phone, and minutes later, a car pulls up with the supplies. In some cases, the *donos da boca* know their suppliers, but it appears that in many cases, they do not; they only know a phone number and a code word.

After the crack arrives at the *boca de fumo* (crackhouse, though in Brazil, the dealing is generally on the street, not in a building), the dono will distribute it in bags called the *bolsa pedra* (see chapter 2). He provides the bags, each with 30 rocks, free to the dealers, who must then repay him with 66% of the sale price within a week. Dealers informed us that they sell some to people from their community, but more that half of sales go to middle class people from outside of the favela. In Arruda, these buyers arrive in their cars in the middle of the night and pick up their drugs at the openings to the alleys; in Chão de Estrelas and Santo Amaro, they must enter on foot. Regardless, these sales are the bread and butter of the dealer, and both street-level traffickers and people who live in the favela tell endless jokes about the stupidity of rich addicts, lost in the maze of the favela.

As such, we can see that the basic flow of drugs is from the *Vila* to the *Vila*, using a detour through the favela as a kind of free trade zone. Most of the profits go to the distributors. Most of the users are also rich. But the people who die – and who earn the reputation as violent – are from the favela.

Again, we see that the real conflict is between the favela and the *Vila*, in this case between narco-capitalists and the favela, which they use as an out-law free trade zone. Yet the violence on TV and the cadavers that appear in the morgue are poor and black.

Though we do not address the root causes of this violence in this study, we believe that it is one of a small number of cases where "treating the symptom" serves as a royal road to address the underlying problem. Since the conflict has been displaced onto violence within the favela, by addressing this violence, the conflict can be expressed more honestly, as one for the material, human, and symbolic resources of the city.


Localização das Favelas desta pesquisa
Peixinhos
Chão de Estrelas
Saramandaia
Canal de Arruda
Dedo no Cu
Cidade de Deus
Salgadinho
Xié
Santo Amaro
Campo do Onze
João de Barros

In order to find ways to address both conflict and violence, this study begins with an analysis of what motivates young men (and some young women) to join violent groups. In most cases, these motivations circle around recognition and revolt, desires which the gangs offer a way to express.

In Chapter 2, we examine how drug gangs function, how one joins them, and how they are organized. In the process, we see that the majority of murders in the favelas are not, as many people assume, the result of gang wars. In fact, they are honor killings associated with debt. And interestingly, for both gang wars and these murders as payment-for-debt, people in the favela know that it will happen several days ahead of time.

The third chapter looks at the actions currently being taken by the government and civil society in Recife to reduce violence. Over the last five years, the state government of Pernambuco has created new security policies based on the "*Pacto pela Vida*" (Pact for Life), which has had a major impact on homicide rates in the state. However, interviews in eight favelas show that on the urban periphery, people continue to see the police and the state as the primal cause of violence, and as their enemies. This chapter also examines the actions of several NGOs working to reduce violence in the favelas of Recife.

At the end of the book, the reader will find two appendices: a report on the research methodology, and a page summarizing the history and geography of each of the eight favelas in this study.

Next, with chapter 4, we look more deeply into the work of these NGOs, with worrisome conclusions. We discovered that the actions of these NGOs have worked against their expressed wish for peace for two reasons. First, the logic of "keeping kids off the street" (a leftover from the struggle against youth homelessness in the 1990s and early 2000s) has symbolically *criminalized the streets of the favela*, transforming them into a place where kids "should" act badly. Second, the popular education that lies at the center of the work of the best NGOs has done excellent work at breaking down ancient structures of oppression, training young men and women as critical thinkers and leaders. Unfortunately, jobs and universities where these skills are valued are closed to young men and women from the favelas, so one of the few places they can exercise their talents is as leaders of drug gangs.

The drug trade is, in fact, a very small part of life in the favela, so in chapter 5, we look at the businesses and "journalists" of the urban periphery, looking at three economies: finance, information, and prestige. By tracing the

flows of these resources, we can see new opportunities for partners in the struggle to reduce violence and transform conflict.

As we begin to look for solutions, chapter 6 examines the way that individuals have been able to escape from the logic of violence. Though many members of gangs insist that "once you're in, you can't get out", interviews with half a dozen ex-gang members show a clear path for leaving "the life of crime."

In the final chapter, we gather proposals from civil society leaders, people who live in the favela, and even gang members for actions that could integrate a new "civic policy" to complement public policies for violence reduction.

This text is only a part of a larger multi-media study of the favelas of Recife. All of the digital resources are available on line, collected in an index at http://cartografiadafavela.blogspot.com/

1. Maps: Five interactive maps accompany this study:

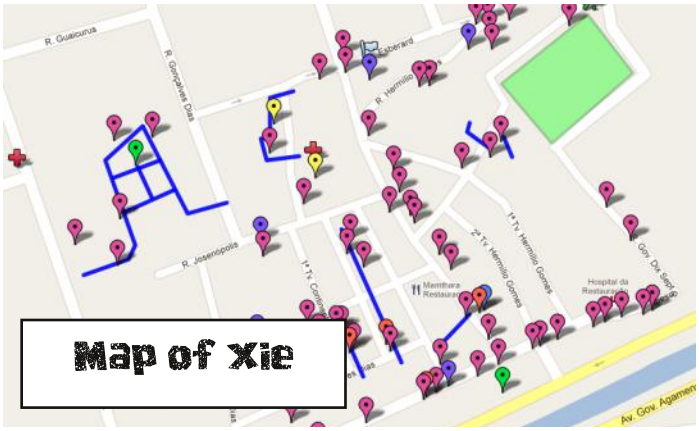
a. Santo Amaro and Campo do Onze

b. Xié and Salgadinho

c. The Favelas of the Canal de Arruda

d. Chão de Estrelas and Peixinhos

e. Film locations (see below)



The maps show the location of every institution in the communities: businesses, NGOs, cultural groups, community leaders; they also correct the official maps provided by City Hall, adding unmarked alleys and correcting the path of many mis-mapped streets.

2. Children's video cartography: In several of the key neighborhoods for this study, we asked children to use video to show their favelas. The research team taught 5-10 year old kids how to use the camera, and then everyone used film to show the social geography of their homes. With these films, we see how children live their day-to-day lives – games, social relations, fears – but also the taste of each community: the narrow alleys of Arruda, the central role of the open football pitch in Chão de Estrelas, etc.

3. Hip-Hop Research: In the favelas of Recife,

hip-hop functions as a kind of unofficial journalism (see chapter 5), where young artists research the events of their communities and "publish" the results as songs. Taking advantage of this local form of knowledge, each of the researchers in this project investigated violence in his community and wrote the results as a song or a choreography. The songs were then recorded in the studio and turned into music videos by the authors. In addition to helping the readers of this study to understand the dynamics of violence in the favelas of Recife, this form of "publishing" brings the results of the research directly to the people who live in the favelas of Recife.

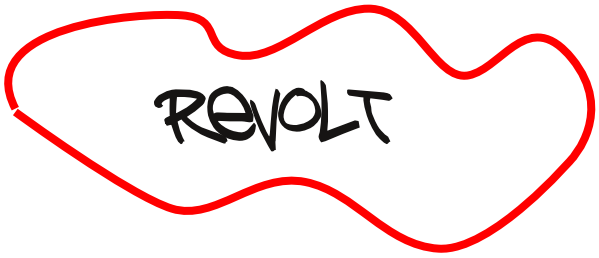
1 Why join the armed groups?

When children and teenagers in Recife talk about people who join gangs, funk brigades, or other violent or criminal groups, they say that they "*entrou nessa vida,*" or "entered in that life", sometimes adding the adjective "wrong": "They entered in that wrong life." With this chapter, we want to understand why children and teenagers from the favela "enter that life" and what "that life" implies, concretely, for someone who lives it.

Almost all of the people we interviewed during the research (whether gang members, family, or friends) related three central motives for "entering that life":

1. Revolt
2. Desire for independence
3. Wanting to be "considered" or recognized

For them, these explanations come from simple, day-to-day words, but for those of us who don't live in the favelas of Recife, these ideas need a lot of unpacking.



Invisibility, poverty, the lack of water, sewer or electricity in their homes, seeing their image dirtied every day on TV… all of these factors strike children from the favelas as unjust and unfair. However, what drives most teenagers to the fury at

Conflict between police and educators from Pé no Chão. From the film Return to a City of Rhyme.

injustice that they call "*revolta*" is the constant invasions of the favelas by the police. Without a productive channel to express this revolt, gangs become a way for teenagers to deal with their anger at injustice.

According to almost all of the people we interviewed in the favelas, from six year old children to eighty-year old grandmothers, the police are the cause and source of the violence in the favela. They do not deny the violence of the gangs, the funk brigades, or abusive parents, but they see this kind of violence as derivative and as more or less comprehensible and manageable. What they see as uncontrolable and senseless is the invasions of the police.

Many children play games where police brutality plays a central role; as kids from Arruda show in their film, "*Minha Favela*," when they play at cops and robbers, the police frisk everyone and throw kids to the ground when they resist. However, it's the beginning of the teenage years when kids begin to feel this violence in their bones, because whenever the police invade – which they may do at any hour – young people from 12-20 years old find themselves as a target of the police. When we asked teenagers how often they had suffered police brutality, the most common answer we heard was "every day", and not a single teenager reported having escaped from police attacks. Even in the center of the city, as we were filming one day the police attempted to attack our research team, and only the intervention of Jocimar Borges and Anderson Santos from Pé no Chão prevented a serious beating.

Children and teens aren't the only ones who experience the feeling of revolt. In both this research and our projects from 2002-2008, people from all ages denounced the way that police treat them in the favela. One great-grandmother in Arruda told the story of when she and her grandson were walking outside the favela, only to be stopped by the police. The police beat him so soundly that he only survived thanks to protests by other people on the street. The great-grandmother reported that a pregnant woman, who had tried to defend him, was threatened as well. After he was bleeding on the street, the police either planted or found – we heard both stories – two rocks of crack.

"My grandson almost died, and they didn't even respect the belly of the pregnant woman. After that, I understood why people enter in that wrong life," she continued with obvious rage. "If I'd had a gun that day, I swear I would have killed them."

This story illustrates a complaint we heard often: that the police obey neither the laws of the state nor the norms of the community. "No law controls them," one young man declared. In this case, the great-grandmother was angry at the beating, but it was the *rule-breaking* that brought her to furious rage. First, the police officers beat a pregnant woman, a serious violation of community norms, where pregnant women merit special protection. Nor did the police respect their own rules, because they took the grandson prisoner after they found only two rocks of crack. The law defines two rocks as personal use (deserving of a much lighter sentence), but the police charged the grandson with selling. "Even if he'd had three rocks, he shouldn't have suffered like that, but with just two, they didn't even have the right to take him prisoner."

A young man with many friends who sell drugs in Santo Amaro told the following story, which helps us to understand the revolt of many young men.

> *"We were hanging out on the street here one night at 11 o'clock, just shooting the shit. Five or six of us. When the swat team invaded the alley, we tried to get in our houses, but they stopped us: 'Hands on the wall! Spread 'em!' One kid didn't spread his legs fast enough, so they kicked us to the ground and started to kick and beat us. At the end, we were all there on the ground, bruised and battered, and I said to the chief, 'All that, and none of us did anything bad.' He looked at me and he said, 'Maybe you haven't done anything yet. So I'm not beating you for what you've done, but for what you're going to do."*

Marcos Lanna, A *Dívida divina. Troca e patronagem no nordeste brasileiro.* Campinas : Unicamp. 1995. See also Chapter 5.3

This young man defined revolt through the story. The code of honor in the northeast is based on reciprocity, including revenge for injustices done to a man. However, you can't "pay the police back", so entering "that life" (a code word for becoming a gang member) becomes a form of symbolic revenge, at least to join the police's hereditary enemy. The problem, as the research team discussed after the interview, is that the police officer made it clear that he *wanted* the young man to become a bandit. The phrase "I'm not beating you for what you've done, but for what you're going to do" makes it clear that the police understand they they are constituting their future enemy.

"I'm not beating you for what you have done, but for what you are going to do."
-Police officer in Santo Amaro

Vengeance has long played a central role in the

construction of masculine honor in the northeast of Brazil. Where the state was long absent or hopelessly corrupt, justice came to be defined through norms of reciprocity: one had to return favors, pay debts, and avenge affronts. The famous family feuds of the region, as portrayed in the film *Behind the Sun*, are one manifestation of this ethical system, but we also see it in day to day life in the favela.

(Marques, 2008), da Silva 2008

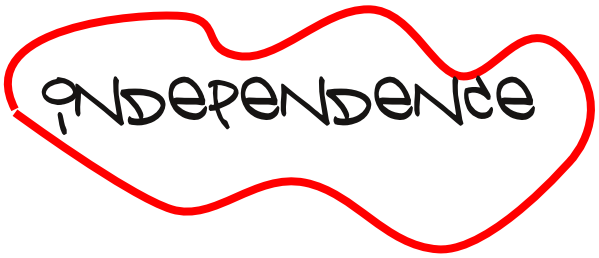
The police, as a part of the state, stands outside of the immediate economy of vengeance and reciprocity: it can insult and offend without fear of recompense. In part, this is the result of the nature of the state, as an anonymous force that belongs to everyone and no one, but it also has to do with the fact that a police officer is more a function than a person, more a uniform than a face. One cannot get revenge the police officer as an individual; it would be absurd. In addition, the police have such incommensurate means of power that if a gang would begin to kill police officers, the police are capable of destroying a whole community.

Another story that circulated in the favela of Arruda during our time in the field illustrates the centrality of anonymity for revolt, as it reaches beyond the power of the police. An acquaintance of one of our informants had been sent to a prison where he had many enemies. One night, all of these enemies surrounded the young man, and the head of the group asked, "Who has the courage?" One of the enemies had the "courage" to step into the middle of the circle and kill the young man, but the others closed around the event, hiding responsibility and making vengeance impossible. "In my family, we always feared that my grandson [now in jail] would die like that. God help us." She was particularly fearful that his murder might go unjudged and unavenged: "If that happened, no one could be accused of his death."

According to the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, a masochist is not someone who likes pain. Instead, he is a person who knows that when he transgresses a rule, he will have to be punished. Since punishment is inevitable, he chooses to suffer it before the sin, not after. In the same way, a young man from the favela who has already been punished, feels he has the right to commit the crime for which he was already condemned.

Gilles Deleuze: Coldness and Cruelty. NY: Zone Books, 1991, p. 88

When power or anonymity makes reciprocity impossible, revolt takes the place of vengeance. Knowing that he cannot attack the police or the state directly, a young man who feels himself the victim of injustice will join an armed group to win a shadow of revenge, at least knowing that he has joined up with the great enemy of the police. The problem, of course, is that this channel for justice will only justify more police abuses, more revolt, more children joining the gangs. As in the old feuds of the northeast,



each individual may be a victim, but the structure of violence continues to win.

Childhood in a Brazilian favela doesn't follow the same timetable as it might in a middle class family, whether in the United States, Europe, or the rest of Brazil. Traditionally, from ten years old on, children want to contribute to the family's income to help their mother and siblings, and by thirteen, the rest of the family will come to expect this help. At fourteen or fifteen, many teenagers are married and/or have children. In the favela, adulthood can come a decade or more before it does for a person who grows up in the middle class.

The desire for independence is often linked to the desire for recognition and consideration (see below), but freedom also plays a central role here. When a young man says "I started to sell drugs so I could buy my own things," he isn't only referring to the status he will win for having a nice shirt or pair of shorts; he also dreams of *not depending* on his mother or father. As they grow older, many teenagers come to see their purchases as a burden for their families, using money that would be better spent on younger siblings or on food. So with their own resources, teenagers feel that they free up money for their families and free themselves to buy what they want.

In the same way that a 25 year old college graduate in New York might feel ashamed of living with his parents and depending on them for food and rent, a fourteen year old in the favela may begin to want his independence. Decades ago, before the prohibition of child labor in Brazil, kids began to work with their parents at this age, but today, this kind of family apprenticeship is illegal (though not unheard of). In an informal debate in the offices of Pé no Chão, and in other conversations with activists who had been militant supporters of the prohibition of child labor, many educators have come to see this political reform as part of the problem. "The only business that is faithful to the tradition of apprentices is the drug trade," one NGO leader, known in the 1990s for his fundamentalist opposition to child labor, told us. "The government and civil society, we all made a mistake. And the drug trade took advantage of it." Another program director made a similar observation: "When a buy wants to buy a gift for a girl, what option does he have to get the funds? Trafficking."

The third, and probably most important motivator to join gangs and other armed groups is what people in the favela of Recife call "consideration". This word captures a large range of ideas, from being respected and recognized in one's own group, to a broader sense of being well thought of. It is not specific to the favela; children of all social classes need recognition from parents and other adult family members, and later from peers, friends and neighbors. For small children, recognition comes from helping at home, being funny or charming, and as they grow, from being a hard worker, "*fazer a correria*". As children become young adults, however, in an environment marked by invisibility and social exclusion, understanding the dynamics of consideration is key to analyzing the construction (and possible subversion) of current violent practices.

"Fazer a correria" is how children and teens in Recife describe the hard work of trying to contribute something to their families' economies. It generally means doing good, honest work, the famous work ethic of lower class Brazilian families. (See Silva 2008)

It isn't only in the favelas of Recife that pre-teens and teenagers look outside of their family group for recognition. This is one of the common marks of adolescence, attached to fashion, youth culture, and new behaviors. The *correria* which gave such prestige in the home may make a teenager seem like an "*otário*" (a fool taken advantage of by others), while he is also exposed to a new value system focused on independence, manly courage, and/or easy money. Teenagers come to have new consumer desires, and know at the same time that they cannot ask their poor parents (generally mothers) to provide them.

The change in value system is accompanied by a change in the subject of consideration; instead of wishing recognition from mother and siblings, many teenagers come to see the gang or other violent actors as the prime font of consideration, for they best express the independence and cunning associated with the Brazilian idea of *malandragem*. Several of the young gang members we interviewed said that they felt they had to choose between their mothers and the gang, and taking up arms was a way to win "consideration" from older peers.

A young man from Arruda, three times prisoner for dealing, explained how he joined the gang. He had been a b-boy (breakdancer) who, with a group of friends, performed in

I didn't want my mother's consideration any more. I wanted consideration from the gang, because I thought they were cool, powerful. Real men. And to get them to respect me, I had to tag, sing gangsta funk, hang with them.

-gang member in Arruda

"Why does a teenager take up arms?" asked Adriano, one of the researchers on this project, of a group of 12-13 year olds who play soccer in front of the boca de fumo in Arruda.

"To be considered," one replied.

"To get famous," said the second.

"To show off," suggested the third boy.

shows around the city and on the street as a ay to earn money – a classic form of *correria* in Arruda. But at thirteen or fourteen, he grew apart from the group, finding dance boring, and becoming more and more revolted by the violence he saw around him, especially from the police. At that time, Arruda had become one of the centers of the drug trade in the city, as the commerce excluded from Santo Amaro moved into other favelas. It was a moment when the drug trade implied both money and prestige.

The young man said,

"The dudes were powerful. People looked up to them. But they didn't even know I existed. I started to write gangsta funk, singing about the stuff the did, the wars and that stuff, and the dono liked it, you know? So then I got some spray-paint and went over there [gesturing to the favela called "Dedo no Cu"] and tagged my name and the gangs'. I wanted to be considered by them."

Looking back, the young man says he didn't want to join the gang or sell drugs. He just did what he thought would earn him the respect of the men who had power and prestige in the neighborhood. But when he tagged the walls of the enemy – in the same way that funk brigades and gangs do – he found his name "in the circle," and came to be considered as one of the gang. At first, this identity didn't come from the gang, but from the enemy and from normal people in his favela. But now, to defend himself – and because his old friend didn't want to be friends with a gangster – joining the gang seemed the only option. It was only *after* he was in the gang that the young man understood the consequences of his actions.

In almost all of the interviews we did with teenagers and young men in the favelas, "to be considered" was first on the list of reasons to enter "the life of crime." Behind the walls of the favela, invisible to people passing on the street, it is easy to think that the guns and money of a powerful dealer will give a boy respect.

Luiz Eduardo Soares describes the will to be seen, and how it it expressed through guns, in Rio de Janeiro.

When a dealer gives him a gun, the boy receives more than just an instrument that will give him material benefits, economic gain, or access to consumer goods: he gains a passport to his own social existence because, with the gun, he will be able to

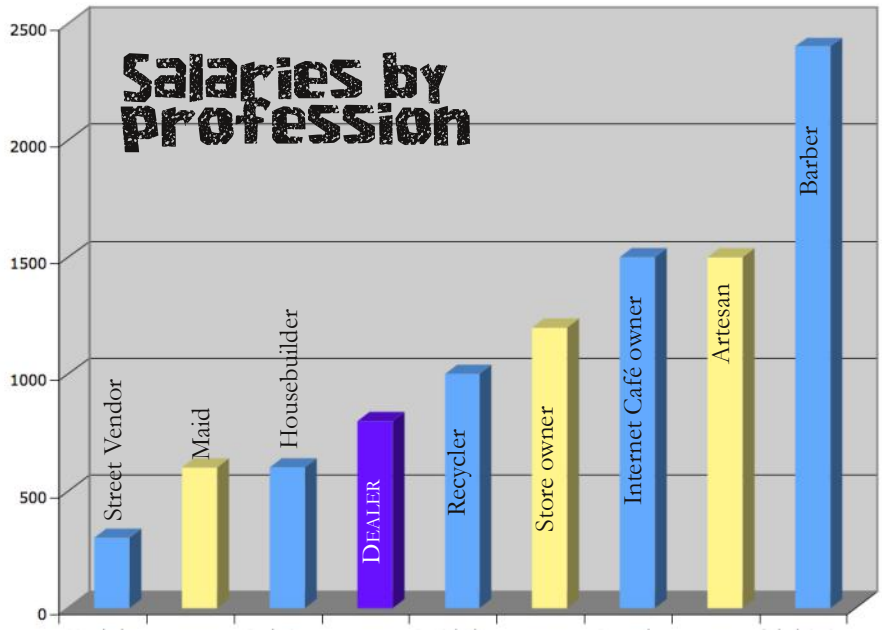
LUIZ EDUARDO SOARES, Novas políticas de segurança pública. ESTUDOS AVANÇADOS 17 (47), 2003. pp. 75-96, p. 77

produce at least one emotion: fear.

What is interesting both in the gangs that Soares describes and in our research in Recife, is that money – generally considered to be the most important motivator to sell drugs – is really just a subcategory of the desire to be "considered" and recognized. "I wanted money to buy a cool pair of shorts, a wicked cap," is something we heard several times, when we asked people why they had begun to sell drugs. This was true of two young men who had always been examples of good behavior, closely associated with educational programs at an NGO. Wearing good clothes marks a young man as someone "who's well-off,", who isn't "a poor sucker"; this is the key to being recognized in a capitalist society, but also among boys and girls of this age.

A young dealer in the gang in Santo Amaro told us that he only joined the gang because he wanted the money to buy shoes and a nice shirt. For him, the gun played no part. However, once he had become a known dealer, he had no choice: he had to take up arms to defend his boca and his own life, and to make war against other gangs.

One of the greatest surprises of this research was how little money a street level drug dealer earns. Working hard, he may be able to sell a bag of 30 rocks in 3-4 days, earning R$100 in the process; over the course of a month, he will bring in something like $700-800 reais, a little over the minimum wage of R$540/month. A recycler, the most despised job in the city, earns R$1000 for a month of good work, more than a dealer. A barber with a good clientele earns R$2400/month, and the owner of a shop about R$1200-1600. When one looks carefully at the statistics, a dealer earns much less than many honest workers.



None the less, when we asked a barber who had once been a dealer how much he earned "in the life of crime," he

told us, "There's good money in drugs." When asked about his current salary, almost four times higher, he replied, "I get by on it." We heard similar comments from many people: the small salary of a dealer is "a lot", while the good salary of a worker is "not much."

Why? Conversations among young men and women lead us to believe that when a person earns money honestly (*fazendo a correria*), he has the obligation to spend this money for the good of his family: on food, housing, gas and water and electric bills. But when someone gets money dishonestly, he has the right to spend the profit on luxuries, like a pair of shorts or an expensive baseball cap. Honest money is for survival, while dishonest money is for showing off.

Here we arrive at an essential element for understanding the motivation to sell drugs or join a gang: ridiculously expensive clothes or shoes show that a dealer has a excess of money, money to burn. This conspicuous consumption (to use Veblen's term) shows that a young man is "well-off" and worthy of respect. *Wasting* his money on luxuries like fashion is a kind of potlatch, where a man earns prestige through his capacity to spend with wanton abandon.

Dealer's expenses

Baseball Cap by Cyclone: R$60.
T-Shirt by Seaway: R$50.
Bermuda by Cyclone: R$160.
Shoes by Nike: $240

The media also play an important role in the dialectic of visibility and invisibility of teenagers in the favela. Though social activists may say that people from the favelas are "invisible", this isn't exactly true: in fact, the favela is constantly surveilled by the media, and both people from the "*Vila*" and the inhabitants of the favela themselves come to understand life on the urban periphery through programs like "Hard Core with Cardinot" (a sort of police blotter for daytime TV) and "Cinderella" (a comedy program about life in the favelas).

Each year, when a new group of young men and women join the NGO Auçuba to learn how to make video, the educators ask the students to do a study of their own neighborhoods, comparing the way that people from the favela live their communities with the way those same places are portrayed in the media. According to the video teachers, every year they see the same results: *young people from the favela believe the media more than their own eyes.*

The favela is not, in fact, invisible to society. However, the easiest way

to become visible is to do bad things. That's what TV and newspapers want to show: the tripod of crime, violence, and drugs. For a young man who wants to see his face in lights, crime is an easy path.

Funk Brigades

Consideration is an important motivation for joining gangs that traffic drugs, but we can also see it as a reason that young people become members of the funk brigades. In Recife, funk culture has become a classic example of how social groups use courage and competence in combat to overcome a challenge or a rival, thus winning recognition. When we began this research, we imagined that these funk brigades – dance groups who fight during *bailes funk* – were a kind of training school for the drug gangs. However, we learned that the relationship between these two different violent groups is much more complicated; many young people who join the funk brigades never become gang members, and many young men join the gangs without ever having passed through funk culture. None the less, the two groups engage in a play of mutual recognition and interdependence.

Gangsta Funk is a kind of ritualized violence, where the consumption of symbols (music and consumer goods), together with the participation in staged battles, becomes a way to be recognized and known. It is based on repeated challenges using music, almost an esthetic duel of insults and affronts. The most respected members of the brigades are creative composers, who invent lyrics to laud their friends and denigrate their enemies. These lyrics – and the response they inspire from rivals – can raise or lower the popularity quotient (*ibope*) of an individual or his or her brigade. To be named in a popular funk brings fame and normally inspires pride, but it may also do the opposite, if the lyrics slander their subject.

The case of the leader of the funk brigade of Arruda is exemplary. In addition to being known as "a good fighter," she wrote powerful

"Ibope", meaning a kind of popualrity rating or quotient, is derived from the name of the Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística (IBOPE), defined on its website as "The IBOPE is a Brazil-based private multinational corporation, one of he largest market research companies in Latin America. For the last 69 years, it has provided extensive information and studies on the media, public opinion, voting preferences, consumption, branding, and marketing." It serves a a kind o Nielsen rating for Brazil.

Baile funk transforma pancadaria em diversão

Front page of the Diário de Pernambuco, showing a fight at a baile funk

The Clube Português, which once held bailes funk, now specializes in brega.

and clever verses to "lower" girls from other brigades. In our interview with her, she sang a funk she had composed against the leader of the brigade from Peixinhos; Peixinhos had been one of the most powerful enemies of Arruda, and when the leader of the rival brigade was unable to respond with an effective rhymed rebuttal, Arruda's popularity quotient went through the roof. According to the singer, the rival's boyfriend suggested that she not respond, because he knew that such a contestation would bring the two rival brigades to the edge of violence. Thinking that they had earned a reputation for good fighting skills, the Funk brigade from Arruda began to think even more of itself, and gained a reputation with the other brigades.

Many people agree that gangsta funk culture is in decline because of the excess of death and violence it involves. People who used to fight at bailes funk now go to other genres of dances, like the brega (a slow, sensual dance more associated with sex than violence). Brega dances continue to focus on prestige and the popularity quotient, but instead of winning points for clever lyrics or good fighting skills, girls are recognized for the clothes (especially shoes) they wear or by the way they dance. From time to time, the DJs at a baile brega will play funk music, and the girls from Arruda said that it made them miss their fighting days, giving them goosebumps. Even so, they think the change is for the better: "We lost a lot of friends, so it was really time to stop," one of them said. Another added, "Now I think about how stupid it was to pay R$20 to go to a dance and get beat up, come home all black and blue…"

For more details on fights in the bailes funk, see chapter 5.

Hooking up

Another way to win consideration is through romance. In Recife, young men gain status among their friends when they are able to seduce many girls, and when desirable girls want to be with them. For boys and young men who feel unlucky at love, the drug trade can be a tool to attract sexual partners. Girls and young women, in turn, see a dealer's presents, his protection, and his courage as a way to win prestige among their own friends.

They started to sell drugs because of the 'Illusion of women,' and used drugs with them. Then the girls dropped them for someone else who could offer more, and then they got depressed and started to use more drugs and alcohol. They want to show they hook up with more girls, that they are powerful, they can give presents, and that's why they join the gangs. If they can keep it up, other people will envy them.

We do not want to suggest that this dynamic is universal among teenagers in Recife; many young people prefer stable monogamous relationships or stay out of the game. However, this kind of polygamy was listed by several young men as a reason to join the drug gangs.

When expressing why a boy might join a gang in order to impress a girl, we heard the phrase "the illusion of women," where illusion means mirage, hope, and the unknown. In the perception of these young men, the most desired girls have many boys after them, and they will choose the one who has the most to offer (presents, money, prestige, etc). In turn, the boy who "gets" the girl, gains prestige among his friends. One of the researchers lamented many of his friends who fell into this trap:

> *"They started to sell drugs because of the 'Illusion of women,' and used drugs with them. Then the girls dropped them for someone else who could offer more, and then they got depressed and started to use more drugs and alcohol. They want to show they hook up with lotsa girls, that they are powerful, they can give presents, and that's why they join the gangs. If they can keep it up, other people will envy them. Three of my old friends, who used to breakdance with me, are worse off than a beggar right now because of that. I'm sorry for them, I try to help, but I get sad when I see I can't do anything."*

Though girls and women may work as dealers or even be *donas de boca*, their most common involvement in the drug trade is through these romances. By dating dealers, they come to be recognized because of their access to money, the status of their boyfriends, and because their boyfriends have the power and courage to protect them. Teenage girls who have become involved with dealers report that the boys are charming, and though the girls know that they are doing something wrong and that the relationship has no future, the boys put so much effort into their seduction that they eventually get what they want. The girls fall in love with them.

The seductive dealer

We heard many young women say that they found gang members charming and seductive. They might look for protection or presents from a dealer, but it was this charm that made them fall in love.

It seems that the essence of this charm is the devil may care attitude of the dealers, who are willing to say, "Life is short, so I'm going to play hard." As one young man from Arruda said, "they know they'll die young, so they burn the candle bright." This attitude gives them the courage to take on other gangs, but also to overcome the shyness that might keep a boy from talking or flirting with a girl he likes.

Dating a dealer brings with it certain benefits: girlfriends report that they start off feeling safe in a violent context, that their female friends see them as powerful, that they get presents, that they have access to drugs, a car, and money. These girls say that many others date dealers because of the money and benefits this relationship brings, but that they really love them. They say that you can tell the difference between selfish and loving relationships, because when the love is real, girls won't give up on a guy in hard times, and they trust that some day he'll change his life. Girls who are in it just for the benefits will give up when a better man comes along.

One young woman who lived with the dono da boca in her favela said that the benefits are less than most girls expect. There was very little money to be had, and he spent most of it on drugs and women. "He locked me in the house because he said that "that life" wasn't for me, and I was always furious because there was always a new women after him. I thought he would change,

Consideration and teen parents

In the favelas of Recife, marriage and/or childbearing generally happen during the first years of an adolescent's fertility (14-18 years old). Teen pregnancy rates are high, and at the mouths of alleys and in the largos, one sees many fourteen and fifteen year old girls caring for their children. Though public health officials and social workers define this issue as a "problem," people in the community do not see it as such, responding with, "When you make a kid, you're not a kid any more." Much to the contrary, they see childbirth as a mark of maturity and a source of recognition for teenagers, who share their babies proudly. In the alleys of Arruda and the streets of Xié, Santo Amaro, and Chão de Estrelas, one can see how young mothers bring their children to play together in relatively safe places, creating a sort of community daycare center. In these spaces, not only do small children learn and play together, but young mothers learn from mothers with more experience, and people outside of the family collaborate with watching after the kids. The child serves as a kind of medium of communication, a motive for social relations between people (see Silva, 2008), and a way to recognize both men and women.

Sexual Orientation

Few people in the favelas of Recife are murdered because they are gay or lesbian. None the less, homophobia plays and important role in the construction of a violent environment in the city.

When interviewed, many musicians and dancers from the favelas expressed sadness that other young men called them "frangos" (gays) because they danced well. It is already difficult to choose a life of art in the favelas, a profession which will bring little income and none of the quick prestige that accrues to a dealer, but when other people make fun of you, too... It serves as yet another motive for a young man to enter a gang. None of the gang members we interviewed said that he joined the gang for fear of being thought gay, but people outside the gangs saw it as a significant motivator.

In Arruda, the terreiro de candomblé (Afro-Brazilian cult center) is clearly the place where gays, lesbians, and transgender people feel themselves welcomed and embraced. In the film the research team made at the invitation of the priest, one can see that more than half of the participants come from sexual minorities.

It is especially interesting to see that the drummer at the event was also a famous valente (killer) in the neighborhood, the type of person who might make fun of gays in other contexts. However, in a space defined as tolerant, he hugged the transgender participants with a much enthusiasm as the priest did.

and I finally told him I'd only get back together with him when he did. But now he's in jail because he killed a guy."

Some young women become involved with young men who have killed people, thinking that it will make them more respected and feared in the community. Others see the protection of a powerful man as an opportunity to exercise their own power, knowing that they can beat up other people without fear of recompense, for they are protected by the most powerful man in the favela. The violence of the man makes the women feel powerful.

Many of the girlfriends of dealers with whom we spoke said that over time, "that life" became too hard. They constantly had to flee the police and rival gangs, and they could no longer circulate through the city because of the reputation of their boyfriends. They could no longer go to visit friends, parents, or relatives in other favelas, especially when those people lived in favelas controlled by their boyfriends' enemies. Perhaps the most dramatic case is one we heard from three teenage girls, two sisters and a friend of theirs. The elder dated the dono de boca in Arruda, while the younger sister dated the dono in the favela across the canal, a traditional enemy. The friend dated another dealer from Arruda. As the war heated up between the two favelas, one boyfriend killed the other.

Revolt, independence, and the desire to be considered are important processes in Recife, integrated with daily life. They are all basically good things. Hegel even said that the essence of the human being and the motor of history was exactly that desire to be recognized and respected. In the same way, under the conditions of exclusion and oppression that children in the favela live, revolt is a positive emotion, showing a will for justice and equality.

The problem is not that these elements exist, but that the armed groups offer the best (and perhaps the only) way to channel these desires into action. Any politics that tries to reduce violence and improve the lives of children and adolescents on the urban periphery in Recife has to channel these legitimate, quotidian desires into something productive, so that teenagers need not join armed groups in order to find independence, justice, and recognition.

Cartografia
Skyward

2 In that life

Up to this point, we have analyzed the change in values and expectations that prepare the path into the armed groups. Normally, this process walks hand in hand with several concrete steps which bring the boy (or less often, girl) into a group that will sell drugs and battle to control points of sale. In this second chapter, we want to look at how a boy or girl comes to sell drugs, and then examine what life looks like inside the gangs and other armed groups.

The movement into the drug trade is marked by the "*bolsa pedra*", which works like this: the dono da boca will give (on credit) a bag with thirty rocks of crack cocaine to the novice dealer; this merchandise is worth R$300. In a way, this "gift" functions as a contract of trust between the chief and the novice salesman, a signing bonus. If the new dealer sells all of the rocks, it will earn him R$300, of which he must pay R$200 to the dono da boca, allowing him to keep R$100, or a third of the profit. When he returns the price the of bag, he then gets a new one, also on credit, for which he must pay when it is sold. Effectively, the dealers are semi-autonomous sales associates who win a commission of 33%.

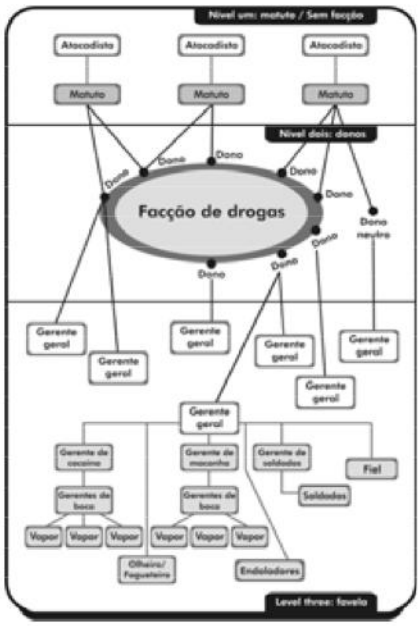
"Bolsa pedra means both "back of rocks [of crack]" and "crack scholarship", (bolsas are the generic terms for scholarships and welfare programs in Brazil) eliding the semi-welfare discourse of the entrance into the gangs.

Because of this process of sales, the organizational structure of the gangs in Recife seems different from those documented in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, where the command structure is more military and hierarchical; there, the dono da boca will coordinate an army of soldiers, watchmen, and sellers. In contrast, in Recife the structure is more flexible and horizontal, with

For more on the structure of the drug trade in Rio de Janeiro, see Luke Dowdney, *Crianças do Tráfico* (RJ: Ste Letras, 2003) and Marcio Alvito, *As Cores de Acari* (RJ: FJV, 2001)

Gang organizational chart, Recife

Gang organizational chart, Rio de Janeiro



source: Luke Dowdney, Crianças do Tráfico (RJ: Ste Letras, 2003)

only two layers of authority: the dono (helped by a "right hand man") and the dealers (*os cara*). The Right Hand Man may be a vendor, but he is also responsible for the dirty work, discipline, and command of invasion and defense.

Many children and adolescents who observe the drug trade explain that in addition to the young men who sell openly, there are also many quiet dealers, unknown to most people. They have not built their sales clientele on violence and do not define their identity in terms of dealing; perhaps more importantly, they will probably not be called on as soldiers when wars occur between gangs.

Entering the armed groups can happen easily, sometimes before the young man knows that he has done. The gangs often ask young boys to work as messengers or couriers; boys explain that these errands help them to have their own income even when they are only four or five years old. These boys develop friendships and a sense of allegiance, and by the time they understand what they are doing, they are on the inside.

In other cases, children and teenagers turn to their armed peers to escape or resist bullying, a favor which is not free of consequences. Since almost everyone growing up in the favelas has childhood friends who joined the gangs, hanging out with those friends implies guilt by association; considered by others to be dealers, it is often easier to join the group than to defend an independent identity. We also heard many stories of young men hanging out with dealer friends when the police invaded and took the whole group prisoner. In jail, they needed the support of criminal friends, and then needed to repay the favors when they got out of jail. This moral debt forced them to help the gang or even sell drugs, entering into a cycle of financial debts to add to the moral ones.

Violent Practices

"Of all of the deaths that I saw or participated in, only 25% happened in war. 75% came out of an unpaid debt."

- ex-gang member, Arruda

When outsiders think of violence in the favelas of Brazil, we often think first of drug wars. One gang attacks another to take its territory; the police invade the favela to do away with the drug trade; gangs engage in civil wars to establish control of the group. Though this kind of violence is present in Recife, gang members report that most murders have another cause: debt.

Stories from many people who live in the favelas show an error in the statistic cited here. In truth, a large percentage of murders happen by error. When we heard rumors about a murder from people who did not know this victim, the story always included the moral, "they killed him because he was a bandit (or addict)." In contrast, when we heard narratives of the same murders by people who knew the victims, many of the narrators insisted that the death happened because of a stray bullet, mistaken identity, or mere association. According to these people, the justification came later. Clearly, this analysis of gossip falls far short of scientific research, but it does suggest that a large percentage of murders happen by error.

With this research, we were unable to do a careful statistical analysis of the causes of homicide in Recife. However, almost all of our informants agreed with a datum provided by one ex-gang members: "Of all of the deaths that I saw or participated in, only 25% happened in war. 75% came out of an unpaid debt."

In this section, we analyze the most common violent practices in Pernambuco, looking to the stories we heard during the research to understand why people are murdered. Part of the success of the state program Pacto Pela Vida (see chapter 3) emerged from the observation that many murders in Pernambuco were committed by death squads and social cleansing groups; by attacking these groups, the police could make a large impact with a limited investment of resources. We hope that his analysis can help to do something similar with murders in the favelas.

Debt

As we explained at the beginning of this chapter, the *Bolsa Pedra* builds the economy of the drug trade on debt. The seller gets the drugs for "free" but then must pay back R$200; each time he gets a new product, the dealer will contracts new debt.

The problem emerges when a dealer cannot pay the R$200 back,

establishing a more permanent debt with the dono da boca. When this debt is not quickly paid, the debt will become a complex problem, leading to violence within the gang. Financial debts are considered to be moral debts, because they involve not only money but also trust, confidence, and the status of the dono da boca. If the dono "lets it slide," he will lose authority and profit.

Even small debts, if left unpaid (*não-pagado*) must be honored by *apagando* (turning off/killing) the debtor, a rule that applies to debts between the dono and his dealers, or between the dealer and the consumer. This threat of death by debt causes immense fear among mothers of users and dealers, especially when an addiction becomes stronger than the ability to pay for it.

Here, the concept of honor fuses concepts of moral and financial debt, an idea brought together in a catch-phrase one hears in the favela: "If you can't pay with money, you pay with your life." As debt persists, more important than the actual money of the debt is the honor associated with it.

When they get the *Bolsa Pedra*, many boys who have no experience with sales or managing money suddenly get a packet of drugs worth more than they have ever seen. They can commit any number of errors. After any of these simple mistakes, the dealer will not be able to pay his debt to the dono da boca. At this point, he can either find a way to pay, accept another Bolsa and increase his debt load, or, if he does not address the problem, he may be murdered.

We also heard many cases of debt between the dealer and the user. Addicts know how to play the system, searching for novice dealers, telling them sad stories or threatening them, and get the drugs on credit. Without being paid by the user, the dealer won't be able to pay his debt to the dono da boca. A teenager who sold for many years and went to jail three times explained what happens next:

> *"So if a junkie contracts a debt with us, and can't pay it, then the dono gets on your ass. 'Gotta pay, gotta*

How dealers get in debt

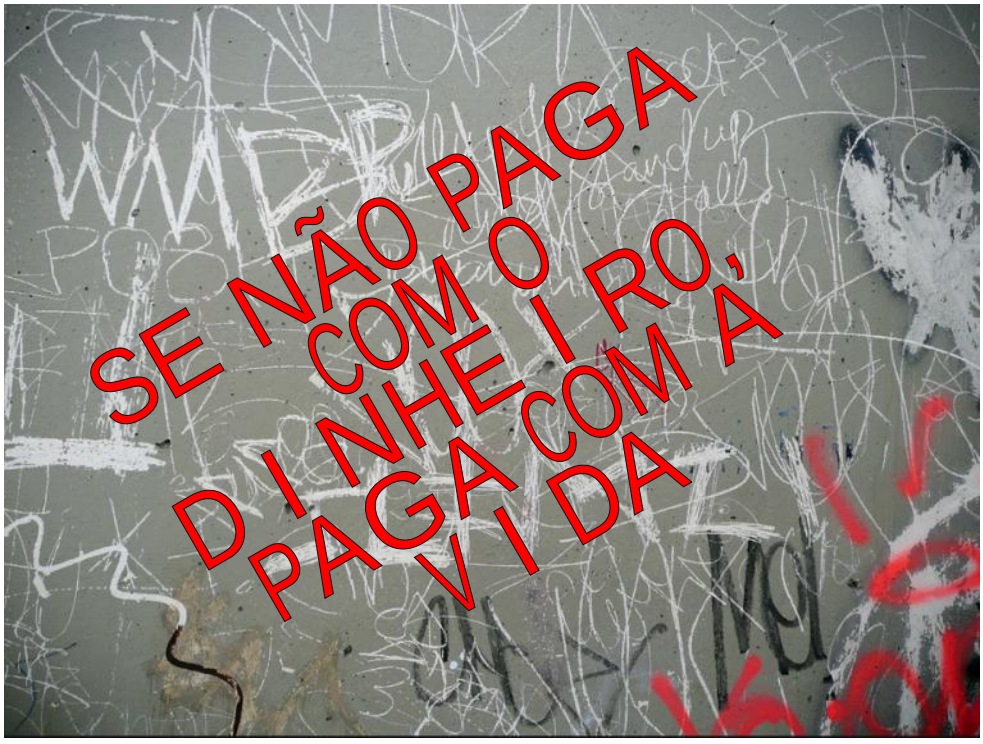
1. Start spending the sales money before selling the whole Bolsa, thus spending more than the R$100 that belongs to them
2. Give crack as presents to girls (as an exchange for sexual favor) or to adults (as a way to gain prestige or affection)
3. Sell to people who don't pay
4. Use the crack because of curiosity, addiction, or the stress of not being able to sell
5. Losing the drugs
6. Throwing the drugs away when the police invade
7. Accepting bartered goods (cell phones, DVD, jewels) in trade, only to find that they aren't worth what they look like
8. Many other errors we didn't hear

pay.' Then he says, "You can't pay with money, you pay with your life.' So then you got a choice: either I kill the guy who owes me, or the dono kills me."

When a researcher asked, "You can't pay with your own money?" he responded, "I could. But I do that, I look like a wimp. It's all over then. It's kill or die."

Researcher: "And most people…"

Dealer: "Kill, of course."



This exchange opens many questions which should be considered more deeply. First, the logic of "If you can't pay with money, you pay with your life" means that a R$10 debt can earn death. In spite of malicious jokes that circulate in the favelas, this practice doesn't mean that "life is cheap." Ten reais are not worth a life, but the *honor* of the man who gives a loan is. Loaning money is not just handing over pieces of paper with numbers on them. It means giving faith. This is why the word "*fiado*" (on credit, a word derived from *fé* or faith) is so important. I give money, but in exchange, you owe me respect and the promise to repay. The culture of Brazil's northeast is based on the idea of reciprocity, the trust built on the mutual exchange of favors. This exchange means respect. And reciprocity doesn't just mean the exchange of favors; if someone does a man wrong, he has the responsibility to pay that wrong back as vengeance.

We use the word "man" here consciously, because this ethic of debt and reciprocity stands at the center of what it means to be a male in the northeast. If someone does not repay a debt to me, it implies that the person is holding back part of my honor; the debtor effectively robs one of honor through his disrespect of the contract. A life is not worth ten reais, but a debt means honor, and honor is worth the price of a life.

Returning to the exchange between the researcher and the ex-gang member above, we see that not to pay a debt is to negate respect, and this

Slavery and Debt

It is interesting that the first slaves brought to Pernambuco in the 16th and 17th century were often sold into slavery in Africa in order to pay a debt. Clearly, it goes beyond the scope of this research to suggest that there is a direct historical memory here, but the continued obsession with debt in Recife might owe something to this fact. See Ira Berlin, Gerações de Cativeiro. São Paulo: Record, 2006.

undermining of respect is contagious: for this reason, the dealer could not possibly forgive the debt or pay it with his own money. He would seem weak, a wimp, a fool. He would lose prestige in front of the users (making his work harder) but also in front of his friends and the other dealers (who would tease him relentlessly). Were he to forgive the debt, he knows that every user in the city would be at his door asking for free drugs.

The dealer's honor is not the only thing at stake here: the dono da boca also has invested his honor in the deal. For that reason, he will always "Get on your ass" to demand repayment. If the debt does unpaid, the dono loses honor and the boca gets a reputation as a bad place for business. The only way to "pay back" this reputation is an honor killing of the debtor. Though he lost his money, the bravery it takes to kill another man would compensate for the loss of honor in the debt.

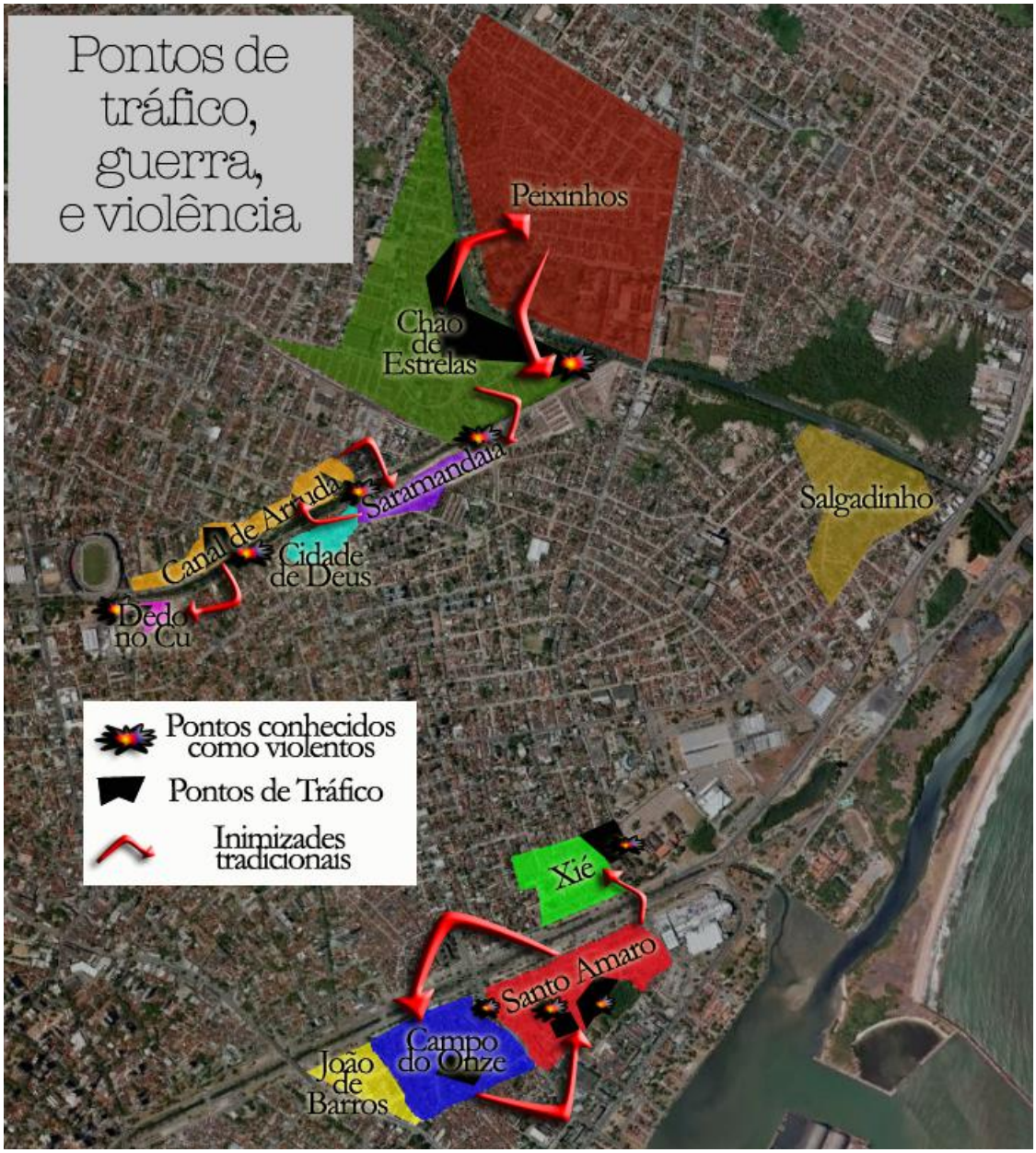
Debts can be moral as well as financial, and many "good kids" get involved in the drug trade for this reason. For example, we interviewed a young man with many friends in a rival favela; when he went to visit them, the dealers in the other neighborhood asked some information of him, and since it seemed unimportant and they threatened him, he responded to their question. This "small favor" hurt the sale of drugs in his own community, so the dono of the local boca de fumo demanded that he repay the damage he had done, doing favors for the gang. If he didn't he would die. The case of innocent children in jail (mentioned above) follows the same logic: upon gaining their freedom, they must pay the moral debt for the favors that kept them alive on the inside.

Honor killings because of debt are a kind of "death foretold": the debtor (moral or financial) knows the consequence of his debt. Rumor in the neighborhood also points to what will happen: "The dudes are looking for what's his name," you hear days before news of the murder. This news brings about another kind of violence, unrepresented in statistics: forced displacement. Among teenagers who did not join a gang, almost half of them told a story of being forced to flee their homes at one point or another, largely because of moral debts. Others do not accept the warnings to flee, whether because they accept their deaths, don't believe the rumors, or simply have no other options.

War

A second cause of murder is competition for clientele between rival bocas de fumo. When one point of sale begins to gain or lose a large number of buyers, war is a way to change the dynamics of the economic game. By destroying the boca of a rival gang, a dono supposes that he will increase the sales of his team. Here, the point is not to *conquer* the opposing point of sale, but to *destroy* it as a way to gain market share.

Wars between favelas happen in a context of traditional rivalry, often stimulated by proximity. Campo do Onze fights Santo Amaro; Arruda against Dedo no Cu; Chão de Estrelas against Peixinhos and Saramandaia… each gang



The War for the Canal de Arruda

From October 2008 to March 2009, gangs from three favelas on the banks of the Canal de Arruda fought a bloody war to control drug trafficking in the area. After a series of police invasions of Santo Amaro, users and suppliers were looking for new free trade zones for drug sales, and the Canal was perfect: it had good access for cars, narrow alleys that were easy to defend militarily, and a tranquil population. Saramandaia had an established gang, but crime in Dedo no Cu and Arruda was just getting organized.

In order to win a larger share in this new market, gangs from the three favelas entered into an anarchic war, where each of the ten bocas in Arruda fought against each other. The gang in Saramandaia, already powerful and monolithic, took advantage of the confusion to attack the northeast of Arruda, while the bocas in the south also fought against Dedo no Cu.

In only a few months, more than 25 people in Arruda died, leading to a homicide rate of over 500 per 100,000 (if pro-rated by months, more than 1000). At the end of the war, only three bocas were left in Arruda, and the police took advantage of the weakened gangs to arrest the donos of all three.

According to participants in the conflict, many "soldiers" died in battles, but the violent environment took even more victims. Dealers took advantage of the war to kill debtors and to avenge personal affronts from years past.

inherits a territory and a history of many wars. And as old enemies, it is very easy for an insult, an economic crisis, or simply a new dono looking to establish his power to set off a new war.

As we will see in the analysis of the economy of prestige (Chapter 5), the most important thing in the war between bocas de fumo is not the conquest of the other's territory, but the destruction of its point of sale. When the rival gang's market share grows too much, or when it begins to rob clients from other bocas, it inspires envy, and the rival gang will try to do away with it. A dealer from Arruda told the story of a war in which he participated in 2009:

> *"There in the favela of Dedo no Cu, they were growing too much. People were buying there and not here. So the dono told his right hand man, 'We have to end the lives of those people.' The right hand man got us all together at night and told us to get our guns. We crossed the canal in the dark, a night we knew they had a party there, and invaded. Shots, shots everywhere. It was months before they started to sell well again."*

The 2008-9 war in Arruda, which involved internecine conflict between the ten bocas in the favela, as well as battles against Saramandaia and Dedo no Cu, shows the level which these conflicts can reach. Over the course of only a

few months, at least 25 people died in Arruda, and more in the rival favelas, leading to a 500 per 100,000 homicide rate. In addition to the economic conflict, the war came to be based on honor, debt, and vengeance. It was so dangerous that people simply did not leave their houses, and Pé no Chão cancelled classes for several weeks.

In Rio de Janeiro or Medellín, tasks are divided in a gang: dealers, soldiers, watchers, rocket-men, couriers, and marketing specialists, but in Recife, dealers have to play all of these roles, including that of soldier. The Right Hand Man will command in times of war, but the participants are the same as the dealers who work for the dono da boca. According to one dealer in Arruda, the donos don't go to war; they just command.

Wars can begin for economic motives, but honor and insult also play important roles. When we were in the field, a war began between Chão de Estrelas and Alto Santa Terezinha, gangs without a traditional rivalry, and from distant favelas. The problem happened when a dealer from Chão de Estrelas went to jail, and to get leniency, told the police about details of the drug trade in "his" favela. Because he knew this information about Santa Terezinha, he claimed to be from there and told about the activities there, instead of for his own gang. The gang from Santa Terezinha invaded Chão de Estrelas to get revenge and to reduce the income of their new enemies.

Only a few days before a war begins, rumors fly. "Shit's coming down," one hears on the street, and mothers tell their children not to play on the street any more. No one seems to know where the news comes from, but people know that a war is on the horizon, and they prepare themselves. We see this fact as a key to promoting dialogues to head off these wars (see Proposals, Chapter 7).

Losing your head: drugs and alcohol

Many people in the favela – especially our research team – expressed concern about another form of violence in the favela: when people "lose their heads" under the influence of alcohol or drugs (mostly crack). Especially when times are tense and people can't seem to resolve their problems in other ways, drugs and alcohol can catalyze an explosion of violence, whether against acquaintances or unknown people. It may also inspire domestic violence in many forms: parents against children and men against women, but also women striking men and women against other women in the household.

In Arruda, particularly, the research team insisted that we not do the cartography on weekends, because of the spontaneous and random violence inspired by drugs and alcohol.

The traditional form of "losing one's head" was by drinking *cachaça*, but

crack now also serves this purpose by mixing masochism and sadism, violence against one self and against others. People in the community fear crack junkies because they lose moral control when they are "jonesing" (*noiando*) for a hit. Neighbors say that these junkies may do just about anything to get what they need, and that they no longer see friends or neighbors as human beings, but only as an opportunity to get more drugs. Strangely, users of crack get a kind of forgiveness from the community: they may break a central norm against hitting a mother or robbing in their own favela, for instance, but people will say, "You have to understand, he was jonesing for crack."

The brave one

The same people who were concerned about people losing their heads also pointed to another cause of violence in the communities: people who want to show off their power with guns or by acts of senseless bravery. Their "performance of violence" may gain them a kind of respect or fear from others, but it also leaves everyone in the favela with a sense of insecurity and uncertainty of what they might do next.

These "brave men" (*valentes*) make mana circulate in the favela (see chapter 5.3), because one gains honor by being respected by them. At the same time, they carry with them immanent danger, because of the threat of violence and vengeance which always circulates close to them. When a young man kills someone, he gains this status of a "brave one" and will be known by almost everyone. He becomes somehow other, different from

The killer at the candomble

Part of the research team went to the terreiro of umbanda in *A*rruda at the invitation of the local animist priest, in order to film one of the most inclusive and accepting religious spaces in the community. During an intermission, I congratulated one of the drummers on his rhythms, slapping him on his back in a common Brazilian form of camaraderie. He returned my compliment with equal enthusiasm, and invited me to come back any time.

*A*s the drummer went back into the terreiro, Okado turned to me with an air of fear and respect. "Good thing he liked you. He's the valente (brave one) in the favela. Five murders and counting."

*A*t the time, I interpreted Okado's commend "Good thing" as a kind of "whew, that was close, if he hadn't liked your slap on the back, you might be dead." In addition, however, I think we need to consider the way that the valente makes honor and mana circulate: he had respected me, giving me a new kind of status in the community, even among people who hate what he does.

- Kurt Shaw

Ze Brown, one of the most famous musicians in Recife, sings the anthem "Alma Sebosa," a condemnation of people who make "confusion" in the favelas.

-source: Zé Brown's Facebook Page

normal men.

Social Cleansing

There are several forms of social cleansing in Pernambuco, from death squads that kill beggars to groups dedicated to killing traditional, political, or business enemies. According to José Luiz Rattón, special advisor to the Governor of Pernambuco for security, merely combatting these groups was enough to drop homicide rates by 12% a year. Among inhabitants of the favela, however, social cleansing is limited to two smaller practices: eliminating the *alma sebosa* and off-the-books police work.

When a person has a history of creating social problems or conflicts in his community, he may earn the name of an "*alma sebosa*" (a soul of stinking offal). These people bring conflict into the community, sometimes as a part of armed groups or gangs, other times simply by angering people and causing "confusion": telling tales or gossiping to make others fight, lying about affairs or bragging of untrue sexual conquests.

Executing the *alma sebosa* is an accepted way of reducing social conflict in the favelas of Recife. da Silva (2008) gives the following extended description, based on the story of a local artist from the favela of Brasília Teimosa:

> *"A popular artist explained what an alma sebosa is: 'The Alma Sebosa is anyone who lives by bringing bad things into the community. He doesn't respect the sons and daughters of other people, nor the wives of other men. He drinks too much and does stupid shit, hits people. And he'll narc on anyone if he thinks it'll help him.' He then went on to explain how the community will use the alma's evil side to attract him to his own death.*
>
> *'Since he's a dude who'll go after anything in a skirt, they send a women there to him, to flirt and make him think he's got a chance. So then he takes her off in some dark corner, and the woman's husband shows up to kill him. It was because of honor. No one will say anything. No one will accuse the guy [the husband] of killing the alma sebosa. Everyone wanted to do exactly the same thing. So the cops show up and everyone says, "Nope, I didn't see anything." And the cops write it off as justified homicide, that kind of stuff. Sometimes the police even know who did it, but they let it go because they know a dead man can't mess*

with the community.'

Killing the alma sebosa is legitimate, because it ends a danger to the community.

The second form of social cleansing in the favela is that of "cop's friends", whose traditional role is something like an informant. However, especially in Arruda, when the police fear to enter the community or don't have sufficient evidence to charge someone formally, they may send their "friend" as a killer. In exchange for police immunity, the informer may kill whom the police tell him to.

Domestic violence

Though this research emphasized violence in the street, children in the favelas of Recife – like children from all social groups in all parts of the world – also suffer violence at home. Because of its history, form, and motivations, public violence in Recife is different from anywhere else in the world, but domestic violence is similar to what one might find in a middle class or peasant family anywhere else.

Intra-familiar and domestic violence in Recife has two characteristics worth noting. First, the social geography of the favela confounds any easy distinction between public and private. Houses are tiny, and kids spend most of their time in the streets, alleys, and clearings in the favela. Streets are also not exactly public: unknown people are not welcome, families may close the public way, and a "street" may pass under a roof or even through a house. This deconstruction of the division between public and private makes it impossible to hide domestic violence. Everyone knows that it is happening.

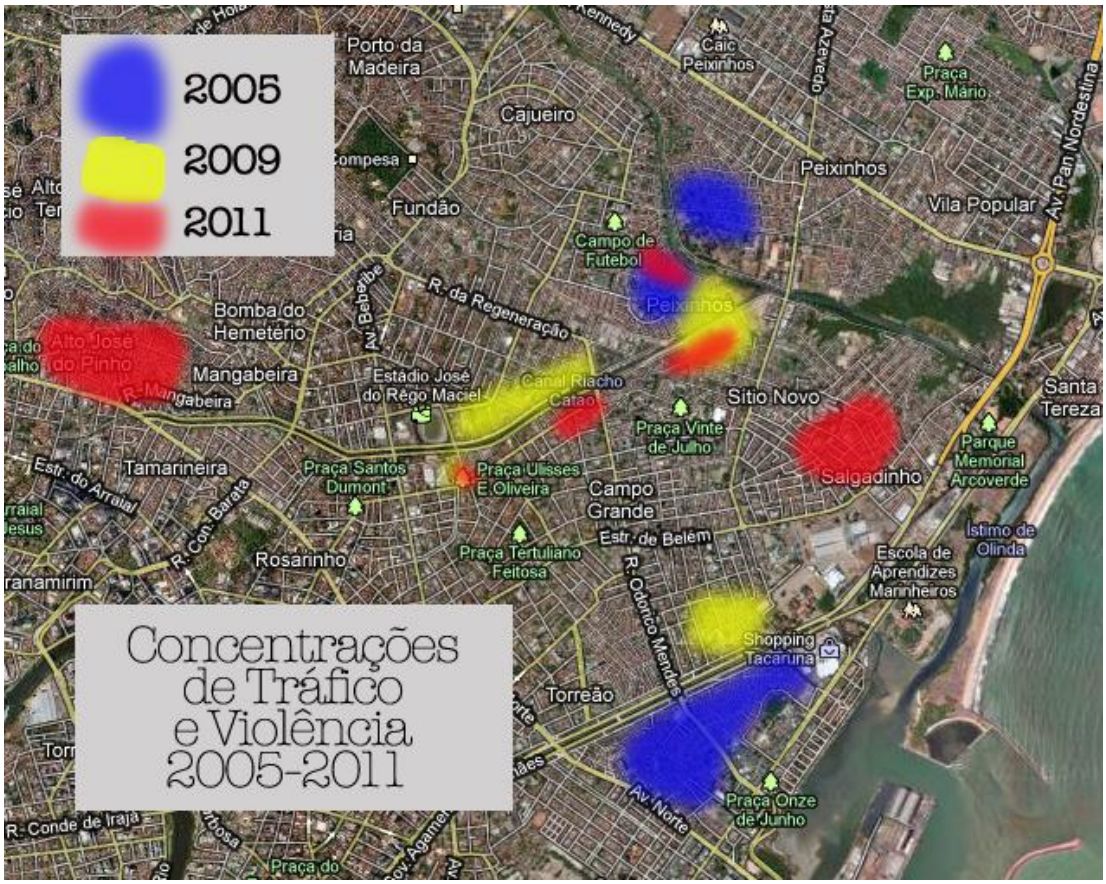
The second special fact of domestic violence in Recife is the central role of honor. With children (and even more with teenagers), many parents beat their children "to make you respect me." Disrespected and invisible on the street and in the *Vila*, parents may see the street as the last place they can get respect and consideration. We believe that when parents get more recognition in public spaces, they need to use less violence to win the respect of their children at home.

3

Current peace-building and violence reducing activities

In the 1990s, when murder rates in Recife were climbing 12-14% per year, approaching the frightening number of 100 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, both the government and many NGOs developed actions to reduce violence or promote peacemaking. If we consider only the favela of Santo Amaro, we see many international efforts (from the EU, Italy, and many foundations) and a major investment by the Brazilian federal government, when it declared the neighborhood the first "Peace Territory" in the country. As proof of the success of these efforts, organizations and funders all point to the dramatic reduction in homicides in the neighborhood. They see Santo Amaro as a model to follow in reducing homicide rates in other violent favelas.

None the less, this example shows the problems associated with responding to violence without a coherent policy. Though the inhabitants of Santo Amaro agree that their neighborhood is less violent, the drug trade and the violence associated with it have only been displaced onto new spaces, or re-created with new practices. In 2009, when the government began major interventions in Santo Amaro, the trade flowed into Xié, Arruda, and Chão de Estrelas. With punitive police action in Xié and Arruda, the trade went deeper into the alleys of Chão de Estrelas and into Cidade de Deus, Saramandaia, Salgadinho, and a small favela in Campo Grande called "Dedo no Cu". Even more worrisome is the fact that closing down open trafficking in Santo Amaro also sent the drug trade into neighborhoods that had been safe for many years, like the Alto Zé do Pinho and Alto Santa Terezinha. Without a broader public policy, attacking crime and violence in one neighborhood only pushes criminal activities into new places. It is now in these neighborhoods that children have to watch out for stray bullets flying in the street.



The second problem with the success of Santo Amaro is that statistics lie. Certainly, there are fewer murders and less open dealing in Santo Amaro than five years ago, but this does not mean that there are less drugs, fewer addicts, or even less violence. Inhabitants of the neighborhood say that the drug trade merely adapted to a new ecosystem of police and public security. Knowing that murder invites police detectives and public scrutiny, the gangs now behave differently, acting like small businessmen instead of warriors. Before, each of the bocas in Santo Amaro fought against the others, but now they have a cooperation treaty. On the other side of the road in Campo do Onze, there is no longer a single boca de fumo; instead, the dealers are in constant movement, and buyers (or the police) have to ask locals where to find them on any given day. Our research did not propose to measure the number of addicts in each neighborhood, but many informants in Santo Amaro believe that there are *more* addicts today than there were in the past, even if street violence is less than it was. And according to some inhabitants of Santo Amaro, repressing violence in the street brought with it higher levels of domestic violence.

Here, we want to analyze the actions to prevent violence ongoing in the favelas researched in this study, in the light of the debate over what "really" happened in Santo Amaro. The results surprised us: five years ago, we would have said that NGOs played an important role in reducing violence, while it was better to see the state as an agent of violence. Today, the contrast is not so clear.

New government security policies

Before 2007, though the state of Pernambuco was always one of the most violent in Brazil, it never had a public policy on violence. The state engaged in actions against crime, but it never developed these actions into a coherent policy. When Eduardo Campos was elected Governor in 2007, he called on José Luiz Rattón, now professor of sociology at the Federal University of Pernambuco, to respond to this glaring lack.

Knowing that much of the problem emerged from a lack of communication among different actors, Rattón convoked a dialogue among all of the organs of the state. An association of police chiefs concerned with human rights had already asked Rattón to help them think through the problem, so he brought them together with the *Ministério Público*, judges, local police forces, social movements, and NGOs in a series of open meetings on the future of security policy.

Annual Homocide rate, Pernambuco

Source: Pacto pela Vida

According to Rattón, the plan they developed focussed on the long term, looking to reduce the number of homicides by 12% each year until the state reduced the murder rate to the average in Brazil, and then to the goals of the United Nations. In a series of interviews with Rattón, he explained that the strategy of the new *Pacto pela Vida* would come together in the following plan:

1. **Foucussing law enforcement's attention on homicide.** The best police chiefs were transferred to special squads directed toward murder investigation, getting more resources and training to address capital crimes.

2. **Shutting down death squads.** Many murders in Pernambuco were committed by groups dedicated to "exterminating filth" or honor killings for debt. In the first years of the Pacto, just attacking these groups achieved the 12% homicide reduction goal.

3. **Bureaucratic reform.** Security policy was transferred to the Planning Ministry, which also controls budgeting decisions. In this way, the policy became more flexible. The Governor of the state took direct responsibility for security and became the chair of the Administrative Committee on Public Security (see below).

4. **Creation of AIS:** By dividing the state into 20 "Integrated Security Areas", the government could monitor crime levels in each and provide more detailed responses to the regional problems.

5. **Re-directing social policy toward violence prevention.** By collaborating with schools, welfare programs, and social services, the government encouraged these programs to use their work in new ways.

6. **Administrative Committee.** Every Thursday, the governor chairs a meeting of all state actors who work on security issues, from police chiefs to bureaucrats, and the group evaluates statistics and suggests new policies.

Stats used by the Pacto para for evaluation and planning

ANÁLISE POR ÁREA INTEGRADA DE SEGURANÇA (AIS)

Tabela 1: Números absolutos e taxas de crimes violentos letais intencionais (CVLI) por Área Integrada de Segurança (AIS) – Pernambuco (2009 e 2010) – Março.

	Números absolutos (março)			Taxa no período* (março)		
	2009**	2010	Diferença	2009**	2010	Variação (%)
AIS-1 (Sto Amaro)	4,5	4	0	5,2	4,6	-12,0%
AIS-2 (Campo Grande-Iputinga)	10,1	8	-2	3,3	2,6	-21,8%
AIS-3 (Boa Viagem-Ibura)	14,6	17	2	3,7	4,3	15,1%
AIS-4 (Afogados-Tejipió)	20,2	16	-4	4,9	3,8	-21,8%
AIS-5 (Monteiro-Guabiraba)	16,9	19	2	4,5	5,0	11,5%
AIS-6(Jaboatão-Moreno)	38,2	35	-3	5,1	4,6	-10,2%
AIS-7 (Olinda)	21,3	27	6	5,4	6,7	25,3%
AIS-8 (Paulista-Itamaracá)	27,0	26	-1	4,7	4,5	-5,4%
AIS-9 (Camaragibe-São Lourenço)	7,9	9	1	3,3	3,8	13,5%
AIS-10 (Cabo-Ipojuca)	14,6	10	-5	6,1	4,1	-32,5%
AIS-11 (Nazeré-Carpina)	16,9	12	-5	3,4	2,4	-28,8%
AIS-12 (Vitória de Santo Antão)	14,6	14	-1	4,0	3,8	-4,5%
AIS-13 (Palmares)	16,9	8	-9	3,9	1,8	-52,8%
AIS-14 (Caruaru)	21,3	35	14	3,6	5,8	62,1%
AIS-15 (Pesqueira-Belo Jardim)	9,0	9	0	2,9	2,9	-0,5%
AIS-16 (Limoeiro-Surubim)	9,0	12	3	2,8	3,8	33,4%
AIS-17 (Sta Cruz Capibaribe)	10,1	17	7	4,6	7,6	64,0%
AIS-18 (Garanhuns)	12,4	16	4	2,5	3,2	28,7%
AIS-19 (Arcoverde)	11,2	14	3	3,6	4,4	23,3%
AIS-20 (Afogados Ingazeira)	2,2	4	2	1,3	2,2	77,3%
AIS-21 (Serra Talhada)	4,5	9	5	2,5	5,0	98,7%
AIS-22 (Floresta)	4,5	5	1	3,1	3,4	9,7%
AIS-23 (Salgueiro)	3,4	0	-3	2,5	0,0	-100,0%
AIS-24 (Araripina)	10,1	3	-7	3,3	1,0	-70,7%
AIS-25 (Cabrobó)	3,4	2	-1	3,2	1,9	-41,5%
AIS-26 (Petrolina)	7,9	9	1	2,5	2,7	11,2%

(*) Por 100 mil habs.
(**) Média mensal de CVLI em 2009.
Fonte: Infopol/GACE/SDS-PE.

Source: Pacto pela Vida

Goals of the Pacto pela Vida 2011-2012

1. Implementation of *Agentes Comunitárias* in communities
2. Improving Internal *Affairs*
3. Reduction in police brutality
4. Improved relations with the community

According to Rattón, the reforms have brought murder rates down by an average of 12% per year.

2011 begins a new stage in the project, where each community will have a "community agent" of the Pacto pela Vida, a communication channel between the community and the Administrative Committee. These agents will mobilize community action and transmit the complaints of the community (on crime, police brutality, etc) to the state. This stage also intensifies police reform, with training in human rights and new departments of internal affairs. Rattón recognizes something that people in the favelas we researched were quick to denounce: though the Pacto pela Vida may have reduced the number of homicides, it has not changed the relationship between the community and the police, a relation still defined by violence and revolt.

Many people in civil society, especially the NGO leaders we interviewed, have serious doubts about the Pacto pela Vida, and do not believe its commitment to human rights and social change. Inhabitants of the favelas continue to see the police as the fundamental agent of violence in Recife. The policy changes that have made such a huge impact on death squads have yet to change the behavior of police officers in the favela.

None the less, we can say that the Pacto pela Vida shows a commitment by the state to take violence seriously, and that the project has achieved its principal result of reducing murder rates. In comparison with the fiasco of a similar project in Rio de Janeiro in 2000 (box), it has been quite successful. 2011-13, with police reform and the implementation of the Community Agents, will be a key test for whether this policy can make for real changes in police behavior in the favelas.

In 2000, professor Luiz Eduardo Soares was invited to develop new public policies around security and crime for the state of Rio de Janeiro. His proposal, much more radical than the Pacto pela Vida, threatened the interests of corrupt police officers and (unlike the case of José Luiz Rattón in Pernambuco), the governor of Rio de Janeiro did not support Soares when he began to receive death threats. After eighteen months on the job, Soares was forced to seek political excile in New York to escape his own police officers.

One of the first things that José Luiz Rattón did when Governor Campos asked him to do something similar in Pernambuco, was to speak at length with Soares to make sure he would not fall into the same traps.

Many other government actions, on state, local, and federal levels, now justify themselves on the ground of violence prevention, but we judge that this has been more a change in discourse than in practice. In general, neither young people nor their parents thought much of the other two big programs to reduce violence in the city.

1. Segundo Tempo (Second Half): Sport to promote peaceful living together, and to train young people for the labor market. Several of the young men we interviewed commented that the activities happened on the military base, where few people from the favela felt comfortable.

2. Youth Centers: Culture, including rap, dance, and traditional culture, to prepare young people for the labor force. Almost everyone mentioned the presence of an armed police officer as a guard at a locked gate. None the less, many young men do participate in these centers, largely because participation implies a R$100 per month contribution to their families.

In focus groups, inhabitants of the favelas complained that these programs were badly run and that they treated all young people like criminals. However, NGO leaders considered money the young men "earned" as participants as even more damaging. "Before," an educator at the Galpão Santo Amaro told us, "kids danced and played drums because it was fun. They liked it. Now they ask, 'Do we get paid? How much?' These welfare payments make it so the kids only do what they're paid to do. If they don't get paid, they don't do it."

civil society actions

All of the NGOs we interviewed have projects to reduce violence or build peace; in many cases, these projects are well designed and put children's social agency at the center of their philosophy. Shine a Light itself has invested much of its time and energy into promoting the mixture of culture and popular education that emerged in Recife in the 1990s, something that has now become central to the work of NGOs around Latin America.

For the majority of NGOs, the theory that frames their work against violence is "getting kids off the street and out of trouble" (*afastar a criança dos*

A crisis in Recife NGOs

Almost all of the NGOs in Recife are suffering a major crisis, whether in monetary or practical terms. Among the most worrisome:

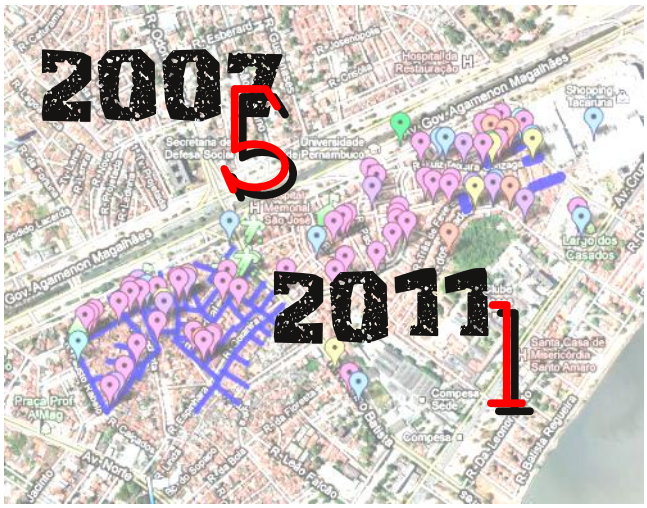
1. One NGO that has always been the most important innovator in the use of culture as a tool in popular education, has had no money for salaries for the last two years. Fifteen educators now work strictly on a volunteer basis.
2. Another NGO has had to sell two of its three houses just to keep functioning.
3. Many of the traditional NGOs in Santo Amaro have had to reduce services dramatically. A day care center now functions only on Saturday, while another program was never even open for an interview.
4. The training center for the Movimento Nacional de Meninos e Meninas de Rua (the national street children's movement), was closed, eliminating the main space where NGOs exchanged ideas for collaboration.

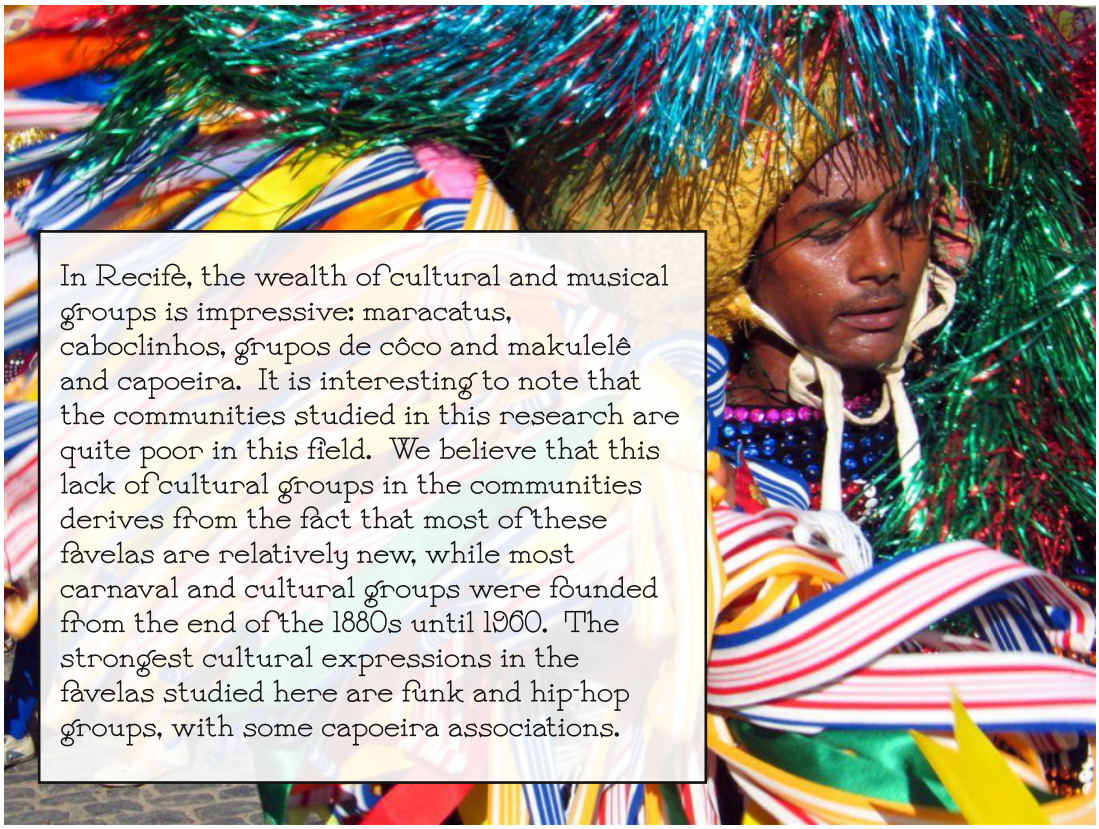
In several cases, these problems emerge from the re-direction of international support to other countries, and in others from the over-valuing of the Brazilian Real on international currency markets. There are many new donors on the scene, but these traditional NGOs have not yet learned to work with them.

perigos da rua), a slogan that emerged from the struggle against youth homelessness in the 1990s, and has been transferred, with little change, to the struggle against gang violence. As we will see in the next chapter, many of the practices that came out of this unconsidered transfer of ideas actually had a very damaging impact on the communities.

Though some NGOs just speak of "getting kids off the street," several NGOs in Santo Amaro have thought through peacebuilding more carefully. The Galpão Santo Amaro, for instance, trains young men and women as "peace multipliers," where they learn to speak in public, to analyze the context of violence, and then go to schools and NGOs to teach peacemaking to children. At the AACA, children learn specific techniques to resolve conflicts without violence, talking through their problems and inviting others into the conversation. The PDA, in Chão de Estrelas, has a similar project. Though the frame of *protagonismo infantil* used my these programs is very interesting, we did not have a chance to see the

Day care centers in Santo Amaro





In Recife, the wealth of cultural and musical groups is impressive: maracatus, caboclinhos, grupos de côco and makulelê and capoeira. It is interesting to note that the communities studied in this research are quite poor in this field. We believe that this lack of cultural groups in the communities derives from the fact that most of these favelas are relatively new, while most carnaval and cultural groups were founded from the end of the 1880s until 1960. The strongest cultural expressions in the favelas studied here are funk and hip-hop groups, with some capoeira associations.

"peace multipliers" in action, so it is hard to evaluate their real impact.

Pé no Chão has probably done the most serious thinking about the way its work combats violence. According to Jocimar Borges, the group's founder, every community has young men and women who will become leaders, who will teach others how to understand the world and act in it. Through dance, percussion, rap, breakdance, and other urban arts, Pé no Chão brings these leaders into the struggle for peace. Otherwise, they might have become leaders in gangs and other violent groups. The young artists at Pé no Chão present performances at schools, community centers, and on the streets downtown. With these presentations, they see that they can have an impact on the world without taking up arms.

The young men and women who participate in Pé no Chão become role models for other children and teenagers in the community. One of the researchers on this project, who has made a name for himself as a dancer, actor, and choreographer at Pé no Chão (and now in other groups), explains that every time he appears on TV, whether giving a performance or an interview, kids from his neighborhood stop him on the street to talk, to ask how they can become dances or actors. "Before, mothers told their kids, 'don't hang out with that boy. But now they say, 'walk with him, because he'll show you a good path.'"

"When I was a kid, there were revolutionary groups, so a kid could do something productive with that revolt. Today, only the drug trade gives an answer."

-Jocimar Borges

In this way, Pé no Chão channels the desire for recognition so that young men and women can be respected as artists and civic leaders, not as dealers. Equally important is the channeling of revolt. Borges told us, "When I was a kid, there were revolutionary groups, so a kid could do something productive with that revolt.

Today, only the drug trade gives an answer." Because teenagers and children at Pé no Chão can use their artistic skills to denounce injustice – and feel that they are making a difference – they can channel this revolt into something useful and productive.

Cartografia
Skyward

NGOs and violence

Many organizations work in the favelas in this study. With seven NGOs, three football schools, and three government programs, for instance, the Santo Amaro-Campo do Onze complex must have one of the highest number of organizations per inhabitant anywhere. In these favelas, we see large, traditional NGOs like the AACA or the PDA, real grass-roots organizations like Daruê Malungo, and groundbreaking groups like Pé no Chão. When we are asked about cities with the most interesting civil society in Latin America, Recife is always near the top of the list.

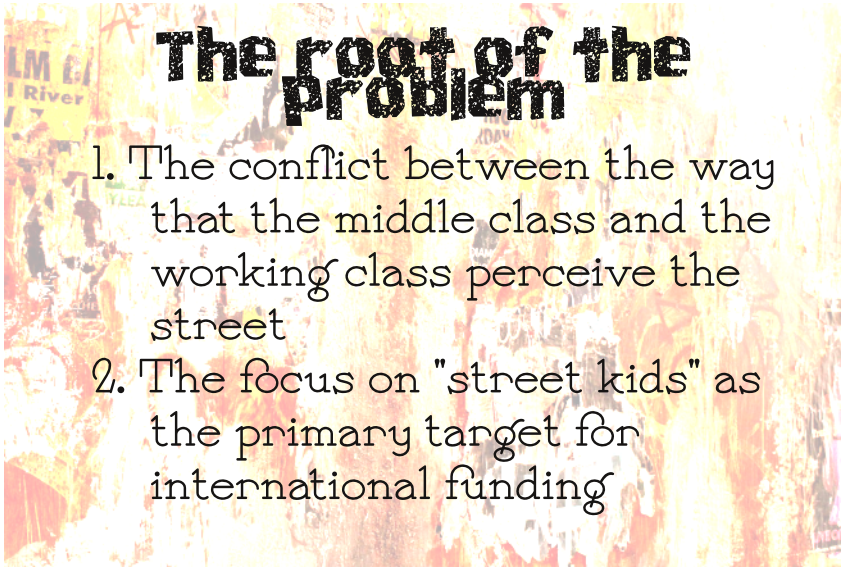
For this reason, it was both surprising and disturbing to find the complicity of these organizations in creating a environment where violence would come to play such an important role.

Almost all of the NGOs we interviewed play an essential role in the communities where they work, and we don't see the following analysis as a critique of any one organizations. However, when the practices of these NGOs come together, they become part of the problem faced in these favelas. We break the issue into two parts: the conception of the street, and the formation of leaders who have no place to exercise their leadership skills.

THE STREET AS A "PROBLEM"

Though most children in the favela grow up seeing the street as a place to have fun and learn with other kids – even as they learn from their parents how to be careful in the street – there has been a shift in recent years to see the street as a place of danger. We see two sources for this change: 1) the conflict between working class and middle class perceptions of the street 2) the focus on "street children" as the principle target for actions involving childhood

Thanks to the perspective of the middle class and the way that international organizations (including Shine a Light) focus on the issue of "street children", many NGOs have come to see the street as a place of danger and their role as "getting kids off the street and out of trouble." As such, organized civil society has physically and symbolically abdicated the street as a place of encounter and sociality, defining the street as a place occupied by "bad things". The end result is a kind of criminalization of one of the essential spaces of life in the favela. In truth, these NGOs are doing the opposite of their stated goal, because their work to "get kids off the street" ignores (and then undermines) the duality of the street as a place where good and bad things happen.



This "bad street" is taken as a given, and as something immutable. One of the researchers on this project, who has lived in Santo Amaro all his life, contrasted the way people live the street five years ago and today. During the war, when the streets belonged to the drug gangs, one had to behave aggressively just to survive there, knocking shoulders when passing someone, never apologizing for a mis-step, constantly showing oneself as macho and valiant. Today, as kids play on the street and women sit around tables full of dominoes, people feel obliged to treat others with gentility on the street. They greet, smile, and wish each other good day. The street has changed.

For the working class in Brazil, the street has always been a space for socialization, education, and play. Roberto Da Matta suggests that for the poor, the street is often an extension of the home, something one hears in the saying

For a more thoughtful discussion of the relationship between home and street, see Roberto da Matta, *A Casa e a Rua*, RJ, Rocco, 1997.

"The street is the poor man's living room." Kids play in the street, kick balls, and follow older brothers and sisters around, learning with them what is safe and what isn't. On the other hand, the rich have always seen the street as a mark of danger, where the "house child" (*menino de casa*) faces sickness, filth, and the bad manners of the "dangerous classes." For someone from the US or Europe, the word "street kid" conjures up ideas of pity and desire to help, but a rich Brazilian sees street kids as a category of criminals and filth.

Without being aware of what they were doing, NGOs in the favelas locked heavy gates with chains and padlocks to which only an adult guard had the key. Symbolically, these chains make it appear that the street is so dangerous and the child so fragile that only bars can keep a kid safe.

In some cases, as with the AACA in Santo Amaro, these ideas come directly from the middle class, but in other cases, social work classes serve as the mediator of the idea. Teaching at the Federal University of Pernambuco in 2002, it was tragically clear how social work students had been imbued with these values. None the less, international foundations should also shoulder much of the blame for our emphasis on the category of "street kids" as a criterion for supporting local NGOs. Local programs know that they have a better chance at funding if they say that their work is directed toward street children or the prevention of youth homelessness. As the number of kids living on the street fell (or, more accurately, as we learned that much of the problem was a failure in perception, the inability to see that most "street kids" continued to have strong connections to their homes), the rhetoric of *prevention* took center stage. Local NGOs learned to frame their work as "keeping kids off the street."

As a way to reduce the number of children who sleep on the street, this theoretical frame worked. As a theory of community development, it is an abject failure. In great part, this problem emerges from the failure to distinguish the streets of the favela from the streets of downtown, *living* on the street from *using* the street. To occupy, play, and learn on the street has always been part of a poor Brazilian's childhood, but "getting kids off the streets" of the favela robs them of this fundamental space.

As anyone who works in education knows, it is easy to contrast "good kids" with "bad kids", exemplary students with juvenile delinquents. In the favela, this false distinction was imposed on kids who go to NGOs and those who mess around on the street. Without being aware of the consequences of what they were doing, NGOs in the favelas locked heavy gates with chains and padlocks to which only an adult guard had the key. Symbolically, these chains make it appear that the street is so dangerous and the child so fragile that only bars can keep a kid safe. Good kids occupy themselves in the building, while those who "aren't looking for anything from life" just hang out on the street. In fact, all kids are both good and bad, interested in just hanging out and doing something with their lives, so this division *creates* good and bad more than it

describes it.

Speaking with many community leaders in the favela, we heard them say that in their childhoods, they walked a fine line (often described as balancing on a wall) between "falling into culture" and "falling into crime." This "fall" depends largely on the friends and the environment in which they lived at the time, as well as what people expected of them. For a kid who likes to play on the street or simply can't abide the rules of an NGO, it seems that there is only one side to fall on.

Dealers we interviewed said that they did not want their kids to join the gangs, and insisted that when kids asked them for advice, they always told any child to study and keep on the straight and narrow.

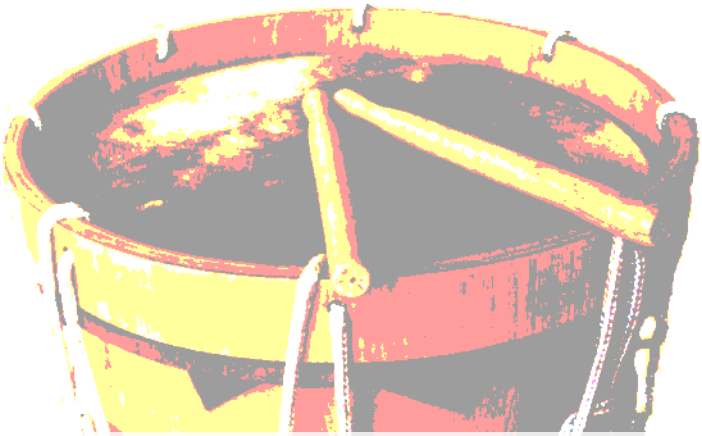
The presence of children on the street also transforms that space. Whether an adult is defined as "good" or "bad" by his neighbors, all "big people" (*os grandes*) in the favela have the responsibility to watch after kids playing on the street. Dealers we interviewed said that they did not want their kids to join the gangs, and insisted that when kids asked them for advice, they always told any child to study and keep on the straight and narrow. As such, when children are on the street, dealers prefer to stay away – and keep their violence at a distance. Because of cultural norms that insist that all adults must protect the innocent, the presence of kids on the street establishes rules and shames anyone who breaks them. When kids are locked behind the walls of and NGO, they can't transform the street in this way.

Of course, NGOs are not the only actors in the favela who have developed this division between the street and the home (or the NGO), nor are they alone in trying to keep kids off the street. Police and gangs play an even more potent role in dividing the "safe, good" home from the "dangerous" street. When people hear rumors of a police invasion or a gang war, the first thing mothers do is to run for the street to bring their kids inside. The media, with its attitude of "If it bleeds, it leads", also plays this role. None the less, NGOs form opinions in the favela and help to establish the quotidian circulation of many children, making their central role in this process of criminalizing the street clear.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

As we have seen, many NGOs have unconsciously contributed to the criminalization of the street and its abdication to gangs and other violent actors. Other NGOs, also with the best of intentions, have created another problem: a large population of smart, talented youth who no longer see oppression and misery as inevitable, trained as leaders… who live in a world where it is almost impossible to find a way to use these talents to get a salary or respect for themselves and their families. They find in the drug trade, however briefly and tragically, a place to use the leadership and entrepreneurial skills they learned in NGOs.

In order to analyze this problem, we first must understand the way that resistance to oppression has always been foreclosed in Brazil's northeast. It is one of the most unequal places on the planet, where injustice is so obvious that the rich and powerful don't even try to hide it. While in the US, inequality is glossed over by the ideology of equal rights and the "self-made man", in Recife, for many years everyone accepted injustice as normal and inevitable, as if it could never be changed. "The rich drink wine, the poor drink moonshine; the rich drink from a glass, while the poor take it up the ass," as the lyrics of a song often heard in the streets go. For someone who grows up in the favelas or on the poor desert *sertão*, one of the first great lessons is to accept the inevitability of injustice. The impossibility of change has traditionally controlled the revolt of angry young men.



When you ask the majority of kids at Pé no Chão what they want to be when they grow up, they say "arts educator", while the kids and Daruê Malungo say "Musician" or "Dancer."

One of the great successes of many NGOs has been to break down this ideology, to make young people see that the world can be better and more just than it is. Through culture, dance, storytelling, and popular education they learn to desire and to dream, to imagine a better life for themselves and their families. As they watch other teenagers from the NGOs where they learn go to Europe as actors or teachers, they come to see that other alternatives can bring the chance for recognition and perhaps even money. When you ask the majority of kids at Pé no Chão what they want to be when they grow up, they say "arts educator", while the kids and Daruê Malungo say "Musician" or "Dancer."

The basic problem is that few jobs exist in Recife for musicians and art teachers; there are many more applicants than there are opportunities. NGOs and the government in Recife invest heavily in culture, with concerts all year long and special arts programs in the schools, but it isn't enough. The best young artists may get these jobs, serving as a model for success without violence, role models for little kids. However, the young artists who are half a step behind, good but not good enough, lose out on these opportunities.

NGOs like Pé no Chão, Daruê Malungo, and Peixe-arte also offer education in leadership, ethics, and politics. Young men and women learn to overcome the timidity and shyness that form part of oppressed subjectivity in the favelas. Working in groups, they learn to organize time and people. In shows and concerts, they learn to speak with people from other cultures and social classes. All of these skills are essential to making grass-roots civil society work. However, when kids are 15 or 16 years old and the recognition they get from their artistic performance isn't enough, when they go to look for work and find few opportunities to do what they are good at… they experience another reason to be revolted: what they long dreamed now seems impossible.

Here we need to look at the figure of the "*otário*," a category one finds in favelas all over Brazil. Many academic observers see the ethic of the *otário* as the opposition to that of the bandit or criminal, and certainly "*otário*" is a word that people in "that life" use to insult honest workers. But what we see in this research is that the *otário* isn't really the opposite of the bandit, but the opposite of the autonomous subject. The *otário* has reconciled himself with the sad injustice of life, giving up his dreams to work for someone else and bring food to his family.

The best NGOs help kids and teens to imagine a dream where they are neither *otários* nor bandits, especially through the arts. But as teenagers begin to look for paying jobs, they find that this dream is very, very difficult.

This study is insufficiently broad to offer statistics on the number of gang leaders who participated in NGOs; to get that kind of information, we would have to do a real census of dealers, and this research never had such a project in mind. None the less, we heard many, many worrisome stories of donos de boca or important dealers who had been members of NGOs. Without the chance to use the talents they used in NGOs nor the opportunity to express their sense of revolt, the drug trade is a live option for young men (and some women) who could not find work in the arts.

By no means do we wish to blame NGOs for the problems of violence in Recife. They are doing the right thing in a difficult context: educating

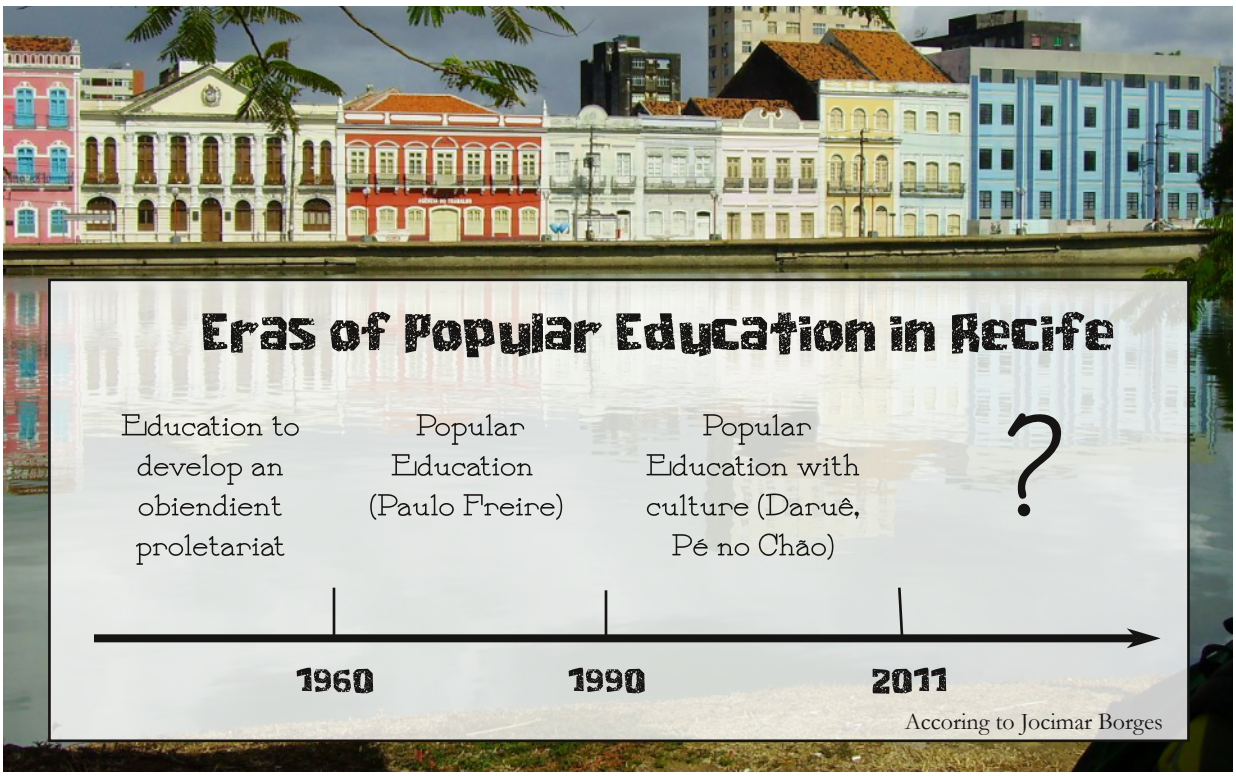
Zaluar, Alba. *Condomínio do Diabo.* Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, 1994

Otário: adj. *A* person who allows himself to be deceived or taken advantage of: ingenuous, naive, foolish. From the Lunfardo: ingenuous man of easy faith.

children and teenagers to de-normalize oppression and develop capacities to act politically and economically in an unjust world. Nor are they the only social actors doing good things that may have bad results: many drug dealers said that as children they had been outstanding soccer players, for instance, that they "had a chance to go pro" before they entered the drug trade. Football and culture both offer the chance to dream, something wonderful in the oppressive history of Brazil's northeast. The problem happens when these dreams come up against the reality of oppression.

conclusions

Jocimar Borges (Pé no Chão) says that being aware of these problems marks the end of an era of popular education in Recife… and perhaps the beginning of another. For many years, education in the Northeast was part and parcel of a system of social control working to normalize the oppression and exclusion of the poor. However, the

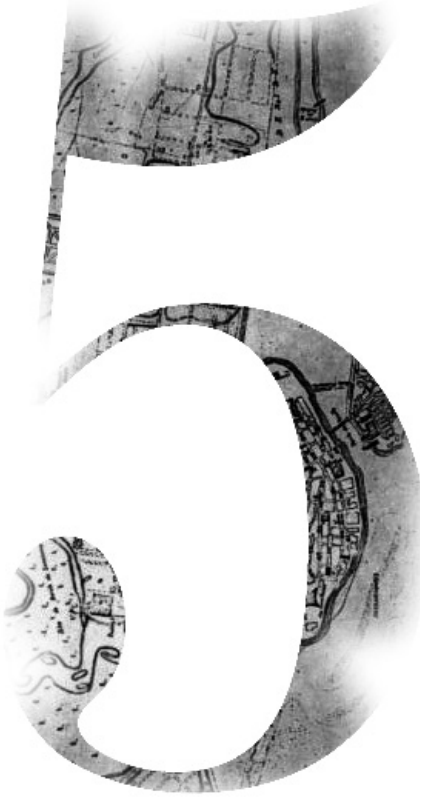


advent of popular education, based on the work of Paulo Freire, himself from Pernambuco, revolutionized education. After the 1960s, the goal of education was no longer to prepare the student to work without protest in a world that took advantage of him, but instead to read the world critically and try to change it. The NGOs of the 1990s marked a new stage in this form of popular education, as they integrated dance and music as essential pedagogical tools. However, in 2011, this model has also come to a stage of crisis because of the failure of economic alternatives and the strengthening of the drug trade.

Though this research does not pretend to offer a new educational paradigm, our conclusions agree with those of Borges: today in Recife, we need to find new forms of popular education and action for a new context.

5

Three Economies: Money, information, prestige



Over the course of our research for the Cartography of the Favela, we identified three resource flows that are essential to the function and development of marginalized neighborhoods. Here, we will analyze these flows with tools developed to think about economics: clearly, the flow of money and consumer goods, but also information and prestige follow similar rules.

We use the word "flows" because we want to understand the semi-porous system of the favela economy in which some resources enter the community from outside, many circulate within the favela, and then some leave. We might think of these system as a lake, where many streams enter from the surrounding hills, to support an ecosystem that depends to some degree on those resources, but also on circulation of food and water within the lake, and then a river (or perhaps a swamp) where the water and resources egress.

Since it is easiest to think of the economy in financial terms, we begin with money. However, it is important to note that all of these economies are interdependent, and that information and prestige may be just as important to an inhabitant of the favela as money itself.

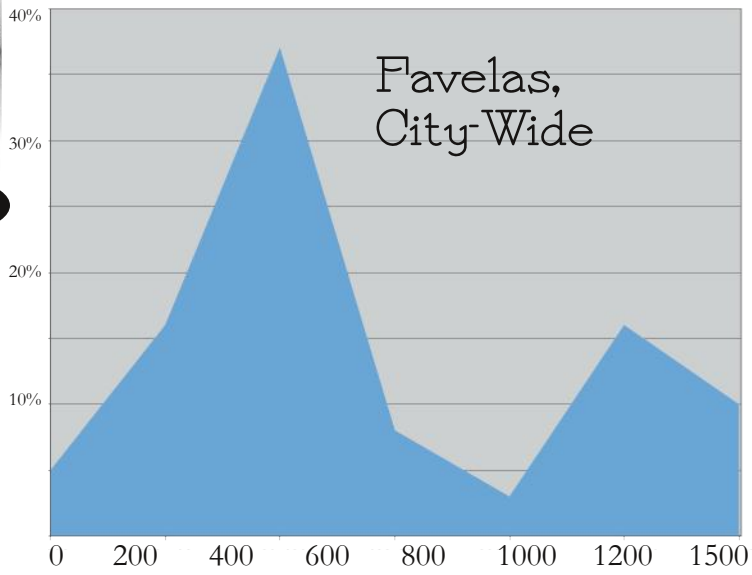
Flows of Money

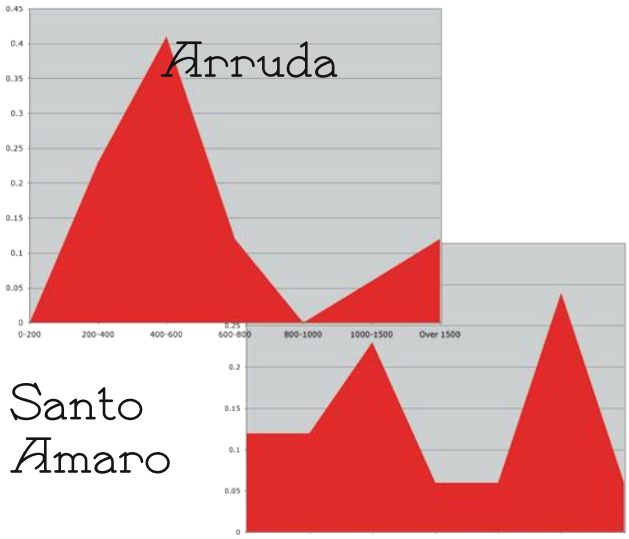
The common sense vision of the favela sees it as a place of scarcity and lack, thinking that the most important resources must enter the favela from outside. Though we want to challenge this idea, we will also begin with the way that money comes into the favela, because in order to understand how finance circulates in the communities, we first have to see how it gets there.

Income

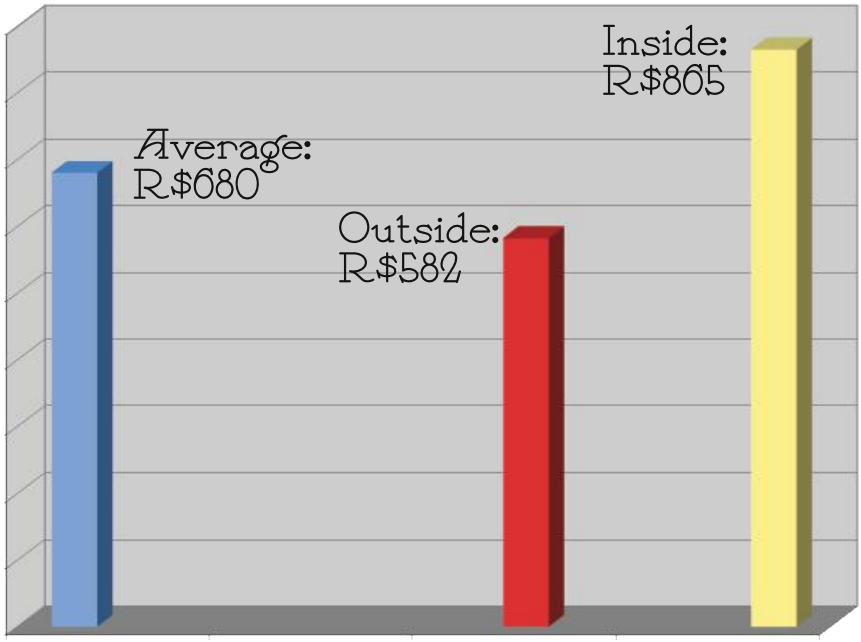
The high levels of economic inequality in the favelas of Recife surprised us. Generally, people who study or work in the favelas distinguish more between one favela and another than between people who live in one community – "Agua Fria has become a rich community; it almost isn't a favela any more," or "Dedo no Cu… now that's a miserable favela." – but our research shows that differences in income within any one favela are much greater than between different favelas. Income is highly unequal: a family earning R$200 per month may live next door to another who earns $2400, an income difference of 1200%. If we transfer this to an American context, it would be like a family living under the poverty line (US$22,000 a year for a family of four) living next door to an upper class family earning $240,000 a year. With this extreme level

Income distribution in the favelas





Santo Amaro: Income of people working inside and outside the favela

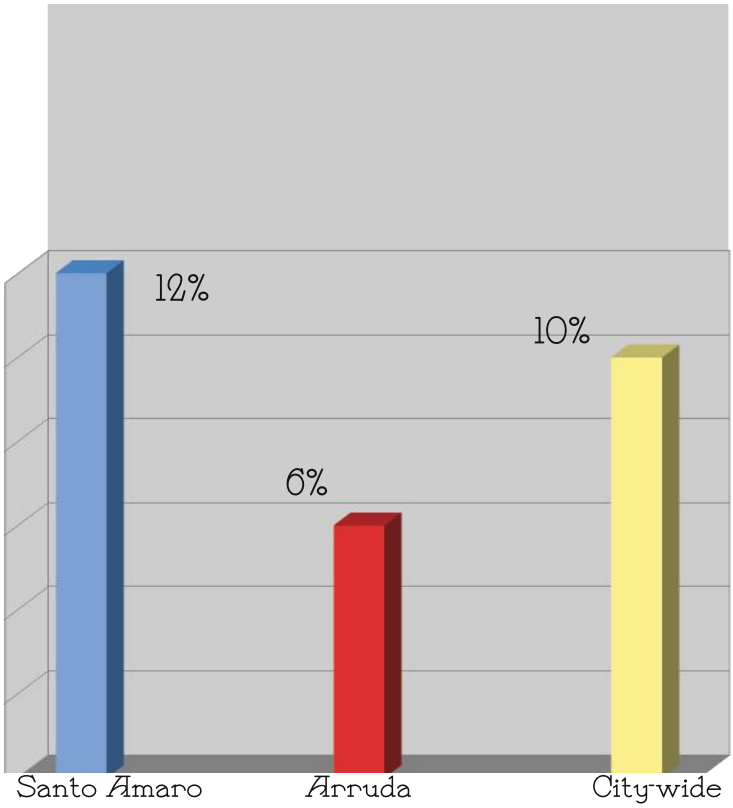


of inequality in the midst of a culture that traditionally values equality, we understand why people are so concerned about envy and the evil eye.

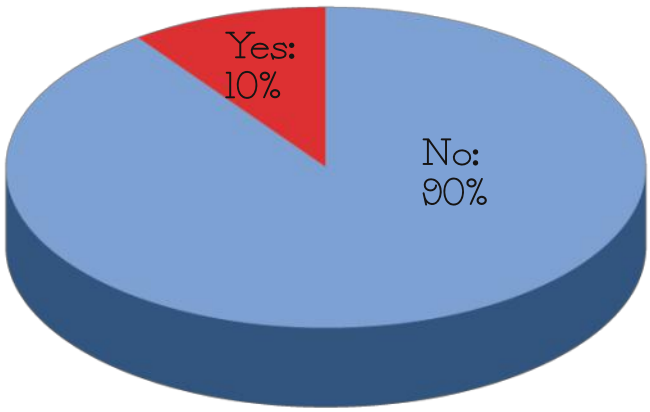
What may intensify this dynamic is that many of the best paid professions are those who work inside the favela: barbers, owners of internet cafés, and other small business people. Though the prices for their goods and services are reasonable (R$4 for a haircut), one can imagine that poor people in the favela see the "rich" around them as exploiters. It is also interesting to see that the people who earn most outside of the favela are street artists (who can earn R$1200-1500 per month), a much better salary than traditional working class jobs like mechanics and waiters.

This research also points out the importance of government subsidies to the favela economy. Welfare payments have a much smaller role

Percentage of families using welfare programs



Percentage of workers with jobs providing benefits



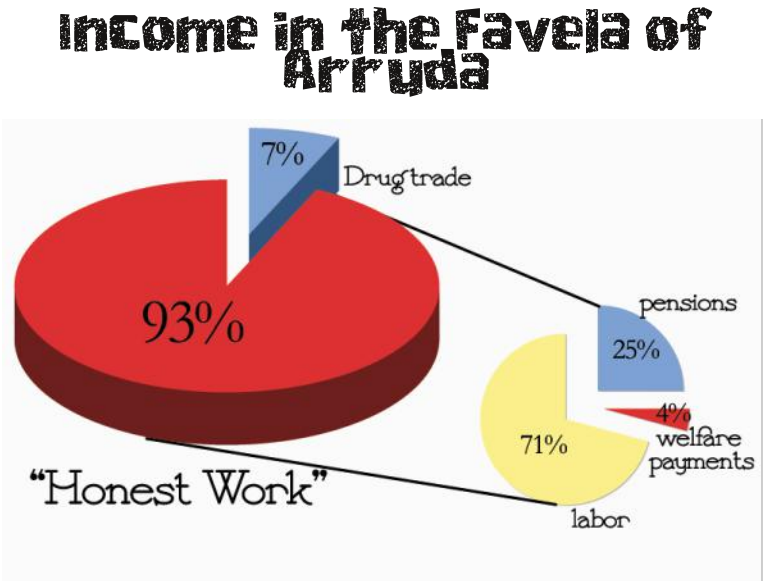
than we had imagines (only 10% of families surveyed get them), but pensions were extremely important. Social Security payments are more than many salaries, and in come cases whole extended families depend on them. With a very small number of people working in the formal economy today – and thus without pension and unemployment benefits – this resource will be threatened in the near future.

The media (and convention wisdom) see drug trafficking as one of the principle economic activities in the favelas, but our research shows that statistically, it places a minimal role. We take as an example the community of Arruda, for which we have very good data.

Arruda has a population of more or less 5000 inhabitants, divided into 1100 households. If our research represents an accurate cross-section, some 50-60% of these families work, get pensions, or get welfare payments from outside of the favela, with a monthly income of R$530 per family. Expanded for the whole favela, some R$291,000 enter the economy ever month; this sum is not, we note, a measure of GNP of the favela, but more a kind of foreign trade index. GFP itself (or Gross Favela Product) would have to include circulation within the favela as well, a much larger number.

We contrast this number with the income of a boca de fumo, which should have 10 regular dealers and a couple of associates. The average dealer earns R$800 per month, of which something more than half goes to people outside of the favela; as a round number, we'll estimate it at $500 (the rest of the sales are internal, and should be considered as circulation, not "foreign trade"). There are three functioning bocas in Arruda as of this writing, so if we do the math, it means that drug dealers brings in something like R$15,000 per month. Add the income of the dono da boca (estimated at somewhere between R$2500-5000), and the total brought in by the drug trade is less than R$20,000. This comes to less than 7% of the total "foreign trade" of the community.

When we compare this income to that derived from low status jobs like recycling or being a maid, we find some major surprises. Especially on the shores of the Canal de Arruda, recycling is a



major business, where a trash-picker earns R$1000 a month. In Arruda, there are five businesses or co-ops that buy recycled materials and hundreds of families earn their money in this way; if we do the math, *recyclers bring in much more money than traffickers*. The problem, according to the chief of one of the recycling cooperatives (himself an ex-trash picker), is not the salary, but the stigma. Though they may earn more than many other workers, they are called "beggars" and disdained by people in and outside the community. They have high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, which takes up much of their salary.

Circulation

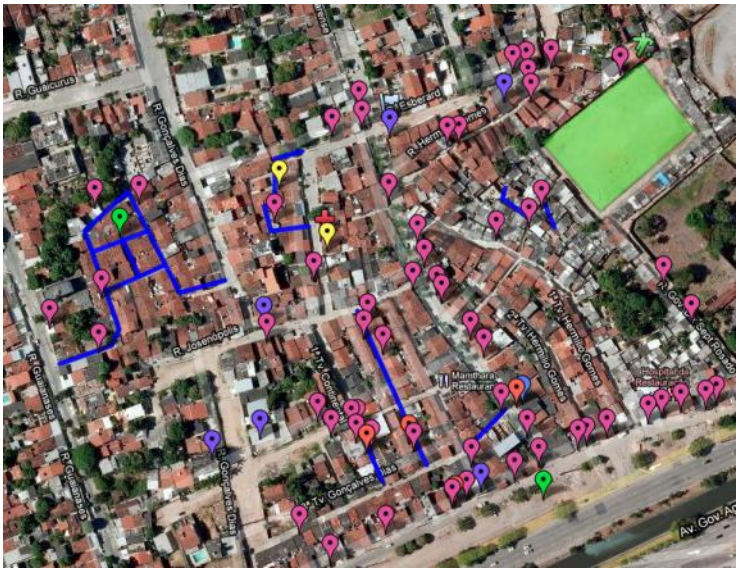
Work outside of the favela is not the most important part of the communities' economy. A little less than half of the workers from the favela work in businesses outside the community. For this reason, it is very important to address the circulation of money in the favela: most people buy food; fix their bikes and refrigerators, televisions and telephones; cut their hair; buy clothes and furniture; and eat at restaurants in the favelas. When a 10 *real* bill arrives in the favela, it will circulate there many times before it leaves.

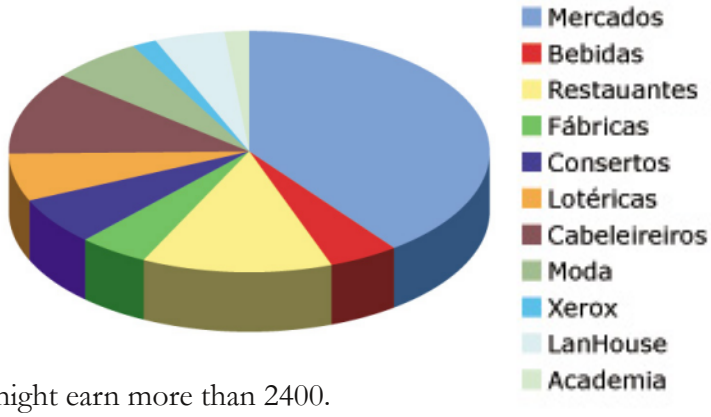
Economists speak of the "multiplier effect" to understand the impact of investment or outside income on an economic system. Economic textbooks define the multiplier effect as "a factor of proportionality that measures how much an endogenous variable changes in response to a change in some exogenous variable." To explain better, if the government invests three million *reais* to build a road, the impact on the city will be much greater than those 3,000,000. Workers on the project will spend their salaries in the city, buying clothes and food and consumer goods. The road will reduce transport costs and time, freeing up investment and spending for more productive uses.

In the same way that public investment has a large multiplier effect, the salaries of people who work outside of the favela are multiplied when they bring their money

While most workers will spend their money on food, clothes, and other goods inside the favela, dealers spend their money disproportionately outside the favela, reducing the multiplier effect of trafficking to almost 1.0. Their largest expenses are on clothes and shoes, and they make an effort to buy these goods in shopping malls, where their purchase gains them more prestige and none of the money returns to the community. They may spend money at liquor distributors in the favela as they plan parties, but these distributors send most of the purchase price to wholesalers outside the favela, keeping only 10-20% in profit. After the research team discussed this issue, two of the members decided to create a fashion brand so young people could buy within the favela, showing us the importance of circulation versus income in the favelas.

Bysinesses in Xie





home. This money will circulate many times in the favela, with a larger impact that it might at first seem.

When we look at the maps of the communities, one of the most surprising results is the number and diversity of businesses in the favela. In Xié, for instance, there are 64 businesses in a small favela, selling many goods and services. About half are markets, but we also see a large number of restaurants and bars (8), barbers and beauty salons (7), and clothes stores (4). Though this study is insufficiently sophisticated to postulate a multiplier quotient, we can see that money stays in the favela a long time before it returns to the rest of the city.

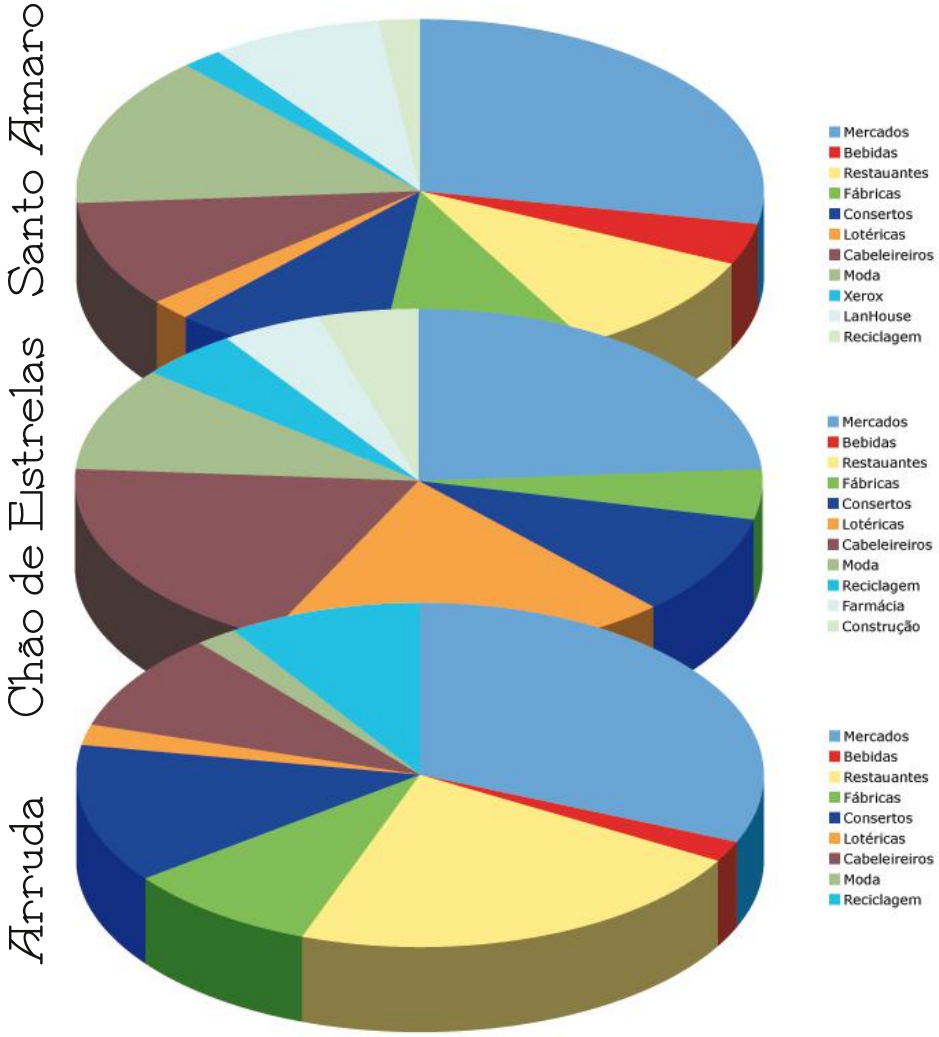
One of the best examples of the power of circulation in the favela economy is the profit registered by these businesses. The owner of an internet café or video-game parlor generally earns 1000-1200 reais per month, while a barber might earn more than 2400. Markets and liquor distributors also provide for a good income, but many owners report that the most important thing about the markets is to provide free food to large families. It is an older barter system, where profit must be measured in other terms.

Normally, the markets work this way: in the morning, the owner will take a cart to a warehouse or wholesaler outside the favela, where he purchases the goods he think will sell best that day. When he returns to the community, he sells at a 10-20% markup. The shopkeepers recognize that anyone in the favela could do the same, saving 20% on their groceries, but the small shops make money for three reasons:

1. It is much easier to buy close to home
2. To buy wholesale, you have to buy in large quantities, and the majority of people in the favela have neither the spare cash nor the space to keep the goods
3. The markets sell on credit, charging only at the end of the month.

Credit is one of the major issues for market owners. All of them know peers who have gone bankrupt for giving credit to buyers who did not pay them back, but they know that their business depends on this risk. Courts offer little solution to the small-scale debts of favela shops, so owners only have recourse

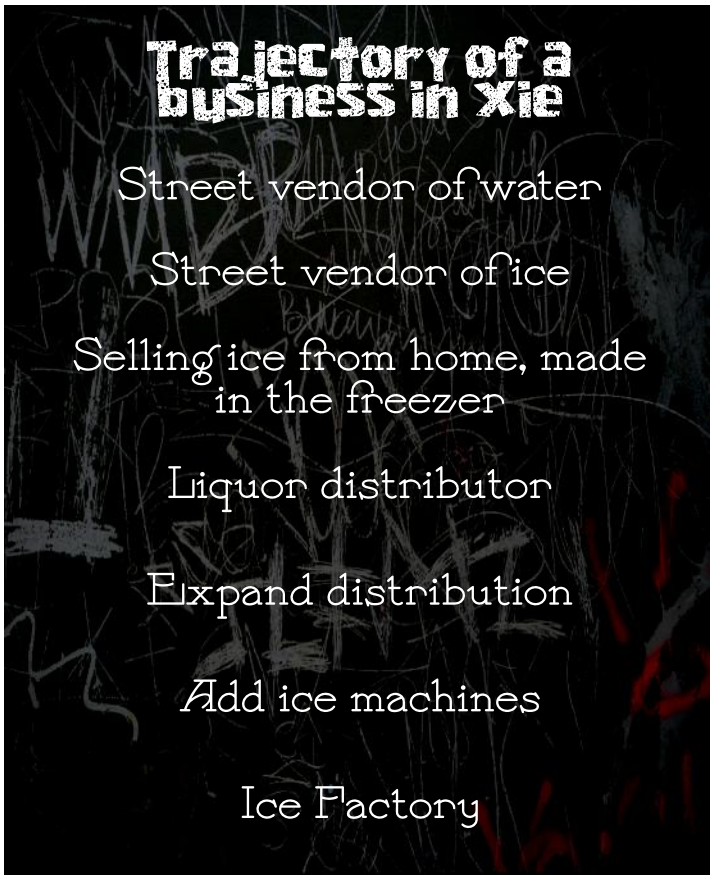
Institutions in three favelas



to the gangs as debt collectors; since the dealers are known to kill to compensate R$10 debts, the owners avoid this path. To solve the problem, the shopkeepers in Santo Amaro have developed an informal network where they exchange information on consumers and blacklist buyers who don't pay their debts.

Though, as we have seen, the drug trade does not contribute much to the income of the favela, here it does have an important role: crime control. Thanks to the dealers, there are many addicts in the favelas, and some of them choose crime as a way to finance their addiction. Though there have long been social norms condemning robbery inside the community, the force of people's desire for crack has come to break some of these rules, and local business owners have faced more theft in recent years. Seeing that going to the police only promotes their presence in the favela – and not just their presence, but a government action which might benefit members of the community – the gangs began to offer security services to businesses in Santo Amaro. When there is a theft or other crime, the business owners go to the dealers, who chase down the thief, beat him on the spot, and get the stolen goods back. In a small community, both the business owner and the gang members probably know the thief, so the business owners say the system works well. "There is a lot less crime in the favela these days. A couple of years ago, they robbed me every week, but nothing now," one market owner in Santo Amaro told us. "A couple of days ago, a guy robbed my cell phone from the market, but the dealers had it back to me in two hours."

Business development in the favelas follows a regular, if not fixed, course. Generally, the businessman or woman (many are women) takes advantage of something he or she has at home to sell: the most common is to sell ice made in the home freezer, but we also heard many stories of women



who sewed clothes for their children and began to offer the service to others, or teenagers who rented out their home computer to friends. Learning from neighbors who have developed businesses – or in evangelical churches, which seem to be another important source of business knowledge – these micro-capitalists learn the importance of saving to invest, and their businesses grow slowly into markets, clothing stores, or businesses that fix things.

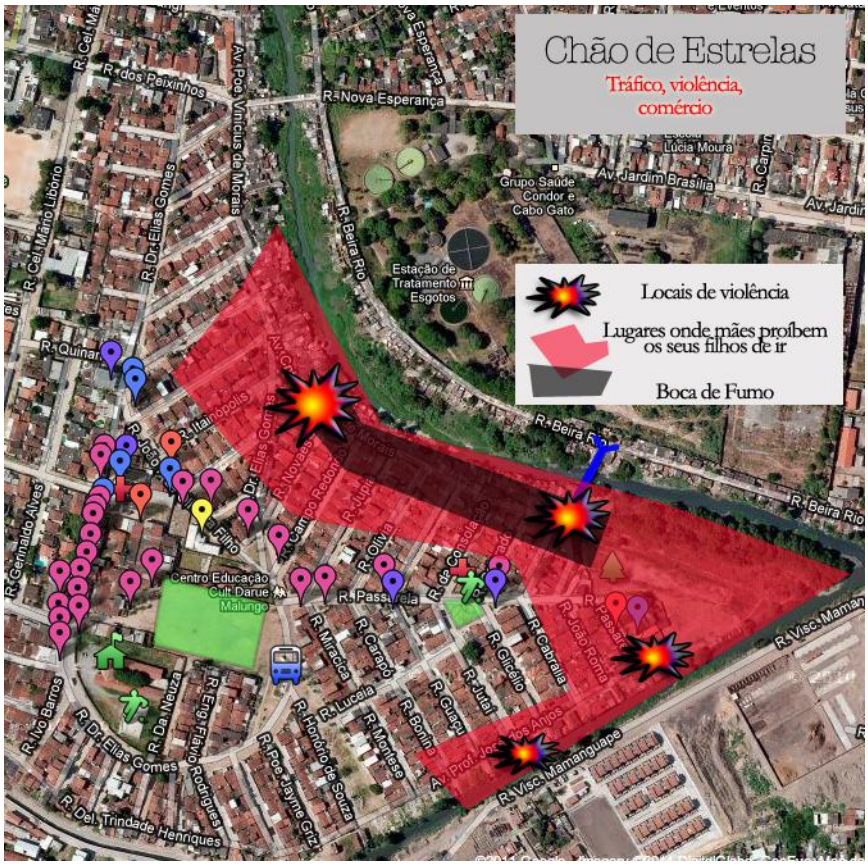
There are only a few exceptions to what appears to be a limit on the growth of these businesses, which is generally controlled by the possible number of employees. Though a couple of small factories have grown up in Xié, few other businesses grow beyond employing family members and close friends. People in the favelas suggest different hypotheses about the cause of this limit, hypothesizing the complexity of Brazilian labor law, the lack of desire to grow, fear of being too successful, and lack of administrative training.

How resources leave

The egress of money from the favela is not really a single river, if we use the ecological metaphor, but a kind of swamp or wetland. For instance, the majority of money spent in markets and liquor distributors goes directly to wholesalers. Seamstresses and repairmen keep almost all of their profit in the community, except for the purchase of raw materials and tools. Consumer goods like TVs and refrigerators might be bought outside of the favela, but many people buy them from the repair shops, which keeps a larger percentage in the community.

The economy of the the favelas we studied is active and diverse, and the businesses – in spite of the ups and downs of any company – generally grow. Here, in addition, we would like to point out an important fact about the relationship between these businesses and drug trafficking, something that is clear to see through cartography. *On streets with many businesses, there is little dealing, and on streets where there is a lot of dealing, there are few businesses.* Business owners know that their clients don't feel comfortable going to places where there is a threat of violence, and their economic status gives them a degree of control over the sale of drugs, making implicit and often unspoken deals with the gangs to find other places to sell.

Mutual exclusion of violence and commerce in Chao de Estrelas



In the same way, dealers don't want to sell on busy streets. Buyers want to be anonymous, and with many people on the street it would be hard to pick out informants or plainclothes police officers. For this reason, they have their own motives for seeking new spaces when business expands. Over the last several years, this process occurred on the principle street of Xié and in the northwest of Santo Amaro.

Though we can see this mutual exclusion relationship in Santo Amaro or Arruda, it is especially clear in Chão de Estrelas. The central commercial street of the neighborhood is safe and busy, but just a couple of blocks away, on streets without markets or barbers, are some of the most dangerous places in the city.

Information flows

The most coveted information in the favela is about the favela itself: who's playing football well, who got beat up by the cops, who is going out with whom… one might expect, then, that the *circulation* of information would be more important than its *entrance* into the favela from outside. Strangely, that is not true. "Valid" information that flows to people in the favela may come from neighbors and their own experience but as we saw above, the NGO Auçuba has seen than people generally trust the media more than their own eyes.

The facts presented in the media are important, and people talk seriously when they see a neighbor on Cardinot, whether as a perp or a victim. However, the most important thing about these programs is the *frame* they provide, how they mark out what merits attention and what doesn't. The principal message of these programs isn't that this person or that is now in jail, *but that only stories of blood are worth telling*. On the street corners and in the alleys of the favelas, we hear many stories that never make it on Cardinot, but they share this same value, privileging stories of violence. In this way, the favela is defined and constituted as a place of drugs, violence, and lack. These are the stories and the gossip that deserve to be told, whether on TV or on the street.

Positive information

Cardinot Cinderela

At lunch time, the most popular TV program in Recife – both in the favela and outside of it – is "Hard Core with Cardinot", an hour of news about violence in the city. Framed as a kind of public service, a condemnation of violence, the host (Cardinot) shows only murders, crime, and war in the favelas, with as much blood as possible. Thanks in great part to this program, most people in the city see the favela as a place of only crime and violence.

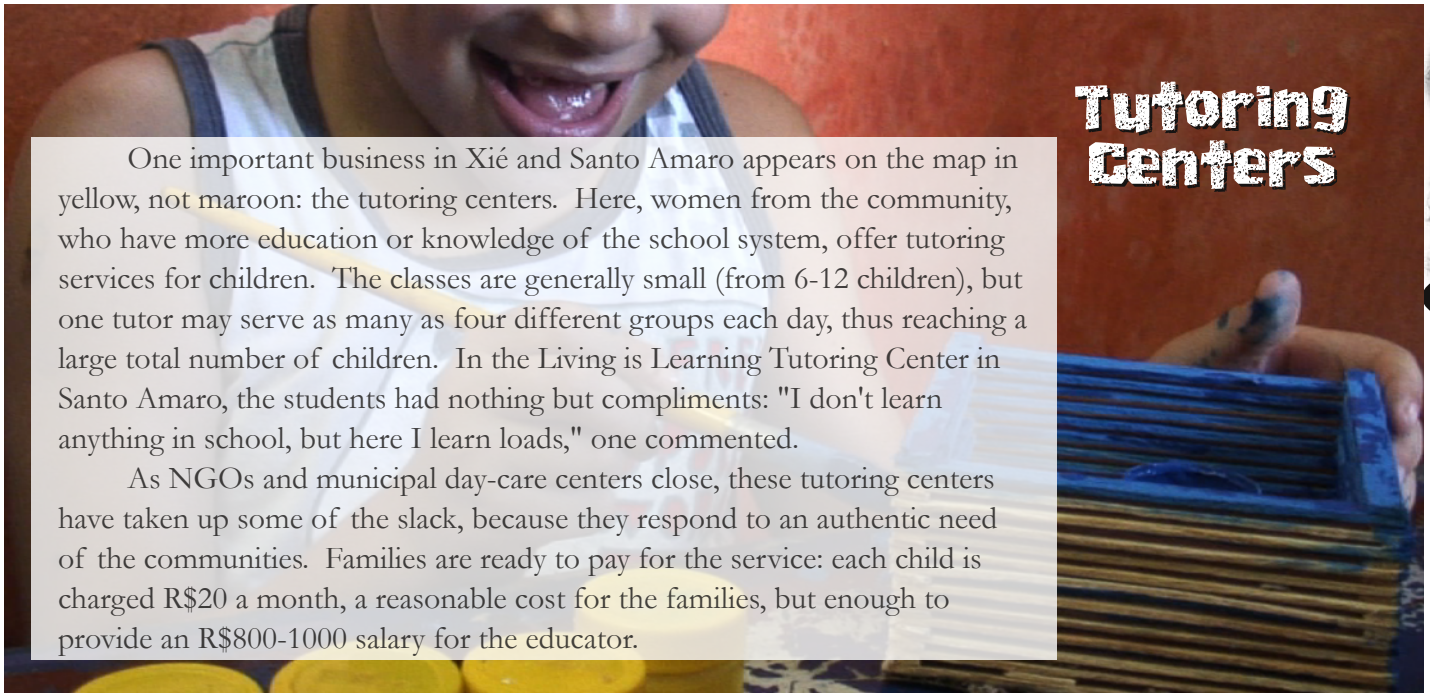
Cinderella claims to be a comedy, but it may have an even stronger ideological impact than Cardinot. With skits and jokes about events in the city, it defines some areas as "off limits", and many educators tell stories of meetings between kids from different neighborhoods in the city, where when one teenagers says "I come from Chão de Estrelas", one hears a chorus of "pe-pe-pe" from everyone else. This sound is the onomatopoeia Cinderella uses for dangerous communities.

about the favelas seldom arrives from outside. Some NGOs channel this information, whether through cultural events (Pé no Chão) or movie clubs and community radio (Auçuba), but in general the information that comes into the favela about the favela – and the frame that allows people to understand it – is profoundly negative.

Information about new opportunities (for jobs, welfare programs, or classes) arrives in the favela by various paths. NGOs manage a network of informal communication, passing information to children and teenagers, who then pass it on to parents and friends. Schools do the same. In places where community organizations are strong, like Chão de Estrelas, the Neighborhood Association can play an important role, but in many favelas, the neighborhood association is famously closed and clientelistic, only passing on information to members of the same political party or to friends. Sadly, this informal transmission system does not always work; even many people well connected with NGOs don't know how to sign up for the *bolsa família* or *bolsa escola* welfare programs.

Circulation of Information

The circulation of information in the favela follows the logic of mouth-to-mouth, with the benefits and dangers that this medium of communication implies. People talk constantly as they pass each other on the street, play dominoes, or watch their children playing, and the most common subjects appear to be love and violence. On Cardinot and Cinderella, the



One important business in Xié and Santo Amaro appears on the map in yellow, not maroon: the tutoring centers. Here, women from the community, who have more education or knowledge of the school system, offer tutoring services for children. The classes are generally small (from 6-12 children), but one tutor may serve as many as four different groups each day, thus reaching a large total number of children. In the Living is Learning Tutoring Center in Santo Amaro, the students had nothing but compliments: "I don't learn anything in school, but here I learn loads," one commented.

As NGOs and municipal day-care centers close, these tutoring centers have taken up some of the slack, because they respond to an authentic need of the communities. Families are ready to pay for the service: each child is charged R$20 a month, a reasonable cost for the families, but enough to provide an R$800-1000 salary for the educator.

bandits are always responsible for violence, but in conversations in the community, people are more likely to point to the brutality of the police.

Two forms of information circulation in the favela deserve to be highlighted: rap and gangsta funk (*funk de galera*). Young men and women make and listen to these musical genres as artistic expression, but also as a way to communicate what they consider to be important. For gangsta funk, the primary message is lauding or cursing individuals and gangs, as a part of gaining popularity and fame. For rap, the fundamental message is to denounce violence and injustice.

Funk is best known through the *bailes funk* and the violence that occurs there, but for young people in the favela, the lyrics are just as important and serve as a means of communication. The genre mixes journalism (narrating the events that happen in the funk brigades) with propaganda (promoting or denigrating a person or group), resulting in a kind of interpretive war between rival brigades, hermeneutic wars that often become real ones. The principal is to raise the popularity index of the funk brigade or its members.

The funk music that people hear on the radio or at dances deals with love and betrayal, often in a nearly pornographic way, but gangsta funk narrates the events that happen within the group, focusing on conflicts with others. This "journalism" is strongly partisan, with the aim of promoting the singer's brigade and denigrating that of its enemies. One of the fastest ways of gaining "consideration" and respect from funk brigades and drug gangs is to write a clever lyric flattering them. In this way, the leaders of the neighborhood win more fame, and the singer enters the economy of honor and consideration (see part 3 of this chapter).

I came to your favela,
let's see you come in mine.
I showed the courage that I can get in,
so come to Santo Amaro and you'll ne'er go home again.

- Funk song from a 2008 gang war

"I decided, after a long time writing gangster funk, that it was stupid just to sing to lift up the famous people in the favela. I wanted to sing to raise the popularity index of my friends: 'João killed this many, Pedro beat up a cop...' No truth in it at all, but people started to pay attention to us."

The narrative form of gangsta funk pretends to tell the truth, but many composers feel no responsibility to verisimilitude.

> *"I decided, after a long time writing gangster funk, that it was stupid just to sing to lift up the famous people in the favela. I wanted to sing to raise the popularity index of my friends: 'João killed this many, Pedro beat up a cop…' No truth in it at all, but people started to pay attention to us."*

Funk also serves as a kind of public intelligence service. The same funk singer cited above told us:

> *"When my favela had a war against the one over there, I had a friend on that side, and he told me about where the boca was, where the gangsters met up, where they kept the stash. So I wrote songs with all of that information. Man, were they mad. They wanted to kill me. It was years until I could go into that favela again."*

Normally, gangsta funk doesn't get recorded, nor is it played on the radio. It is disposable music, made for the moment and useless after that. However, when a song is hot, people memorize and repeat the lyrics, using them to make fun of the enemy and admire their cunning allies. It functions rather like party newspapers at the beginning of the twentieth century, animating and inciting allies, bringing useful information for the political struggle, and offering humor and entertainment. The difference is that in the favelas, where the written word has little force, this process happens through the composition and repetition of music.

Rap also functions as a kind of favela journalism, with a clear purpose of providing a counter-discourse to that heard on Cardinot and the nightly news. "How do people learn what's happening in the favela?" one rapper asked. "Rap is the community newspaper." If we examine this metaphor more carefully, we see that rap doesn't actually work as a newspaper, but like a *newsweekly*, which has the chance to step back, look at the situation with more time and calm, and analyze it. Rap tries to provide another frame with which to understand the events that everyone knows about through TV and gossip, helping the audience to understand the causes and roots of the violence. For this reason, rappers condemn police abuses, look at the injustice in the economy, and talk about the invisibility and exclusion suffered by people from

PROTECTING HIP-HOPPERS

During our time in the field, two teenagers associated with hip-hop began to sell crack in their neighborhood. One might imagine that the gang celebrated an enemy coming over to their side, but their response was the reverse. They went to the leader of the boys' dance group and said, "Watch out for those two. They're selling, and shouldn't be doing that." Other dancers and rappers report that even if they wanted to take the "bolsa pedra" and sell drugs, the donos da boca would not permit it. "They don't want us to get lost in the 'wrong life,' too." Both in their discourse and in their practice, the dealers understand that they are doing something bad, and they want to protect their peers whom they believe to be doing good.

the favela.

Rap in Recife uses a highly pedagogic discourse, calling for people to behave better, treat others with compassion and solidarity, and to work for justice. The chorus of a well known rap in Santo Amaro goes, "Peace and unity, love and hope; enough violence, enough vengeance. Be humble, have solidarity, and respect people from your community." It is interesting that the target audience of this music includes dealers, even those condemned by the rappers. Jocimar Borges of Pé no Chão marveled at this dynamic: "The dealers listen to – and like! – songs that condemn them and the evil they do to the community." They don't live the values of hip-hop, but the gangsters still respect the rappers and think their ethical view is correct.

The Egress of Information

Information leaves the community both voluntarily and involuntarily. Journalists and the police look for news in the favelas and publish it, even if people in the favela would prefer that such information not be public. Other times, information that the community wants to get out also makes it way into the public discourse, mostly in the form of culture: performances of *maracatus, caboclinhos*, and other groups during carnaval and São João; through funk or rap that makes it on the airwaves; through films made in the favela that show in festivals; and through the occasional capoeira teacher or dance/theater group that tours the world. When this information appears on TV or makes it back to

Learning in the favelas of Recife

Chico Science, the founder of Mangue-Beat, an international success in the 1990s, studied in Daruê Malungo. Antônio Nóbrega and Naná Vasconcelos learned in the same place. Lenine learned to play in several Maracatus in Recife. A heavy-metal group invited Cila do Côco to sing on their album and tour Belgium with them.

the community, it is always received with pride.

Information about the community also leaves with people who work on the outside: maids, housebuilders, and others with daily contact with other social groups. Most people in the favelas also have friends and family members in other communities, to which they pass news and gossip.

There is one case where information leaves the community with only a modicum of control: through artists and intellectuals. Many important Brazilian musicians went to the favelas of Recife to learn how to dance or play traditional music. Many local NGOs and people in the favelas believe that artists who gained so much in the favela have a responsibility to give something back, offering credit and honor to the musicians in the favela with whom they studied. However, there is no norm or convention which shows how to give back, so though dancers and drummers in Recife are proud to see their sounds on CDs and on TV, they also feel resentful that others earned fame and money through knowledge they got in the favela for free. They see this process as theft of their experience and wisdom.

In this way, though people want information to leave the favela, because it brings attention and honor to the community, they also hate to see the cultural wealth of the favela exploited.

Flows of Prestige

Prestige and honor play a central role in the value system of the favelas of Recife, and people of almost all groups and social classes work hard to be "considered." Like the financial economy, many of these flows of prestige and honor are what make the favelas marvelous places: the desire of a grandmother to be seen as a good person and a kind disciplinarian for children and grandchildren; a capoeira dancer or musician respected for the quality and creativity of his art. And though we cannot measure prestige with the same easy numbers we use to

measure salary, we can say that most of the circulation of prestige in the favela, like most of the circulation of money, is healthy and productive for the communities.

None the less, the aspect of this economy of consideration that draws most attention is not the desire of a grandmother to be seen as a benevolent matriarch, but that of the dono da boca to be seen as therichest or most feared. Mothers don't fight for the right to say they are the best mothers, but dealers do. For them, recognition is a zero sum game, where if one person gains, another must lose.

If we accept that there are different currencies of money – honestly and dishonestly earned – we should also note that there are different kinds of honor. When boys enter the drug trade, they say the process starts with wanting to be considered and respected more by the dealers than by their parents.

Here, we want to insist that the "zero sum" logic of consideration does not apply to all kinds of recognition, and that the economy of good consideration is much more significant to daily life in the favela. None the less, the economy of competitive consideration is what stands as the origin of much of the violence in the favela, so we address it more comprehensively here.

How Consideration enters the favela

One of the most effective ways to overcome the zero sum logic of competitive recognition is to develop new ways for honor and consideration to enter the favela. One can see the work of Pé no Chão in this light: by providing a stage in the center of the city where artists from Arruda, Santo Amaro, and Chão de Estrelas can perform their art – or by sponsoring tours of Europe – the young people who participate in Pé no Chão win recognition from outside of their communities. Their recognition does not come only from their neighbors, but also from

Sharing Fame

Detefon, a dancer and choreographer who began his artistic career at Pé no Chão (and who was one of the researchers on this project) reports that when he was working as an actor on a production for TV Globo, he gave an interview for local television. Over the next several weeks, every time that he went out on the streets of his favela, people stopped him to show a dance step or sing a couple of lines of a rap. Detefon could pass the fame he had won to other people in his community.

Cinema and Recognition

In some cases, it appears that cinema has the potential to grow the total sum of recognition and honor available in the favelas, without the physical presence of an audience. The mere fact that someone will see what a child or teenagers from the favela filmed -- in festivals, on the internet, in small showings -- promoted visibility and recognition for the good things that people in poor communities do.

An extensive evaluation made by Shine a Light on the impact of cinema education in Recife and other marginalized communities shows that this form of education leads to both increased leadership and educational aspirations.

outsiders, raising the sum total of recognition available in the favela. It is no longer a zero sum game, because the total sum grew.

It is important to note that, just as money earned outside of the favela has a multiplier effect, honor also multiplies in the favela. Young artists who win fame downtown or abroad can use their newly-won honor in the favela, recognizing other people.

One way to understand this process is to think of consideration as "stuff", something that can be passed from person to person. In the islands of the South Pacific, for instance, anthropologists have shown that "mana" plays a similar role, though in the economy of magic instead of that of prestige. Mana "is that substance of which magic is made," a substance which can pass from one person to another.

What is the "stuff of which consideration/prestige is made"? Though we do not hear the word as much in the urban northeast as one would in the countryside, we believe that the mana of the favela is *honor*. According to Marcel Mauss, one of the first anthropologists to think through mana systematically,

> *"It is legitimate, then, to conclude that we find everywhere the notion that involves magical power. It is the idea of pure efficacy, which is material and possible to point to, but also spiritual. It acts at a distance, but directly, not through contact. It is mobile and moves others without being moved; it is impersonal and yet assumes personal forms; it is both divisible and continuous."*

It is in this way that we postulate honor as the stuff of recognition and consideration. It is what circulates, as a kind of magical power, to give prestige to certain people in the favela. For Mauss, mana is "verb, noun, and adjective", "in one place and all places", "subjective and objective," "evil and good", all at once. It serves as both an independent force and a medium to achieve other things. It is almost like a fourth dimension in space, whose efficacy is invisible but clearly marked by what it does.

The communities on the urban periphery of Recife are open fields,

Mauss. Marcel. "Sociologia e antropologia". São Paulo. Cosac & Naify. 2003. p. 151

exchanging many goods and services, among them, honor. This circulating mana is also divided, sometimes strengthening and sometimes weakening the community, depending on who has and uses honor at any given time. In the same way that mana is "the stuff of which magic is made", honor is "the stuff of which prestige is made."

The idea of two currencies of honor (with different powers and effects) helps us to understand another problem of the economy of recognition in the favela. Though young men and women from the favelas quickly condemn the "bourgeoisie" for not recognizing the good in the favelas and seeing them as entirely populated by criminals, these same young people dress in a way easy to categorize as gangsta chique. Dealers, for instance, wear expensive shirts and shorts – in order to show that they are not poor – but they use brands and fashions that the middle class destains. They aren't trying to "look like rich people," but to show that they are rich in their own context. Unfortunately, the general population – and the police – see this fashion as a mark of criminals, and are quick to run from or attack any teenager wearing Cyclone, Seaway, or a uniform of Manchester United. If they are really looking for recognition, safety, or business, this fashion will cause a problem.

However, the consideration of the police and the bourgeoisie is not an end in itself for young dealers and gangsters, but only a *means* to gain more honor within their own group. Wearing gangsta chique fashion in front of police officers will reduce his honor with the cops, but increase it with his friends; the hatred of the police officer or fear of a rich old lady are a kind of mirror upon which the gangsta can project his own bravery, which is what he really want so show to both friends and enemies. However, in this process, he isolates the honor of the favela from the honor of the *Vila*, making it difficult to exchange the currencies and emphasizing the zero sum aspect of prestige. In contrast, the fame won by an artist outside of the favela integrates poor communities with the rest of the city, bringing more recognition for everyone.

The Circulation of honor

Historically, equality is an important value in the Northeast of Brazil. People fear that success might make others envy them, bringing down the "evil eye" and creating conflict in the communities. Ten years ago, when we began to work in Recife, we often heard stories of "crab culture": if you have a bucket full of crabs, and one of them tries to climb out, the other crabs will grab their

legs and drag them back down into the bucket. In the same way, according to the artists and intellectuals who used this metaphor, favela culture looks ill on people who think they are better, who show off or try to diminish other people.

On the other hand, we also see common sayings that try to ward off envy and the evil eye. On styrofoam coolers used to sell beer on the street, one often sees a bumper sticker saying, "Your envy is the strength behind my success." In working class markets, many small businesses show signs that say, "The frog has a evil (big) eye, but it lives in the mud." In this way, people from the favelas who see themselves as successful try to do a kind of magical judo, where envy serves the person who is envied, and perhaps even harms the envious person.

Today, it appears that many small business people in the favela have come to see "crab culture" as a barrier to development, and they now propose new relationships with people in the community, relationships based more on competition than on equality. This change seems to be dependent to some degree on the insertion of the favela in the free market, and in part on the presence of new churches preaching the "Gospel of Prosperity."

For young people in Recife today, a central concern is showing themselves as "well off", proving that they lack for nothing. This is why luxury goods are so important: if a young man can spend R$80 on a t-shirt or R$180 on a pair of shorts, effectively *wasting* resources, then clearly he can spare them. He won't be seen as a "poor thing."

"It isn't easy to start a store, but now loads of people know me, more know me than I know them. They come from the other side of the neighborhood to find me." This comment shows the importance of being respected and considered, but it also shows how competitive fame works in Recife: "More people know me than I know them."

-owner of a women's clothing store, Campo do Onze

Among intellectuals and activists who worry about life in the favelas, one often hears complaints about economic priorities. Some families, when they get extra income, will dedicate it to improving a home, but many others will not. Why, we then ask, would a young man spend R$500 on a iPhone or a Blackberry when that same money could be much better used to tile the bathroom, improve a kitchen, or invest in a small business? In order to respond to this question, we first need to look carefully at the information in the sub-chapter on the economy of the favela: even in the favelas we studied, poverty is not always as extreme as it might appear. The second part of the response, however, has to do with the gaze of the other. If a young man wants to be seen as well off, if being considered is his most important value, then buying a cell phone is a rational use of

limited resources. It is neither false conscience (as people on the left will say) nor a lack of ethics (as critics on the right might suggest). If we think of pure efficacy, in the bang for the buck, buying a cell phone or a t-shirt will win the admiring gaze or more people than will a new toilet.

The quest for recognition isn't limited to the young. The owner of a women's clothing shop in Campo do Onze told us with pride, "It isn't easy to start a store, but now loads of people know me; more know me than I know them. They come from the other side of the neighborhood to find me." This comment shows the importance of being respected and considered, but it also shows how competitive fame works in Recife: "*More* people know me than I know them." It is for this reason that we talk of a flow of recognition in economic terms: it is as if a person has a limited quantity of recognition that he can give, and each person wants the recognition of others for himself. This kind of recognition is a zero sum game: when I win, another person loses.

We see this zero sum dynamic very clearly in the battles between funk brigades. When two groups fight, the winner will climb in the IBOPE rankings, while the other will fall. One girl we interviewed told with pride the story of when her brigade challenged one of the most famous groups in the city and won. She was thrilled that her group was climbing up the rankings, but just as excited that the other was falling.

conclusions

These reflections on the flows of money, information, and prestige suggest new paths for social interventions in the favela. Though it clearly is important to increase the salaries of people working outside of the favelas, it is equally important to catalyze the circulation of resources *inside* the community, a process that has already happened naturally in Xié and Santo Amaro. Second, it is important to short circuit the economy of recognition-as-competition, promoting the development of *new flows of honor and consideration*. And with

information, it appears that the fundamental problem is one of egress, how information and knowledge leaves the community. People in the communities want new ways to export the good news from their favelas and to exchange the cultural and intellectual wealth they have.

Leaving the armed groups

Among members of gangs and other armed groups, one often hears the phrase, "Once you're in, you can't get out." However, over the course of our research we met with at least five young men who had been dealers, and then left "that life" without serious problems. In this brief chapter, we want to think about the rhetoric of "You can't get out," and contrast it to the concrete steps that young men and women use to escape the drug gangs or other violent groups.

As we have shown earlier, all of the dealers we interviewed recognized that they were doing something bad: something they did not want their children to do and something that they told children to avoid. None the less, it is an activity that gives them status, pleasure, and money, and as such, they don't want to give it up. The easiest way to resolve this ethical-cognitive conflict is to admit that they made the wrong choice, but to say that once they made the decision, it's impossible to go back.

Gang members give many reasons why "you can't get out"; here we list them and explain the argument before showing how the ex-gang members overcame the problem.

1. **Knowledge**. According to various dealers, the gangs will not let them leave because they know too much. If they pass information to the police or to a rival gang, they will damage the economic and military interests of the group, so the donos da boca do not allow them to leave.

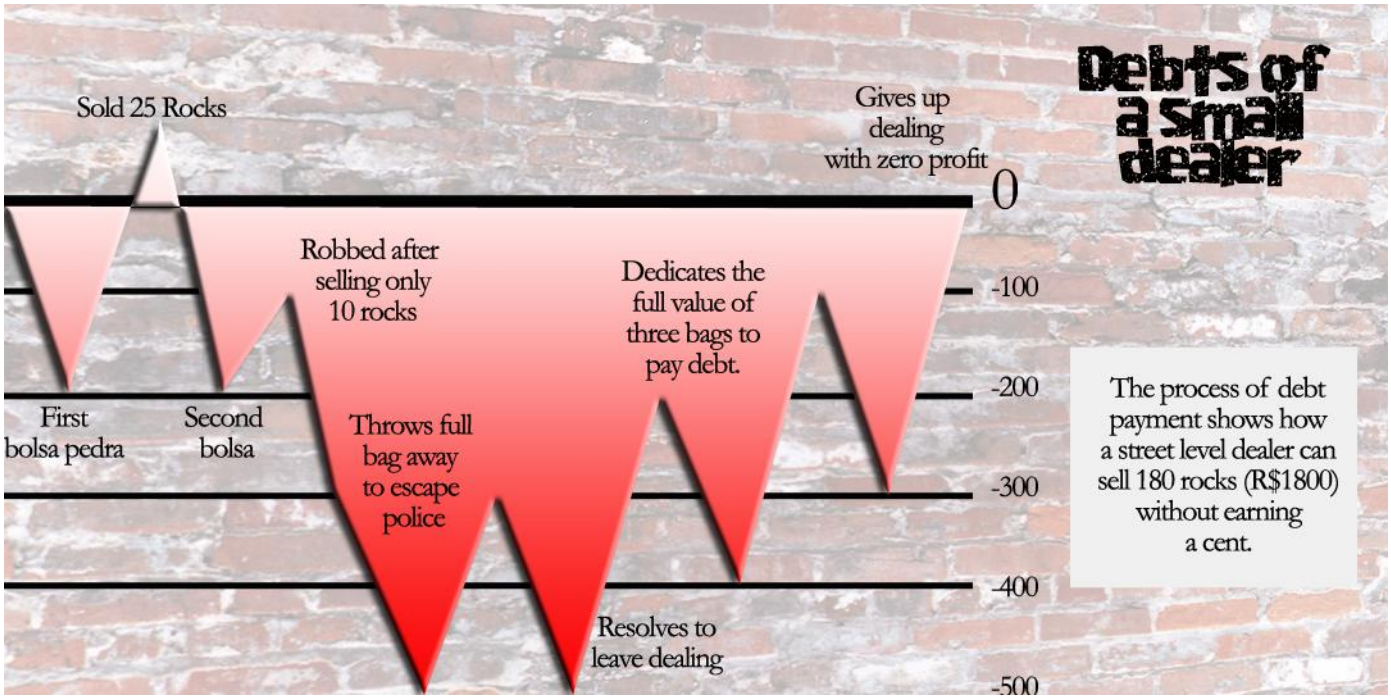
   A comment from an ex-gang member in Campo do Onze challenges the whole premise of this argument: "What do I know that any community member doesn't know? Where's the boca, who sells,

who's in charge? Everybody knows that. The dealer doesn't know any huge secret."

In fact, it appears that the discourse of "secret knowledge" exists more as a way to flatter the dealer than because it is true. When they feel they are members of a privileged society, a secret club, the dealers feel they are important, privy to matters that the "*etários*" don't even suspect. However, as the ex-dealer points out, when you analyze any particular fact, dealers don't really know anything important.

The people who may have truly valuable information are the donos de boca, and in some cases, their Right Hand Men. They are the ones who know how the drugs enter the community, who provides them, and who (of rich, white people from the "*Vila*"), has the power to facilitate the traffic. This information, which could harm important and powerful people outside of the favela, indeed must be kept secret. However, no street level dealer ever has this kind of information.

2. **Debt.** A dealer lives in debt. From the first moment that he gets the *Bolsa Pedra*, he owes money to the dono who gave it to him and expects his money back soon. When he pays back that debt, he instantly contracts a new one, with the new Bolsa he is given to sell. Given the danger of their work and the chance for loss of the product, in many



cases this debt goes far beyond the cost of one R$300 sack of rocks of crack. An ex-dealer from Xié tells the following story, which illustrates the challenges of many street level dealers.

> *"I hadn't been selling very long. I'd sold a couple of bags and thought things were going well. I was right here [shows the main street of Xié] when I heard all sorts of confusion, and the cops invaded. I was over there [showing a side street] so they couldn't see me at first, so I threw the bag up on the roof there. The ROCAM [SWAT team] took lots of kids prisoner that night, but they didn't have anything on me, 'cause I didn't have any drugs with me. Then, the next day I climbed up on the roof to get the bag, but it was gone. Disappeared. But I still had to pay the $300 to the dono. That's when I decided I didn't want to do this anymore. I sold until I could pay off the debt, and then I was gone."*

Most dealers maintain a debt to the donos, varying between the cost of one and several bags of crack. As long as they are selling and bringing in money for the boca de fumo, the debt isn't a problem. Like an American family with a large mortgage on the house, it is simply part of life. The problem happens when the dealer wants to leave "that life" or fails to bring profit to the boca (whether because he's become lazy, addicted, etc). In that moment, the dono will come to collect the debt. If the dealer can pay, everything is fine. The challenge is to save enough money to be able to do that.

3. **Honor and friendship.** According to an ex-dealer in Arruda, one of the biggest problems in leaving the gang is that when a boy joins, he "burns" his old friendships outside the armed group. Friends in the gang may not be good or sincere, but business associates become the most important relationships that a young dealer has. Leaving the group means leaving those friends as well, ending up completely alone. The same young man said that the most difficult challenge he faces today is solitude, now that he has neither his childhood nor his gang friends. "I was afraid to leave because of that, and it's rough, really rough," he confessed.

Other dealers speak of the same fear in terms of honor instead of friendship. Leaving the armed group means abandoning the activity that gave them prestige and "consideration", as well as the comrades who gave that respect. Many dealers fear that if they leave, other gang members will call them wimps or cowards.

The ex-dealer from Campo do Onze told us that his experience was exactly the opposite.

"I think those guys respect me more now than when I was inside. They know I had the courage to do what they couldn't, but which they want to do. And what's amazing is that when I was inside, they weren't really friends, not true friends. But now that I'm on the outside, many of them are now my friends. We talk about other things, do other things. It's much better."

4. **Work.** Many NGO leaders and educators also lament that involvement in the drug trade – or especially having being in jail – makes it impossible for young men from the favela to get a job. Many kids stay in the trade or return to it because they cannot find employment.

This concern is valid when we consider work *outside* the favela. However, *inside* the favela, there is no such prohibition. Ex-dealers and ex-cons work in markets, as barbers, as recyclers… In many cases, it appears that a background in the drug trade – and the hard lessons it implies for business management and sales – actually prepares the young men well for a job in legitimate commerce.

Though it may not be true that "You can't get out," leaving is not an easy process. It demands discipline, courage, and willpower. It is interesting that of all of the ex-gang members we interviewed, almost all of them gained some part of this discipline or courage from family members who stuck with them in spite of their status as gang members.

In many stories of leaving the drug trade, we heard that the fundamental motivation was family.

DESCULPA, MAE -- CACCAO CENTRAL

Mãe, não dei valor pro teu sonho, sua luta
Diploma na minha mão, sorriso, formatura
Não fui seu orgulho, diretor de empresa
Virei o ladrão com a faca que mata com frieza
Não mereci sua lágrima no rosto
Quando chorava vendo a panela sem almoço
Vendo a lage cheia de goteira
Ou a fruta podre que era obrigada a catar na feira
Enquanto você ajuntava aposentadoria esmola pra não ter despesa
Eu tava no bar jogando bilhar
Bebendo conhaque
Bêbado eu era o ladrão de traca a escopeta
Com a mãe implorando comida na porta da igreja
Todo natal você sozinha eu na balada
Bancando vinho, farinha pras mina da quebrada
Desculpa mãe pela dor de me ver fumando pedra
Pela glock na gaveta pelo gambé pulando a janela
(2x)
(desculpa mãe) por te impedir de sorrir
(desculpa mãe) por tantas noites em claro triste sem dormir
(desculpa mãe) pra te pedir perdão infelizmente é tarde
(desculpa mãe) só restou a lágrima e a dor da saudade

"My old lady was suffering so much because of what I was doing. I saw her pain, and I couldn't do that to her any more. That's why I left," one young man explained. Another explained, "I didn't want my kids to see me doing that, even if I was doing it for them." We heard from many people in the favelas – dealers and family members – that "when a boy takes the wrong road, it's his mother who suffers most", and the awareness of this fact appears essential for many young men who manage to leave the drug trade.

The power of the mother in the life of young men from the favelas is clear from a tattoo one sees on arms and backs in many favelas: *Amor só de mãe* (only a mother's love). In the unstable world of dealing and violence, the one constant is a mother's love. One song that every boy in the favela knows by heart is "Sorry, Mom," by the rap group Facção Central. And when young men talk about love and family, one always hears the comment, "When you're in jail, who's doing to visit you? Not your friends. Your mother."

Though individual mothers clearly try to help their children get out of the drug trade, no coherent movement or strategy has emerged from these micro-practices.

For more on the role of mothers among gang members in the favela, see Kurt Shaw, "Only a Mother's Love", in Jimmy Carter and Philip Zaleski, *The Best American Spiritual Writing 2008* (The Best American Series). NY: Mariner, 2008

In the same way that until 2007, the state of Pernambuco never had a public policy on security, through 2011, civil society has not developed a coherent strategy to address problems of violence. Many independent actions exist, and all of the interviewed NGOs implement activities directed toward what many call "a culture of peace"; without these efforts, conditions in Recife might be even worse.

However, many of these actions directed toward a politically correct "culture of peace" do more to change language use than the facts on the ground. Ideas of consideration and revolt are deeply rooted in youth culture, and teenagers don't see anything wrong with these basic values – though gossip and the media may see them this way. The following proposals accept the basic landscape of consideration, revolt, and independence as a given – as forces that move young people in Recife – and try to channel them into productive actions to help the communities on the periphery of Recife. We look for two main goals in these proposals:

1. They value activities and dynamics already present in the community, whether promoting them, expanding them, or directing them to new ends, so that children and teenagers may have more opportunities to make a difference in their communities and their city.

2. The foment the flow of goods, information, and prestige to improve the conditions of marginalized people and the communities in which they live. This process means opening the community to knew forms of knowledge and supporting democratic information flows from the favela into broader Brazilian society.

We hope that these ideas will help to orient the Bernard van Leer Foundation's efforts to strengthen community resources to reduce violence against children.

A civic policy

The majority of current civil society actions (whether by NGOs, football clubs, cultural groups, etc) propose to offer alternatives for children and teenagers. In interviews, we often heard the phrase "we want to get the kids off the street and keep them safe from the drugs and violence there." Our research has shown that this frame for social action has, in fact, damaged community life in the favelas, promoting the idea that the street – where all children play, learn and circulate – is a bad and dangerous place.

This orientation of social work reflects prejudices in the Brazilian middle class – always disposed to see the street as a font of danger, filth, and subversion – and those of international and national funders. Sadly, it has negated a much more productive, working class vision of the street as a place for sociality, education, and living together.

Given these concerns, we suggest the following frame for a new "civic policy" in the favelas. These ideas join together the proposals of many members of the communities studied, leaders of NGOs and cultural groups, academics, and even members of gangs and funk brigades.

1. **Value the street.** Not using culture to "keep kids off the street," but to *transform* public space itself and the way that people see it.

2. **Rapid Response.** One of the most striking facts about violent actions in Recife is that people *know it is going to happen*. Funk brigades schedule their battles and mark where they will meet. A debtor will get news that creditors plan to kill him days before the murder. And rumors that "shit's coming down" float through the favela as a war between bocas de fumo approaches. In a similar way, certain clues point to a teenager's incipient involvement in a gang, so that observers may see his commitment to the group before he does. By training locals to look for the right clues and giving them the tools with which they can act, it

should be possible to make important inroads against violence.

3. **Express revolt productively.** Finding and promoting channels so that young people from the favelas can *express revolt and the desire for consideration in ways that produce and promote social justice and equality.*

ACTIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH THE STATE

Ombudsman or think tank in the Ministry of Children

Justification

Justification in terms of civic policy: Rapid response in juvenile detention and other state institutions. Channelling revolt.

Partners

Possible Partners: Children's Ministry, Deptartment of Sociology at the UFPE

Together with the reform of the security bureaucracy in the state of Pernambuco, the Governor has also reorganized services and policies for children. According to José Luiz Rattón (Special Advisor on Security to the Governor), the new Children's Minister is smart, young, and open to new ideas. By creating an ombudsman or a think tank in the Ministry, it might be possible to create a new culture of children's rights and children's social agency (protagonismo infantil) in the Ministry and the government as a whole.

Community Agents of the Pacto pela Vida

Justification

Reduction in Bolice Brutality and Revolt. Channelling revolt into productive critiques of the state.

Partners

Pacto pela Vida, NGOs in the communiteis where Community Agents will work.

The next step in the Pacto pela Vida is the integration of Community Agents, people who live in the community and can serve as a communication conduit between the Administrative Committee and the favelas. Up to this point, it appears that the role and mission of these Agents is not very clear, but van Leer's collaboration could help direct this resource so that it really aids people who live in the favelas.

In recent Brazilian history, we see many examples of advisory councils that propose to

mediate between the state and the community, but many have fallen victim to clientelism or party patronage. In other cases, because the councils are paid by state funds, they serve more to communicate the will of the state to the people, and not the other way around. Were Van Leer to finance training, channels of communication, or even the salaries of some Agents, they might become a more autonomous force, less likely to be coopted by the state or party interestes.

Police Training

Over the last several years, the Federal University of Pernambuco has invited many police officers to participate in classes on criminology or human rights, and there is good evidence that these officers have helped to transform the violent police culture that inspires revolt and the desire to join gangs.

Just.	Reduction of police brutality and the revolt it causes
Partners	Pacto pela Vida, Departamento de Sociologia da UFPE

ACTIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH NGOS

Creche dos Becos

The streets and alleys of the favelas function as a kind of community day care center which has developed spontaneously in the communities. Children play together in groups of 8-15 in relatively safe and controlled spaces, and older kids are present to care for their younger siblings. Young teenagers, the age at which many kids enter the drug gangs, sit at the front of the alleys, chatting with friends and making sure that kids don't run out into the traffic. One of the most interesting grass-roots initiatives we found over the course of the proyect – the tutoring centers – emerges from this practice.

The Creche dos Becos (Alley Tutoring Center) is an idea developed watching these practices and conversing with kids and mothers from Arruda. It transforms the informal day care system into education, where children learn and both they and teenagers have the chance to act as protagonists in their

Justification

Transformation of the culture of the street, turning it into a space of education and living together. Rapid Response for teens at risk of joining armed groups. Channelling the desire for honor (as teachers) and revolta (organizing children to demand their rights.

Partners

Daruê Malungo (Chão de Estrelas); Pé no Chão (Arruda); Ruas e Praças (Santo Amaro); Multicultural de Peixinhos.

world. Though the structure would differ based on local characteristics, the basic idea would be train young people and teenagers as homework tutors and cultural educators. Working with the kids who already gather in alleys and largos, they would add elements of homework support and music to the daily activities of soccer, dance, and hide-and-seek that these kids already do. Teenagers and young mothers would have the chance to channel their revolt and desire for recognition into something positive, while the children would also prepare for presentations (like those at Pé no Chão's Eco da Periferia) where they could be seen and admired as agents of creation and social change.

These creches would be a space for living together, where mothers and children could join together in these activities, interacting and learning. If the project is successful, each creche could develop, in the long run, into self-sustaining small businesses on the model of the Tutoring Centers in Xié and Santo Amaro, or into organizations funded by foundations.

In each community, a local NGO would support and train the young educators (older teenagers from the local community with leadership and educational skills, and younger ones at risk of entering the drug trade). On a daily basis, the whole program would be organized by one administrator/educator, who would work with each individual "school" to make it better.

It would also be important to bring in other successful practices: a mobile library and toy library, for instance, could circulate among the schools. Many adolescents in the favelas (many now in the drug trade), told us that as children they had dreams for their future employment, but gave up as they came to 10-11 years old because they couldn't see how those dreams had any chance of becoming true. By inviting professionals who live in the favela (firemen, housebuilders, artists, etc) to teach and participate in the activities from time to time, children can see that there are many options beyond the drug trade.

Justification

Transforming the culture of challenge and competition to promote peace and solidarity

Part.

Oi Kabum and Auçuba

IBOPE

The cause of many wars, be they between gangs or funk brigades, is to gain the popularity quotient (IBOPE) in the contest with other communities. On the web and on Facebook, there are pages dedicated to which group is on the rise and on the fall, who slandered whom, and what favelas have the gangs with the most prestige. The criteria for this judgement has always been violence (who wins battles between funk brigades or drug gangs) and insult.

At the NGO Oi Kabum, there is a nucleus of young artists from the favelas who work on graphic design and internet pages. With a small investment, this group could create a new, on-line system for ranking the favelas, where each community would gain prestige for other actions (cultural competitions, events, number of days without violence, etc), thus promoting a new way to compete for IBOPE. The page could be advertized in internet cafés in and near the favelas.

Chess moves

According to the metaphor of one educator, Recife is a chess board where favela and *vila* are the black and white spaces. And almost all of the people in the city are bishops: they only move diagonally on spaces of the same color. Some cultural events (Terça Negra, Carnaval, Eco da Periferia) bring the periphery to the center, but it is uncommon for people from the white spaces on the board to visit the black.

Working with organizations and cultural groups from the favelas, it would be possible to develop a series of events which invite middle class people and other cultural groups to visit (and present art) in the favelas. Through dances, musical shows, cinema, and literary events, it would be possible to stimulate and exchange ideas and prestige, overcoming the traditional segregation between the favela and the *vila*. Importantly, in such events, the police would play a completely different role – protecting and not invading – thus developing a new model for police-community relations.

Justification

Transformation of the culture of the street and the relationship between center and periphery. Increase in total amount of respect and recognition. Channelling revolt in new spaces for protest and political action.

Partners

Pé no Chão, Daruê Malungo, Fundo Baobá, Maracatus, caboclinhos, and other cultural groups.
Departamento de Cultura da Prefeitura de Recife

Fundo Baobá is planning to develop a "Cultural Agenda of the Periphery" to promote these events in the city; this foundation could be an important partner.

Soccer

Some of the groups with the deepest roots in the favelas are the football schools; unfortunately, though they may be deeply committed to helping children in their neighborhoods, few of the organizers and coaches understand social movements or popular education. During the course of our research, we were struck by the number of dealers who said that they were good players when they were kids; we believe that football may play the same role as some cultural groups, de-normalizing oppression and raising expectations, without offering employment for any but the best.

Many football schools expressed their desire to be more socially and politically active. The NGO Ruas e Praças is just now beginning a project to use football to promote social change, which might serve as a model.

In addition to training coaches, we believe it would be important to promote inter-favela championships (integrating them in the process of IBOPE) and promote the role of players as leaders in their communities.

Justification	Channelling the desire for honor into sports competition among favelas. TRansforming the culture of the street. Rapid Response with young players at risk of joining armed groups.
Partners	Escolinhas de Futebol in Arruda, Chão de Estrelas, Santo Amaro, and Campo do Onze. ABC Trust and Ruas e Praças

Events

Recife is a city defined by its festivals, where the calendar and the

economy of the city is punctuated by Carnaval, São João, and other huge events. Many people in favelas the NGOs suggested using this festival culture as a way to develop community life and reduce violence. In many cases, these events would be competitive, and could be integrated into #2 (IBOPE), as well as overcoming the segregation between different social groups. Among the suggestions for events:

a. **Funk battles:** Many of the cultural practices now defined as folklore in Recife started as violence: *maracatu, makulelê*, and capoeira all began as forms of violence before being transformed into cultural competitions. The "Funk Battle" proposes to do the same with the battles between funk brigades, creating public events where funk groups compete through music, and dance, turning the violence into a ritual, instead of actual blows.
b. **Barber battles:** The logic of competition could be expanded to include many other activities: barbers and hair stylists, fashion from the favelas, football players, even recyclers. Staring with public qualifiers, each competition would move toward a final championship in the center of the city. In addition to promoting pride in the favela for non-violent activities, it would open new professions where young men and women can become "famous" and recognized. It some areas, it may also open new markets for products and services from the favelas.
c. **Peace Festivals.** All of the favelas of Recife pass through cycles of war and peace. Peace festivals propose to extend the tranquil periods by celebrating months with no deaths. When two communities with a tradition of conflict (Santo Amaro and Campo do Onze, Chão de Estrelas e Peixinhos) go through a month without a violent death, the program would organize a festival for the communities, with dance, traditional foods, and music. Beyond it power to commemorate, the festivals would promote exchanges between people from rival favelas, building trust and new connections.
d. **Wakes for the dead**. So many people die in Recife that, beyond a small group of friends and family, violent death serves more as a spectacle than a tragedy, more a show on Cardinot than a funeral. These wakes

Just.	Channelling revolt and the desire for honor. Transforming the culture of the street.
Part.	Pé no Chão (Eco da Periferia), Ato Periférico

intend to re-inscribe death in the frame of tragedy, de-normalizing it again. With attention to the traditional funeral rites in each community and the sentiments of the family, these events would help the community to elaborate its mourning and to see murder as something abnormal and tragic, something against which everyone should struggle.

Business training

Though there are many small businesses in the favela – and we can understand drug trafficking as a kind of business – few young people dream of opening their own company. For children who participate in NGOs, being an artist or an educator appears to be the only path, while other children see a stark choice between selling drugs as a career, and the miserable life of being exploited as an underpaid worker. None the less, there is a strong entrepreneurial spirit in the favela, and with a few suggestions and inspiration, young people adopt business practices quickly. Of the four researchers in our group, three of them used their salaries to open small businesses.

Being a small business owner offers major benefits for a young person from the favela.

1. They won't be marked an "*etário*", the great fear of any young man
2. They win prestige and consideration in the community
3. They are paid daily, and not at the end of the month
4. They need not deal with the prejudice of hiring practices in the *vila* (especially important for young men with a criminal record)

With the collaboration of SENAI, local NGOs, and mentoring of local business leaders (from the favela and from outside), it would be possible to turn this spirit into an option for young men and women.

Justification	Channelling revolt and the desire for honor. Transforming the culture of the street.
Partners	Daruê Malungo (Chão de Estrelas); Pé no Chão (Arruda); Ruas e Praças (Santo Amaro); Multicultural de Peixinhos. SENAI

Rapid Response Team

People who live in the favelas we researched say that they know before hand when "they shit's coming down." Whether through gossip, news from the traffickers, or simply "the feel in the air", people know when there will be a war between gangs or even when the dealers are planning to go after people

Just.	Rapid Response. Transformation of street culture
Partners	NGOs in all neighborhoods, hip-hop movement. Ato Perifeérico might be a good focial point for the work, or perhaps a recording studio, or the dance studio at Daruê.

who owe them money.

The Rapid Response Team would use this ground-level knowledge to prevent violence before it happens: Community leaders in each favela would be able to call a phone number to call a team of conflict mediators and trained artists who could act before the murder or war starts, using a combination of mediation and cultural events.

Since young men and women associated with the hip-hop movement are respected by both gang and civil society leaders, and have their finger on the pulse of the community, they would have a central role in this project. A centralized dance studio would bring together dancers and rappers from all over the city to train and come to know and trust each other. A professional mediation trainer would work with them in that space, in both formal and informal skill-building sessions, to prepare them as an early warning system.

The informal network developed through this collective arts and mediation training would be able to call on the Rapid Response Team when they saw a problem building. The team would two a double response:

1. A formal, professional mediation between leaders of opposing gangs, or between the debtor and the creditor
2. When safe, a cultural peace building event on the border between warring communities, involving a show, a dance, and a break-battle between dancers from opposing sides.

Women's and Girls' Movement

Several NGO leaders in Recife are impressed with the power of the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* in Argentina to humanize the victims of the dictatorship and to keep human rights in the forefront of the national dialogue. In Recife, mothers also have a privileged place among people involved in violence, and many young men say that they only got the courage to leave the gangs after seeing how much their mothers were suffering.

Just.	Rapid Response. Protagonism of mother and girls, victims of the war.
Part.	Casa de Passagem, Instituto PAPAI?

It isn't easy to create a social movement, and there is no set recipe. None the less, it appears that Recife is ripe to create a movement like the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, a group that would pressure the state, but also offer support and advice to mothers of young men and women who have joined gangs or died as a part of the drug wars. Several people suggested beginning by making a film in which mothers talk of the challenges of their lives on the urban periphery, and then a showing in a theater or open-air space in the center of the city. Creating a space where mothers could exchange ideas and strength could catalyze new alternatives and a movement itself.

The other female actors who play a fundamental role in this process are the girlfriends of dealers. A social movement that includes them could be even more powerful. It is difficult to imagine how to begin this type of movement, but perhaps a call for proposals from different NGOs would inspire interesting ideas.

Favela Film School

Perhaps because we did this research with cameras in our hands, many people gave ideas of how film and cinema might play a role in making peace in the favelas.

One of the young researchers on this project uses his salary to buy a camera and computer, planning to help children in his alley to make films and to document what is good about his community. He sees film as a way for adolescents and children to be seen and respected without resorting to arms. Among the proposed films:

1. A documentary with and about women who lost their children in the drug war, perhaps helping to catalyze a movement like the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*
2. After interviewing dealers and gang leaders in various favelas at war, children in those communities will make fictional movies based on the childhood of these leaders. In a neutral, safe place, gang members from rival neighborhoods could then watch the films together, seeing how similar their childhoods, struggles, and dreams were, before entering the gangs. The films, then shown in public spaces, would help to humanize the gangs, gain their recognition in non-violent ways, and undermine the discourse of

Justification

Transforming street culture and involving new groups in work for peace. Rapid response with young people at risk of entering gangs. Recognition through movie screen, channelling revolt with filmes against injustice.

Part.

Possíveis Parceiros: Shine a Light, Auçuba, Oi Kabum

Cardinot and the nightly news.

3. Before the bailes-funk, interview brigade leaders, asking them about ways to reduce violence and what is good about funk. After an instant edition, these films would be show to the whole group, who would then have a moral responsibility to stay within the moral definition of their leaders.
4. **Lysistrata**: In the famous comedy by Aristophanes, Lysistrata, tired of the Peliponisean war, organizes the women of Athens and Sparta for a sex-strike: they refuse love to their husbands and lovers until the men stop the war. Thanks to this radical step, the two cities make peace. It would be very interesting to invite girlfriends of dealers to make a film updating this story; it might serve as the beginning of a movement of the girlfriends of dealers.
5. **Gangstas who left**: a film in which ex-gang members relate the way they left the gangs, showing current gangsters that it is possible.
6. **O Etário**. Gang members condemn *etários*, people who give up on their dream to become exploited workers. However, if we look at the economics of the drug trade, we see that gangsters are really only a way for rich people to outsource the danger and crime of drug sales from the *vila* to the *vila*. By making a film about this process, we might be able to show young men who the "real *etário*" is.

Orquesta Mitote

Recycling trash is good for the environment and provides a good wage for many families along the Canal de Arruda and in Chão de Estrelas, but the work also carries with it a serious stigma. As a result, many recyclers use alcohol and drugs to excess, while their children look to the armed groups as a new source of prestige.

Justification	Recognition for children of recyclers, so they need not seek consideration in gangs. Tranformation of the culture of the street. Rapid response for recyclers and their children.
Part.	Pé no Chão, Daruê Malungo

In Mexico, the Orquesta Mitote has won numerous awards for its work with children, who learn to transform trash into musical instruments, and then perform on stages around the country. The idea re-inscribes recycling as something that should inspire

pride and creativity, not as a form of begging.

Pé no Chão already has an excellent relationship with Mitote, and would be able to provide the space for workshops to create and nurture a trash orquestra in Arruda. The director of the Orquestra has also expressed his interest in coming to Recife to start a new musical group.

Theater-Comedy

Justification	Transforming the culture of the street. Challenging a discourse that only permits recognition for young men for their violence. New channel for recognition for young artists.
Part.	Pé no Chão, Daruê Malungo, Peixe-Arte

The narrative frame given by Cardinot and Cinderela to life in the favelas has gone largely unchallenged on a large scale. By developing a comedy troupe that would present plays and improvisational skits based on life in the favela -- and making fun of the way television portrays these communities. This group could present at all of the events suggested above, as well as at other public spaces in the city. In addition to helping to develop a new narrative around violence and peace -- and about the positive aspects of the favela -- the group could also train young actors from the favela.

Network of Lawyers and Journalists

Justification	Expression of Revolt. Overcoming the sense of exclusion and futility.
Part.	Pé no Chão, Auçuba

Many young men and their families are abused by the police without any way to defend themselves. They find themselves unjustly as prisoners, where they will become morally indebted to gangs and have to enter "that life" after they return to the street. In addition, there are few routes to challenge the official story presented about young men in the media; when one boy with whom we worked five years ago was arrested, Cardinot pasted his face over the TV as the leader of crime in Arruda, when he was, in fact, an innocent bystander at an arrest. By organizing journalists and lawyers, it might be possible to reduce the false arrest rate and the false accusations against innocent young men.

Appendix I: Methodology

This monograph is the result of an innovative methodology, integrating social cartography, video research, and hip-hop with more traditional social science methods. More than ten researchers, almost all of them from the favelas studied here, participated, with a total of more than 300 days in the field and more that 100 interviews conducted. The researchers had to confront floods, two wars among the favelas in the study, a transport strike, and other difficulties to present this text.

1. Cartography of the Favelas

In each of the favelas, a research team – of which at least one member came from the community – walked every street, alley, and nook to map the neighborhood, its resources, and its challenges. The cartography used as its basis Google Maps (taken from public records in Olinda and Recife), but we soon discovered that many of these maps were erroneous in important ways. In Arruda, for instance, of twelve alleys where thousands of people live, the official map only marks one alley, and in Campo do Onze, the formal map has little to do with the real streets of the favela. We had imagined that the social cartography would emphasize the "social", but we soon found the simply mapping geographic space was a challenge.

Each institution in the community received a

A cartography on TV

In an episode of City of Men, one of the few programs on commercial TV that portrays the favela from the perspective of its inhabitants, the two lead characters make a map of Santa Marta. At the beginning, the gang members are thrilled, demanding that each alley bear their names, but when the police get a copy of the map and use it to invade, the protagonists get in trouble. Thinking of this problem – and that of drug buyers who come from other areas – the public maps of this cartography do not include information about points of sale or violence.

mark on the map. In some cases, it was easy to identify a church or a market, but especially in some of the remote alleys of poorer favelas, the presence and knowledge of the local researchers was invaluable.

Most inhabitants of the community were excited about the research. Business owners were happy to know that a Google Map would have information about their company, even if only on a personal page, and other people expressed their hopes to have a map that better reflected the reality of the community. Before beginning, we had feared that gangs and other armed groups would react badly to the research, but the presence of local researchers, with their friendship and kinship ties to the gangs, kept things safe. From time to time, especially in Chão de Estrelas, gang members observed us curiously and asked questions, but no problems emerged.

Researcher	Favela
Jonas França	Sta. Amaro
José dos Santos	Campo II
Ellan Barreto	Arruda
Jailson dos Santos	Xié
Adriano da Silva	Arruda
Daniel Peixoto	Chão de Estrelas
Ricardo do Break	Salgadinho
Flávia de Lima	Saramandaia
	Cidade de Deus

Interviews

Over the course of the research, we interviewed more than 100 people in the communities, among them passers-by; business-owners; political, cultural, religious, and sports leaders; and participants in the drug trade and other armed groups. There were qualitative interviews designed to understand different aspects of life in the favelas, and quantitative interviews, directed at understanding the economy and perceptions of public services.

Many interviews were recorded on camera, but most of these were not published, whether for reasons of privacy, security, or mere esthetics.

In addition to these interviews in the communities, we also met with NGO leaders and educators, people working with the community budgeting program, and educators from some government programs. In order to

Ellan Barreto, Kurt Shaw, Helena Iara da Silva Shaw, Luziel Costa, and Adriano da Silva working on the map in the favela of Arruda

understand the new policies of the State of Pernambuco, we spoke several times with José Luiz Rattón, special advisor to the Governor, were invited to participate in a meeting of the Administrative Committee, and participated in a round table with Rattón and his students of criminology at the Federal University of Pernambuco.

Video-research

In several of the favelas, local researchers taught children from the communities to make videos, and the kids then made short movies to show their community from a child's perspective. With the simple question, "What do you do every day?" we arrived in places we had never imagined, like abandoned houses where kids play hide and seek. More importantly, we learned what children know about their own neighborhoods (more than adults might like them to know!), how they see the government, schools, and the police, and how they learn informally. The fact, for instance, that the children of Santo Amaro sing children's music, while those from Arruda sing rap and funk, shows the importance of tutoring centers in Santo Amaro and the role of informal education in the alleys of Arruda.

Hip-Hop Research

The use of music and culture was the most innovative aspect of this research. People who live in the favelas of Recife have long researched their communities and even published that research, but never in academic papers: they use music. Today, rap and funk are ways to look for what is going on in the neighborhoods and then to communicate this knowledge to other people.

Looking to incorporate local perspective on the favela, we asked each researcher to think of an signifcant event in his community that taught something important about violence or community resources to resist it. Three of the researchers wrote raps about the theme and then made music videos to illustrate them. The last researcher, a dance teacher in local schools, developed and filmed a choreography to illustrate his research.

Though the goal of this research was to understand the violence in Recife and Olinda and document the strengths available to the communities, our work also had concrete results to reduce violence and improve conditions in the favelas. In the process, we learned that we were not only engaged in an academic study, but also a social action.

The researchers

Jocimar Borges, the director or the NGO Pé no Chão, made a key suggestion to transform this research. "The salary you have for the researchers is excellent," he told us, "and can do a lot for their communities as well as for them. Why not ask a proposal from each of them, so they can think how to use this resource to make a real impact?" The researchers proposed – and have now begun to enact – the following ideas:

1. **Jonas Corrêa de França:** Jonas's mother is an excellent artisan and seamstress, so Jonas bought her a sewing machine and a lot of cloth so that she can open her own clothing store.

2. **Adriano Ferreira da Silva:** Adriano has always been known as the best student in his high school, but it is extremely difficult for anyone from the favela to pass the difficult entrance exam for the UFPE. Adriano has always dreamed of being a lawyer, so he plans to use his salary for a special course to prepare for the entrance exam for law school. With the money left over, he reformed the bathroom in his parents' house.

The research team (Ellan Barreto, Luziel Costa, Jonas França, Adriano da Silva, Helena Iara da Silva Shaw, and Rita da Silva) putting cartography information into Google Maps.

3. **Luziel Lourenço da Costa (Detefon):** As our research showed the importance of the internal economy of the favela – and the loss of currency because of people buying outside of the community – Detefon saw an opportunity. He used his salary to create, together with Okado (below) a brand of clothing for young men. The brand, which is already selling baseball caps and t-shirts, seems to have found a strong clientele in the favela. With the rest of the money from his salary, Detefon bought a washing machine for his mother.

4. **Ellan Alves Barreto (Okado)**: Ever since he worked with us on the film *City of Rhyme*, Okado has been fascinated by cinema and its power to transform a community. Seeing, as part of the research, that many teenagers join the gangs in order to be seen and respected, he thought that a camera is a much better tool than a gun to be recognized. He used his salary to buy a camera and computer so he can make films with children from his alley.

The educators from Pé no Chão all commented on the way that the posture and confidence of the four researchers had improved, noting that doing the research had been a learning experience for all of them, helping them become leaders in their communities.

Inclusion

One of the central proposals of this study is that any coherent civic policy to combat violence must find a way to channel the revolt and desire for consideration felt by young people on the urban periphery. We believe that in some small way, this research did exactly that. The chance to be heard, to express their rage against the state, the police, and injustice, channeled revolt for many young people. And knowing that one's ideas and opinions are important and might be taken into consideration is a way to win recognition and honor.

Another important aspect of this process is that gang members spoke sincerely with us about their hopes for their communities: in large part, they want the peace, prosperity and education desired by peaceful activists in civil society. With these opinions recorded on video tape (even if they are never shown), they feel a commitment to work for this better community, when new projects come to it.

Finding Respect

The enthusiasm of small businesspeople for the project expresses their desire to see their work reflected on the internet. For Hegel, being recognized by the State serves as the *sine qua non* of the recognition that everyone wants, and today being on Google is a way to inscribe oneself on the Big Other, to say that a person exists and is important. A map of the favelas that shows and celebrates these efforts is a way to win respect and consideration for people who live in the favelas, without them having to raise arms to be recognized.

In addition, our conversations with local leaders serve to start a process by which they see themselves as protagonists in peace-building. The way we asked questions helped people in the community to see new frames for questions of war and peace. Instead of searching for an NGO or politician to save them, we hope that our questions helped people to see that they are also actors, capable of making a difference in questions of community development, life and death.

Appendix 2: The Favelas

Since many readers of this monograph may not know the geography and the history of the favelas of Recife, we include here a series of brief essays on the principal communities studied in the Cartography of the Favela.

Santo Amaro was one of the first informal neighborhoods (or invasions) to be developed in Recife. It was founded in the 1920s and 1930s, when poor migrants from the countryside of Pernambuco and Paraíba came to Recife in hopes of finding work in new industries. The Fábrica Tacaruna, where many men worked in those days, still stands at the edge of the favela, though it closed its doors many years ago.

After many years of struggle to get good public services, and more decades to improve their homes, many of the alleys are paved and the homes are mostly well-made. There is an impressive diversity of institutions in the community, running from businesses to schools, NGOs, and a public day care center.

Though it has long been known as the most violent favela in Recife, today there is little open war in Santo Amaro, and the streets vibrate with life, with music, domino games, businesses, children playing, and teenagers flirting. None the less, people from the neighborhood continue to face serious discrimination when they look for work outside of the favela, and a wall hides their homes from the city and from the Shopping Tacaruna beside it.

Population (estimate): 10,000
NGOs that work in the neighborhood: AACA, Adolescer, Galpão de Meninos e Meninas, Ruas e Praças, Pé no Chão, Casa de Passagem, Reforço Viver e Aprender, Creche Militares Espíritas, Oasis de Liberdade
Public Services: good
Also called: Santa Tereza de Santo Amaro

The film made by the children of Santo Amaro highlights several interesting facts. First and most significant is that in spite of the improved security in the favela, violence continues to be very present in the lives of children; they talk at length about police brutality. Less obvious for people who don't know the favelas of Recife is the music the children sing: though kids from other favelas sing funk and rap, children from Santo Amaro sang classic children's songs. This small difference speaks much of the presence of day care centers, tutoring programs, and NGOs working with small children in the neighborhood.

Still from the video "Santo Amaro não só tem ladrão", by Jonas Racional

Though City Hall considers Campo do Onze to be part of Santo Amaro, this favela has a very different character from the one on the other side of the Avenida Taurino Batista. Most people see Campo do Onze as a favela, but walking through the streets the place seems an established working class neighborhood, with good public services, paved streets, and schools. The northern part of the favela seems to be the most prosperous area in this study, and only along the Rua Berlim and the alleys that come off of it, does one get the impression of being in a Recife favela.

The Campo do Onze -- a large football pitch -- gives both a name and an essence of the community. The favela has five football clubs, two of which offer schools for children. Though these clubs do not understand popular education, they express a sincere desire to do something for kids from the neighborhood. Several NGOs work in the favela, but only the football clubs and Oasis da Libertade (an evangelical group) are based there.

For many years, there was a war between Santo Amaro and Campo do Onze, but at the time of this writing, the conflict was in an extended cease-fire. Drug trafficking continues to be a strong force in the community, but there is no longer a single point of sale; instead, dealers are mobile and may sell anywhere.

Commerce is very strong in Santo Amaro, with dozens of stores and even a couple of factories making furniture.

Population (est.): 7,000
NGOs working in the favela: Galpão de Meninos e Meninas, Ruas e Praças, Pé no Chão, Casa de Passagem, Oasis de Liberdade
Public Services: good
Also called: Santo Amaro

The favela of Arruda is relatively new, being founded in the 1980s and 1990s by families from the countryside and others fleeing high costs or violence in other favelas. Much of the economy of the favela depends on recycling, and five businesses and hundreds of family depend on collecting useful trash.

The geography of Arruda is defined by a major road that runs by the edge of a canal (an open, stinking sewer), and a dozen narrow alleys that leave the main street to go into the community. The alleys are thin and labyrinthine, with occasional clearing where children play. The do not connect from one to another, so to visit friends in another alley, people must go to the main road and then enter another alley. Each alley has its own history and character.

Population (est.): 5,000
NGOs working in the neighborhood: Pé no Chão, Pastoral da Criança
Public Services: Poor. Many people have died or been injured connecting wires to the electric network
Also called: Favela do Canal, Arruda.

In 2008-9, Arruda was one of the most violent favelas in the city, with a civil war between gangs located in different alleys, and then against gangs from other favelas. In 2011, the favela is quite calm, and inhabitants remember only two murders in the last year.

The film made by children from Arruda shows now the alleys become spaces where children play and live together, teaching each other how to sing, dance, and play football. We also see that public and private overlap: when playing hide and seek, kids hide in other people's houses as well as in nooks in the alleys. An abandoned house where children play is also worthy of note: there, kids fear four things: "Perverts, werewolves, junkies, and the police."

Still from the film "Minha Favela: *Arruda*", by Luziel Costa e Ellan Barreto, with children from the neighborhood.

Chao de Estrelas

When Chão de Estrelas was still a young community, created by the forced displacement of families who had lived in precarious favelas and under bridges, many of the new inhabitants had a history of community organizing. They came together to organize their new favela. The prepared community meetings, planted a garden with medicinal herbs, demanded a bus route to their homes, and chose a name for the neighborhood (Chão de Estrelas was chosen because the meeting happened at night, and the palm trees left moonshadows on the ground that looked like stars). In the next decade, these community organizers won many successes for the community, getting a school, two health centers, a day care center, paved roads, water, sewer, and electricity.

None the less, this organization was also a challenge: at one point in the 1990s, there were 24 NGOs in the favela and several neighborhood associations in conflict.

Chão de Estrelas is divided between the commercial streets -- with good stores, markets, the health center, and the school -- and the bank of the river, where children are afraid to go. This part of the community centers the drug trade and is the battlefield for wars with the nearby favelas of Saramandaia and Peixinhos. Because of these wars, people from around the city consider Chão de Estrelas to be the most dangerous favela in the city today.

The film made by the children of Santo Amaro shows this violence indirectly. In Arruda and Santo Amaro, children talk about their fear, but in Chão de Estrelas, mother prohibit their children from visiting different parts of the favela. Sadly, Daruê Malungo, the most important NGO in the community, is on one of these dangerous streets. One also notes that the children in the film are much more shy than their counterparts in other favelas. Luziel Costa, one of the researchers on this project, believes that this timidity is a direct result of the ongoing war. "A kid who lives in the midst of that doesn't want to talk," he said.

Population (est.): 15,000
NGOs in the neighborhood: Centro de Organização Comunitária Chão de Estrelas, Daruê Malungo.
Public Services: Good on commercial roads, weak by the river.
Also called: Campina de Barreto (really a larger neighborhood of which Chão de Estrelas is a part)

Still from the film "Minha Favela: Chão de Estrelas", by Luziel Costa and Eillan Barreto, with children from the neighborhood.

When the Fábrica Tacaruna was an important employer in Recife, many workers lived in Xié, next to the factory and across the river from Santo Amaro. These employees used their salary to give the oldest part of the favela good homes and to demand decent public services. In contrast, the eastern part of the community is a more recent invasion. where houses and fragile and public services are weak or absent.

Xié is outstanding in two areas: the great number of small and medium sized businesses and the strong presence of evangelical churches. There may be an interdependent relationship between these two processes, because many of the stores are knows as "the shop of brother such-and-such", local code for evangelicals. Churches appear to be a place where people exchange ideas about business development.

Though it was a violent favela for many years, today most of Xié is at peace -- perhaps in great part because of the growth of small businesses. There is still a boca de fumo by the soccer field at the east of the favela, and a small space where boys use drugs at the northwest, but most inhabitants agree that there is little trafficking in comparison to past years.

Population (est.): 10,000
NGOs in the neighborhood: None
Public Services: Good on commercial roads, weak by the soccer field.
Also called: Chié

Peixinhos

Peixinhos is not so much a favela as a large region divided in commercial areas, formally recognized neighborhoods, and the invasions normally named "favelas," where 40,000 people live. The teenagers in the community distinguish between the "Avenue" -- with many stores and banks -- and the "favela" -- the areas hidden behind the avenues and separated by them. Outsiders may see Peixhinos as a single favela, but on the inside, the social, class, and regional differences are obvious.

According to some young people in the community, the schools there are among the best in the city, and several academic teams have won state-wide competitions in math, literature, and sciences. They contrast this strength with the violence in the community, its invisibility to other people around the city, and the annual floods. "They call it Peixinhos (little fish), because for much of the year, only a fish could live here," joked one girl.

Population (est.): 40,000
NGOs in the neighborhood: Peixe-arte, Centro de Arte, Educaçãao, e Cultura, Movimento Boca-Lixo, muitas bandas, Nascedouro Multicultural
Public Services: Good on commercial roads, weak in the favelas.

Peixinhos is famous for the immense quantity of musicians in the neighborhood, with many rock bands, african drum groups, samba, and especially mangue-beat, a musical genre created in the neighborhood in the 1990s. NGOs in the community, though greatly weakened by the withdraw of international charitable support, have always used this cultural strength as a central part of their work.

The government has invested quite a lot of money and energy in the community; as with Santo Amaro, the Federal Government declared Peixinhos a "Peace Territory," freeing up resources for cultural and security initiatives. Perhaps even more important is the Multicultural Incubator, build out of the ruins of an old meat-processing plant. There are three buildings in the complex: the first, run by the city of Olinda, has social services and houses an NGO that runs a community library. The second, run by the city of Recife, hosts an immense stage and theater. The third, run by the state government, offers courses in computation, web design, musical production, and graphic design. It also has a cinema.

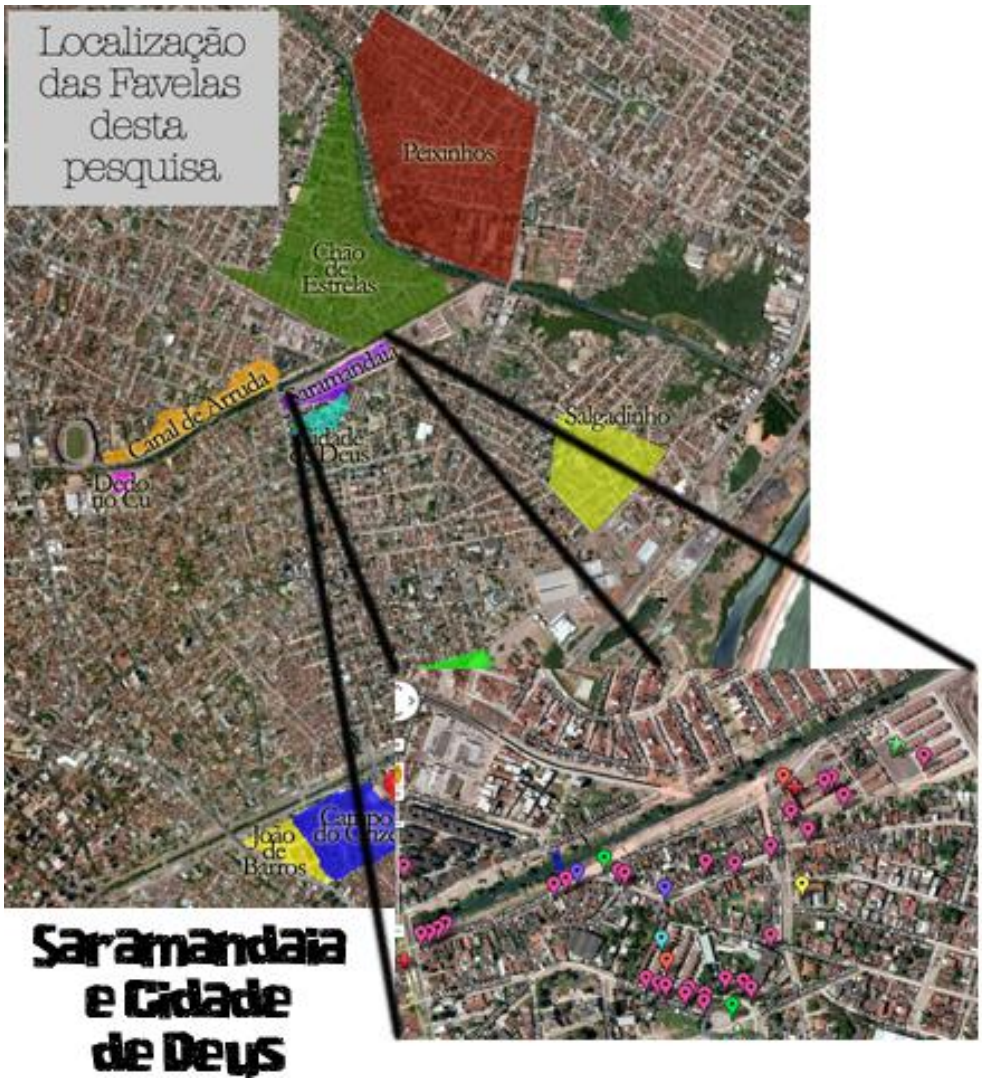
For many people who live on the periphery of Recife and Olinda, Salgadinho is a mysterious place, outside of the normal trails that lead from one favela to another. Formally part of Olinda, but geographically more connected to Recife, it is a mixture of favela, richer neighborhoods, and commercial areas, and as such is difficult to pin down. None the less, outside of the community, Salgadinho is known as a violent and crime-ridden space.

Just as the Tacaruna coffee factory is a reference for Xié and Santo Amaro, the Rosa Branca flour factory occupies the most important place in the geography of Salgadinho, with its high wheat silos dominating the landscape. The topography of the community is very different from many others in this study, with wide streets and some larger houses (except in the poorest part, called Ponte Preto, near the river). In spite of this more formal appearance, Salgadinho feels almost abandoned, with few people on the residential streets.

Population (est.): 10,000
NGOs in the neighborhood: None
Public Services: Good on commercial roads, weak in the favelas.
Also Called: Ponte Preto, Fábrica das Velas (bairros dentro da comunidade)

The community has a school in the center, with a nice space for sports, but people who live near-by say it is under-utilized. There are some strong businesses on the street that enters Salgadinho from the Estrada de Belém (connecting Recife and Olinda), but deeper in the favela, one does not feel the entrepreneurial spirit of Xié or Arruda.

No NGOs work in the neighborhood, though there are several private elementary schools and day0care centers. Some teenagers from Salgadinho participate in Pé no Chão, while others use the services of the Caranguejo Community Center, in the near-by neighborhood of Sítio Novo.



Saramandaia e Cidade de Deus

For many years, Saramandaia was one of the poorest and most violent favelas in Recife, with thousands of shanties perched on stilts above the Canal de Arruda. The gang that ran the community was very strong, and engaged in constant wars against gangs from Chão de Estrelas and Arruda. In the last five years, the community has changed radically: City Hall built two immense public housing projects and displaced the people from the shanties to them, and is now using the space to build a new road to link Recife and Olinda. Today, community dynamics are very different.

Population (est.): 7000
NGOs in the neighborhood: Afoxé Axé Orum
Public Services: Weak everywhere
Also Called: CapiléE

The Saramandaia housing project is now four years old, and people who live there say that things are going pretty well. The football pitch in the middle of the complex is much-used, small businesses are beginning to appear, and though people continue to sell drugs, there is not a high level of violence. However, in the second housing complex, called Cidade de Deus, conditions are terrible. Gangs control the streets and children are afraid to play outside. City Hall built the buildings but then abandoned them incomplete; they do not even provide trash collection services (a major problem in a community with many recyclers). Gangs in Cidade de Deus have not yet begun to war against gangs from other favelas, but they kill many people in the community.

The Rua Capilé, the part of Saramandaia that was not leveled in the urban reform project, continues to be quite violent, so much so that the local guides were reluctant to research there, and we could only map the road by walking it quickly without a notebook and using memory to mark the map later.

Between the two communities, there is only one important cultural space, the Afoxé Axé Olum, which teaches Afro-Brazilian music and dance, and which is also an important space for meetings and conversations. In Capilé and Cidade de Deus, people lament the lack of opportunities for children and young people, who have to look elsewhere for informal education.