

Dismantling Illusions in and of Paradise
Through the Gift of Refraction in the Terra do Exú
An Ethnography with Women of Rural Bahia

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents a new tool for analysis of the way difficult experiences or phenomena influence the process for constructing self-identity in the performance of everyday life. This concept, refraction, emerged as part of a grounded theory methods analysis of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Itacaré, Bahia, Brazil from January to July 2014. The work here contributes to the field of performance studies as a possibility for examining how affective responses to difficult experiences contribute to a shift in perspective and subsequently shifts in the performance of self in everyday life. This research was conducted with critical and reflexive autoethnographic methods in order to hold the research accountable for the ways subject position influences the research. In this case the most salient theme that emerged from these autoethnographic methods was an unpacking of unacknowledged tourist privilege in this setting. The resulting work-in-progress performance will offer ways for spectators to question their own assumptions regarding tourist privilege in Brazil, and in so-called developing countries in similar tropical climates. An additional contribution to the field of performance-based research that resulted from this dissertation is the articulation of a dynamic locus of creativity wherein rigorous established qualitative research methods complement creative practices in conjunction with a spectrum of tacit knowledge and theoretical sensitivities. This juncture becomes the theoretical space where creativity in research can be articulated in ways that are legible to both artists and researchers.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The summer before I arrived to conduct fieldwork proper, someone told me the following joke about the idea of paradise.

So this guy dies and goes to heaven. He meets São Pedro at the pearly gates and São Pedro says “OK, you’ve led a good life, you get to go to heaven (paraíso).” So the guy goes to paraíso and it’s all very nice and beautiful and everyone is very polite. So much that it’s kind of boring. So he goes back and says “You know, I think I might like to see what it’s like in hell.” São Pedro says “OK, but you can only stay for 7 days.” So he goes down to inferno and it’s awesome! There are night clubs, and women, and good times! So at the end of his week he goes back to paraíso and says “Gee, ya know, I think I actually liked it better in inferno than here in paraíso. Do you think maybe I could go back there?” São Pedro says “OK, but this time you can’t come back.” So this time the guy goes back down to hell and it’s awful. There’s rape and murder and crime. And he says “Hey, what happened? This is not the same place I visited last time!” And St. Peter says “Well, last time you came as a tourist. This time you came as an immigrant.”

This joke indicates what is happening in Itacaré in a number of ways. Of course it reflects the obvious ways Itacaré has been actively constructed as paradise for tourists, but very specifically not as a paradise for local residents. But additionally it underscores a learned awareness that occurs when one sees, in all its grim reality, the nature of what

goes on in order to construct this idea of paradise. The person who told me this joke introduced it by saying “You want to know what’s behind paradise? Hell.” In this sense, it highlights the “two-sided” nature of perspective, or rather I would argue even further, the multi-sided nature of perspective. This was reinforced by Maria, a local resident, who claimed “*é uma cidade linda e maravilhosa mas não tem oportunidade para quem mora aqui*”

I have experienced the development of this study as a series of waves. This is perhaps fitting for a tourist setting made famous by the surfers who gravitated to the place when they discovered how good the waves were for surfing. I dipped my toes into the study when I first visited the site five years ago. At that point the waves only tickled my toes. The seductive power of this place, which is so actively produced as tourist paradise, drew me in. I knew there were problematic assumptions underlying the idea of this place as eco-tourist paradise. I felt drawn to this place and wanted to understand it more deeply. I wanted to find a way to conduct a study here. When the waves that tickled my toes went back out to sea I was left in the mire of trying to determine what aspects I could possibly focus on to make a study worthy of academic scholarship.

The next year I visited I made sure to spend some time in Salvador with my mentor and dance teacher Mestre Augusto Omolú. We discussed the importance of our work and collaborations together. But I soon realized that we were not on the same wavelength. His intentions were to continue developing the “*Dramaturgia dos Orixás*” as a model for creating performance work derived from the sacred dances of the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé religion. I, on the other hand, was seeking an inquiry that could understand how we experience the dances in our bodies in a way that contributes to our understanding of the world. That is not the work of this dissertation. It is the work still

¹ It’s a beautiful, marvelous city but there are no opportunities for people who live here.

to come in my career. Life, in its funny way of highlighting something we are meant to see, gave me a bout of dengue fever that summer, which I contracted at Augusto's house. Perhaps it was a sign that I was to pursue another path.

The third year that I visited the place, I brought my partner with me. He was able to help me see aspects of the setting I had not perceived. I knew in my gut that the production and performance of paradise were somehow problematic. He helped me to see a few cracks in the scenery. Around the same time I began the next wave of trying to determine the focus of the study. I spent a semester in an independent study on Umbanda based on some casual conversations where local residents had commented that "oh yes, we have some Umbanda practitioners here." I was hopeful that I had caught the right wave.

The fourth year I visited the site, I came with a researcher's eyes, equipped with diligent thick description practices and critical reflexive methods. Unfortunately for my dissertation prospectus and my desire to find rich social resistance among Umbanda practitioners, that is not the data that offered itself to me in the setting. The practices I had learned from my mentor guided me to admit that I had work to do on my own unacknowledged tourist privilege if I were to understand the realities of the women in that community. And yet, for some time still, I tried desperately to navigate these waters heading in the direction I thought I needed to go, insisting I could find the evidence of social justice movements here, working at cross purposes to myself. Instead, as I learned once I entered the site for fieldwork proper, the reality of the setting asked me to wait for the right wave to come to me rather than try to sail boldly and blindly through the waters towards a destination that I couldn't reach that way.

This dissertation serves as something sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos would call "an act of committed witnessing" (51). He arrives at this concept of critical

witnessing through a questioning and a disruption of Eurocentric notions of theory and practice. He asserts that theory and practice currently have a “phantasmal” relationship (48).

On the one hand, theory is no longer at the service of the future practices it potentially contains, and serves, rather, to legitimize (or not) the past practices that have emerged in spite of itself. Theory stops being orientation to become ratification of the successes obtained by omission or confirmation of unseen failures. [...] (F)rom the point of view of theory, theoretical bricolage never qualifies as theory; from the point of view of practice, a posteriori theorization is mere parasitism (49).

Considering that Santos harshly criticizes rationalism and scientific inquiry, we can infer that when he claims that theoretical bricolage never qualifies as theory, he implies that those conducting qualitative inquiry that adheres more closely to a scientific method might still challenge the kinds of interdisciplinary and emergent design qualitative research championed by Denzin and Lincoln. Interdisciplinary arts, education, and social justice scholar Matt Rogers, in his overview of theoretical bricolage, asserts that bricolage offers “a multiplicity of epistemological and political dimensions” (1) to qualitative inquiry; whereas the scientific inquiry of positivist research models is monologic. As such it is unable to “account for alternative rationalities, multiple knowledges, or complexities inherent in the inquiry process” (9). In this case it appears that Santos is reminding scholars that theory alone cannot resolve complex social issues. I interpret this further to indicate that imagining the solution before even entering the field to make observations is short-sighted at best. Following this line of thinking, the grounded theory methodologies and emergent design as modeled by Lincoln and Guba

become the more ethical and inclusive mode for conducting qualitative inquiry that allows for multiple viewpoints to coexist.

When Santos claims that *a posteriori* theorization is parasitism, I interpret this to mean that if theory is only used to examine evidence of particular and specific contexts in order to explain social phenomena in a way that leads to universalisms, then theory has done nothing more than use data analysis to justify a previously imagined concept. I observed this in the field in a way I found to be particularly relevant. The more I encountered practitioners of Candomblé in my fieldwork, the more I heard contradictory and even conflicting anecdotes about what certain concepts meant in their world view. Each time I read another scholar's account of Candomblé, particularly mid-20th century anthropologists, I began to see that each time a researcher posited something to be true of Candomblé, in general, they were making that inference from a specific set of experiences and observations which contradicted things I was observing or hearing from others. I began to see that this tendency to explain Candomblé religious concepts through empirical evidence was almost as faulty a premise as entering the field with a proposed hypothesis to be proved or disproved. Rather than throwing in the proverbial towel and deciding that there was no such thing a knowable thing in Candomblé, I took this as a sign to be more keenly observant and to be patient in what I felt was being made known to me.

Santos asks those studying social movements to adopt “surprise as a constitutive act of theoretical work” (50). He asserts that “by definition, avant-garde theories are not taken by surprise” (50) and that, by extension,

... what we need in the present context of social and political change is not avant-garde, but rather rearguard theories. [...] theoretical work that goes hand in hand with the transformative work of the social movements,

putting it in question, establishing synchronic and diachronic comparisons, [...]. It calls for artisanal rather than architectural work, work of committed witnessing rather than clairvoyant leadership, accessing what is new for some and very old for other people (50-51).

I understand Santos' call for "rearguard theories" as a reminder to question the teleological mindset that assumes progress as the ultimate goal of time. By insisting synchronic and diachronic comparisons be employed in the work of both social activists and social theorists, he asks us to understand the value of what some might call ancestral knowledge and others might call "primitive" modes of understanding the world. He reminds us that the work of social theorists and social activists (particularly when they are one and the same person) cannot only be the visualization of future possibilities, or only analysis of present realities, but must include an awareness of and respect for the ways epistemologies from alternative spaces and alternative times might be woven into visions for the future.

This idea that I needed to resist the kinds of narratives about progress and change that I have learned and unconsciously adopted proved difficult to shake. Verusya Santos Correia, one of my study participants and also the director of the dance festival in Itacaré agreed that the work we are doing in Itacaré can help illustrate and demonstrate to the members of the community what is already occurring, what they are already doing that serves to help the community achieve collective well-being. Even the idea that I posed in my original research prospectus, that individual women might be seeking personal self-actualization, ignores the needs of the community that are always already interwoven with the needs of the individuals. For this reason among others, the focus of this dissertation shifted dramatically from the initial prospectus to the final report of findings. The acts of committed witnessing as proposed by Santos coincide seamlessly

with grounded theory methods as outlined by Strauss and Corbin, where the data being presented in the field helps to shape the research question and findings.

My interpretation of Santos' committed witnessing involves being present and observing in great detail what is occurring in the site being studied. It involves care and listening. And most importantly, it involves relinquishing modes of thinking derived from what he calls the Global North and being open to perceiving modes of thinking and being rooted in the Global South. For Santos, the act of witnessing is more important than any kind of efforts to prescribe solutions to social problems from outside the setting being studied.

As part of his overall strategy for disrupting and challenging the epistemology of the Global North, he identifies five logics that make up what he calls the sociology of absences. "By sociology of absences I mean research that aims to show that what does not exist is actually actively produced as non-existent" [...]. Non-existence is produced whenever a certain entity is discredited and considered invisible, non-intelligible or discardable" (52). For Santos, the research which utilizes this sociology of absences is research that points out the instances where this type of absence is constructed.

He describes these five logics in detail. "The first logic derives from the 'monoculture of knowledge' and 'rigour of knowledge'. It is the most powerful mode of production of non-existence. It consists in turning modern science and high culture into the sole criteria of truth and aesthetic quality, respectively" (52). I observed this logic at play in the field in a variety of ways relating to the production of the two main cultural events I observed while in Itacaré conducting fieldwork: the dance festival and the *quilomobo* festival. My analysis for these two festivals is reserved for a separate article. The knowledge I gleaned from making these connections informs this dissertation.

“The second logic resides in the ‘monoculture of time’” (52) and exists on the basic tenet that time is linear and that all time is heading inevitably toward progress. He comments that this teleological conception of sociability in effect makes invisible social systems that do not adhere to this logic. He includes “progress, revolution, modernization, development, and globalization” (52) as markers of this logic. The assumption here marks those as “backward” on the scale of progress to be inherently inferior and therefore marked as invisible or not worthy of presence in public discourse, except to be bracketed off with terms that have spanned from “primitive” to “underdeveloped” (53).

Santos’ third logic is the logic of “social classification.” He indicates that differences considered to be natural have historically helped support hierarchies designed to marginalize or oppress members of a non-dominant category. “Racial and sexual classifications are the most salient manifestations of this logic” (53). He cites sexual hierarchies as contributing to the reproduction of labor for the purposes of perpetuating capitalism, but he also cites the body of work pointing to the ways racial classification was deployed as a means for justifying the enslavement of non-dominant peoples in the development of capitalism. Santos asserts that these categories become interpreted as “insuperable” because they are “natural” (53).

Santos’ fourth logic is the logic of the dominant scale, wherein scale becomes the means for determining who is and who is not relevant. He cites “universalism” as one way of making invisible or absent realities that depend on particularities of context for their meaning. He also cites globalization as the mode by which the local and the particular become situated in opposition, and, by extension, inferior or irrelevant.

Santos’ fifth logic is the “logic of productivity.” By this logic, the epistemology of capitalism dominates. “According to this logic, economic growth is an unquestionable

rational objective” (53). Santos points out that this logic functions not only in economic systems but in social and natural systems as well. Human beings who do not or cannot procreate are considered non-productive. Human beings who do not buy into the belief that busy-ness and productivity are already automatically positive are labeled as inferior, slothful, lazy, etc. This logic never questions the validity of the claim that profit must always increase and never considers that this ever-increasing profit might not be economically sustainable.

These five logics which make up Santos’ sociology of absences might seem obvious to anyone who has ever lived in the ideological spaces outside of the Global North capitalist paradigms. But every time I go to Brazil and come back, I am reminded almost instantly that I reside in a place where the Global North epistemology permeates every aspect of our existence. Except for some spaces in academia or in communities where decolonizing the mind is a crucial step in the process of liberation, the places I enter in the US seem to be void of opportunities for the kind of reflection that can result in shifting perspectives outside of the epistemology of the Global North. I often find that the culture shock I experience happens, not when I arrive in Brazil, but when I return to the US.

The majority of information presented in this dissertation revolves around moments or experiences that were incongruous. These were the moments where the phenomena observed did not fit easily into clear categories. I found myself eager to understand the anomalies and the enigmas rather than to try to find unity or cohesion. These moments of seeming incoherence helped me begin to identify the possibility for shifts in perspective. For this reason the material I selected to present covers moments in the study participants’ lives where they developed significant shift in their perspectives. These moments reside in what I call zones of discomfort. Many of these

moments in the lives of my study participants resonated with my own difficult personal lessons that I learned in the field.

Some might consider the difficulties surrounding the lives of people in this community to be merely growing pains as part of a necessary path toward progress. I found this trope of the conflict between preserving the past and embracing progress to be present in nearly all of my encounters, even in the photographs I took of tree roots bursting through the poorly maintained sidewalks. On my first drive to Itacaré from the airport, the cab driver touted the location as a perfect balance between progress and ecological preservation. He commented proudly that it was illegal to build on land that had been designated as eco-preserve. And yet, just this week as I write revisions, I saw an article about one of the local eco-resort property developers being found in violation of the laws of preservation of this Atlantic Rain Forest. And in conversations local residents have lamented both these gross capitalist infractions as well as individuals living in the *roça*² accused of small-scale *desmatamento* (deforestation), both of which are officially illegal.

Even the desire to preserve the pristine environment in this location is not approached in ways that are universally agreeable to local residents. In one instance, a family had been living off the land for generations, including collecting materials for the construction of costumes for their *bicho caçador* dance³, a traditional dance specific to Itacaré. But because some of the plants that provide natural fibers for the costume of the *bicho* became protected under federal statute, the family had to make other

² This is a word that can be translated as “jungle” except that jungle has unfortunate connotations. Essentially, these are families who have been living in remote areas of the Atlantic Rain Forest for generations. Typically they are without access to energy other than solar or generator power. Those that do have municipal power complain about how irregular the service is.

³ The *bicho-caçador* dance is a three person dance that takes place across various parts of the city and includes two “*bichos*” (beasts) and one *caçador* (hunter). It is performed during *carnaval* and during the festival of three kings in January. For a detailed and insightful description of the dance and how it embodies acts of social resistance see the masters thesis of Verusya Santos Correia.

arrangements that did not honor the original vision of the dance that their forefathers had imagined.

The conflict between eco-preservation and progress is not the only conflict that emerged with the increase of tourism. Most of the growth has occurred within the last ten years. The real estate market in Itacaré has already had its own little bubble, which has effectively burst. One resident indicated that those who bought property five years ago thinking they would reap profits off what they assumed would be a continuously increasing market have found themselves owners of plots of land but cash-poor. Many residents have lamented that with the increase of tourism, particularly young international tourists or “backpackers” as they are often called, there has been a massive increase in the local drug trade, and, by extension, an increase in crime in a place that for years had been touted as safe, *tranquilo* (tranquil), or, a little piece of paradise. In the five years I have been visiting Itacaré I have noticed women, in particular, as the ones who face these changes most drastically as they are the ones so often working in the hotels and resorts in housekeeping and reception.

This ethnography of everyday life among women who live so-called “third world” realities within a tourist setting catering to supposed “first world” tourists will not show radical social resistance movements in the streets. The kinds of lessons I experienced and observations I made required a dedicated attention to subtle shifts in attitude and perspective. The embodied experience of engaging in intercultural encounters within this touristic setting offered me a deeper mode of understanding of how these women construct their own realities as well as a deeper mode of understanding my own place within their community and within my own world. To paraphrase one of my study participants, there is no such thing as being only an observer. All acts of observation are at least partially participation.

In chapter two I describe the setting in which dissertation fieldwork took place and the social, historical and cultural context. I provide an overview of the documented histories of racial formations and cultural preservation in Bahia. I include a reminder of the ways official structures of power have prevented Afrocentric modes of knowledge production from being openly or publicly cultivated. I also include a description of prominent literature on the theme of gender constructs in Brazil in general. I elaborate on how the term *Quilombo* has been deployed historically and how the political realities of *Quilombos* have shifted over time. I also include an explanation of the ways Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has been influential in what one Bahian scholar has termed "*quilombo pedagogy*."

Because this setting has been profoundly affected by the increase in tourism over the last ten years, any study of the site must include an examination of the ways tourism has been produced in the region in general and in this town in particular. With the word *paraíso* painted on walls in nearly every neighborhood in the center of town and on the beaches, an unpacking of the term "paradise" will be required. In this chapter I utilize the work of Dean McCannell, and Erving Goffman to unpack the ideas of tourism and paradise and determine how front stages and back stages construct these ideas differently. Additionally, the recent work of Erica Lorraine Williams comes into play as she unpacks the term "sex tourism" and asks readers to open up their understandings of this problematic phrase to include the various ways women (and men) in Bahia are sexualized to varying degrees and how those dynamics contribute to "ambiguous entanglements" in these tourist spaces.

In chapter three I will elaborate on the methodology I utilized during fieldwork and during the phase of data analysis. I follow the guidelines for ethnography as outlined by Amira de la Garza in her essay "The Four Seasons of Ethnography: a

Creation-Centered Ontology for Ethnography” and her additional essay “Ethics for Postcolonial Ethnography.” In her Four Seasons of Ethnography essay, de la Garza describes what she calls the “received guiding ideals” of Western post-enlightenment tradition of rationalism and her counter to those ideals, which she calls the “Four Seasons Guiding Ideals.” She explains that the received ideals are not natural or essentially human, but rather are learned from a long history of rationalism. They are “taken-for-granted” as the normal or natural way to conduct research. The Four Seasons guiding ideals, in contrast, use as a model the natural cycles of the earth. This provides what she calls a “creation-centered ontology” within which to imagine ethnographic research projects. These guidelines foster an epistemic – methodological link for observing and knowing how to do so.

Understanding ethnography as a cyclical and creation-centered process based on the metaphor of the four seasons offers a useful model for passing through the various stages of the ethnographic process. Spring is considered the time of preparing, or of planting the seeds. Summer becomes the height of activity, or the actual fieldwork. Autumn becomes the time to harvest our data, tilling the proverbial soil to elicit results that stem from the seeds that were planted. Winter then becomes a time of rest, reflection, and integrating the analysis into the written ethnography.

De la Garza’s ethics for postcolonial ethnography link seamlessly with her Four Seasons ideals and include accountability (being transparent about how the ethnographer came to know the story being told); context (being clear and detailed about the descriptions of the environment from whence the story came); truthfulness (being transparent about how our own motivations have played into the research); and community (ethnographers must acknowledge that the study is the beginning of a committed relationship).

While some scholars might buy into the ideal that we can aspire to objectivity in research, others acknowledge that there can be no such thing as objectivity in research. With de la Garza's strategies for critical self-reflection, I do not seek objectivity but rather transparency in my subject position and acknowledgement of how that subject position with all of its foibles, histories, and background can manipulate the field of data. I believe it is in these efforts to be transparent in our research, combined with a heightened awareness of the sensitivities of human interactions that we can understand new things about the ways we perform ourselves and the ways we engage others in their daily performances in the world.

To finish this chapter I describe how I came to develop two main extensions of de la Garza's methodologies. The first and most important extension has been developed into the main theoretical contribution of this dissertation: *refraction*. I will describe how this concept of refraction came directly from the data as part of a grounded theory process and how it only emerged as a result of the critical reflexive practices I learned with de la Garza. The second extension takes the four-direction model of the Four Seasons of Ethnography methodology to develop an axial relational model for identifying what we are together calling the *dynamic locus of creativity*. I describe this locus as a metaphoric alchemy between creative impulses, diligent and disciplined data driven research, theoretical sensitivity and tacit or embodied knowledge. This serves as the foundation for my contributions to the field of performance ethnography.

In chapter four I conduct the main analysis of data and explain the development of the concept of refraction as a hermeneutic tool. This chapter will include data findings from ethnographic interviews and field notes including relational analyses from the themes that emerged. The data examples will be woven together with insights from theoretical sensitivities gained through constant comparison. These insights came from

academic fields such as sociology and social psychology. Many of the insights also came from examples of narratives from Candomblé mythology. The myths, the theoretical sensitivities and data are used to weave the tale of this ethnography.

In chapter five I provide a summary of a proposal for a new performance ethnography script that will be rooted in the data findings from this dissertation. Part of my contribution to the field of performance ethnography is a proposal for navigating the process of creative research. This dissertation will not include the actual creative performance ethnography project. This dissertation will be the summation of the planning process for developing and creating a new piece of performance ethnography rooted in these data findings.

I do not believe that any academic study rooted in this methodology can result in “conclusions,” but something de la Garza refers to as “tentative certainty.” The closing of this dissertation will include the findings at which I have arrived with tentative certainty and the proposed next steps I need to take in order to fulfill the ethical commitments I have made to this community. This includes a way of presenting these findings to the community where I did my research and possibilities for refraction to become a useful hermeneutic tool in the field of performance studies.

A note on capitalizations, translations, and diacritical marks

In this dissertation I have used the names of the sacred entities known as Orixás (Exú, Iemanjá, Iansã, etc.) utilizing the Brazilian spelling unless I am directly quoting from another source. I have opted to capitalize terms that refer to either ethnic or cultural demographic groups (such as Black, *Quilombo*, or Afro-centric). However, I have not capitalized “white” as an ethnic descriptor. My intention is not to invisibilize whiteness. But there are dark and disturbing histories with the word “White” with a capital W with which I do not wish to associate myself in any way. For translations I

have decided to privilege, whenever practical or prudent, the words of the original speaker or writer in ways that do not disrupt the flow of the text. One-word translations are handled parenthetically within the text. Anything longer is included as a footnote. The exception to this is Paula's story. The excerpts I used from her story were so long that it became cumbersome and clunky to have the translations in footnotes. In the case of performance excerpts where I do not offer the audience a translation of words or phrases, I also do not offer them here.

My translation choices result in non-Portuguese speaking readers having their reading experience disrupted, either by footnotes or by untranslated words or phrases. This is a strategy to call attention to the complexity involved in translating a text. Too often, works from other languages are translated into English with an intention of making the English as smoothly intelligible as possible. At worst, this holds, as a core assumption, that the original text can be wholly knowable in English. At best, that strategy glosses over issues relating to words, ideas and concepts that are untranslatable. Too often people from non-English speaking countries are expected to understand and produce work in English, which has become the default language of academia. This is my small intervention: to make English-only readers uncomfortable in their monolingualism.

CHAPTER 2

ITACARÉ, BACKGROUND, AND CONTEXT

Brazil > Bahia > Itacaré?

I place this set of signs and symbols in this particular way for a specific reason. If we read this set of letters and symbols out loud according to the rules of mathematics, it reads: “Brazil is greater than Bahia, which is greater than Itacaré?” I want to de-naturalize the assumptions that geographical size and/or number of inhabitants automatically implies a greater importance than smaller geographical areas or less populated areas. I specifically honor Santos’ theories of the sociology of absences with this gesture. His ideas about the ways the logic of the dominant scale have influenced the beliefs and epistemology of people from what he calls the Global North indicate that that kind of automatic assumption about size, (if you will excuse the crass reference, that “size matters”) creates the conditions in which non-dominant peoples have been made absent in areas of the Global South.

The geography

Itacaré is situated geographically on the southern coast of the state of Bahia in Brazil. Bahia is located in the northeast of Brazil. The nearest airports are Salvador’s international airport and the municipal airport of Ilhéus. To arrive in Itacaré from Ilhéus takes approximately one hour by car or taxi along 72 kilometers of relatively well-maintained highway. This highway, BR-001 was constructed approximately 10 years ago and is generally considered by residents of Itacaré as a measure of progress, offering significantly increased access to Itacaré. Prior to the construction of BR-001, Itacaré was considered a remote, coastal town populated largely by fishermen and women and the descendants of *cacau* (cocoa) plantation owners and former slaves. (See map on the following page).



Figure 1: Map of Southern Bahia (taken from itacare.com)

In order to arrive in Itacaré from Salvador’s international airport, the trajectory is much more complicated and time consuming. However, because of the construction of BR-001 which extends all the way to Camamu, travel time between Salvador and Itacaré

has been reduced from what it used to be in prior years. Some tourists, usually backpackers on tighter budgets, choose to fly into Salvador and travel to Itacaré this way as it saves money on airfare. As I knew my sister and her partner would be traveling with me, and I knew they were on a tight budget, I opted to arrange for us to fly into Salvador and arrive this way. What I later learned is that the money saved on airfare may not be worth the headache of traveling the lengthy and complicated journey from the airport, through Salvador, across the bay via a ferry, and down a poorly maintained highway that varies from asphalt to dirt road to cobblestone, generously peppered with potholes. I am including an excerpt from a blog post I wrote after my drive from Salvador to Itacaré.

Trans: Across

Torno: (Portuguese) I return, turn, go or come back; I give back, I send back or repay; I reply, answer, retort, translate, transform, render, change or convert.

Transtorno: (Portuguese) upset, disappointment, perturbation, confusion, trouble, derangement, adversity, misfortune.

The drive from Salvador - it wasn't until I described the drive to my partner in an email that I realized what a nightmare it was. It started out pleasant enough. We took the waiter's advice and went along the coast to get from Piatã to the ferry station. This, of course, meant we avoided the chaos of the city center and spent most of the drive admiring beautiful scenery in some of Salvador's most exclusive neighborhoods.

Then the chaos hit. As soon as we hit Mercado Modelo, where I THOUGHT I knew the rest of the way, where I've WALKED many times,

the chaos entered and the panic crept in. The signage in Salvador is horrible. I'm sure there are plenty of other major cities across the globe with similar problems, like Boston. If you don't already know the way you shouldn't be driving. In this case it meant that one wrong turn means you are suddenly on a wild goose chase trying to get back to somewhere that looks familiar. OVER and OVER and OVER again.

I had made wrong turns several times already, repeated at least two stretches of the journey twice and was finally on the correct road. I found the ferry station. I was frazzled, stressed, and jumpy. But the line was long. If I had slipped in behind the last car my tail end would have been in traffic.

So my sister suggested I "play the dumb card" and pull into the second lane, which was completely open. Apparently the dumb card, which has worked for me in the past, led to the greatest transtorno of the day. When I pulled up to the front where the guards were letting cars line up to get on the ferry, I stopped and asked where I was supposed to go if I wanted to get on the ferry with my car (which was a rental I had already endangered about a half dozen times). He said I was supposed to get to the back of the line. I asked "But where? There is no space." He said "Você vai ter que dar uma volta⁴." "But how?" He guided me through backing up to get into the exit lane. So I drove down the exit lane thinking there would be a space to slide right back into the entrance lane at the end. No such luck at all. And cars behind me were already honking. But the thought of getting back into Salvador's traffic to try to

⁴ You're going to have to go around.

go all the way around the block nearly left me shaking. I asked the moto-taxi dispatch guy in his yellow traffic vest what I could do. He said "Você vai ter que dar uma volta." "Uma volta inteira? Ali?"⁵ I pointed to the main traffic and the city block I'd have to circumvent again. He looked around, skeptical, but just crazy enough to suggest it. (Meanwhile cars behind me trying to exit were honking even more fiercely).

He said "ou ... você vai ter que dar ré!"⁶ Oh shit. He was really suggesting it. "Eu vou acalmar o trânsito, e você dá ré."⁷

Oh shit. Never in my life do I need to relive those few moments. It was probably only 30 seconds but it felt like 5 minutes. I pulled a teensy bit into traffic then put the car in reverse; the car behind me still following closely behind nearly hit me. As he skirted around me he yelled "Onde você tirou sua carteira, sua maluca! Porra!"⁸

Then I slowly reversed, in heavy Salvador traffic, the few yards backwards it took to get myself in place at the end of the line of cars waiting to get onto the ferry. I was terrified but I wasn't about to drive all the way around the block again. "Yes, that just happened," I thought. A pedestrian walked by (presumably witnessed the whole thing) and I swore I thought I heard him say "... vai ter que pagar depois."⁹

⁵ You're going to have to go around. All the way around? There?

⁶ Or, you'll have to put it in reverse.

⁷ I'll slow down the traffic and you back up.

⁸ Where did you get your driver's license you fucking crazy woman!

⁹ You're going to have to pay for that later.

There is more to the story of the journey of transition into place - the 4 hour drive that was really 6; the "brand new highway" that was some of the worst driving conditions I've ever been in. Suffice it to say there have been ample opportunities already to reflect on things like social access to infrastructure, my own implications of privilege and all that I take for granted.

This entry to fieldwork served as a metaphorical paving of the pathway through these studies. The issues that came up for me while I was trying to get to my final destination served as issues I was constantly asking myself about the daily lives and material realities of my study informants. That ending thought about access to infrastructure held steady throughout all of my six months in Brazil. The initial moment of “*transtorno*” related more specifically to access to transportation. Cars are expensive and rental cars are even more expensive, particularly when you consider that without a major credit card, they will charge a mandatory insurance which, in effect, doubles the cost of the rental fee, which is already prohibitively too high for most local residents to pay. Taxi cabs in Salvador also tend to be prohibitively expensive for most locals, except for the very wealthy. So for most residents trying to get around town, to have any sort of mobility around the state or to travel anywhere, busses tend to be the only available mode of transportation in their price range.

Getting a cell phone was also complicated. The way their billing systems work in Brazil is completely different than what I, in my US-based smart-phone mentality with unlimited data texts and calls, was used to dealing with. But every time I had to reload a few dollars onto my cell phone, knowing full well that I would eat up those twenty bucks with only a few phone calls, I realized telecommunications in Bahia are also difficult to navigate. It also explains why people tend to make a point to go in person to talk to

someone rather than make a phone call; because the cost of making that phone call can mean the difference between having the device when needed, or getting stuck with no minutes left in a moment when the phone would be crucial for an emergency contact.

It is certainly true that Itacaré is no longer as remote as it was ten years ago. One need only look at the improvements in the highway system in that time. But as I overheard one foreign visitor say, “things are slow to repair here,” I can also say with confidence that infrastructure is slow to arrive there. There are many reasons for this, some having to do with long histories of corruption and abuse of power, some having to do with something a little more difficult to pinpoint. I have heard people describe the setting and the people there as “resistant to progress.” This phrase must be unpacked to fully understand what is going on in this context. First and foremost, any teleological assumptions about the positive aspects of progress must be abandoned in order to see how progress in this place has only brought better conditions to the few, not to the many. As an introduction to the setting, the geography becomes important because it emphasizes how only those who were moneyed landowners or wealthy (mostly international) tourists had access to the kinds of structures that would allow them to experience this location in a mode we might call leisure.

One of the aspects I feel I must reiterate about this introduction is the way I unpacked the meaning of the word “*Transtorno*” in Portuguese. This notion of “paying back” is something that recurred while I conducted fieldwork. The idea that somehow, we must always pay for what we take or give back to the communities we study. While the gesture remains incomplete, until the promise is fulfilled, the researcher must continue to navigate the chaos (*transtorno*). Knowing this keeps me moving through these waters even when I feel lost.

The history, whose history?

The scholarship describing the various histories of Bahia and Brazil offers rich detail and varied perspectives. A full treatment of the topics related to this study would require a review of literature of race relations in Brazil. These might include an analysis of influential Brazilian scholar and medical doctor, Raimundo Nina Rodrigues' work on public and social health in the early part of the twentieth century as well as a look at anthropologist Livio Sansone's current writings on the way race and ethnicity are constructed in Brazil. Twentieth century scholarship on Brazilian history ranges from the problematic theorizations about race put forth by sociologist Gilberto Freyre, to the important work anthropologist Ruth Landes did to place women at the center of analysis of Afro-Brazilian religious communities. Both Freyre and Landes were not without their controversy: Freyre for his romanticization of complex race relations in an idealized colonial past and Landes for her assertion that "the past needed to be understood alongside an equally dynamic process of contemporary change" (Qtd. in Romo 11). Even in my fieldwork this year I encountered discord among the members of the community about whether to preserve traditions or to embrace progress.

Within the scope of this dissertation it will be impossible to fully engage with these various texts and do them proper service. To help my readers understand a very broad stroke context and background of the environment I rely on the concise overview of Bahian cultural histories as written by Latin American historian Anadelia Romo. She takes much of the rich historical body of knowledge and condenses it into a kind of roadmap. This roadmap offers intellectual pathways to be able to understand how scholars producing the literature about Bahia in the 20th century were in dialogue. Her work also examines the ways racial formations in Bahia have been constructed throughout the 20th century and how they are woven into the social fabric of the place. To help my readers understand the more "fine stroke" descriptions of the specific

realities of southern Bahia, I will rely on prominent Afro-Bahian linguist Ruy do Carmo Póvoas. Equally important in any examination of the body of literature relevant to this study would have to take into account the preponderance of scholarship produced by foreign scholars and the need for more scholarship done by and/or collaboratively with members of the communities being studied.

Romo's work on the cultural history of Bahia serves as a kind of shorthand for the ways race has influenced the preservation of culture and patrimony. She identifies a gap in the scholarship about race relations in Brazil. She asserts that "...while Bahia has been the heart of the question of race in Brazil, it has been curiously overlooked in modern historical studies of race and race relations" (12). For this reason she focuses her study on scholars who were examining race relations and racial formations in the northeast of Brazil in general and in Bahia specifically. While my dissertation does not exclusively focus on Afro-descendants in Itacaré, the influence of Afro-Brazilian culture and history in the area is deeply enmeshed in the lives of these residents. The sight of a *pescador* (fisherman) on the side of the road weaving and repairing his fishing nets might seem mundane, but these meshes are a physical manifestation of cultural preservation. The meshes capture fish from the open sea or *siri* (small crab) from the mud at the place where the fresh water meets the saltwater. They can serve as a metaphor for the kinds of community practices some have told me are crucial to the maintenance of a community identity linked to ancestral pasts.

Any understanding of this setting needs to include a basic awareness of the ways religious syncretism has affected the lives of Black people in Brazil, and in Bahia, in particular. I will not attempt to present a complete or detailed description of religious syncretism. The literature on it is too vast for the scope of this study. However, it is important to remember that this syncretism did not occur peacefully, arbitrarily or by

chance. The process of religious syncretism was accompanied by colonization and all of the associated violence, slavery, and attempted genocide that came with it. One common understanding of syncretism revolves around the ways slaves and former slaves had to hide their religious practices because they were prohibited. This resulted in the syncretism of African Orixás (often referred to as deities) with Catholic saints wherein each Orixá was identified with a Catholic saint. When a group of Candomblé initiates needed to conduct rites or rituals for a particular Orixá, the celebration would be conducted with the name of the saint so as to imply to outsiders or legal officials that they were worshipping Catholic saints as they were ordered to do.

To this day, I have heard Candomblé initiates insist that there is no need to separate the identities of the Orixás from their Catholic personages. “Iansã is the same thing as Santa Barbara” I was once told in what appeared to be an impatience with my insistence on trying to understand the difference. Other Candomblé initiates I have encountered have insisted “*Sou Católico e também sou do Candomblé.*”¹⁰ This insistence that both identities, Catholic and Candomblé, are not mutually exclusive indicates more than just a need to hide one’s African-derived religious practices. Quite possibly, it implies a belief that the entities and energies cultivated as part of the ritual practices of Candomblé exist in the world, have always existed, and will continue to do so, regardless of the name used to refer to their identities. Even still, there is a movement in Brazil led largely by some of the most traditional Candomblé houses in Brazil seeking an *africanização* of Candomblé in an attempt to undo the syncretism with Catholic religious symbols (Prandi).

Romo looks at the work of Nina Rodrigues, and cites his work as important in trying to understand how the existing social factors of the time influenced how his work

¹⁰ I’m Catholic but I also belong to the Candomblé religion.

was received. She acknowledges that he “is often invoked as the most racially deterministic thinker in Brazil,” but asserts that he “also advocated important public health reforms that could have brought real benefit to the city’s poor” and “believed race to be mediated and altered by a host of environmental and social influences” (Romo 29). She cites Rodrigues and the group of Bahian physicians known as the Tropicalistas¹¹ as being extremely influential in developing strategies for improving the social and physical well-being of the poorer classes in Bahia. Central to their theories was the insistence that local realities must be considered in order to develop local solutions.

I acknowledge Romo’s own claim that she devoted her attention to the urban center of Salvador because it was there “that the energy of the state and its ruling elite was most focused” (6). Following the logic that local conditions must be analyzed in order to develop local solutions I propose that, while Romo did an excellent job of centering her scholarship in regional realities, her focus on Salvador overlooks many of the realities of the more rural communities in Bahia. For this reason her work must be put in conversation with scholars like Póvoas, who live and work in southern Bahia in less urban areas.

In addition to her examination of the different ways patrimony and cultural histories were preserved through curatorial practices and intellectual writings of the time, Romo points out the ways members of the elite classes exerted their influence over decisions related to both culture and to material realities. “Bahia’s municipalities had little income of their own, and local bossism, or *coronelismo*, created local authorities more interested in personal gain than in public welfare or racial justice (25). I encountered several people in my fieldwork with different demographic profiles

¹¹ This should not be confused with the artistic movement of the 1960s called Tropicalismo.

lamenting the way corruption, clientelism, and *coronelismo* continue to dominate local politics and result in limited access to social services for the local residents.

Romo speaks to what she sees as a rift in scholarship on Bahian history and culture. She spends much of the book describing the kinds of intellectual debates that occurred between Bahian scholars that indicate a palpable disagreement about whether or not to see the Afro-Brazilian cultural practices as being deeply and distinctly African or as being a distinctly Brazilian invention. She cites efforts to maintain tradition as possibly being a force that prevents radical social change from making significant improvements in the lives of Afro-Baianos, so many of whom have inherited social legacies such as low literacy rates, poor public sanitation, and voting laws designed to keep the elite classes in power. Yet she also insists that the very dynamism and creativity Afro-Brazilians have demonstrated over the centuries have contributed to the importance of Bahia as a cultural center of Brazil.

What is fascinating in this story is Bahia's remarkable creative energy in reinventing itself: it began its life at the political center of Portugal's largest colony, languished in Brazil's margins for more than two hundred years and then successfully fashioned itself as a cultural heartland of the nation. [...] The twentieth century witnessed a refashioning of Bahia's identity, one that depended on creative new formulations of race and culture (Romo 6).

Paradoxically, Ruy Póvoas cites Nagô¹² philosophy as offering an insight that I believe may hold a key to understanding this tension. In the collection of his essays

¹² Nagô and Yoruba are words often used interchangeably when referring to the cultural group in the African diaspora generally considered to be from West Africa. For a more thorough examination of how these ethnic and cultural groups were formulated, see the work of Falola and Childs *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*.

published in 2011, he describes a major difference between Western philosophy and Nagô philosophy.

Para o nagô, o universo – a vida – é antes de tudo um sistema que se move. Nada está parado. Nada pode permanecer quieto. É do movimento que vem o equilíbrio, e é do equilíbrio que se faz a vida. [...] Uma comunidade nagô vive em eterna efervescência, por isso mesmo até as suas orações são dançadas (232-233).¹³

He goes on to elaborate how the very dynamism central to Nagô philosophy helps to ensure the culture remains vibrant and able to adapt to change. So while Romo indicates that the seemingly contradictory efforts to preserve traditions and to adapt dynamically and creatively to the new Brazilian setting are in conflict, Póvoas indicates that they are actually working in harmony, or perhaps rather (to honor the musical roots of the study) in a rather polyrhythmic and complementary fashion.

Póvoas reminds his readers that one important aspect of these histories to keep in mind when conducting any analysis of peoples and cultures of Bahia is the way history and culture are produced by the dominant sectors of society. He makes clear that the official language in which Brazilian history and Bahian history are recounted is written Portuguese and that oral traditions from Africa were prohibited for centuries. For a person of African descent in Brazil, domination of the written Portuguese language would be required for any kind of social ascension. At the same time, oral communication and movement practices continue to be the dominant mode by which African traditions and histories are passed down from one generation to the next (Póvoas 2011, 71-72). It is perhaps for these reasons that Póvoas himself and other scholars like him expressed an urgent need to enter the academy and a deep frustration with the

¹³ For the Nagô, the universe – life – is, before anything else, a system that moves. Nothing is stagnant. Nothing can remain still. Balance comes from movement, and from balance, life is created. [...] A Nagô community lives in eternal effervescence; for this reason even their prayers are danced.

energy it takes to carve space in academia for the kinds of knowledge production that would honor the oral and movement-based practices brought from Africa while being able to enter into dialogue in written Portuguese with the Euro-centric philosophies that have historically governed academia.

The current social and political climate

Once again, I must acknowledge that within the scope of this dissertation it will be impossible to provide a thorough coverage of the scholarship that has been published around the relevant themes in this setting. It would require an overview of literature speaking to constructions of gender and identity in Brazil in general and in Bahia in particular and would involve comparing the work of Ruth Landes to those who speak to her work such as anthropologist Sarah Hautzinger's examination about the realities of battered women in Bahia. While Donna Goldstein's ethnography of women in poor communities in Rio and African American Studies scholar Kia Lily Caldwell's examination of how Black women negotiate identity and citizenship in Brazil both offer significant insights into the ways race, gender, and class intersect in Brazil, both of these scholars conducted their studies outside of the state of Bahia. I must also acknowledge that a more complete examination of these issues should include a better balance between Brazilian scholars and foreign scholars, privileging the Brazilian scholars whenever possible.

Caldwell's research conducted in Minas Gerais offers some insights into how to contextualize the efforts of Black women in Brazil to construct their identities. Her book seeks "to understand how social, political, and cultural processes have shaped the invisibility and anonymity of Afro-Brazilian women" (2). In doing so, she offers an intersectional analysis of race and gender in the city of Belo Horizonte in the state of Minas Gerais. One of her main points that seems particularly relevant to my work is her

observation that her “interaction with non-activists suggested that a number of Afro-Brazilian women have constructed resistant Black subjectivities apart from social movement involvement” (18). The realities of a medium sized city like Belo Horizonte (approximately 2.4 million according to official 2014 estimates) might be radically different from the realities of women in the small town of Itacaré (less than 30,000 for the entire municipality according to recent estimates). However, some of Caldwell’s observations and analyses hold some relevance.

In her gendered reading of Brazilian nationalism, Caldwell identifies what she believes to be roots to the current issues. “The internal and external dynamics of racial interaction in Brazil are grounded in the colonial encounter and continue to shape practices of racial identification and racial subjectivity for both blacks and whites in Brazil” (38). She links these dynamics back to Gilberto Freyre’s scholarship on race in Brazil. She describes the way his body of work contributed to popular ideas about Brazil’s national character. “In this master narrative of Brazilian history, indigenous and African women are portrayed as silent/silenced incubators of miscegenation” (40). I found this reflected in multiple ways in the small town of Itacaré. Women who self-identified with a more politicized position seemed more eager to engage in dialogue openly and publicly about issues relating to social conditions such as racial and gender bias. Others expressed reticence to discuss these issues. Some spoke of how offensive it was that there was still evidence that women in subordinate positions are still treated as if they are sexually available to those in power. One woman commented to me that in her view, the main problem stems from the fact that there are so many men out there who still believe it is their right to take it (sex) from women, just as in the days of slavery.

One of Caldwell’s important contributions to this study is reflected in a comment made by one of her study participants. “(C)hange has largely occurred on the individual

level for group members” and “women’s activism has not produced sweeping social changes” (120). Placing this claim in context with a comment I observed in the field that “women in Itacaré are difficult to mobilize” it becomes even more crucial to recognize Caldwell’s assertion that “change on the individual level should not be dismissed as unimportant” (120). This also reflects the importance of keeping the results of this study in harmony with Boaventura de Sousa Santos’ theories about the sociology of absences and how the logic of the dominant scale can blind us to more subtle results, and by extension, subtle resistances. In my time in Itacaré several people commented that the problem of corruption is so widespread and exists in all sectors, from the town council to the police force, that many people simply do not see a plausible way to fight it. In these instances, the attention to small scale tactics can offer a glimpse into future possibilities.

***Quilombo* pedagogy and Porto de Trás**

Of particular importance to this study is scholarship surrounding the history of the ways the term *Quilombo* has been deployed historically and how the political realities of *Quilombos* have shifted over time. The term *Quilombo* was used differently in the time of slavery. Its linguistic usage shifted when Afro-Brazilian scholar and activist Abdias do Nascimento’s theories of *Quilombismo* entered public discourse. In contemporary scholarship, educational pedagogue Jeanes Leichert identifies the ways Freirean pedagogy speaks to the lived experiences of *Quilombo* communities in order to articulate what she describes as “*quilombo* pedagogy.”

There are several casual understandings of the term *Quilombo*. According to the report “*Programa Brasil Quilombola*” produced in 2004 by a special agency of the federal government devoted to the promotion of racial equality, in the Brazilian imaginary, *Quilombos* are a thing of the past: something that disappeared with the abolition of slavery in 1888 (SEPPPIR 6). A common general understanding of the word

Quilombo is a marooned slave colony or a colony of escaped slaves. Some refer to the idea of *Quilombo* as more of an ideological space. And still others refer to any community of largely Afro-descendants to be a *Quilombo* community.

In her doctoral dissertation Bahian scholar Jeanes Larchhert sets out to prove that the entire municipality of Itacaré should qualify as a *Quilombo*. She begins her dissertation citing the ways the term *Quilombo* has been deployed: “...faz-se necessário analisarmos o conceito de quilombo sobre dois aspectos: a definição inicial no período colonial e a segunda definição ressemantizada e ampliada, nos anos noventa, pelo Movimento Negro Unificado (MNU¹⁴).” She cites the original meaning of the Bantu word *kilombo* as being a sociopolitical military institution from central Africa. Linking this meaning to the military roots and the fight for liberty, the word *Quilombo* becomes more closely associated with the fight to end slavery and the struggle for social justice. She then traces the influence to Abdias do Nascimento’s use of the term Quilombismo as a rallying call to the fight for racial equality in Brazil and to dismantle the myth of racial democracy¹⁵.

Larchert places a large portion of the blame for the perpetual domination of African peoples in Brazil squarely on the educational system in Brazil. She claims that by constructing *Quilombos* as communities of escaped slaves in the social imaginary, educational systems perpetuate the idea of slaves as dangerous to the social order, thereby contributing to the difficulty for Black people in Brazil to achieve any kind of social mobility (22). She then asserts a need for pedagogy in *Quilombo* communities to include both formal and informal pedagogies that reflect the epistemologies of social

¹⁴ ... it becomes necessary to analyze the concept of *quilombo* by way of two aspects: the initial definition in the colonial period and the second definition, semantically reinvented, in the 1990s, by the Unified Black Movement.

¹⁵ Livio Sansone offers an excellent overview of the ways this myth has been constructed and how it is currently being questioned in his book *Blackness Without Ethnicity: Constructing Race in Brazil*.

resistance, including ludic activities in the communities. Central to her theory of *Quilombo* pedagogy is the Freirean claim that “*a educação deve ter como objetivo maior desvelar as relações opressivas vividas pelas pessoas, transformando-as para que elas transformem o mundo*”¹⁶ (Larchert 65). According to Larchert, because Itacaré has such a strong link to the colonial past and to the system of slavery which provided labor for the plantations in the region, every community in Itacaré identifying as Afro-descendant automatically already has rights to claim *Quilombo* as a community identity.

Brazil’s federal government uses a somewhat open-ended description to define the term *Quilombo*. According to the official report published by the Federal Secretary for the Promotion of Racial Equality, “*O significado de quilombo é a reafirmação da luta pela sobrevivência, construindo uma realidade que garanta a igualdade, o convívio com a coletividade, a ancestralidade e uma história de quase quinhentos anos de exclusão*”¹⁷ (SEPPIR 4). Linked to both the history of oppression and the imagined disappearance of *Quilombos*, the fact that these communities remained isolated for a large part of the 19th and 20th century can be seen as a strategy for survival. Before the abolition of slavery, invisibility was required for survival, as was a knowledge of living off the land. Whether or not strategic invisibility is still required for survival is a question that depends on several conditions beyond the scope of this dissertation (such as factors relating to the particular realities of specific communities). This could be an important research question for a future project.

The federal report acknowledges that some *Quilombo* communities were formed, even after the abolition of slavery, out of a need for Black Brazilians to establish a life of

¹⁶ ...education should have, as its principal goal, exposing oppressive relations lived by people, so they can be transformed into people who transform the world.

¹⁷ The meaning of the term *Quilombo* is a reaffirmation of the fight for survival, constructing a reality that guarantees equality, living as a collective, ancestry, and a history of almost 500 years of exclusion.

freedom away from the presence of those who considered them inferior (SEPPIR 8-9). The report also acknowledges that the ethnic identity attached to these communities has to be rooted in a dynamic self-identity rather than in biological characteristics such as phenotype. However, there are specific requirements for a community to be certified by the Fundação Cultural de Palmares as a legitimate *Quilombo* community. The SEPPIR report indicates that the important factors for determining whether or not a community qualifies as a *Quilombo* community are “*uma ancestralidade comum, formas de organização político e social, e elementos lingüísticos e religiosos*”¹⁸ (10). The report links other factors such as agrarian micro-economies as well as political, social, and environmental sustainability.

What the report doesn’t cover, however, is the dissident voices within *Quilombo* communities who are ambivalent about the certification. In the town of Itacaré, for example, some members of the Porto de Trás community have expressed a reticence to embrace the certification of *Quilombo* status because the communities are certified on the premise that they are constructed as social units where goods are shared among the community, including property. Individuals who worked to purchase the materials and use their own labor to build their own houses have commented that they do not want to cede their homes to the community.

The Comissão Pró-Índio de São Paulo indicates that *Quilombos urbanos* are just the same as rural *Quilombos*. However, in an urban setting the emphasis is not on agrarian micro-economies or even living off the land. “*Não se planta, não se pesca, e nem se coleta frutas da mata*”¹⁹ (CPISP). The emphasis is focused on the efforts to reassert self-esteem and self-determination in situations of social marginalization. In a

¹⁸ A common ancestry, political and social forms of organization, and linguistic and religious elements.

¹⁹ They don’t plant, they don’t fish, they don’t even collect fruit from the forests.

setting like Itacaré, where many people in the community still fish, and plant, and collect fruit from the abundance of trees in the area, the situation is complex because these habits exist in a space that is neither completely rural nor completely urban. The small town still has many of the qualities of an agrarian and fisherman's lifestyle while coexisting alongside a tourist center that is increasingly encroaching on the territory of the locals.

Tourism and *O Eterno Encantado*²⁰

I saw this phrase "*O Eterno Encantado*" in a restaurant in Itacaré known as one of the oldest and most traditional restaurants in town, up until 2014 when it changed management. Prior to this change in management the place was always decorated with vibrantly colored local artwork (provided by a resident artist who owned a boutique shop next door to the restaurant). The décor also tapped into romantic ideas of a colonial past with its sheer drapes billowing in the breeze. These sheer drapes were used to separate different spaces. Colorful umbrellas were hanging from the ceiling, offering a reminder of the Frevo dance that is prominent in northeastern Brazil during the *Festas Juninas*²¹ every year. On my first visit, the hostel where I stayed was two doors down from the restaurant and I could hear the nightly singing of a woman who has become a friend and a kind of muse for me. It became my favorite local haunt, where I was always greeted with a hug, and sometimes with a free *caipirinha* if I would offer a jam session with the local musicians. At the front of the restaurant was a hand carved wooden sign with the phrase "O Eterno Encantado." This became my in vivo code for the ways the place is specifically produced as tourist paradise.

²⁰ "The eternally enchanted place"

²¹ These "June Festivals" are traditional festivals in the Northeast and are commonly celebrated in all of Brazil. Bahia, in particular, hosts several of these festivals. In Itacaré there are three Saints who have their June festivals there.

The website for the town of Itacaré offers an introduction for dialogue about tourism. While photos of the area alternate on the home page, the bottom margin of the photos reads “Gorgeous beaches, tropical forest, waterfalls, surf, *capoeira*, adventure sports ... Come to Itacaré!” (itacare.com). The options for clicking at the top of the screen include “Beaches,” “Surf,” “Adventure,” “Lodging,” “Dining,” and “Events.” The portal is clearly targeted to the tourist visitor. Itacaré’s marketing staff has apparently decided that “If Itacaré was a song, it would carry the bass line of the hottest funk rhythm, the melody of a beautiful love ballad, and the lyrical prose of your favorite Bob Marley tune” (itacare.com). With this romanticized vision, who wouldn’t want to visit Itacaré? Once you arrive in Itacaré, the word *paraíso* (paradise) can be seen on at least one building on every street. The message is clear: Itacaré = tourist paradise, complete with sexy music to get your body dancing, implicit opportunities for romance, and just a dash of political resistance – not too much, mind you. Just enough to “keep it real.”

The city of Itacaré is not alone in the efforts to perpetuate a romanticized vision of this region. The State Board of tourism in Bahia produced a series of web-based video propaganda to promote tourism in the entire state. In one video, we see the trope of the smiling, brown-skinned female, dressed in traditional garb, ready and eager to serve²². It presents a reminder of the colonial past without questioning the realities of the labor that works to construct this fantasy vacation. The trope of the fair-skinned (presumably European) visitor peppers the video: couples partaking of the kinds of excursions not available to those earning Brazilian Reais in the tourist industry, and enjoying a spontaneous *capoeira* lesson by, once again, brown bodies unproblematically eager to serve. While this official post card vision of the state of Bahia might seem exotic and

²² The cultural icon of the “Baiana” (woman from Bahia) appears nearly everywhere in Bahia, particularly in tourist areas. The traditional dress (white dress, head scarf, etc.) is worn while selling traditional foods like acarajé. For a small fee some Baianas offer themselves as photo opportunities for tourists to snap a shot with this important figure. The figure is deployed in Carnival and in other tourists settings. The traditional garb is also worn in Candomblé ceremonies and parties.

exciting, the reality is that the experiences they are advertising are only accessible to the wealthiest of the wealthy, and usually reserved for visitors coming from countries with a stronger currency.

During the time period leading up to the world cup in Brazil this past year, the dynamics and problematic assumptions at the root of the tourist industry are made apparent by a photo that was published in the Folha De São Paulo website indicating that the image used to market the Bahamas Club to World Cup visitors was found offensive by the staff of city hall in Guarulhos, São Paulo (see Figure 2). The image, which shows a woman squatting over a soccer ball wearing very short shorts and high heels (and nothing else), holds onto the legs of a man wearing soccer cleats, with his shorts down at his ankles. So while we cannot see the two people above the woman's arms or above the man's knees, the image clearly implies oral sex. The billboard's caption "Where your fantasies become reality" indicates that any visitor (presumably male but not necessarily) who frequents this nightclub

can get women to do whatever he desires. And truly, since it is a known establishment where high-class prostitutes solicit moneyed clients, it would be difficult to accuse Oscar

Maroni of false advertising.



Figure 2: Billboard in São Paulo

What is more intriguing is the way the billboard plays into assumptions about how Brazilian women are somehow automatically always sexually available to the foreign

visitor²³. Erica Lorraine Williams touches on this in her provocative ethnography *Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements*. She describes the ways the histories of exoticism and slavery have contributed to what she calls the specter of sex tourism, a specter with myriad ramifications and reverberations.

The specter of sex tourism is a racialized discourse that profoundly affects the daily lives of Salvador's men and women – white and black, Bahian and foreign, sex workers and non-sex workers. This concept suggests that the reach of sex tourism extends beyond those who participate in commercial sexual transactions. In fact, it makes any and all transnational and cross-racial encounters seem suspect (46).

This concept can also be linked to the age-old vacationer's mantra "What happens in _____ stays in _____!" One need merely insert the name of an exotic tourist location in the two blanks: such as Brazil, Rocky Point, Vegas, etc. Williams points out in her work that these embedded assumptions have real ramifications for those whose lived realities exist in the daily negotiation of the tourism industry. Some of her informants indicated that they see outsiders as metaphorical invaders of their community seeking the good time that the tourism industry would like them to believe is a natural part of the experience.

Williams elaborates on the need for a much more nuanced approach to analyzing the ways sex tourism influences the lives of people in Bahia. She asks her readers to resist falling into the logic of sensationalist media that has "created a moral panic about black sexuality that unwittingly reinforces stereotypes as well as notions of who is worthy of the privileges of transnational mobility" (7). She describes how for many local

²³ The image also plays into the ways women of color, particularly mixed-race women are overly sexualized in Brazilian popular culture. Her racial identifiers are left ambiguous but the light-brown skin codes her as mulatta.

residents, engaging in romantic or sexual encounters with foreign visitors can often offer them access to the city's resources that would normally be out of their reach due to the costs associated with fine dining and other tourist-centered activities. She makes the claim that even though "prostitution is legal in Brazil, it is still stigmatized" (13). The majority of her study informants were sex workers looking to improve their safety, reduce violence against sex workers, and reduce the social stigma surrounding prostitution.

Williams also discusses the complicated histories of inter-racial liaisons and cites critical race theorist Jared Sexton's assertion that white supremacy is linked inextricably to inter-racial encounters. Yet she also asserts that even with the ways racial and sexual meanings are already always mapped onto the Black female body, she seeks a way to engage with the dialogue surrounding this complex issue in a way that both honors the painful history but also opens up space for agency and erotic autonomy for Black women (62). She also links the history of foreign visitors engaging in these romantic or sexual liaisons with Brazilians to what Goffman cites as a desire to move away from the front stages of tourism and into the back stage areas (84). Her analysis of these dynamics in Salvador is rich and nuanced and informs my study deeply. The structures of power are slightly different in Itacaré than they are in Salvador so some of her claims and assertions do not hold true in the more rural setting, but many of them rang eerily true as I moved through my six months of field work, including very difficult realizations of the way I, myself, am implicated in these power dynamics.

CHAPTER 3

ELABORATION OF METHODOLOGY

When I began my doctoral studies at Arizona State University, I entered the work with an eagerness to do everything correctly. Five years later I am now questioning the very desire for correctness. I spent the first year and a half trying to understand what it meant to do scholarship. Theory and method were messy jumbles in my brain. I remember one of my colleagues in our doctoral research methods class asking what it really meant to theorize. At the time I thought it was a silly question. I later realized it was the most important question of the day and applauded her candor and willingness to ask a question I was too embarrassed to formulate.

At a recent conference, one of my former theatre professors, and the chair of the panel for which I was presenting a paper claimed: “I am eager to hear about the methodology used in ethnography, ... because they have one.” While his comment may have been a light-hearted poke at the ways theatre as a field lacks some of the structure and formality of the hard sciences or even the social sciences, I found myself laughing because it wasn’t until I began studying under the tutelage of my mentor from the School of Communication that I felt I finally had concrete tools to begin crafting a study worthy of being called “scholarship.”

In this chapter I will elaborate on the methods I utilized in my dissertation fieldwork. This elaboration will include an explanation of how I sought to follow as a model the Four Seasons of Ethnography methodology as delineated by Amira de la Garza; the ways these methods are rooted in grounded theory approaches to scholarship; how de la Garza’s deep reflexive methods offer a crucial system for checking taken-for-granted assumptions; and how my interpretation of these methods and ideals has given me guidance for seeking ways that the analysis and development of the ethnographic tale

can be rooted in the phenomena observed in the field. De la Garza claims “It is never the same to merely watch a ceremony as it is to participate in it” (642). With this assertion she underscores the importance of acknowledging that any ethnographer enters the field in order to learn “through his or her own experience” (635). This relates specifically to the location of my fieldwork in that it allows for a genuine recognition of the importance of experiential and embodied knowledge, which is so central to Afro-Brazilian histories and religious cosmologies. These histories and cosmologies, even when not overtly part of the lives of community members who no longer practice Candomblé or other African-derived religious practices, are tightly woven into the social fabric I have been studying.

In addition to outlining the ways I have adopted de la Garza’s methods, I will also explain the two extensions of her methods I have developed. Both of these extensions stem largely from the critical reflection I conducted throughout all phases of research. These reflexive practices resulted in what de la Garza and I developed as a term we are calling the *dynamic locus of creative activity*. We developed the articulation of this process in tandem with the principal reflexive practice resulting from this dissertation, which I am calling *refraction*. I am deploying both of these extensions as modes for developing new understandings of data from field work as well as modes of developing my own flavor of creative research.

Part 1: The Four Seasons of Ethnography Overview

In her article “The Four Seasons of Ethnography: a creation-centered ontology for ethnography,” (2000) de la Garza provides guidelines for re-thinking the ways academia has traditionally approached ethnographic studies. She describes the “received guiding ideals” (629) inherited from scientific rationalism and how those received ideals can be an impediment to a genuine growth in the ways we perceive and understand human interactions. While many in the academic world might still assume

rational thought is natural and neutral, de la Garza reminds us that this mode of thinking ignores that many of the scholar's "taken-for-granted (629)" assumptions about the way the world works are not universal but, are rather quite specific to a Western notion of knowledge acquisition and production.

De la Garza explains her methodology of the Four Seasons by comparing what she calls "received" guiding ideals to the Four Seasons guiding ideals. She takes the term "guiding ideals" from Guba's *The Paradigm Dialog*, and expands upon them to include "multiple ideals which exist on a taken-for-granted level due to the cultural situatedness of 'Western' research" (629). These received guiding ideals tend to be rooted in scientific inquiry and academic schedules. She explains that these guiding ideals are not natural or essentially human, but rather are learned from a long history of rationalism. They are "taken-for-granted" as the normal or natural way to conduct research. The Four Seasons guiding ideals, in contrast, use as a model the natural cycles of the earth. This provides what she calls a "creation-centered ontology" within which to imagine ethnographic research projects.

The Cartesian split between mind and body, and the common tendency to sort all other data into convenient binaries stems, according to de la Garza, from the received guiding ideal of the primacy of rationality. This coincides with Boaventura de Sousa Santos' first logic in his sociology of absences wherein modern science and high culture become "the sole criteria of truth and aesthetic quality, respectively" (52). De la Garza also points to the ways rational thought has historically dominated all other forms of experience and knowledge. "What occurs in the privileging of the rational voice is essentially a veiled repetition of the cultural theme of dominance of the self which operates through the preceding ideals" (632).

In order to best follow this idea, I made every attempt to conduct regular observation sessions, particularly in moments where I felt lost or stuck in the research. The observations invariably placed me back into a mode of disciplined work, and trust in the process. This ideal also allowed me to feel free to journal extensively without worrying about whether the field notes were being written in anything I imagined to be an academically appropriate way. What becomes inappropriate for an academic setting is filtered out from written documents but is maintained in my own awareness of the interdependence of all forms of knowing.

De la Garza is careful to point out that a rejection of Western rationalism altogether does not necessarily disrupt the traditional paradigm. She claims that the very binary model she uses to lay out her argument comes from Western modes of thinking. Indigenous scholars and scholars of color often acknowledge the foreignness of Western modes of knowledge production, even as they are forced to master them in the academy. She proposes that her model “be recognized as a heuristic and not as the definition of a battleground of separate opposites” (630). To counter this urge toward binaries and the tendency to try to explain phenomena according to categories that do not exist natively in the context being studied, de la Garza proposes an ideal of harmony and balance. She links this to the discipline required for conducting any sort of ethnographic research. This discipline involves rigor and regular journaling practices. But it also involves being aware of how the human instrument holds multiple ways of knowing, and no one of those ways should be privileged over another. “...the rational is no more valuable than the spiritual, the material no more significant than the emotional” (634).

The work for the researcher who follows her methodology becomes a balancing act wherein the awareness of learned habits creates space for the development of new

ways of thinking to create new habits. She describes the logic of opportunism that lies behind the perceived need to do things according to a particular schedule, pointing out that “losing” or “wasting” time reflects a researcher’s need to meet a schedule more so than it reflects the needs of the study. “Interviews might be conducted because a member of the culture is present ‘today’ and might not be there ‘tomorrow,’ even if the researcher is not aware of a purposive need for the interview” (630). Indeed, I found myself falling into that logic early on in fieldwork. I felt I had so much to accomplish and so little time. I arrived eager to “do things” and “make a difference.”

This situation offered me a chance to learn a new expression, “*cheguei chegando*.” Literally translated it means “I arrived arriving.” I was at an art opening and my apartment manager was there. She asked me about my work. When I told her of my plans, she smiled and said “*Você chegou chegando, né?*” I did not understand the phrase so she explained it to me. When someone arrives in a setting, with fresh energy and brand new ideas, a vision, and plans to realize those visions and plans, they say “*ela chegou chegando*.”

When she said it, she said it with a bit of a smirk: not quite a compliment, not quite ridicule. She seemed to be acknowledging good intentions while still making fun of the ingenuousness of it all. Then I realized why I had been so anxious to get started. I was making plans based on a US American structure and system of getting things done. In the states I always have several irons in the fire and I know how to bring projects efficiently to fruition. I had forgotten how things move to a different rhythm in Bahia. Yes, the hips sway frenetically in those samba, *farró*, and *pagode* rhythms, but life and business move at a much more relaxed pace.

She suggested I relax, enjoy the summer vacation and wait until after *Carnaval* to begin my research. I remember feeling flabbergasted. I couldn’t possibly just sit around

and wait until mid-March to begin conducting interviews and preparing community-based performance projects. I went home, looked back at all my plans and goals for the six month period of fieldwork, made a list of all the things I hoped to accomplish and realized that if I achieved only one, that I could consider the project a success. So while I diligently tried to accomplish as many things on my dissertation “to-do” list, I also remembered the lessons de la Garza had been trying to teach all of us, her students. I can almost hear her voice saying: “Be open to the situation, to what you can learn, and allow the work to emerge. Don’t try to know in advance what you are going to learn before you even get there!”

For de la Garza, a better way to approach the work involves an awareness of appropriateness in relation to how our experiences in the field are cyclical. For example, asking a particular question at a time that I believe is right based on my need to produce results for data analysis in my dissertation could better serve a creation-centered ontology by recognizing that this work does not exist one time. It exists as a cyclical model. I will return again and again to this site. And when the time is appropriate, the questions will be welcomed. She describes this shift in perspective by saying “Opportunity is never ‘lost’, simply delayed for the reoccurrence of a season” (632).

This mode of thinking also complements Santos’s work and his “sociology of absences” which outlines the various ways logic from the Global North (also often called “Western”) prevents scholars from seeing realities of peoples who exist outside of the Western or Global North paradigm. He explains the “logic of productivity” as a mode through which productivity becomes the assumed measuring device by which a person’s value is assessed. Santos explains how this logic prevents outsiders from appreciating ways of existing in the world that do not privilege productivity as a virtue.

This links back to de la Garza's methodology in that this logic of productivity contributes to the received ideal of opportunism. In the academy, research projects that privilege clear and distinct results are rewarded with funding and recognition. However, this runs the risk of perpetuating a model by which only research projects that offer the most radical results get the most attention. Subtle results might be written off as unimportant or, as Santos would claim, absent. By de-emphasizing results-oriented arts practices or research projects and placing value on descriptive accounts of the interactions that occur as part of the process of conducting these projects, we contribute to important steps toward dismantling Santos' logic of productivity wherein results are valued over all else.

Baianos (Bahians) have historically felt this kind of logic at play when they hear Brazilians from other parts make insensitive remarks about a laziness so often cited as an inherent or natural quality of someone from the northeast, particularly Bahia. According to Santos, when a demographic group is called "lazy," the assumption behind that label privileges a logic of productivity, which in turn, makes absent or invisible those who do not fit the workaholic paradigm that has been exported from the United States to nations labeled "developing" in the Global South.

At the recent Brazilian Studies Association conference in London, I witnessed a panel focusing on Salvador, Bahia as a center of Afro-Brazilian identity and culture. I listened to a dialogue between two anthropologists whose work is based in this region. In both cases, the researchers described the great pains they took to try to ensure that they would maintain an appropriate critical distance from their study participants and work to safeguard the anonymity of the participants as well. In one anthropologist's case study the anonymity of the study participants was linked directly to their safety, as her research project centered on violence against women in Salvador. In both cases, the

anthropologists asserted that one of the most important ethical considerations in the research was the maintenance of a certain separation between them and their subjects.

On one hand, I applauded these women for so diligently protecting their subjects and their own emotional autonomy. But on the other hand, I understand what de la Garza claims in her assertion that the guiding ideal of the independence of the researcher sees interactions between ethnographer and subjects as problems to be dealt with, rather than an integral part of the process. She claims "... it should be noted that the assumption is that methods are intended to correct and remedy the 'problems' which arise when the independence of the researcher is violated" (630). Rather than seeing this situation as independence that gets violated, it might be rather more productive to acknowledge and engage with the many different ways our presence affects the dynamics of the social realities being observed.

De la Garza elaborates further when she describes the four seasons guiding ideal of the awareness of the interdependence of all things. She claims "the awareness of the nature of boundaries calls for a further awareness of the obfuscation that occurs if we reify boundaries and perceive separateness where we have constructed it for functionalist reasons" (633). This awareness allowed me to recognize that my actions (or at other times, my inaction) had real effects on the people of the community where I was conducting this research. As a person and an artist in the world I have historically had blurry boundaries between the personal and the professional, between the personal and the creative, and between academic work and creative work. This reminder of the interdependency of all things prompted me to reflect on the tensions and dynamics of my interactions in a way that held me accountable for my words and actions. Part of my methodology as an ethnographer includes autoethnography involving deeply critical self-

reflection to help maintain this awareness and proceed with a sensitivity to these complex dynamics at all times.

De la Garza describes the received guiding ideal of entitlement as a taken-for-granted assumption that “simply having a question is seen as grounds for being able to attain one’s ‘answer’ upon demand” (631). I found this to be particularly relevant with regard to knowledge about the Afro-Brazilian religions Candomblé and Umbanda. My creative partner, Mestre Monza, an ordained *Ogan*²⁴ in Candomblé, reiterated to me on several occasions that the way knowledge is passed on in Candomblé is a sacred process which demands humility and patience. It is considered rude to ask questions. Learning must happen through an apprenticeship model by observing and doing under the instruction of an elder.

Ruy Póvoas, the founding director of the Kâwé Núcleo de Estudos where I was a member during fieldwork, also points out in much of his work that Candomblé has a contentious relationship with anthropology. He has indicated in his work that members of Candomblé groups will deliberately deceive or mislead researchers because of a complex history of the ways anthropology has been used as a tool for oppressive colonial projects. Keeping religious practices secret has been a survival tactic of Afro-Brazilian peoples for centuries.

This concept of entitlement became clear to me when I reflected on the ways many doors remained closed to me, despite knocking repeatedly on those proverbial doors. It was only after I entered certain spaces with no expectations, with a generosity of spirit and an openness to what I might receive, did I finally begin to have interesting exchanges with people in sacred settings. This was an important step toward acknowledging the ways this received ideal affects my ability to conduct fieldwork. I also believe, as de la Garza suggests, that this ideal need not be completely rejected. But

²⁴ Monza’s position as *Ogan* hold responsibilities for musical accompaniment and ceremonial assistance.

acknowledging it without self-judgment will be an important tactic for me as I continue through this work. In her ethnographic essay “Painting the White Face Red” de la Garza speaks of the concept of appropriateness. The researcher must consciously and continuously ask herself, “Is this the right time for engaging in the method I choose to use, or is there a better time – or none – for doing what I want to do?” (

The grand irony of this realization came in the moment I finally worked up the courage simply to walk through the various communities asking where the local Umbanda Center was. I had heard from various people there was one. I had thought I was being open to signs but became frustrated after several months of not seeing any opportunity to engage in conversation with a practitioner of Umbanda in my fieldwork site. So, one fine sunny day I walked over to the neighborhood of Passagem where I was told I could find a woman who could help me. Passagem is also a neighborhood quite off the normal path where tourists might walk. I was a fair-skinned woman walking through this neighborhood made up largely of Afro-descendants. In this neighborhood, even more than the neighborhood with strong roots as a *Quilombo* community, I felt the gaze of locals looking at me as if to question why I was there. It felt clear to me that I did not belong there. When I finally happened upon a couple of elderly men outside the front of a small market, I asked them if they knew where there was an Umbanda Center and the woman who runs it. After a few moments of them trying to figure out what I could possibly be talking about, one of them said “Oh! You mean Mãezinha? Yes, she did have some kind of spiritist center or something. But she died a few weeks ago.”

I felt like laughing and crying at the same time. I knew in that moment that once again, I had tried so hard to reject the received guiding ideals of opportunism and entitlement only to find that my greatest possible opportunity to learn about Umbanda in this community had passed away, taking her knowledge with her. Perhaps I was too

late. Perhaps I was too eager. Perhaps I was not eager enough. But the moment made it clear that we need not completely reject our received guiding ideals merely for the sake of rejecting them. If they serve the study, we can use them and acknowledge their position in the context. If they do not serve us, we will learn that in other ways. At some point in the future I may find an opportunity to speak with those who were *filhos*²⁵ of Mãezinha. Until then, I will make every effort to maintain an awareness of both appropriateness and signs of possible entires to the research.

While I may have felt a very real sense of lost “opportunity” in that scenario, if I had been more conscious of de la Garza’s guiding ideal of preparedness I would have understood that “one simply cannot enter into that for which he or she is not prepared appropriately” (634). Of course, to be truly prepared requires both patience and discipline. De la Garza describes the seeds that must be planted for them to grow into a harvest of knowledge. This also means that simply arriving on the scene without having done the work prior to entering the field will result in problems when it comes time to harvesting the fruits of our labor. In this instance, the work I should have done even before writing my prospectus would have been to spend more time in the preceding five years I was spending my summers there engaging with local residents to understand what the needs of the community are and how my research might more appropriately dovetail with those needs.

Understanding ethnography as a cyclical and creation-centered process offers the metaphor of the four seasons to become useful as models for passing through each of these stages of the process. Spring is considered the time of preparing, or of planting the seeds. Summer becomes the height of activity, or the actual fieldwork. Autumn becomes the time to harvest our data, tilling the proverbial soil to elicit results that stem from the

²⁵ When a *mãe de santo* or *pãe de santo* (priestess or priest) initiates someone into the Candomblé or Umbanda religion, that person is considered a spiritual “child” (*filho*) of the person doing the initiating.

seeds that were planted. Winter then becomes a time of rest, reflection, and the writing of the ethnographic account. It proceeds seamlessly into the next spring for the next phase of the cycle of the seasons.

Part 2: Spring and Pre-Fieldwork Preparations

Ó primavera adorada

Inspiradora de amores

Ó primavera idolatrada

Sublime estação das flores

– Nelson Sargento, Jamelão²⁶

These romantic lyrics about springtime are taken from the soundtrack to the 1999 remake of the film *Black Orpheus*, scored by Caetano Veloso. They point to a more tropical conceptualization of spring than in parts of the world where snow might cover the ground in winter. In this tropical framework, spring is the time for love. In the four seasons-based research, the work begins in spring. In the agrarian metaphor, spring is a time of planting. In the tropical rain forests of Brazil, spring is the time of flowers opening in the period of rebirth. In spring the work is beautiful and delicious and fragrant with possibilities.

The spring phase of research for me included several areas of work. I prepared the study and the research questions based on my own interests and on my independent study conducted with Dr. Isis Costa-McElroy, who specializes in Afro-Brazilian religions and cosmology. Having heard in casual conversation from community members that there existed an Umbanda center in Itacaré and that the woman running it was doing

²⁶ Oh, beloved springtime
Inspiration for loves
Oh, idolized spring
Sublime season of flowers

good work for the community, I focused my research question around that possible “object” of inquiry.

An additional aspect of spring preparation involved determining how best to incorporate my skills as a performer into the research proposal. The members of the Kàwé research group at the local university indicated that, to date, no one had done a study about Afro-Brazilian culture in the region from a gender perspective.

Coincidentally, one professor indicated that there was a recent increase in work to raise awareness about domestic violence in the region. Since so much of my previous research and creative work centers on questions about women and about domestic violence, I wanted to try to offer something of value to the community. However, after realizing that my research question would be difficult to pursue if I specifically wanted to focus on victims of domestic violence, I opted for a more generalized approach.

I prepared the IRB proposal for a general ethnography and was given an exemption. I determined that the best thing I could offer the community was a performance of my solo autoethnographic performance piece “How not to Make Love to a Woman” (*Como não Fazer Amor com uma Mulher*) as a way of offering an invitation to community dialogue about a topic that has been difficult for people to approach.

As part of my preparations I visited the site six months before entering fieldwork proper. While I was making contacts and meeting new people, it became clear to me that my original research question, which was centered around the ritual practices of women in the Umbanda religion, would be difficult at best to pursue, and possibly unethical, because many of my questions held as a core assumption that syncretism has been deemed no longer necessary. What I learned later is that the literature I was reading was reflecting studies that were conducted in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and other urban

centers in the southern regions of Brazil. These studies were not conducted in the state of Bahia, where I would be conducting my own fieldwork.

What I also learned as part of the process of analyzing the field notes from the preliminary summer visit was that I needed to prepare to deal with some deep questions about my own subject position. The idea of touristic paradise crept into the field notes despite my deliberate attempt to make the research about other things. I soon realized I was going to have to ask myself about the ways this place has been produced as paradise for the tourism industry and how the realities of tourists who visit contrast grotesquely with the lived realities of the people who have lived there for generations, the people who are generally hired to cook for, clean for, and serve those who visit from other places. I realized that in order for me to adequately serve this project I would need to pose some deep critical questions about my own relationship to Brazil, to Bahia, to tourism, and to ideas of leisure and work. These kinds of questions began in the springtime preparation and continued through all phases of the cycle.

Samples of exercises for deep critical reflection included regular journaling practices. I first journaled with the intention of posing questions to myself about my true motivations. Then I would re-read prior journal entries to begin questioning why I use particular words or phrases. I engaged in meditation exercises designed to uncover and address potential emotional triggers in order to understand how they might influence the study. One important aspect of spring preparation lies in the journaling and meditation practices designed to acknowledge and allow space for shadow aspects of our identity to be channeled in a way that does not disrupt or distort the study.

I discovered two shadow aspects of myself that presented themselves to me through meditation and journaling as potential triggers that needed to be properly addressed. My desire for the “Other,” if left unchecked, would result in a romanticization

of these women and an uncritical view of the tourist setting. My personal trigger with lying and dishonesty would have blinded me to the nuanced and complex ways people in this setting call each other and themselves “*mentirosas*” (liar-female) and how the cultural archetype of Exú (often cited as the Yoruba trickster) prepares people to engage in strategic lying as a mode of developing creativity and as a survival tactic. But with springtime preparations of acknowledging these shadow aspects and maintaining the awareness of their place in my worldview, I am able to bracket them off in ways that minimize the potential distortion of the data gleaned from the process.

Part 3: Summer and Data Collection

Summertime and the livin' is easy.

– George and Ira Gershwin

In many ways, the summer of fieldwork offers me the most joy in the process. The living might not be as “easy” as the Gershwins would have me believe, but the work gives me great pleasure. Summer in this creation-centered ontological approach to ethnography is the actual fieldwork proper. Summer is also the time for developing relationships in the field with members of the community, study participants, etc. I engaged in diligent journaling, observations, and “pounding the pavement” to get out into the community and see and feel the realities at play. In this case perhaps “pounding the sand and *paralelepípedo*” (cobblestone) is a more apt description. I willingly let go of research questions I deemed to be irrelevant and tried diligently to remain open to what the field itself offered me.

My fieldwork methods included observation of interactions in the setting utilizing thick description as modeled by Clifford Geertz; photographic and video documentation of the setting and public events that took place there; recorded interviews with local residents (some audio, some video); diligent journaling practices designed to be critically

reflexive; and a modified mode of participant observation in the community and in various cultural events. This included the ways I, as a performer, utilized that cultural cachet to engage in dialogue with local residents. Often I gave impromptu jam sessions at local bars. This allowed people in the community to get to know me. My presence as a performer also served as an entry to conversations to which I might not have been invited otherwise.

I conducted both formal and informal interviews. The study group included natives of the region (both *Quilombo* residents and non-*Quilombo* residents), and people who have moved to Itacaré but self-identify as being from somewhere else originally. Of the formal study participants, six were native to the Porto de Trás *Quilombo* community, four were native to Itacaré and surrounding region (but not Porto de Trás), and six were born elsewhere but had moved to Itacaré and now consider it their home. Formal interviews were recorded either on video or audio or both and were authorized by the study participant according to standard IRB procedures. All of these formal study participants opted to use their real names. Informal interviews encompass all the conversations I had with people in the field that were not formally recorded or officially authorized, but whose conversations appeared in field notes. It included local residents as well as tourists and other visitors. These individuals were willing to speak to me in casual conversation but a formal interview never occurred either because of the individual's reticence or because of other practical reasons. In these cases, because their explicit permission was not given, I have made every attempt to describe these comments and conversations in a way that maximizes the privacy of the individual and offers no obvious clues about the person's identity.

In the interviews I opted to do as much as possible to make the study participants feel comfortable and relaxed. This required me to release the idea of following a rigid set

of scripted questions and enter the interview as a conversation. Every time I looked at my set of interview questions that I had prepared for the IRB application I felt they were stilted and awkward. One study participant who had recently finished her masters in dance even giggled at the idea that this would be a study in how women in the region fight for “social justice.” I began to realize that my idea of social justice might be irrelevant and foreign to the setting. Instead, I found myself beginning almost every interview with the opening phrase “*Isto é uma conversa.*”²⁷I asked interviewees to begin by describing a normal day. Invariably this led to follow up questions about how easy or difficult that typical day might be.

I found one additional question to be a useful way to elicit stories about one’s upbringing and background. I would pose the question “Is there any one person in your life who serves as a model for a woman who has made her way in the world, someone with joy and success?” In that respect study participants enjoyed remembering and telling stories of someone inspiring: a deceased mother or a best friend. I designed the study to follow the model of gathering personal narratives rather than attempting to prove or disprove some social theory about the way women in this community interact with each other.

One additional interview technique I occasionally used that offered a more relaxed, congenial environment for these dialogues was to interview more than one person at a time. In that regard, one person would follow up or clarify what another said. Their friendly style of chatting with each other felt like it offered more genuine thoughts and opinions about their daily lives. The initial interview questions I prepared as part of the IRB approval process remained in the back of my mind and certainly influenced my interview questions that I actually posed, but I did not specifically select

²⁷ This is a conversation.

questions from the script in any of these interviews. The original scripted interview questions are available in an appendix at the end of this dissertation.

Part 4: Fall and Data Analysis

São as águas de março fechando verão.

É promessa de vida no teu coração

– Elis Regina²⁸

When Elis Regina sings of the waters of March and the closing of summer, she sings of the time feeling like “*o fim do caminho, ... um pouco sozinho.*”²⁹ Compared to the social interaction of fieldwork, this might feel true. But in terms of the qualitative methods of grounded theory, this phase feels like the beginning of a process that requires significant diligence and effort to ensure rigor and a determination to reach something closer to the actual “end of the road.”

Autumn is the time of harvesting from the data. It is also the transition from fieldwork into the analytical phase. It can involve feelings of being overwhelmed at the extent and breadth of data. I found it essential to commit diligently to detailed coding practices in order to present the work as being truly rigorous and grounded in



Figure 3: Sorting Codes

²⁸ It's the waters of March, bringing summer to a close. It's the promise of life in your heart.

²⁹ The end of the road, a little alone

the data. This commitment to the process also helped alleviate these feelings as long as I trusted the process of allowing grounded theory to emerge. Through this process I learned that the relationship between tourists and locals remained present, but new themes emerged that offered more complexity to the analysis.

My first step was to transcribe all field notes journals and one of the early interviews conducted in the field. The next step I took was to take the first set of field notes and the interview transcript in order to conduct line-by-line coding of this data, or open coding as it is commonly called in grounded theory. Johnny Saldaña also refers to it as “initial coding” in his 2009 issue of *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. His wording is informed by the work of Kathy Charmaz (2006). He claims “it implies an initiating procedural step in harmony with First Cycle coding processes” (81). This is a crucial step in grounded theory methods. There are various ways in which established researchers have accomplished this in their initial coding. I utilized what Kathy Charmaz describes as the most effective means of coding using actions and processes (ie verbs) to identify “what is going on” rather than using topics or ideas.

Examples of actions taken from the category of tourism include “After the bridge, tourism fell” and “the mayor’s efforts to *resgatar*’ tourism in Itacaré.” These were actions taken directly from field notes *verbatim*. Examples of processes in this same category include “Getting more tourists to Itacaré for World Cup” and “Trying to sell a postcard image” where the gerund form of the verb is used to imply an action still in process. These actions and processes were not always possible. In other instances I utilized in vivo codes, particularly when a phrase was especially telling. Examples from the category of “Power/Structure/Justice” included the action codes “the mayor gives no support” and “he blames the *prefeitura*.” Examples of process codes from this same

category include “Surviving 500 years of oppression” and “making excuses for missed connections.”

After the open coding, I divided the individual codes (printed onto small slips of paper) into literal piles of abstract categories. (See Figure 3.) From the categories I identified four major themes that emerged from the data: group dynamics, perspective, identity, and systems and structures of power. Each of these categories had several sub-categories, resulting in most piles of codes having at least a dozen examples, some even more. From those abstract category names I selected a code from the pile to become the in vivo code name. These code names are outlined in the sample codebook in Appendix E at the end of this dissertation.

Once these main categories were established, I conducted a second process. Saldaña categorizes many of these phases as “second cycle” (46). My process included the phase Charmaz refers to as “focused coding” (46). In this phase, categories that emerged as part of the first cycle of coding became my themes for second cycle or focused coding. Charmaz refers to this step as a means of “using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data” (57). Using the categories established from the initial coding and sorting phase, I coded two additional field note journals and ten additional interviews according to the established categories and subcategories. For a complete listing of categories and subcategories, see Appendix D.

I conducted this second phase of coding utilizing the MAXQDA data analysis software, which aids in the sorting and organizing of the researcher’s data coded in the initial phase of coding. The established categories were entered into the software; the transcriptions of the field notes journals were imported; and the audio from interviews was imported. I coded the text documents by highlighting sections that seemed relevant

to an established code and assigned the code. The highlighted section was saved in the software program with its highlighted text. For audio files, I highlighted the relevant audio section and added into a comments screen the words spoken that were relevant to the assigned category. This made it possible to export codes from both text-based files and audio files. The screen shot below shows a sample of extracting all incidents of the code “perspective” and being able to see them in one visual space and track recurring themes.

Comment	Docum.	Document name	Code	Begin	End	Weig.	Preview
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	345	345	0	I had noticed M and was trying to avoid being in too close prox
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	369	369	0	"Quem disse que é assim" - reminds me of something I've been cu
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	372	372	0	However, even so, we all come to the table with our own pasts,
Segundo eles, lá do meio, veio uma ordem do chefe do presídio lá e...		Angela	Perspective	00:13:30.9	00:13:38.7	0	<AUDIO>
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	406	406	0	He questioned the phrase "uma quase-comédia sobre violência dom
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	408	408	0	"Tu acho que 99 ... 90K das mulheres daqui gostam da violência."
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	444	444	0	Paula said she used to teach Samba and Forro. She said they use
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	447	447	0	I also mentioned it's not really useful to go to the opposite e
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	449	449	0	He apparently told Hannah it was wrong for me to try to do the
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	451	451	0	As we were waiting for the taxi, he was saying "Nothing is a co
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	467	467	0	She got upset and took her mother's extension cord that was in
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	502	502	0	Apparently tonight is the night for a full moon that is rich w
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	506	506	0	The third thing I sort of let her take. I left the speaker in t
		Field Notes Journal T...	Perspective	508	508	0	But for her the "business only" demeanor was (I think) the thi
Tem umas dúvidas dentro da comunidade. Tem algumas que quere...		Venusya	Perspective	00:09:07.3	00:09:12.5	0	<AUDIO>
Mesmo eles gostando, eles vão dizer que não.		Venusya	Perspective	00:12:32.6	00:12:36.1	0	<AUDIO>
São estratégicas que o festival colocou, que sem dizer, so em circular...		Venusya	Perspective	00:18:04.5	00:18:17.8	0	<AUDIO>
A gente viu que dá para fazer coisa super simples com potencial mui...		Venusya	Perspective	00:19:57.5	00:20:08.6	0	<AUDIO>
O ponto de trás não viu a da passagem, o da passagem não viu o de...		Venusya	Perspective	00:21:25.8	00:21:31.4	0	<AUDIO>
Mas ... o receber da presente e toda problematica da discussão, isso fo...		Venusya	Perspective	00:21:32.5	00:21:43.8	0	<AUDIO>
Ela vive uma realidade totalmente diferente porque ela trabalha no		Venusya	Perspective	00:23:25.0	00:23:29.5	0	<AUDIO>
Então ela ve outras coisas , ela percebe outras coisas então ela tem e...		Venusya	Perspective	00:23:31.1	00:23:37.7	0	<AUDIO>
conforto...		Venusya	Perspective	00:25:17.4	00:25:22.3	0	<AUDIO>
Eles gostam daquele espaço, se orgulham daquele espaço, eles não t...		Venusya	Perspective	00:25:23.0	00:25:34.6	0	<AUDIO>
		Venusya	Perspective	00:35:07.9	00:35:21.6	0	<AUDIO>
Me deu uma noção de pertencimento. eu e minhas irmas eram as un...		Venusya	Perspective	00:38:20.6	00:38:26.5	0	<AUDIO>
Eu to vendo que o festival tem uma potencial muito grande de propo...		Venusya	Perspective	00:42:32.8	00:42:43.9	0	<AUDIO>
Para onde que vou agora? Não sei		Venusya	Perspective	00:43:46.0	00:43:50.1	0	<AUDIO>
Eu eu fico nesses dois ... nessa estabilidade e ... ne?		Venusya	Perspective	00:44:21.9	00:44:26.5	0	<AUDIO>
que que a gente fez e porque? ne? a gente fica naquilo.		Paulinha	Perspective	00:00:46.5	00:00:50.7	0	<AUDIO>
Eu gosto muito de escrever. Então eu comecei a cantar, na verdade f...		Paulinha	Perspective	00:00:51.0	00:01:00.8	0	<AUDIO>
Acho que meu mal foi de acreditar, que podia mudar, que eu não pô...		Paulinha	Perspective	00:05:38.1	00:05:52.1	0	<AUDIO>
eu não vi as traíções, eu não vi humilhação...		Paulinha	Perspective	00:06:46.4	00:06:50.3	0	<AUDIO>
Como esse homem conseguiu matar o meu. e com certeza mataou par...		Paulinha	Perspective	00:07:44.7	00:07:54.7	0	<AUDIO>

Figure 4: MAXQDA Software Screenshot

Each time I finished coding a new document I exported a codebook into a spreadsheet to see where additional patterns might be emerging. I also periodically used the “Code Relations Browser” function of the data analysis software to see where there might be co-occurrence of codes and categories that hadn’t occurred to me from earlier passes at data analysis. At the same time I was doing this thematic focused coding, I was defining each category with properties and assigning dimensionality to them. These

dimensions were then used to conduct a modified axial mapping analysis of the main categories. The main categories that emerged from this method included: “group dynamics,” “perspective,” “identity,” and systems/structures of power.” Subcategories are listed in the appendix at the end of this dissertation.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) define axial mapping as “a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories” (96). While Strauss and Corbin delineate a specific series of questions to pose of the data (questions about the conditions in which a particular phenomenon occurred, why, how, and where) Charmaz indicates that their concept of axial mapping can be adapted or modified to fit the needs of the study. In her case, she used it to understand the relationships between categories and subcategories (61). My process was to identify properties and dimensions of each category. Once I had dimensions and properties for these main categories, I sketched a map of how they might

be related. This was an intuitive process based on the patterns that emerged from the first two phases of coding and based on my own instincts and impressions. (See Figures 5, 6 and 7.)

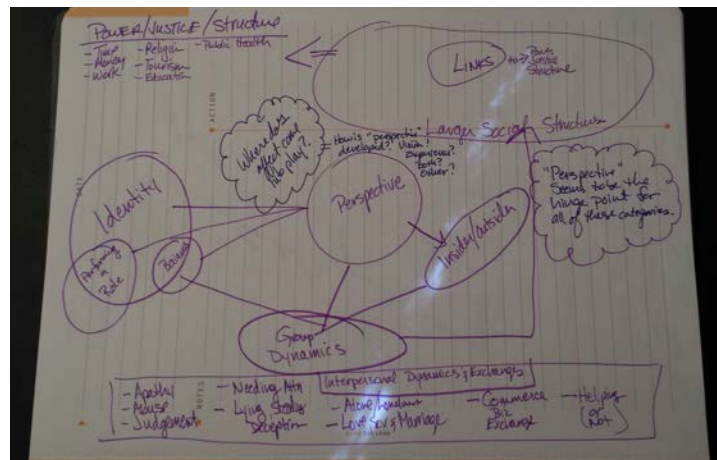


Figure 5: Axial Mapping of Emergent Themes

Axial Mapping of PERSPECTIVE

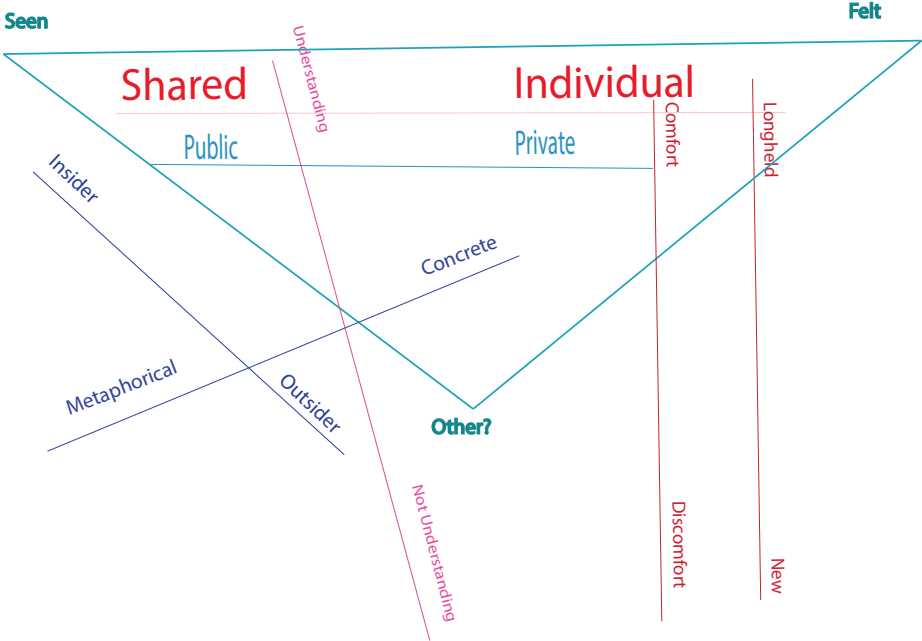


Figure 6: Axial Mapping of Perspective

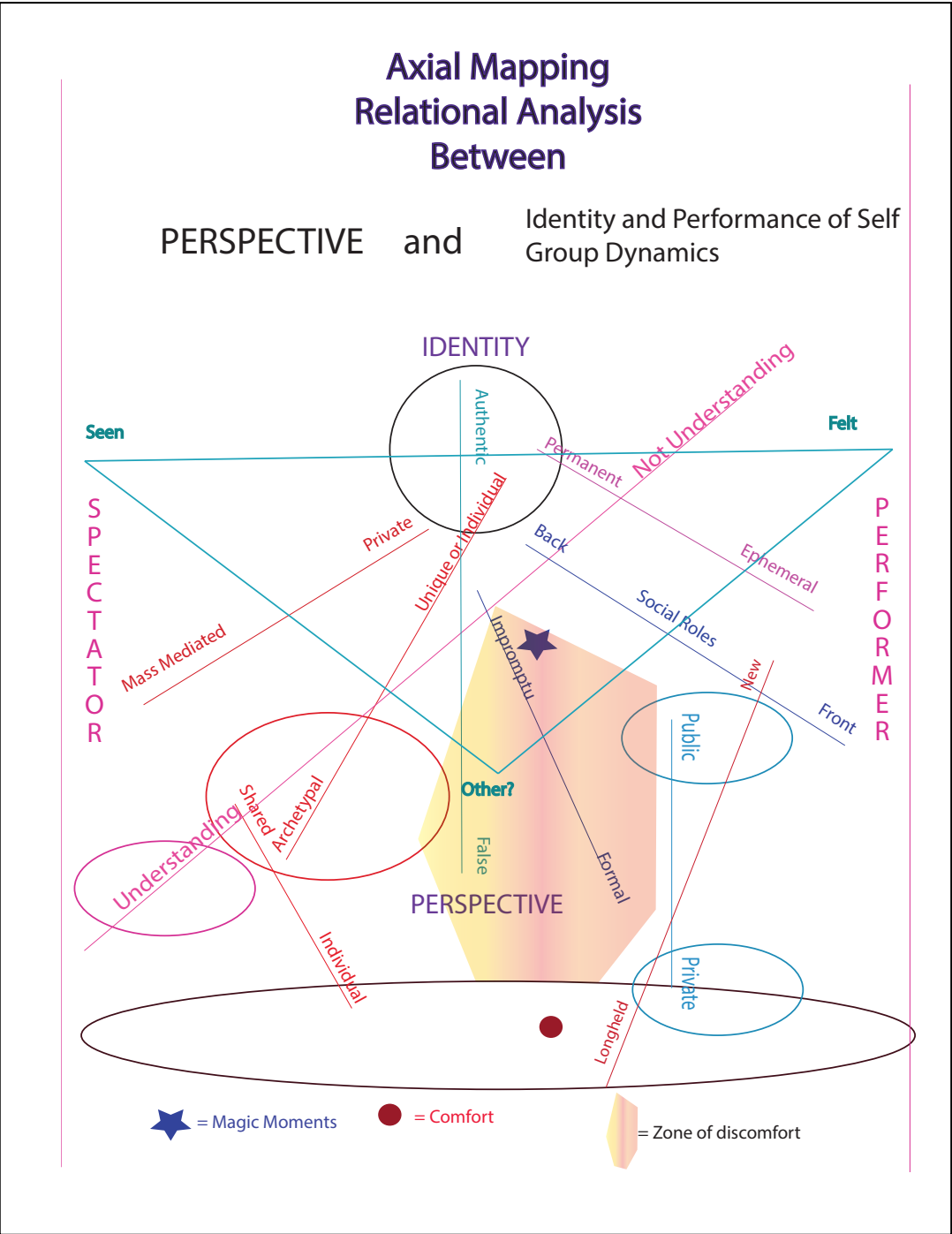


Figure 7: Axial Mapping of Perspective and Other Themes

Part 5: Winter and Reporting Insights

Now is the winter of our discontent

Made glorious summer by this son of York

– William Shakespeare

When Richard III opens Shakespeare's play with this comment, the underlying assumption is that winter will eventually be replaced by another season of summer. However, it is necessary to pass through this phase of stillness and order to reach the next cycle of seasons. Winter is the time of incubation, retreat and the integration of the findings into the written ethnographic tale. In de la Garza's methodology, winter is the time for writing the ethnography, allowing the creative expressions of the ethnography to incubate, and for the ever-important but often forgotten, rest. In my process, this period offered some significant challenges, but also profound rewards.

One aspect of this phase that proved challenging was the task of "finding a metaphor" through which to express the analytical findings. I use that phrase in scare quotes to call attention to the fact that metaphors can be tricky propositions. Linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, in their book *Metaphors We Live By*, indicate as much when they explain that metaphors are neither neutral nor universal. One use of metaphor they identify as being specific to Western culture is the metaphor of time.

Corresponding to the fact that we *act* as if time is a valuable commodity – a limited resource, even money – we *conceive* of time that way. Thus we understand and experience time as the kind of thing that can be spent, wasted, budgeted, invested wisely or poorly, saved, or squandered. [...] This isn't a necessary way for human beings to conceptualize time; it is tied to our culture. There are cultures where time is none of these things (Kindle Locator 186 of 4617).

The use of a metaphor without cultural connections to the population being studied will, most likely, be of little use or impact. And in fact, in many cases, the use of a metaphor at all can be so distracting from the content that it proves to be counter-productive.

I engaged in a brainstorming session to consider potential metaphors for the ideas that were emerging as part of the grounded theory methods of analysis I was using. I examined the layers of meaning of each of the potential metaphors. This was done in order to determine if the possible concept has validity in useful ways. This is also a way to ensure that the possible metaphor does not prove contradictory to the data being analyzed.

I started with the idea of hinge points of perception because so many instances in the data emerged as points in time when a person's perspective shifted. Once I realized that the hinge serves only a two-dimensional model of analysis, I came to the conclusion a different conceptual metaphor was needed. I knew that mirror reflection was an over-used metaphor loaded with too many other interpretations. I posed the question "What if the mirror were cracked or broken? Wouldn't you be seeing a refraction instead of a reflection?" It took a few days of research to be sure that the metaphor was not being misused. But after I understood how refraction is used in physics and how it can result in distortions to perception and even illusions, the metaphor of refraction stuck. Even the axial mapping I conducted seemed to lend itself to refraction as a metaphor (see images 6 and 7).

Part of winter's process involves moving forward with an ethical awareness of how the writing of these stories can affect the persons about whom the stories are told. The isolation of winter runs the risk of becoming too egocentric in the processing of information, particularly after such socially engaged fieldwork. For me, this has been an especially difficult challenge because of the deeply personal lessons fieldwork presented

to me. Some of the stories were shared generously and openly with me. And for those individuals, I am hopeful that when I return to Itacaré to share some of the findings of this research, they will be pleased with the outcome. My main intention is to consult with members of the community to ensure their tales are being narrated in an acceptable way. My second objective is to share with them how the gift of refraction that I received as part of this process might be a way of honoring the exchange of experiences we shared together during fieldwork.

The stories that happened to me, and with me, the ones that challenged me deeply, the ones involving people who were closest to me but who were not official study participants, those lessons had to be dealt with as part of a process of deep critical reflection and creative activity. While certainly every story that was shared with me needs to be handled with care, the creative fictionalizing of some of the most disturbing and painful experiences I had has to be handled with even more care, in order to protect the identities of those who might consider these stories too personal to them. Part of the method for moving through this phase includes engaging in the kinds of deeply critical reflections so common in the spring. After all, de la Garza reminds us that winter is actually a transition into the next spring.

I engaged in regular and deeply critical journaling about the experiences I had before, during, and after fieldwork. I augmented this journaling practice by learning stories of the mythologies of the Orixás. Mistakes the Orixás made and resulting lessons they learned, through which they became divine, offered me a way to reflect on my own mistakes in a manner that reduced harsh-self-judgment and guilt and delineated a pathway that was couched in a kind of comfort that I had not previously imagined. The comfort I found lay in knowing that mistakes are necessarily part of the growth process. In a sense, these moments in the mythology serve as a kind of Aristotelian *anagnorisis*

for the Orixá. But for the Orixás, the tragedy becomes, not just a moment of recognition, but a pathway to divinity. By learning their stories, I become a spectator witnessing the tragic mistake, which, in turn, also offers me a moment of self-forgiveness. If I remember that participation and observation do not exist on a binary scale, I can acknowledge that the observation of these tales, and the affective response to them, can offer a glimpse into deeper insights about the ways we engage with our performance of self in everyday life.

One example of this phenomenon happened when I went to visit the *terreiro* where my colleague in the Kàwé research group was conducting her research on healing practices in Candomblé. One of the initiates at the *terreiro* asked me if I was interested in having a consultation with the *mãe de santo* that day. I have been offered these opportunities so rarely that I generally pursue them when the opportunity arises. The *terreiro* functions on the basis of exchanges of energy, they told me there would need to be *uma troca*. I understand these as a kind of karmic payment for the spiritual work of the *terreiro*. I was told what the standard rate was for this energetic exchange. The cost was a little “saltier” than I had imagined but we negotiated a price and I stayed for the consultation.

The *mãe de santo* told me that, yes, most probably, I was a daughter of Iansã with Obá. Then she framed all of my counsel around lessons that related to the stories of Iansã. The story of Iansã that resonated most deeply with me that day was the warning that Iansã tends to be a bit of a blabbermouth. She speaks without carefully considering her words and generally says too much. For this reason, she told me I needed to be careful to watch my tongue when provoked. I thought back to all the hundreds of times in my life I have allowed knee-jerk reactions to dominate my interactions with other people,

in particular people who provoke my anger. I have been told “*Sua lingua é uma faca!*”³⁰ And I imagined how harshly my words spoken (or written) too impetuously might hurt the person who hears or reads them. I, of course, have known for most of my life that one must think before speaking. And perhaps because this lesson was learned early in life, I have repeatedly judged myself harshly when I forget the rule. But what this consultation with the *mãe de santo* in Ilhéus Bahia did for me that day was to help me understand that tendency in a different way. I now understand that, because I am most likely a person who holds traits similar to the Orixá, Iansã, (including her faults) I can consider those to be a tendency that must be taken into account. Taking that archetypal character trait into account allows me to process it less as “one more thing in a long list of moral transgressions I must avoid” and instead, as more of a natural tendency that has to be handled differently than an ordinary person. I consider it quite personally. I consider that this aspect of my personal character, more than most, requires extra care and attention.

It is perhaps fitting that my “winter” of writing requires that I reflect on how my words will be received. De la Garza indicates exactly this in her essay. “The very act of recording in writing the essence of culture changes it to something it is not. It freezes it. And the possible deathly consequences of winter’s deep freezes are excellent metaphors for the costs of careless writing” (645). Winter also holds the danger of a different kind of freezing up: writer’s block. In my research I found the most effective way to work through moments where doubt nearly seized up the writing process, was to channel the stories most difficult to tell into creative expressions tapping into the iconography of the Candomblé myths. In this way, I can weave lessons I learned with phenomena I observed and stories shared with me. It is my sincere hope that the writing I share as a

³⁰ Your tongue is a knife!

result of this research can transform the winter of my discontent and the associated anxieties into a new summer of harvest and the next phase of research.

Part 6: The Dynamic Locus Of Creativity

As a creative researcher (playwright, performer, theatre maker, singer, songwriter and scholar-practitioner) I am still developing my own methods I can articulate as arts-based research or performance-based research. These are only two of a number of labels the field is currently using to refer to practices rooted in both qualitative research and the creative arts. One of my advisors recently asked me if my flavor of performance ethnography was more performance with an ethnographic influence or ethnography with performance aspects. This is a difficult question for me. If I emphasize the performance and only consider the ethnographic data to be an influence on the performance, it feels somehow incomplete. If I privilege or emphasize the ethnography and merely use performance as a way to present or express the data findings, this also feels somehow inadequate.

In order to emphasize the process of the people involved in this study, and in order not to shift the emphasis to my own experience, I opted not to include personal or intimate comments in the coding process for this dissertation. And yet, the lessons I learned most profoundly were steeped in the kinds of difficulties I felt on a personal level and involving the people with whom I was most intimate – the people who most need their privacy to be protected as part of this work. As I conducted coding and analysis of the data, of the comments made by interview subjects, of the observations in the field of others with whom I had less intimate encounters, I realized that the personal lessons are deeply implicated in the fieldwork experience. In order to best channel my own impulses, I responded to these urges with creative writing. I felt very strongly that the call to write creatively about the personal lessons could not be ignored and truly should

not be separated from the process of conducting research. However, I do not mean to equate my own subjective experience with that of the individuals who shared their lives with me.

The critical self-reflection practices I have learned offer important strategies for something beyond acknowledging an awareness of my subject position. They encompass a process of autoethnography that, for my own work and methodology, must be considered as part of a holistic process for fostering understanding. By considering my own critical self reflection and creative work I am then able to examine that process and gain insights that are less likely to surface if I focus on a first person narrative of my experience in the field.

I engaged in the preparation for this process by conducting my own critical autoethnography. As part of this preparation I developed the solo performance “How not to Make Love to a Woman,” which I presented in Itacaré as part of my fieldwork. The performance piece was in development for several years. In the two years leading up to fieldwork I brought the piece into three different graduate seminar workshops for further development: Visual Ethnography, with Dr. Eric Margolis, and Critical and Postcolonial Autoethnographic Methods, and Critical Self-Reflection as Method with Dr. de la Garza. This process involved digging into my own assumptions and narratives to expose vulnerabilities in myself. These vulnerabilities I then staged as a “critical vulnerabilities.”³¹ But the crucial part of this is exposing these vulnerabilities for a directed purpose. It is not enough to claim vulnerability as part of some self-congratulatory egocentric need for attention and sympathy. In fact, I question those motives harshly. That kind of self-indulgence will most likely result in alienating the

³¹ I first heard this term in a call for proposals for a special journal issue on “Risky Aesthetics” in which performed vulnerability elicits some kind of attitudinal shift. I later learned the term is used in military discourse to describe the opportunities in which an enemy might have spaces that, if penetrated, would result in certain victory for the attacker. The tension between these two meanings can be productive if we consider the very real possibilities implied in true vulnerability.

audience most in need of engaging with the material. My autoethnography is a process that reduces the emphasis on merely telling my story, but emphasizes the need to reflect on my story and question it in order to gain new insights.

In the case of “How not to Make Love to a Woman,” I felt the need to understand through performance the ways vulnerability engages the potential for dynamic interchange between performer and spectator. I deliberately proposed a performed critical vulnerability intended to elicit an affective response in the spectators. As the performance space opens, spectators enter to see a nude female body (mine) on the ground with the words “shame,” “guilt,” “victim,” and “survivor” written across the torso and thighs. This image is contrasted with a light-hearted musical soundtrack and a somewhat sardonic voiceover speaking of a series of incidents in the storyteller’s world that may have contributed to the result that she (I) found herself in the position of victim. In the middle of these stories told over the soundtrack, words projected onscreen counter the narratives with critical questions and demand that the audience help her shave her head.

For the performer, this head-shaving is a necessary ritual for cleansing and healing. For some audience members, participating in this head-shaving felt like they were continuing the violation of the prostrate female body. One of my collaborators, in preparation for the performance in Itacaré asked “don’t you think you are implicating the audience with this gesture?” Yes, as a matter of fact I am. In this community, as in many others, domestic violence and violence against women are taboo topics. A direct and overt approach to dialogue often results in literal and proverbial doors slamming in one’s face. I believe that this potential for a subtle attitudinal shift can offer smaller, more palatable entries into dialogue for this topic, which has proven to be so difficult to approach.

One audience member indicated the ludic manner of presenting this difficult topic opened up new possibilities for her to re-consider past events in her life in a way that helped her move past them with a healthy outlook for the future. She appreciated that the piece performance offered critical questions about the topic with no rancor or bitterness. Another audience member indicated that she has heard from other members of the community that the piece effectively offered an invitation to dialogue that promised to be productive for the community.

The moment in which I felt the most striking feeling of tension between myself and the spectators was at the moment during the introduction where I have waited for the audience to begin shaving my head. Initially I had asked a trusted friend (Monza) to be on stand-by to model the desired behavior for the audience in case no one was willing to come forth. However, because the performance space has no solid walls, he noticed that children from the community were peeking through the spaces between the wall frame to sneak a peek at “the naked woman.” I had left the decision up to the community to determine if they wanted to set an age limit for the performance. After speaking with four women I considered to be leaders in the community, explaining to them the content and the fact that there would be nudity, they determined that they would not permit children under the age of 11 to attend the performance. These very same children were the ones I had been working with for a few weeks on creative expression through poetry and movement. Apparently the curiosity of seeing their teacher nude was too much to resist. So Monza felt compelled to scold the children and shoo them away at exactly the moment during the introduction where the head shaving should have begun.

Because the performance is timed out specifically according to a preset audio and video file, I knew at a certain point that the shaving needed to begin if it were to be

complete before beginning the next scene. Monza was nowhere to be found. I sat up, delicately grabbed the clippers, turned slowly to face the audience and held the clippers up in a gesture that both offered the clippers and begged for help. The first person to come forward was one of my study participants, someone I knew fairly well. Upon reviewing the footage of the performance I saw that only people with whom I already had an established working relationship came forward to assist with the head-shaving. This hints to comments I have received in performances in the US as well that people who do not know me have a difficult time accepting that the head-shaving could be a positive experience for me in the way it was staged.

In the case of the personal lessons I learned in the field, I realized I am always seeking opportunities in my creative writing to construct provocations in order to elicit an affective response. In a meeting with my advisor we began conceptualizing a way of articulating this in terms of qualitative research that is specifically rooted in the arts. De la Garza asserts:

It is in the iterative and comparative process between the conscious autoethnographic analysis and the formal intended ethnographic/qualitative analysis that, as in a symbolic interactionist process, a new intersubjective interpretation arises. That new intersubjective interpretation allows for visioning, explaining, imagining, and articulating new and creative ways to frame and represent the phenomenon of interest or concern” (de la Garza, Personal conversation, 2014).

This process can be identified as a relational navigation between what we might call four axes. Perhaps because her methodologies are based in an indigenous ontology, in our

conversation de la Garza proposed that a compass with four directions be used to visualize this model.

On one axis, the opposing directions can be viewed as two aspects of what Glaser and Strauss call theoretical sensitivity (42-43). “Tacit knowledge,” as adopted from Michael Polanyi’s contributions to social science, indicates that the researcher as human instrument has personal knowledge, feelings and experiences, which deeply influence research. Glaser and Strauss further describe these forms of tacit knowledge as “personal experience” and categorize it as a form of theoretical sensitivity (43). An additional mode of theoretical sensitivity that Glaser and Strauss describe that comes into this oppositional set of axes is theoretical sensitivity to established literature in the field of research activity. In this case, we have the axis of theoretical sensitivity defined by the polarity between tacit or personal knowledge and theoretical knowledge of the field.

The second axis can be viewed as the opposition of an open and adaptive creative process and rigorous adherence to predetermined methods. These methods, to which I adhered as diligently as possible, included: (1) regular journaling of observations in the field and critical self-reflections; (2) diligent coding practices to ensure that concepts emerge from the data; and (3) constant return to notes, codes and data to keep the possibility open for ideas to present themselves that might have gone unnoticed in previous passes at analysis. At the center of this map, amid the tension and contradictions of these four aspects of the work, lies what we are calling the dynamic locus of creativity (de la Garza, Personal conversation, 2014).

For my own creative practice, the formation of this direction of the compass requires an adaptive structure to help foster the initial seeds of creativity. This is where the subconscious often needs to express itself. Often I don’t realize where or how the

creative aspects interact with the data until after initial phases of brainstorming have passed. However, the creative process requires just as much diligence as the rigorous methodology. In the case of my work, the creative process has been the channeling of personal impressions, responses, and free-writing. These moments often arise when I am feeling most “stuck” in the process, be it the process of conducting fieldwork or the analysis of data or the writing stage. These creative writings became a way of responding to the data that is difficult to encounter in established methods of qualitative analysis. And yet, each time I go back and re-read the material written from this mental space, I see that there are reflections of the data woven throughout. Because this creative activity has been supported with the rigorous adherence to established methods, the creative expression resulting from this dissertation has the support of a theoretical framework rooted in grounded theory.

This practice also incorporates an aspect of the work and of the critical self-reflection that de la Garza teaches as necessary for any researcher to help ensure personal biases and blind spots do not dominate the data analysis: the practice of acknowledging Jungian shadow aspects of ourselves. In my own practice, I utilize the creative process to metaphorically exorcize the shadow aspects of self to allow them a “safe” space to express themselves, while at the same time including them as part of the process so that the final performance results in a nuanced and complex interpretation of the phenomenon. In implicating my own shadow aspects, I might also find a way to reflect back to audiences where their own blind spots might have precluded them from arriving at points of understanding between themselves and others. If I have done my work well, these moments of the recognition of one’s own blind spots might become what I call opportunities for refraction.

For the performance ethnography resulting from this research project, the broad topic will explore the realities of intercultural encounters. The more specific lessons will revolve around the possibilities for engaging in tourist activities with a clearer awareness of tourist privilege and an attitudinal shift that might result in more responsible tourist practices in intercultural settings, in general, and in Bahia, Brazil, in particular. The main objective for this performance piece will be to create an impetus for people from the so-called first world or from dominant groups to understand, from a non-dominant perspective, how their actions and behaviors might be perceived. The autumn and winter of my process include a crucial step: allowing time and space for creative brainstorming to navigate the relationship between the diligent research practices rooted in qualitative inquiry and the creative writing practices rooted in a desire to challenge the audience's own perspectives.

The script currently in development for this performance ethnography does not reside conveniently in the models presented to me: a performance with ethnographic influence or an ethnography with performance elements. Perhaps I should be labeling this work "performative ethnography" in the sense that the research and performance themselves seek to perform an act onto the spectator or reader, and to a certain extent, even the writer. My hope, if I have done my work effectively, is to stage the performance as a catalyst for the beginning stages of a process of refraction for the audience. The intention to elicit an affective response and, in turn, an attitudinal shift requires something outside of traditional conceptualizations of performance ethnography. Traditional performance ethnography seeks to enact the experiences of those considered to be cultural others, as a means of offering something beyond the typically dry written ethnographic text. There is certainly some validity to this manner of representing data findings gathered through participant observation. However, this is not merely a sharing

of information through performance. I am proposing a performance of a very deliberate tension between the data gathered and the embodiment of my own lens. The critical reflections and subsequent refraction I experienced become material for exposing my own shortcomings in order to elicit a response in the audience that acknowledges the potential for all of us as spectators or observers for these kinds of shortcomings.

I learned an important lesson years ago from one of my mentors. She cautioned me to be wary of feeling like I “know” anything with certainty, particularly when it comes to concepts relating to Candomblé and other ritual-based religions. A respect for the vastness of the mysteries relating to cosmology and religion is necessary for a respectful approach to this work. This was a humbling lesson to learn because I have historically been someone who doesn’t always take the time to pause and reflect about whether or not I am deserving of having my questions answered. I hope that my audiences can come away with more questions than answers after seeing the performance that results from this dissertation research. When I have staged the performance of “How not to Make Love to a Woman” and members of the audience have come forward to shave my head, they became co-creators of an act of intimacy, an act of critical vulnerability. The performance project that will result from this dissertation research will need to offer a similar performed encounter for there to be a resulting shift in perspective for potential audiences. Because the piece is still in progress it is difficult to articulate exactly how these moments will be constructed. I believe that they will be directly linked to my continued exploration of refraction as an epistemology for my research and creative work.

CHAPTER 4

REFRACTION AS A HERMENEUTIC TOOL IN THE TERRA DO EXÚ

Part 1: O Jogo do Exú, Malandros e Mentirosos, and Hermes

Zé Pilintra! I hope you catch my name.

But what's puzzling you is the nature of my game.

*I danced with glee to the samba beat, and sang your songs of protest in
the street*

I shouted out "who killed ZUMBI?" when after all it was you and me!

*I sang like a goddamned troubadour, was it blackface blues or was it
real?*

And when I sang about Insensatez, I felt your eyes say "How does it feel?"

Pomba Gira! Did you catch her name, tell me did you?

But what's puzzling you is the jogo do Exú.

Just as every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints,

*You can call me Lucifer, or the devil too, but I'm really just a reflection of
you!*

-Porter, excerpt from a work-in-progress

(and a riff off the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil")

Throughout this chapter I will be explaining how the concept of refraction emerged from the fieldwork of this ethnography. I will do so by weaving examples from the data with arguments gathered from theoretical sensitivities that emerged through constant comparison of the data during all phases of the research. As in any Candomblé ritual, it is important first to *saudar Exú*³². In Candomblé mythology, Exú is the Orixá who presides over the crossroads. He is considered the Orixá of communication and is

³² Pay homage to the Orixá, Exú.

often cited as the trickster figure in the Yoruba pantheon. Without an offering to Exú, no communication happens. Without an offering to him, Exú may become offended and place obstacles in one's pathway. For this reason I begin with Exú, syncretized with the Catholic devil, and also associated with the Greek God, Hermes, the etymological source of the word hermeneutics.

In one meeting with the research group in Ilhéus where I was a member, one professor commented that she had recently heard a quote: "*Não tem nada mais verdade de ser falso com quem está falso conosco.*"³³ On that particular day the group's founder, Ruy do Carmo Póvoas, was present and immediately chimed in with "oh that's the *jogo do Exu.*" My understanding of this *jogo* revolves around the fact that Exú is often referred to as the trickster archetype in Candomblé. Póvoas speaks about Exú as a *brincalhão* (playful joker). He describes him as young, malicious, and morally ambiguous. But an important qualification of those descriptors lies in the way Póvoas claims he is "*tão ambiguo quanto os humanos*"³⁴ (Póvoas 243). His dual nature and his ambiguity and ambivalence are exactly what have linked him to the idea of *mentiroso* (liar). Because Exú has this dual nature, he can speak lies and truths at the same time.

One of the facets of Exú's image and interpretation that can be problematic and must be understood with a nuanced and non-judgmental approach is the syncretism of Exú with the Catholic devil. Póvoas describes how the fear of Exú can be linked directly to the ways Catholic colonization of the African continent maligned the figure of Exú and linked him to the devil in a misunderstanding which attributes him with the qualities of being pure evil. While in some cases, I have been told by Candomblé initiates that this

³³ There is nothing more true than being false with someone who is false with us.

³⁴ Just as ambiguous as humans

relationship has “*nada a ver*”³⁵ with common perceptions of the devil, the history of this syncretism has very real effects on members of the local community. I observed several instances where local residents who were not Candomblé initiates expressed fear at the sight of remnants of an offering at the crossroads. Some even referred to ritual *trabalhos* (works) as devil worship.

In casual conversation, one woman I met described an incident where she happened upon some cigarettes in the road. She thought to herself that she may as well grab them as there was no sense letting them go to waste. It was her son who noticed that the cigarettes had been placed strategically in a circular shape on the ground. “*Mãe, acho melhor você não pegar*”³⁶ he said. When she saw the pattern and how they were left with other typical offerings for Exú, she apologized out loud. “*Me desculpe! Não sabia que já tinha dono*”³⁷ and went about her day.

Póvoas asserts in his book that Exú has been solicited over the centuries for help as a protector. In one of our meetings of the Kàwé research group, he also talked about how “of course” there have been and still are “*despachos nos encruzamentos!*”³⁸ He said “How else could we have survived 500 years of oppression? We resisted. We resisted! (Field Notes, 2014).” He also explains that Nagô philosophy demands something in trade for every ritual *trabalho* (ritual work) requested. In the Umbanda religion this is often interpreted as a kind of karma: karma that might demand payback in this lifetime or might wait until the next lifetime.

Interestingly, Porfírio, a self-identified *Quilombo* descendent and trans woman, insisted that slaves did not originally do these kinds of ritual *trabalhos* when they were

³⁵ Nothing to do

³⁶ Mom, I think you’re better not take those.

³⁷ Pardon me! I didn’t know these belonged to someone else.

³⁸ Offerings at the crossroads.

brought over. Rather, she insisted that it was white people, who learned of the power of ritual practices, who began to insist that works could be done to harm others or to benefit themselves. In her interview she displayed the strongest posture of social resistance of all the study participants. Her complaints of corruption in local politics were pointed and firm. Her criticism of the ways tourists arrive, dirty the beaches, and then leave without even a shred of interest in the local culture was unapologetic. She was also one of the most adamant voices in my study in her insistence that common misconceptions about Candomblé be dispelled.

An important subcategory that emerged from this study I have identified with the in vivo code “*mentirosa*.” This word literally translates as “female liar.” But I am using the word to indicate a more open interpretation to include a variety of deceptive practices and comments about the ways other people tell lies or deliberately reveal only partial truths in an act of deception. This also encompasses the times people used the word “*malandro*” or “*malandra*.” Sometimes this word is used to describe someone who steals something from someone else. But this word was used in a sense different from *ladrão*, a person who literally robs someone. In my observations and conversations this word *malandro/a* was most often used to indicate someone who was known, and perhaps someone ostensibly trustworthy or of confidence, who uses his or her familiarity or position to exploit a person or situation for personal gain. What I found most intriguing about this was that quite often, accusations of being a *malandro* tended to be aimed in both directions. The very person called “*malandra*” by one person, complained about the same thing in others. This moment of realization helped me to grasp that these kinds of disconnects in logic imply that the idea of deception might be viewed differently if it is considered as rather a different perspective on the same issue. I sensed that something different might be at play beyond the simple idea of lying.

This category became especially interesting to me for a variety of reasons. One of those reasons had to do directly with the methods of critical self-reflection I utilized in preparation and during fieldwork. Having learned that lying happens to be a personal trigger for me, I approached any instance of lying, dishonesty, or deception with a deliberate awareness that I have the potential to respond irrationally and took efforts to stand back and observe in order to better learn from the situation. Without the awareness of my trigger and the deliberate accounting for it, I might have missed the opportunity to see this new possibility. Even worse, I might have allowed the instances of deception to trigger me emotionally in a way that would be unproductive for the research. In this sense I was able to both reflect on the situation and see how the refraction in my perception might have distorted my perception of the phenomenon.

I define refraction as an opportunity to recognize (re-cognize) moments of doubt, uncertainty, or discomfort and view them from different vantage points in order to come to new understandings of a particular situation. Effectively, this becomes a moment when, in real life, the anagnorisis of ancient Greek tragedy offers a way to reprocess what we think and believe about a particular situation, especially one that causes deep uncertainty, and see things differently. At the extreme end of the scale, a person might deliberately blind himself upon realizing that he had unwittingly killed his own father and married his own mother. For Oedipus, the moment of re-cognizing his life experience resulted in a discomfort or unease so severe that only by gouging out his eyes could he process the realization that his perspective had been so deeply distorted. This severe and tragic example need not be the benchmark for the process of refraction to be useful. Developing a sensitivity to subtle moments of discomfort or unease can assist in establishing skills for using those moments as hermeneutic tools for understanding and interpreting life as it presents itself on the proverbial stage of life.

The etymology of the word hermeneutics comes from the Greek for “interpret.” The world also pays homage to Hermes, the messenger of the Gods. Jean Grondin, philosophy professor and specialist in hermeneutics and phenomenology, explains that the origins of hermeneutics are related to the art of interpretation, including translation and rhetoric, but more specifically to religion or theology (22). While Grondin acknowledges that the links to Hermes are not indisputable, philosophy professor David Couzens Hoy describes how “Hermes, the God who invented language and speech, could be called interpreter or messenger but also thief, liar, or contriver” (1). This story of Hermes and his etymological links to hermeneutics open up possibilities for application in this context when compared to the ways Exú can offer lessons for interpreting and understanding the world around us in ways that emphasize the experiential aspects of the process of coming to know things as true.

Hoy describes how Hermes would guide humans on the path to the underworld at death, indicating that the medium would, indeed, be the messenger. This parallels stories I have heard from Candomblé initiates who indicated that when they had veered off from what they came to understand as their destined paths, Exú would be the messenger to send challenges or difficulties to make the lesson felt most profoundly. One story I heard from a member of the *terreiro* I visited in Salvador in 2008 explained: “*Exú me pegou.*”³⁹ He described how he went through a period where his family believed he was suffering from mental illness and nearly had him committed. This, he later learned, was the message that he was to leave his life dedicated to the Catholic Church and begin a life dedicated to cultivating the Orixás.

These examples where messages are believed to be sent from a divine realm parallel some of the stories I heard from women in this community during this study

³⁹ Exú had gotten hold of me.

who indicated that when they most needed it, a message came sent from God. In one case, Elidalva, a single mother and restaurant worker in town, claimed “*Deus me mandou um juiz.*” God sent her a judge to understand her rights as a domestic worker. Paula, a single mother who works for a resort and teaches dance, claimed that it was only through her faith in God that she was able to overcome a deep depression from a failed marriage and subsequent miscarriage. I believe the impulses to explain these kinds of experiences as profound messages from a divine realm indicate the importance of the affective response to difficult phenomenon. This felt and often mysterious sense of unknowing, confusion or uncertainty indicates an opportunity for refraction in order to shift one’s perception.

Part 2: Ibeji, Mirror Reflections, and Carurú

Part of my story is about the twins.

Twins separated by a lifetime and a continent and ... a few centuries.

She didn’t want them. Oxum.

She didn’t want her babies because she was too vain. She cast them off.

Iansã was desperate for children.

Perhaps all the battles she had fought left her womb too dry to conceive.

So she grabbed them, and held them, and cared for them.

*And now we have to pay homage to Iansã for bringing our lost twins
into her fold.*

-Porter, excerpt from work-in-progress

On one of my final weekends in Itacaré, Paula invited me to a traditional meal of *carurú* at her house. I had been told prior to receiving this invitation that *carurú* was a traditional meal generally prepared as an offering to the spirits of the *Ìbejìs*, or twin children. I was told the food was especially delicious and children loved it. The meal is a

combination of stewed meat (often prepared with shrimp, in this case it was chicken), okra, nuts, coconut milk, onions, garlic and *dendê* palm oil.

In their concise overview of important points to remember from Yoruba mythology Gary Edwards and John Mason describe the importance of the *Ìbejìs*. “*Ìbejì* makes concrete the idea of the cleaved spirit, of the mirror image, of one spirit that inhabits and animates two, sometimes identical bodies. *Ìbejì* represents the duality of man” (65). They describe further how *Elegba* (*Exú*) insists that opposing forces must work in harmony or suffer the consequences. The *Ìbejìs* offer an example of two beings working in harmony as one. “*Ìbejì* is symbolic of the spirit that connects all the things that people conceive of as different but which are in reality the same” (65). *Ìbejì* offers us an entry to thinking through the idea of reflection in identity formation in this setting.

This duality represents the initial concept of perspective as it emerged from the data. I initially gave this category the *in vivo* code of “There are two sides to everything.” This category includes instances in field notes and interviews where the idea of one’s view of life or of a situation is articulated. It includes moments when multiple aspects of a situation resulted in conflicting perceptions; stated notions of what might be true or false; comparisons to outside people, places, or situations; layered meanings where multiple interpretations come into play; comments relating to sight, vision, or looking; the idea of “getting used to” something; sensing a vibe or an energy of something and how that affects the perception of the phenomenon; instances where dreams are mentioned or discussed; the idea of finding, finding out, or being surprised; questions about right or wrong, fairness or justice; speculations about what motivates an individual; and ideas about progress or the idea of backwards or forwards.

The dimensionality of this category includes the spectrum from shared to individual or unique perspectives; the newness of a view compared to a longheld view;

the range from comfort to discomfort; the range from understanding to misunderstanding or not understanding; observations about reality ranging from concrete reality to metaphorical reality; private or secret views in comparison to public or vocalized views; insider/outsider comparisons; the range of layering in one's understanding from a single layer through multiple layers; and the scale of understanding ranging from felt to seen.

The idea that we conceive of our own identity by how we imagine others view us is certainly not new. Sociologist Charles Cooley described this as the looking-glass self theory in his 1902 work, *Human Nature and the Social Order*. In a 1992 article from *Symbolic Interaction*, sociologists David D. Franks and Viktor Gecas elaborate on the ways Charles Cooley's looking-glass self theories have been deployed and where they fall short. Franks and Gecas assert that the interpretive aspects of self-formation as commonly deployed by social psychologists are only one part of a complex system of human interaction. "This selective rendering of Cooley, in its interpretation and utilization, has emphasized the passive and conformist aspects of the self" (50).

They elaborate further on the reasons for this.

Some of the reasons why such one-sided attention has been given to the looking-glass self are fairly clear: (1) the looking-glass self identifies an important process involved in self-concept formation utilizing the dramatic and easily grasped imagery of a mirror; (2) it offers a straightforward proposition on the relationship between interpersonal and personal variables; (3) it is relatively easily operationalized and tested; (4) it emphasizes the social and interpersonal aspects of self; (5) it is part of the quintessentially *interactional* process of role-taking; and (6)

it makes intuitive sense in a culture characterized by a heightened concern for personal appearance (50).

They explain further how seeing ourselves in others must be considered jointly with the ways we have agency and imagination over these reflections and how we navigate the sense-making process of life.

I offer refraction, combined with critical self-reflection, to extend this theory of the ways we construct identities as part of the social interactions of everyday life. Refraction alone does not offer the recognition that something about our perceptions is distorted or blurred. In this sense, refraction and reflection become two hands for the same process of navigating identity and self-formation in the performance of self in everyday life. The practices of deep critical reflection proved to be crucial for uncovering this process. Without these tools, I could very well have continued firmly entrenched in my comfort zone. Denial has long been a strategy for avoiding dealing with difficult or challenging situations. Sometimes life forces the recognition upon us. In the case of the process of refraction, combined with critical self-reflection, these moments of doubt or uncertainty can be elicited without the need for traumatic events to force the question at hand.

In the case of my own study, critical self-reflection offered me opportunities to recognize where my privilege had gone unacknowledged and other moments where I understood how my own history could be subconsciously coloring my interpretation of events I was observing. Approaching these practices as a means for acknowledging the Jungian shadow aspects of the self, I was able to observe phenomena in the field that might otherwise have been emotional triggers for me. I believe that it is through these practices of reflection and refraction that we can lessen the intensity of traumas and triggers and receive the experiences as life lessons for which we can be grateful.

The *carurú* meal to which I was so graciously invited and which I gratefully accepted showed me a generosity of spirit I have often seen in Brazilians, in general, and in *Baianos* in particular. But this *carurú* had particular resonance for me because I had been instructed by a *mãe de santo*⁴⁰ during fieldwork to offer a *carurú* to the children in the community. She indicated that it was important, if I were to seek success in my research, that I should offer something to the children in the community. I was a bit baffled because I had no idea what *carurú* was or how to make it. She offered me more personal reasons and instructions which I will not disclose here, but the important message I received was that any work I do in this community needs to acknowledge the whole community, in particular the children.

This turned out to be true in ways I hadn't anticipated when I designed this study. I had initially intended to offer a theatre workshop for women utilizing reflexive autoethnographic methods. Instead, the community needed someone to offer theatre workshops for children. At first I felt I was not the best person to conduct this kind of work with children, but I later realized it was an important contribution to the needs of the community that I was obligated to fulfill. I might not have been the best person for the job, but I was adequate. It was something I could offer and it helped me make connections with people in the community that I might not otherwise have been able to develop. On the night that the children shared their poetry with parents, I realized how important these kinds of arts and cultural activities are (whether led by me or by anyone else) for the well-being of the community.

Part 3: Iansã Broken into Nine Pieces and Refraction

Red is the color of my true love's lying cheating lipstick

Vermelho é a cor da Iansã

⁴⁰ A female authority figure in Candomblé often translated as “priestess.”

Guerreira poderosa da tempestade

Amante da justiça

-Porter, excerpt from “How not to Make Love to a Woman”

In his collection of West African myth narratives, Alex Cuoco tells of the origin and meaning of the name of the Orixá, Iansã, also called Oyá (Oya). Iansã was married to Ogum (the Orixá of metals, highways, and war) before she was seduced by Xangó (the Orixá of thunder, lightning and justice). When Ogum found out about the affair between Xangó and Iansã, he became furious. He consulted Olódùmarè (a manifestation of a supreme deity) for advice. He was told that he should not be angry, but rather he should forgive both Xangó and Iansã. Refusing this advice, he went in pursuit (292).

Later on, when he finally found them, he had a major fight with Oya. He launched blows at her with his magical iron stick and cut her in nine parts. The number nine connected with Oya is also in the origin of the name Yánsà,⁴¹ which comes from different regions of the old Dahomey where the cult of Oya is practiced by the names of Aṣesan and Aḃesan. These names have as their origin the expression Aborimeṣan, which means: “with nine heads” and is a reference to the nine deltas of the river Niger (Cuoco 292).

Honoring the myth of Iansã and her re-fracted nature, I will take the time to broadly define the term refraction in its previous linguistic uses. I will first outline the most basic definitions for refraction in the world of physics. The phenomenon of refraction occurs when a light wave (or sound wave or energy wave) passes through a transparent medium at an oblique angle. The angle of refraction and the degree to which it distorts depend on the difference in molecules between the two different substances

⁴¹ A different way to spell Iansã.

through which it passes. The most common example of refraction is the image of a pencil in a glass of water. We see the pencil enter the water and it is straight. Once the pencil is in the glass of water, our eyes perceive it as bent or even broken. Refraction can also cause optic phenomena such as rainbows (when light passes through air with moisture) and mirages (when light passes through differing temperatures).

In photography, lenses are crafted to offer different focal lengths to the photographer. Whether converging or diverging, the light passes through the lenses and becomes refracted before it reaches the other side. In some cases a lens might be utilized

specifically to give the effect that only parts of the image in front of the camera are in focus. In the image below, taken in daylight in Itacaré, a lens with a shallow depth of field was used in order to



Figure 8: Children playing, shallow depth of field

provide the effect that the foreground would be clearly

in focus and the children playing in the background would be out of focus, even though a normal, healthy, well-seeing eye with no vision problems would see all of these things clearly.

Refraction is also a term used in ophthalmology. When our eyes are misshapen they require a refraction analysis to determine if we are far-sighted, near-sighted or have astigmatism. An optometrist then crafts a new lens to correct the vision. My hope is that this “theoretical lens” will be a lens that actually does something, that it can be used to correct one’s vision when moments of doubt or uncertainty arise. These moments of

doubt, uncertainty or discomfort can be signals that something about the way we are currently perceiving the situation or phenomenon is flawed, faulty or distorted. It is an opportunity to reconsider and possibly correct our perceptions.

One of my tactics for unpacking our understandings of key terms is a technique I learned with João Fiadeiro and Fernanda Eugenio from AND_Lab⁴². Fiadeiro and Eugenio start by literally cutting up words on a piece of paper to reassemble them in order to highlight their constructed nature and separate them into components for further consideration of the word parts. In her essay “Ethnography as Spiritual Practice” de la Garza hints at a similar strategy with Mary Daly’s Webster work, where the etymology of a word is unpacked through a breaking up of the word into parts in order to understand its components. In the case of the breakout session with AND_Lab, they discussed how the word *reparar* in Portuguese became the key for understanding this as a technique. *Reparar* in Portuguese means variably: to repair, to take notice, to restore, to make over again, to improve, to remedy, to correct, etc. For Fiadeiro and Eugenio, they broke up the word to be re-parar, (to stop again). In this sense they posited that only by taking the time to stop, and stop again, to look, might we truly take notice and make the efforts to repair or correct something that might be a problem.

This links directly to the etymology of refract which means to break up or to re-break. In response to their presentation, I offered a further extension to this. First I pointed out that in English the word repair can be broken up to re-pair, indicating that two things that have been separated must be joined together again in order to make them right again. The etymology of refract implies an interesting and perhaps even troubling concept: that this process of refraction involves, not only an initial breaking, but a further or perhaps even a repeated breaking up. I argue that a repeated breaking

⁴² In a translation breakout session of an event sponsored by Performance Studies International in Portugal, they explained this technique and together we offered extensions. João Fiadeiro is a choreographer from Portugal. Fernanda Eugenio is a Brazilian anthropologist.

up of our perception about a troubling phenomenon is exactly the experience that results in the affective sensation of deep doubt, uncertainty or discomfort that provides the impetus for recognizing that something about the way we view the world might be problematic.

Considering the Fiadeiro/Eugenio model of this new understanding of “*re-parar*” I argue that the word recognize (*reconhecer* in Portuguese) becomes re-cognize or *re-conhecer*. This results in an understanding of the verb recognize as being a process of cognitively re-processing: to re-cognize. Following this same logic, the verb refract (re-fract) implies the notion that the world comes to us broken up and fractured. Part of our sense-making process involves the ordering of life’s data into a coherent whole. The process of refraction is a breaking up of what appears to be whole, then a re-fracturing of our perception. When a rupture occurs in our understanding or experience, we need to re-fract.

One important consideration about using the idea of refraction as a metaphor for analysis or as a hermeneutic tool is the tendency for metaphors to hide some aspects of a phenomenon while highlighting others. In the case of refraction, an incomplete use of the metaphor would rely only on vision and sight as a way of thinking through problems. Proper use of the metaphor of refraction requires the continued awareness that it is being used to highlight aspects of actual phenomenon and not to characterize them. Therefore aspects of the phenomenon, such as feelings of doubt, which may not correspond to a visual sense, can be better understood using the metaphor. Sensing a phenomenon through other means must be taken into consideration when using refraction as a tool for analysis. For this reason I argue that the concept must include an awareness of how feelings of doubt, uncertainty or discomfort relate to the shift in perspective.

Iansã's fractured nature is only one arbitrary way to include her as a guiding archetype in this study. She also becomes particularly relevant in this study because she is considered to be a warrior Orixá. Fiery and tempestuous, she is associated with storms and is a lover of justice. She is additionally considered to be a protector of children. On more than one occasion, my study participants commented on how women in Itacaré are *guerreiras* (female warriors). I have also been told by more than one *mãe de santo* that she is most likely the Orixá who would be the *dona da minha cabeça*⁴³ should I ever be initiated into the Candomblé religion. She is syncretized with the Catholic Saint Barbara.

Iansã becomes important to this study for several reasons. One retired nurse, after a pointed discussion about the failings of public health and public education in Itacaré, and in Bahia and various parts of Brazil, commented that "*mulher de Itacaré é guerreira.*"⁴⁴ But when considering how this relates to the existence of a palpable social activism in the region, she followed up by saying that there are far too many women in the region who are illiterate. She indicated that this kind of ignorance makes it difficult to have an organized movement for social change.

Lídia, a hostel owner, agreed that women in Itacaré are *guerreiras* and went further to say that women are the hardest working people in Itacaré. She specifically excluded men from this statement. When I asked her to explain why she viewed *baianos and baianas* so differently, she hesitated before responding. "*Elas têm menos preguiça. Vamos falar a palavra certa.*"⁴⁵ Perhaps her own background has colored her perspective. She was born and raised in São Paulo. In São Paulo she worked as a police officer. She moved to France as a young adult, married a Frenchman and spent 20 years

⁴³ This phrase indicates that when a person is initiated in Candomblé, the Orixá who chooses to identify with the person becomes the "owner" of his or her head. No one can be sure who their Orixá for certain without the proper ritual.

⁴⁴ Women in Itacaré are warriors.

⁴⁵ They (women) are less lazy. Let's not mince words.

in France. She and her husband moved from France to Bahia several years ago looking for a better life than they had in France. She identifies this as a kind of Brazilian dream: move to Europe, make a lot of money, then return to Brazil for retirement. She has lived in Itacaré as a small business owner for the last five years.

In her interview with me, Lídia described many of the difficulties she had in the five years she has lived in Itacaré. She expressed a kind of difficulty in comprehending how things work in Bahia. When she described the stereotype of the *baiano* man, lying around in a hammock, she did so with an expression that might be considered to be a mixture of disdain and envy. In the same interview she indicated that after five years of difficulties she finally learned that life isn't meant to be as complicated as we tend to make it.

On another occasion I overheard a US American comment "They think they have enough." I understood this comment to be a moment where he was questioning the logic of being content with the current situation, not wanting to progress or grow or have more in life. But it takes only a brief look at Santos' theory of the logic of the monoculture of time as well as the logic of productivity to uncover the problem with the logic behind that statement. The statement holds as a basic assumption that progress is always already desirable and that working to be increasingly productive is always already a virtue.

I observed one conversation between a US American and a Brazilian about working 20 years at a bank. The Brazilian woman couldn't understand why the job wouldn't pay very well. How could they possibly trust a bank manager not to steal if they weren't paid well? She posed a difficult question to answer. Who are the fools? The ones who work 20 years for low pay at the same job or someone who works freely and on her

own schedule to sell trinkets on the beach in a beautiful setting? The conflicting perspectives are indicative of two different ways of looking at the same situation.

In Lidia's description of her five years in Itacaré she claims "*É uma ilusão muito grande morar num lugar turístico.*"⁴⁶ The five years she spent in Itacaré resulted in a profound disruption of this illusion of a better life in this idyllic setting. This process of disrupting her illusion and re-creating a new perspective for herself can be viewed as a means of allowing a process of refraction to take place that can shift her perspective. She was *encantada* (enchanted) by the visions of gringos bringing lots of money to spend. She entered into a business deal to manage a *pousada*. She admitted that she wasn't foolish enough to think she might make a lot of money, but she did become enamored of the idea of having a better quality of life.

She talked about how difficult it was for her, and for others from the south of Brazil like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, to become accustomed to the lifestyle in Bahia. She describes *Baianos*: "*Eles são bem tranquilos, não esquentam com nada. [...] Eles têm o pão deles [...] eles não têm muita motivação para avançar.*"⁴⁷ For her this has created difficulties. She has had to become accustomed to the difficulties associated when you need to hire someone locally, be they an employee or an electrician or a plumber. She describes *Baianos* as living very much moment to moment. "*É hoje. É agora. É aqui. Amanhã a gente vê.*"⁴⁸ After five years of seeing the way *Baianos* react to their environment she said she finally realized

Eles têm razão. Pra quê? Pra que se estressar, né? [...] A vida é muito simples no final de contas, né? É como um ditado que ouvi uma vez. [...]

⁴⁶ It's a great illusion to live in a tourist place.

⁴⁷ They are very cool-headed, they don't get upset about things. [...] They have their basic bread. [...] They don't have a lot of motivation to advance in life.

⁴⁸ It's about today. Right now. Right here. Tomorrow, we'll see.

*isso fala do amor, mas pra mim é a vida. É uma frase que dizia assim, olha: o amor, ele depende de tanta simplicidade, que só os ignorantes fazem com perfeição.*⁴⁹

She qualified this statement, indicating that the so-called ignorance in that statement has nothing to do with wisdom or intelligence. She described it as an ignorance of cultural knowledge. But for those living in the *roça* with no knowledge of technology or even how to read or write, they are happy. When she used the word “ignorant,” she gestured that she put it in scare quotes to indicate that those living a life in the *roça* have a deep wisdom about things that we will never be able to reach. In contrast, she looks at her own life and says the rest of us are bogged down by our worries about whether or not we can pay for a car or pay the house payment. She sees them as being happy, and herself as not happy. The last day that I saw Lídia in Itacaré she told me how she had lost her hostel business and was having to leave Itacaré to move back to São Paulo to try to make a living there.

Part 4: Oxum, Identity, and “*Tem Que Mostrar Cara Bonita*”

Yellow is the color of her bouffant hairdo

Dripping with sticky hairspray

She thinks she looks like Marilyn

Frail, insecure, dying of an overdose

But really she looks like a grotesque, carnivalesque old lady

Amarelo é a cor de Oxum

Amante dos guerreiros

Dama da vaidade, beleza, sensualidade, sedução

⁴⁹ They are right. What for? Why stress about things, you know? Life is very simple at the end of the day, isn't it? It reminds me of a saying I once heard. [...] it speaks of love but for me it's about life. The saying went something like this: love depends on such simplicity that only those who are ignorant do it with perfection.

-Porter, excerpt from “How not to Make Love to a Woman”

*Nessa cidade todo mundo é d'Oxum,
Homem, menino, menina, mulher
Toda essa gente irradia magia
Presente na água doce, presente na água salgada
Em toda cidade brilha*

*Seja tenente ou filho de pescador
Ou importante desembargador
Se dar presente é tudo uma coisa só*

*A força que mora n'água não faz distinção de cor
E toda cidade é d'Oxum⁵⁰*

-Gerônimo, “É d'Oxum”

During my time in Itacaré, I heard this song played several times. It appeared to be a favorite among the locals and one woman even urged me to learn it because she thought it would lend itself well to my voice. The song, “É D'oxum,” by the Bahian composer Gerônimo, lilt its way into the public imaginary with its lyrics that sing of how

⁵⁰ In this city everyone belongs to Oxum
Man, boy, girl, woman
All the people radiate magic
Present in fresh water, present in salt water
The whole city glows

Be he lieutenant or son of a fisherman
Or an important judge of the high court
If you give a gift it is all the same.

The force that lives in the water doesn't distinguish between color
The whole city belongs to Oxum.

everyone is “d’Oxum.” This phrase literally translates as “belongs to Oxum,” but presents layered meaning. When a person is initiated into the Candomblé religion, an Orixá is assigned to the person (or rather, an Orixá chooses the person). In this case, if the *mãe de santo* or *pãe de santo* determined that the person was a son or daughter of Oxum, the person would then refer to him or herself as being “d’ Oxum.”

Oxum is the Orixá associated with rivers and fresh water. She is typically portrayed with a mirror in her hand and is considered vain. She is often characterized as a beautiful temptress. As with all the Orixás, there are many stories surrounding her mythology. One story I heard was that she was so vain she did not want to keep her children. So she abandoned them and Iansã raised them. In Cuoco’s collection of narratives, she became despondent because of infertility and through offerings to Olódùmarè she became so fertile that she was soon after associated with fertility and childbearing (313-314). It is often said that daughters of Oxum are overly concerned with physical appearance and beauty.

One woman I encountered during fieldwork offered me an interesting perspective on Oxum in particular and on the nature of Candomblé practices in general. While very few people were willing to engage in deep conversations about religion, one woman I met commented casually one day that she could no longer practice Candomblé. She was an evangelical Christian now. I asked her why she chose to switch religions. She said that once she heard that song singing about how everyone belongs to Oxum (or as might be interpreted in the context, that everyone is a son or daughter of Oxum), she had doubts. She thought to herself that if everyone is already “of Oxum” why does she have to do all the work decorating her house with yellow flowers? She said it was too much esotericism for her. This resonates with a comment I heard from someone on my first trip to Bahia in 2008 when I was in Salvador studying Orixá dancing with Augusto Omolú. One of the

people Augusto had arranged to serve as a kind of guide for us commented that he would never become involved with Candomblé. He said it was too much responsibility.

For these two people in two very different ways, they conceived of the religious practices as being alternately too much work, too much esotericism, or too much responsibility. For both of them it was less about the choice to self-identify as one religion and more about how much work or responsibility it would require. This hints at questions for future research wherein the nature of community involvement within these two different religions might be conceived. Links between work and identity exist throughout this study. Some women select their identity based on their domestic role (mother or wife) or on their role within the community (business owner or retired nurse). Some women select their role based on their history (*Quilombo* descendant) or on their place of birth (*nativa daqui* or *paulista*⁵¹).

The theme of identity emerged in the study as a result of looking at the ways some women began to talk about how they sometimes felt obligated to appear a certain way. Fátima, a bar owner living in the *roça*, commented that “*tem que mostrar cara bonita.*” This literally translates as “you have to show your pretty face.” But in the context of the conversation it implies more of a felt obligation to be always smiling, particularly as a woman who works as the owner of a bar. This phrase became the in vivo code for a sub-category in which I grouped comments about the performances of everyday life and the metaphorical masks people wear. I decided to include comments about formal performances in this category in order to use it as a dimensional contrast to the kinds of performances associated with sociologist Erving Goffman’s front and back regions in his theories about social interactions.

⁵¹ Native of here or from São Paulo.

This subcategory also included comments about appearances and how appearances might be disguising something. It included instances where women described felt or perceived pressure to meet the expectation of those appearances. The subcategory included observations about a person deliberately acting a certain way in order to elicit a particular response including comments about someone acting or being “ballsy” or “crazy.” I included discussions about whether or not a person was “faking” something; comparisons of social roles including comments about cultural archetypes; and reflections about the performativity in the ways habits construct identity.

The dimensions of this category included temporality (ranging from ephemeral to permanent), individuality (ranging from unique or individual to collective or archetypal), perceived truthfulness (ranging from fake to authentic), formality (ranging from accidental or impromptu to formal or highly produced), the front and back stages of social role and social performances, willingness (ranging from desired or willing to forced or obligatory), spectatorship (ranging from spectator or witness to performer/actor), the range from mass mediated/public to private, and repetition (ranging from one unique and isolated event to habitual or repetitive performative events).

In a casual conversation with one woman, she commented that she used to be called upon to play a slave in the school plays when it came time to study Brazilian colonial history. She ended up hating history and hated playing the slave. In another conversation she complained how her bosses always treat her like a slave, indicating the long working hours and low wages. In another conversation, a resident of Porto de Trás lamented that “just like in the time of slavery” there are still too many men who sexually abuse young women because “they think they have a right to it.” These comments seem to indicate an awareness of recurring reminders of the ways the residual effects of slavery

and colonization continue to evoke felt perceptions of these histories on the part of the women living here.

In one observation conducted at night in the center of town, I noticed one particular man who seemed to set himself apart from the rest of the crowd. The people I was with also noticed and some commented on his impromptu performance. He began dancing samba on the street just like many others who had gathered to watch the live band hired for the night. Through a combination of his energy and enthusiasm in addition to what I can only interpret as a deliberate calling of attention to himself, he ended up at the edge of the sidewalk in front of the bar. The crowd had given some space to him in a gesture that seemed designed to offer him solo or highlighted attention. After several songs getting to this point, after he had kicked off his flip flops to dance barefoot and removed his shirt to reveal a torso glistening with sweat, toward the end of one song he began to shake and shimmy his torso in a move I have seen in Candomblé *terreiros* that indicates a person is going into trance.

The people I was with were in heated disagreement about whether or not he was truly in trance. One woman claimed he was ridiculous. Another woman insisted “No! He goes into trance! I’ve seen it many times!” What I found most intriguing was how the tourists seemed to love it. Many of them whipped out their smart phones with video cameras and recorded the images of the sweaty Black man dancing his “exotic” dances. He seemed to eat up the attention. Later on during fieldwork other people commented to me that he was infamous for being abusive to women (“*ele bate na mulherada direta!*”⁵²) and for being a *caça gringa*⁵³. Sure enough, while I never saw him hit a

⁵² He beats women all the time!

⁵³ Literally translated this term means gringa-hunter. Erica Lorraine Williams, in her ethnography *Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements*, gives an excellent description of the ways this term is deployed in Salvador, BA.

woman, I did see him quite often looking to *namorar*⁵⁴ with wealthy-looking white foreign women.

These dynamics illustrate a complex web of interactions between locals and tourists. While some locals use the term *caça gringo* or *caça gringa* freely, others find the term offensive. Additionally, there are plenty of natives of the region who work as tour guides. Many of these tour guides offer a variety of services including something we might call an innocuous version of escort services. These men will show tourists around to the various businesses, restaurants, and bars which cater to tourists, often times accompanying them to the bar and remaining with them to ensure they are having a good time, dance with them and show them how to dance the local dance, *forro pé de serra*. I am not aware of how monies get exchanged for these services or even if they get exchanged. As a tourist during my first four years of visiting this place, the hostel owner would always indicate which persons or guides were “*pessoas de confiança*” and which ones were, perhaps not entirely trustworthy. I later deduced that this level of trustworthiness lay in the transparency with which the guide was clear and up front about what amount was charged and for what specific services. The ones deemed less trustworthy were the ones who engaged in these kinds of guide services who left it ambiguous what was expected in return for those services. As Williams indicated in her work on these kind of ambiguous entanglements, the line is not always clear and in order to fully understand the dynamics at play judgment must be set aside.

As part of my own process of critical self-reflection I had to acknowledge that I was deeply implicated in the ways I interacted with the locals and the degree to which I resisted the role of tourist, particularly the kind of tourist who pays for the services of local guides, because I preferred to see myself as someone who already knew a little bit

⁵⁴ To date or to have a romantic liaison.

about the local setting and therefore did not need a guide. What I later realized is that the relationships I had forged were already woven into these kinds of dynamics. This has several implications, most importantly that I needed to understand how my presence affects the daily realities of natives of the region. I may have desired to be viewed as someone already familiar with the local environment, but local residents rely on the ability to make a living off tourists. One of the ways that has been most lucrative for them is to be independent tour guides. For me to reap the benefits of having a local friend take me around the area, the reality of that dynamic is that some might view that situation as me exploiting a local person in order to gain free access to spaces for which someone else might have needed to pay.

When I asked a group of women from the neighborhood of Porto de Trás how tourism might be handled differently in a way that might better serve the community, they described a “*madrinho/padrinho*”⁵⁵ system that used to work well. In that system, when one of the local tour guides from the neighborhood would bring tourists to come to the Centro Cultural for classes in *capoeira* or dance, the participants paid their class fee but they also informally “adopted” a child from the neighborhood. The requirement was that they bring treats and presents to the children in the community if they were going to enjoy the use of the community center. Nona, who is a part of the committee that runs the community center, and her two daughters and niece, indicated they wish it could return to that system. In those days children played safely in the streets and added vibrancy to the community. They aren’t quite sure why that system stopped working but expressed a desire to have that in place again.

These kinds of critical reflections about my place in this tourist-centered space also led me to question the ways one’s value is negotiated in this setting. In one

⁵⁵ These terms literally translate as godmother and godfather. They use it here not for Catholic practices but as an informal structural relationship similar to urban “Big Brother/Big Sister” models.

conversation that revolved around the negotiation of value and self-worth, a US-American tourist asked me “Why are Black people oppressed here? Aren’t they the majority?” In the moment that question was posed to me I felt blindsided by something that seemed so obvious. I later scolded myself for not bringing up South African apartheid as the most obvious situation where the white minority oppressed the Black majority for generations. In casual conversation with a fellow traveler I also felt awkward trying to find a way to enter this complicated dialogue in a way that didn’t feel overly didactic. Wasn’t this person on vacation? Who am I to call someone out on unacknowledged privilege in that setting? These negotiations and exchanges continue to be a motivating factor for this work and the ways I hope to unpack unacknowledged tourist privilege.

The very notion of being able to take time off from work is an idea that stems from a certain level of privilege. The year my partner came with me to Itacaré he pointed this out to me. What I thought I saw was people “hanging out.” What he saw was people living in an economically depressed area. “Hanging out” became less of an activity of leisure and became a reflection of a lack of opportunity. On the surface, they might appear to be similar. People waiting in an unemployment line are not hanging out. People with the privilege to have leisure time, people on vacation, are the ones who get to “hang out.” The term vacation is often used to imply that nothing serious can be approached. It can be used as an excuse to remain ignorant.

When I analyzed my field notes from the summer prior to fieldwork proper, this phrase “hanging out” became a code in the process of analyzing the data from that pre-fieldwork phase of preparation. When I conducted the coding and analysis of that summer’s field notes, I defined the phrase “hanging out” as an encounter or meeting, usually impromptu, where there is little to no purpose or goal to the encounter. This

code went hand in hand with the code “strolling through the back door” which was essentially a mobile version of “hanging out.” However, as part of the process of engaging in critical self-reflection, I began to ask different questions of the encounters I was observing. I then asked myself why I associated wandering and hanging out with the concept I have so often called “paradise.” What enables wandering and hanging out? Are those pleasurable activities? Is one required a certain level of freedom in order to engage in them? Or are these activities resulting from a lack of opportunity? Are these not also activities in which someone who is unemployed might partake? How different does it feel to wander because one has no other option versus having the financial privilege to wander and hang out and still know my bills are being paid at the end of the month?

This became an especially tricky question to pose when many of the people in Itacaré work as temporary seasonal workers or as tour guides or in the informal sector. Some work as artisans selling their wares in the *praça* (square). Some work as tour guides. Some work as *vendedores ambulantes*⁵⁶ or, as many people call them, *mochileiros*. This phrase can be translated literally as “backpackers” but in this setting it becomes the word that vendors of the *cabanas* or *barracas*⁵⁷ on the beach use almost in a pejorative sense. Many vendors from the *cabanas* resent the *mochileiros* and chase them off when they approach their customers. I have heard stories from some vendors that certain *cabana* owners/managers are quite rude about it. The dynamics of these tensions between those who run the fixed structures and those who sell their wares as *vendedores ambulantes* becomes even more complex when other criteria are examined.

⁵⁶ Literally translates as “ambulant vendors” and includes people who carry their goods onto the beach and walk from person to person offering various items such as sunglasses, ice cream, sarongs, jewelry, and various snacks.

⁵⁷ This literally translates as tent but often refers to a semi-permanent structure like a shack or hut.

Recently in Salvador and other parts of Bahia, a law regarding guidelines for building permanent structures on the coastline was enforced. The way local vendors explained this to me is that, according to Brazilian federal law, no permanent structure can be built within a certain distance of the coast. This law has, apparently rarely been enforced. In Salvador, the beach landscape was recently transformed when all the fixed cabanas and *barracas* were demolished. For reasons I was not able to discern, this enforcement has not arrived in Itacaré. Some cabana owner/managers have urged the mayor of Itacaré to fight this enforcement on legal grounds. But the irony here is that many of these people who own or manage these cabanas are doing so illegally. One woman who runs one of the more successful and well-known cabanas indicated that not one single cabana on the beach was constructed with official approval from the *prefeitura*⁵⁸. To complicate the dynamics even more, some *vendedores ambulantes* are officially sanctioned and part of a local association of vendors who work as a kind of union to help protect the rights of vendors and to provide helpful infrastructure. Others are not affiliated in any way with any association and simply arrive on the beach, sell their goods, and do not report official earnings or pay vendor licenses. One woman I spoke with even complained that most of the local vendors are affiliated with the associations but it is the vendors who come in from other areas who work without paying their authorization fees. This allows them to sell their goods at a cheaper price than the local vendors who are following legal guidelines.

These complexities are important to consider in order to find ways to avoid falling into a binary of tourist privilege vs. local exploitation. I have heard some local residents indicate that they love how much freedom they have to live in a beautiful setting, working minimal hours, and having a relatively carefree lifestyle. Some have

⁵⁸ Town hall or city hall.

even made comments such as “You won’t starve here. There is plenty of fruit on the trees to pick. There are plenty of fish to catch. And beans, rice, and flour are cheap.” But this romanticized vision of life as a temporary, unofficial, seasonal worker does not tell the whole story. Several people have indicated to me that social inequality has only gotten worse as a result of increased tourism, and that there are very real difficulties that for many seem impossible to overcome. The most common complaints about life in Itacaré are the quality of education and the quality of healthcare. Many complain about corruption but feel powerless to do anything about it. This indicates that the binary of tourist/local is insufficient to explain how local residents who are the wealthy landowners and/or politicians enter this complicated negotiation of social status.

When I reflect on the story of the sweaty, shirtless, Black man shimmying on the street for the spectatorial pleasure of tourists, I also have to look at the ways the young *capoeiristas* do the same thing, posing for photos with tourists after their demonstration at one of the local bars, sweaty, shirtless and smiling. And I must also reflect on how the elders from the *Quilombo* communities confirm what the body of literature on the history of *capoeira* has debated, that these public displays of *capoeira* violate the very spirit of what some consider *capoeira* to be – a practice of resistance, a personal practice of spiritual and physical conditioning, and a way to engage in these practices as an exercise in understanding life lessons. But these reflections must also be considered with other comments I heard indicating that the continued marginalization of *Quilombo* culture has resulted in real and tangible material effects. An official statement issued by the *Quilombo* council of Itacaré indicates that increased tourism has not brought increased prosperity to their community but rather has brought increased unemployment, underemployment and further social marginalization. So, while some members of the community indicate a desire for increased exposure of their own cultural

practices, be they artisan crafts or performance practices, others express a nostalgic desire for a return to times when the community enjoyed the *samba de roda* or an impromptu *roda de capoeira* without tourist spectators.

This relationship between spectator-tourist and native-on-display, reflects the ways tourism has been promoted in Bahia by the official state tourism board. Those who make their living off of interactions with tourists have expressed a need to show their “*cara bonita*” even when feeling irritated or otherwise unhappy. This *cara bonita* is reiterated over and over in tourist propaganda showing the radiant, smiling, brown-skinned locals ready, willing, and able to serve the foreign tourists or invite them into their *rodas de capoeira*. This implicit expectation often goes unnoticed and unquestioned on the part of tourists. I, myself, looked back at things I had written about the place from my first encounter. I used phrases like “people are so warm and nice and open here!” without pausing to ask myself why that might be.

I asked many of my study participants for their views on tourism. Porfírio, a trans woman and self-identified Quilombo descendant, offered this response.

Que eles sejam mais compreensivos, sejam mais abertos a novidades, [...] que sejam mais ... menos preconceituosos, menos racistas, e que eles venham para Itacaré para viver Itacaré. Não só para usar as praias e deixar sujas, que eles vejam, e revejam o conceito de turismo, onde realmente está o turismo, onde eles têm que ir de verdade. [...] onde está a comunidade que nos acolhe. Tratar melhor o cidadão. Que seja ele negro, branco, o que seja. [...] Não há respeito. Eles não têm respeito para as pessoas. Que vê um ali e acha que é um qualquer. Não é um qualquer. Tem uma dignidade vir para cá. Puxa. Não é só chegar aqui,

querer um bom bom bom so porque gastou milhões. Não é isso que a gente quer. ⁵⁹

Só não vé quem não quer ver.

In one interview, Maria, a native of Itacaré and a retired nurse, touched on something that comes into play with other categories in subtle ways. “*Nossas praias continuam poluídas. Só não vé quem não quer ver.*”⁶⁰ There were numerous times when someone would complain about something going wrong in Itacaré, crime, violence, pollution, etc. And in almost all cases, the attitude seemed to be that yes, the problem was apparent but either there was no desire to do anything about it or people were tired of requesting change through the local official channels and not getting any results. The ones who refused to be blind to this phenomenon seemed to exhibit a deep frustration with the ways others cannot see what they see. Only those who were made so uneasy by the situation were able to see it. Those who were tired of fighting the same battle over and over seemed to ignore the problem to the point that they became blind to it.

In one instance, one of the local residents described a conversation he had with the mayor. He had gone to the *prefeitura* to pursue some small funding opportunities for his neighborhood organization. The mayor told him, evidently without any shame, that the previous mayor had stolen money; that he was going to do the same thing; and there was nothing anyone could do to change the situation. Another local resident had gone to complain officially about a sewage pipe polluting the river where people fish and swim. He indicated that when someone complains, the officials go to the sanitation unit

⁵⁹ That they be more understanding, be more open to new things, [...] be more ... less prejudiced, less racist, and that they come to Itacaré to live Itacaré. Not just use the beaches and leave them dirty, that they see and rethink the concept of tourism, where is tourism really, where they truly need to go. [...] where the community embraces us. Treat the local citizens better, whether he is black, white or whatever. [...] There is no respect. They don't have respect for us here. They look and see someone there and think he is just whoever. It's not just a whoever. Come here and have dignity. It's not just about wanting some kind of bom bom just because you spent millions. That's not what we want.

⁶⁰ Our beaches are still polluted. The only ones who can't see that are the ones who don't want to see it.

to turn it on, only to show that it can be turned on, then shut it off after the person complaining leaves. Multiple residents complained that they are tired of doing “all this volunteer work” never to receive any funding or support from the local government.

In all of these instances, the perspective adopted relates directly to the level of energy and desire one has in facing the realities of the corruption and pollution in the city. Those who continue to be angered by these things, adopt a stance that something must be done. Their perspective is rooted in the desire for action and the willingness and insistence that efforts continue in this area. Others, for whatever reason, lack the desire, the energy, the time or the willingness to engage in this kind of struggle and seem to adopt more of a fatalistic perspective.

These examples seem to point to a tendency toward denial. The unwillingness to see the problem creates a disconnect between perception and reality. But when Maria claims that the only people who can't see it are those who don't want to see it, this implies that seeing the pollution or the corruption requires a desire to see these problems. Perhaps human beings do not desire to see when things are wrong. Perhaps the willingness to see what is wrong requires a willingness to feel the discomfort that comes with this awareness. It is much more comfortable to remain blissfully ignorant of problems in our own communities. For those who demand we see the problem and continue fighting to do something about it, the discomfort requires action. The discomfort seems to be inextricably linked to the perception and awareness of the problem. I argue that this discomfort, this uncertainty, this affective response to the situation is essential for the process of refraction to occur.

Part 5: Iemanjá, Affect, and Discomfort

Blue is the color of my butch blue jeans

I smeared the lipstick lesbian in me

I'm too feminine. I'm not feminine enough.

Azul é a cor da Iemanjá

Mãe de todos. Deusa do mar.

Cheia de curvas, voluptuosa ...

Seios cheios com o leite materno

-Porter, Excerpt from “How not to Make Love to a Woman”

For a community like Itacaré, the Orixá Iemanjá holds a place of reverence, even for non-practitioners of Candomblé. Iemanjá, the Orixá associated with the ocean and with fisherman is also commonly considered to be the mother archetype in Yoruba mythology. Every 2nd of February, the community gathers to honor her. Candomblé celebrants dress in their traditional garb, hold a procession down the main waterfront boulevard to the fishermen's pier, and make offerings to the sea. (See below figures). For many people in the community Iemanjá is a protector of the ones who go out to sea at night to fish on the open water. Paying homage to her once a year becomes an important ritual for ensuring a successful and safe season for families who rely on the income from fishing for their survival.



Figure 9: Festa de Iemanjá, Statue and Flowers



Figure 10: Festa de Iemanjá, Offerings



Figure 11: Festa de Iemanjá, Decorated Boat

During my six months of fieldwork this was the only festival directly related to Candomblé rituals that I observed. The sensation I got was that the entire community, both Candomblé initiates and non-initiates, came out to celebrate. However, one moment that left me baffled and became fodder for a secondary interview question was a comment I overheard. Someone present as an observer and not dressed in traditional garb or playing drums or active in the procession said casually to his companion “*Olha, não sabia que tinha tantos macumbeiros aqui em Itacaré!*”⁶¹ This comment troubled me because his attitude was playful, but the words were loaded with oppressive histories. *Macumba* is a word that has been historically used as a pejorative to refer to any African derived religions in Brazil, similar to the way “Voodoo” has been co-opted in the United States to marginalize and other-ize Black rituals in the Americas.

Many of my study participants were reticent to speak of the ways Candomblé is conceived in their community. In response to the question about the comment I overheard, Porfírio had this to say: “*Macumba é o toque do atabaque. Macumbeiro, é a pessoa que dança para o toque do atabaque. Nada mais do que isso. Agora catimbozeiro é outra coisa.*”⁶² She complained that there are still too many people in the Candomblé community who are what she calls false prophets and use the ritual format in order to make a profit off of outsiders who don’t understand the religion.

I first saw Porfírio when she danced in the celebration for Iemanjá, which occurred in early February. I remember thinking it was so refreshing to see, in this small-town rural community, a transgender woman dancing proudly and happily in the

⁶¹ Wow, I never knew there were so many “*macumbeiros*” here in Itacaré!

⁶² *Macumba* is the beat of the drum. *Macumbeiro* is a person who dances to the beat of the drum. Nothing more than this. Now, *catimbozeiro*, that’s a different thing altogether. (*Catimbozeiro* is yet another pejorative term for a person who engages in Africa-derived ritual practices. I find it interesting that a devout practitioner of Candomblé would refer to another Afro-Brazilian religion with similar practices with this pejorative term. Porfírio seems to hint that this pejorative term is used when a *mãe* or *pãe de santo* proves to be a charlatan or otherwise charges money for services that have little to do with the religion practiced by initiates. This appears to be a regional pejorative.)

procession to celebrate Iemanjá. As the archetypal mother, often representing historically undervalued affective labor of women in societies across the globe, Iemanjá offers us an entry to dialogue about how affect plays into this analysis.



Figure 12: Porfirio, Dancing in the Iemanjá Parade.

Affect and Discomfort

In 2005, Performance Studies International (PSi) held its eleventh conference, hosted by Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. The program for the conference cited a speech previously given by then Brown President, Ruth Simmons, in which she indicated a need for “becoming uncomfortable” (Goldstein np) in order to grow. The state of being uncomfortable can create visceral links to perception. Uncomfortable experiences as felt in our consciousness contribute to our need and our ability to perceive the world differently and as a result take steps towards making changes to transform the kinds of realities our sensibilities deem to be somehow wrong or otherwise troubling.

There is a vast body of literature drawing on social psychologist Leon Festinger's concept of cognitive dissonance. A key component of this is the awareness that when conflicting understandings of a situation arise, a feeling of discomfort results. Often, the feeling is so unpleasant that some kind of adjustment to either behavior or cognition is required in order to arrive at a more consistent set of beliefs. Festinger used this to explain illogical behavior. Illogical or self-destructive habits can continue if the person chooses to change his or her beliefs rather than behavior. Cognitive dissonance theory supports the concept of refraction as a process for shifting perspective because it acknowledges that the feeling of discomfort is what produces the shift. The difference is that cognitive dissonance merely explains the phenomenon of the dissonance. Refraction as a tool for analysis challenges the person who encounters these moments of discomfort or dissonance to look critically at how her own views might be skewed, rather than to perpetuate illogical or unhealthy behaviors.

This and the "affective turn" in the humanities and social sciences can all contribute to an understanding of the process of refraction, particularly in the various ways emotions and sensations exist in relation to cognitive and intellectual processes. In his foreword to *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, Michael Hardt claims:

The purpose of my example [...] is simply to indicate the potential utility of the perspective of affects in one field of study, demonstrating how it forces us to focus on the problematic correspondences that extend across its two primary divides – between the mind and the body, and between reason and passions – and how the new ontology of the human it reveals has direct implication for politics (Kindle Loc 145 of 6344).

Affect studies scholars such as Silvan Tomkins and Elspeth Probyn have examined the potential for shame to elicit productive change. But these scholars also warn of the

tendency for affect to result in the kind of illogical behavior associated with cognitive dissonance. Probyn cites feminist scholar Lauren Berlant and points to the ways “feelings, and especially bad feelings, produce an illusion of truth” (7). Queer feminist Sara Ahmed also speaks of the complex and contradictory nature of emotions. She begins her work in *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* by asking “What do emotions do?” She cites shame as “crucial to the process of reconciliation or the healing of past wounds” (101). Part of her work is to remind readers of emotions’ ability to spark social transformation but also of the dangers of what she calls “the performativity of disgust” (83) a situation where feelings of disgust perform an act of alienation in relation to what is strange or other or unfamiliar.

Erving Goffman, in his extensive essay, *Frame Analysis*, speaks of doubt and uncertainty and its relation to the process for change.

The concern, rather, is the special doubt that can arise over the definition of a situation, a doubt that can properly be called a puzzlement, because some expectation is present that the world ought not to be opaque in this regard. And insofar as the individual is moved to engage in action of some kind – a very usual possibility – the ambiguity will be translated into felt uncertainty and hesitancy (302).

He speaks further about how these uncertainties relate to a necessary re-framing of perception. He also reminds his readers that this process does not automatically imply a correct resolution to the error in perception. “[A]mbiguities can, when wrongly resolved, lead to error, just as the discovery of an error can be prefaced by a moment of doubt” (308). For this reason it is important to remember that these kinds of moments of felt uncertainty do not automatically lead to correction of vision. They can lead to that

possibility, but they require a very honest and deep critical reflection of one's own belief system to result in a path toward positive change.

Pena nunca ajudou ninguém.

On two completely different instances, two different people used the phrase “*pena nunca ajudou ninguém.*”⁶³ In both cases the person was responding to a comment I had made about another person I pitied for her difficult situation. In both situations pity was considered to be a fruitless affective response to the situation. Both of these women seemed to differentiate compassion from pity. One woman even told about her own experiences where she had to deal with people in difficult situations. She commented that “*ou aprende pelo amor, ou pela dor.*”⁶⁴ In her observation, the person about whom she was speaking had already exhausted all the help received from friends through love. She determined that this person was going to have to learn through pain since compassionate love did not lift her from her difficult situation.

The comment “pity never helped anyone” opened my eyes to the ways my own assumptions about power and privilege were challenged in a moment that offered me an opportunity for refraction. Prior to conducting this fieldwork I had been operating under the assumption that pity was a sensation that could work as inspiration to offer assistance to someone less fortunate than myself. What I had failed to consider is that pity's relational dynamic holds, at its very core, an implied power structure. For me to feel pity for someone already automatically implies that I somehow feel superior or more fortunate. Looking at someone with pity, while I might view it as productive, also reinscribes power structures wherein my own privilege goes unchallenged.

⁶³ Pity never helped anyone.

⁶⁴ A person learns either through love or through pain.

In one of the first interviews I conducted, a young woman, Josemária described how she had just recently returned to school to learn to read and write. She was nervous about signing the IRB release forms. The discomfort and uncertainty of having to create a *rubrica* (signature) on the spot placed her in a position to reaffirm the choice to go back to school to learn to read and write. For me it also offered a new appreciation for those who live hard-working lives with courage and dignity without ever learning to read or write. Literacy is not required for success or happiness. Looking at the situation from a new perspective can help this understanding to sink into the consciousness.

The act of disrupting and questioning my own affective sensation of pity for another person created a moment of doubt and uncertainty. In order for me to understand how to proceed with my daily performance of self in the setting, I had to recognize the way I viewed the relationship between myself and others in the community. In three parallel situations I encountered women who did not read or write. My initial response was pity. But in each case, the individuals asserted their insistence that being unable to read or write was merely a matter of fact and had not affected their lives for better or worse. I began to realize, through this act of refraction (allowing the awareness to exist that my perception was skewed based on an assumption that was not valid in the setting) that the social situation of large-scale illiteracy might be lamentable, but the individual persons were not to be pitied. Each of these women demanded respect as self-supporting working women in the world. By the end of my journey I certainly revered them as such.

This realization also helped me to understand another similar situation. While one local activist commented to me that women in Itacaré are difficult to mobilize, other women questioned the very nature of activist mentality and still another asked me “what’s in it for her?” This question, at first, seemed ludicrous to me. Who could

possibly question the motives of a person working toward improving social conditions for people in the community? But when I understood from other people how suspicious they were of NGOs in general, I began to sense the need for probing questions about what motivates one to engage in social activism, myself included.

One of the ways I began to see how this suspicion plays out revolves around the control and administration of the physical space of the Centro Cultural de Itacaré located in the Porto de Trás neighborhood. There are apparently two different organizing bodies in the community. One organizing body is the association of local residents and the other is the organization that controls the physical space. There is not always agreement about how to run the space. When someone proposes to bring money to the space for improvements or construction, there is invariably someone else who feels that involves a distancing of the community space from the community most in need of it. Within the community some accuse others of exploiting their own neighbors for personal gain, using the artistic productions curated there as money making opportunities. Those who do the work of producing these events complain that they do unfair amounts of volunteer work to bring these events and resent that others perceive them as making money off of the space.

This came up in another interesting way when I was approached to sing at a venue that did not have a PA system. I wanted to find a way to give back to the community that had hosted my performance so generously. So I approached one of the members who helped produce my performance piece to see if they would be willing to rent out their speaker system to a small restaurant. I told her I thought it could be a useful way for someone to make money off of the gig. But the woman I approached indicated that she felt it was inappropriate to make money off of the equipment that officially belonged to the collective community. This was merely one small manifestation

of something I began to understand as a deep suspicion about the circumstances surrounding any situation where money changes hands. I heard comments that seem to indicate this about the money that was invested to build the community center. One man said it was a gimmick for tax breaks. I overheard rumblings indicating this about the dance festival and the grant that was won to help pay for improvements to the space. The question arose: who is going to manage that money? I heard from various people about incidents where, as soon as money was perceived to have changed hands, others were suspicious about where that money went and assumptions were made that the person organizing the project was receiving some personal monetary compensation, even if that was not true.

I felt this suspicion reflected in comments about a different NGO that was applying for external grants to do a community building project. The story I heard in casual conversation revolved around the ways local realities were constructed in funding proposals to imply how very seriously the risk was for young women to fall prey to prostitution, drugs, and poverty. One young woman in particular considered it offensive that others were assuming that just because she was poor and Black meant she was automatically at risk for drugs and prostitution. For this young woman, the experience served as a moment of refraction: seeing the reality that the ways her life was being narrated had residual effects on her and her community. Once she understood how her community was being narrated to outsiders, she no longer wanted to receive the assistance from the organization in question.

This perspective shift for me was twofold. On one hand, it made me realize that the narratives we construct about people and communities we study have felt ramifications for the people some might call “objects” of inquiry. This made me understand Santos’ description of the logics of the sociology of absences more deeply. If

we, as researchers, always privilege the most radical, the most dangerous, or the most extreme research questions, are we not then perpetuating the logic of the dominant scale, that only research projects with the most dramatic results should be rewarded, particularly if these dramatic results can be measured in a clearly quantifiable way? And if activists enter the scene under the assumption that the community members are already at risk, simply because of their demographic, are we not also perpetuating the logic of social classification, which holds as its assumption that certain categories leave people unable to overcome obstacles because of an assumed or naturalized inferiority?

As I learned from the perspectives of my study participants, I learned that I was obligated to allow my own perspective to shift if I were to make any meaning or take any lessons from this study to be applied in other scenarios. In this regard I developed a new perspective that subtle differences and subtle resistances could and should be studied for their import just as much as radical social movements. I believe it is in this process of refraction that more nuanced interpretations and understandings can emerge from a body of data to be analyzed.

For me, this process helped me clarify my perspective in multiple ways. I looked back at how I had been trying, in my research proposals for my dissertation prospectus and research funding opportunities, to maximize the danger and the risk in order to make the research seem more important somehow. Initially I related those moments of discomfort to not knowing how to properly articulate the problem. I now realize it was an issue with how to conceive of the “problem.” Even the choice of the word “problem” to describe the situation in which I conducted fieldwork causes me unease. Conceiving of an ethnographic research project as a “problem” to be resolved casts the work in a light that might be discolored by some faulty perceptive abilities. Perhaps through rigorous refraction practices we can come to see that the “problem” of the bent pencil in

a glass of water is not actually a problem at all, but rather a result of a vision that is distorted by our way of thinking.

Elidalva's story and negotiating value in work settings

On multiple occasions I heard stories, both through formal interviews and casual conversations, of people who had quit a job or even multiple jobs based on some kind of profound disagreement with the manager, boss or business owner. Maria, who used to be a nurse, told how she ended up quitting every job she ever had because she did not agree with the politics or the way the place was being run. She also indicated that she worked several months without pay because she could not stand the thought of leaving the patients without care. In these instances and others, the way perspective interfaces with the realities of work can have profound material effects on the person's life. Some women I encountered expressed a kind of relief when they were either laid off or fired from a job. For some, the relief was rooted in having felt undervalued and appreciating newfound free time. For others, the relief was rooted in freedom from the monotony of the obligatory 6-day work week for years on end. Still others expressed profound gratitude for stable and continuous employment and could not understand the desire to quit a job.

Feelings toward the work environment were often linked to whether or not the person had a job with a "*carteira assinada*" or not. The phrase *carteira assinada* literally translates as "signed card" and refers to a process for officially registering one's employment so as to be eligible for federal benefits such as unemployment or retirement. In a place like Itacaré, where the majority of small business owners hire their workers on a seasonal basis, a great many local residents work tirelessly during the summer months, without a *carteira assinada*, to save money to last the rest of the year. The ones who have a *carteira assinada* generally consider themselves to be in a fortunate position,

even when only making minimum wage⁶⁵. Some women pointed out that the *carteira assinada* is a complicated proposition. Sometimes, when an employee requests a *carteira assinada*, they are immediately let go for some excuse or other. For others, even with a *carteira assinada*, procuring benefits such as unemployment should they ever be let go, is a complicated process and is often not pursued because of logistical difficulties. Others claim they have worked for years at the same place without a *carteira assinada*, indicating they would not be eligible for any kind of unemployment or public pension benefits upon leaving their job.

In the case of Elidalva, she had two different and distinct moments where a significant shift in her life experience resulted in a new understanding of her world. She grew up in the *roça*, working the *cacau* fields with her family. She commented that it was hard work and that there were feuds between families over who controlled which areas of the territories. She also indicated that when she first became involved with the father of her two children when she was 15, her father insisted she move out of the house. Elidalva indicated that in the *roça* near Camamu where she grew up this was normal. She did not marry the father of her children because he had some fight or disagreement with her father over the land where they lived. She compares this to Itacaré, indicating that life is wonderful in Itacaré because parents will let their children live with them as long as they want.

When she initially moved to Itacaré from the *roça*, she worked for eight years for a family that treated her poorly. She and her young children lived with the family and she worked as a domestic servant. She said that some months she would get paid and others not. When she confronted the matriarch of the family about getting paid regularly for her domestic work, the woman said to her “*você mora aqui de graça, que mais você*

⁶⁵ Currently the minimum wage in Brazil is less than R\$800 (Reais) per month. The equivalent in US Dollars is less than \$300.

quer?”⁶⁶ So Elidalva began to work both as a domestic servant for this family and also outside the home.

After eight years of this, she said “*Aí, Deus botou um juiz*”.⁶⁷ The next household where she worked was the home of a judge. She said it was only after working for a judge that she finally became aware of her rights as a domestic worker. She said “*Não sabia que era salário ... eu era bobona*.”⁶⁸ From this experience of working for a judge who explained her rights to her, Elidalva was able to see how she had been exploited for eight years and went on to other jobs with a firmer grasp of how to assert herself in the workplace. She became aware of how any worker, regardless of where they work, is supposed to be guaranteed at least one day off per week, unemployment insurance, *carteira assinada*, and *fundo de garantia*.⁶⁹

Elidalva’s experience of leaving the life in the *roça* and moving to a town, however small, with little to no guidance about how to succeed in the new environment demanded she engage in an act of refraction to reassess her situation and better understand how to navigate her role in the setting. Clearly, something about the situation of living and working with no guarantee of getting paid made her uncomfortable enough to begin to ask questions and demand a better situation. Several times during my interview with her she attributed these kinds of realizations to divine intervention.

In another example in her life where her view on the world shifted dramatically occurred when she was let go from a job where she had worked for ten years. She

⁶⁶ You live here for free, what more do you want?

⁶⁷ Then God sent me a judge.

⁶⁸ I didn’t even know what a salary was. I was such a fool.

⁶⁹ Fundo da garantia is a kind of public benefit protecting workers from being fired without just cause.

describes her boss in this setting with tenderness and compassion. She indicates this woman treated her with respect and dignity and was a good boss. She describes her role in the job by saying “*Eu dei meu sangue lá. Eu era o motor daquela pousada.*”⁷⁰ She speaks of that time with a kind of pride in how important she was to the daily workings of the *pousada*. The situation that shifted her perspective so radically was when the owner of the *pousada*, a foreign national, left Itacaré to go back to her hometown in Cuba. Elidalva remained and worked for managers that were hired by the owner from a distance.

At a certain point she realized the managers were stealing from the owner. She felt sure that this was wrong and felt it was her obligation to alert the owner to the situation. The result was that her own employment was terminated. She describes how overcome with physical pain she was after this experience. She said she had such severe back pain she could not even lift a small lightweight item, like a small handbag. She went to several doctors and received a variety of treatments but nothing worked to ease the pain. When I asked her what finally worked to help her overcome this pain, she said “*foi curada na igreja.*”⁷¹

Elidalva was nearly crushed from the experience of working ten years doing almost literally back-breaking work only to be let go without just cause. In her experience, this situation of extreme discomfort required, in her mind, an act of divine intervention. In an event that was almost devastating, she was terminated from a job for doing what she believed to be the right thing, a job she seemed to care deeply about. In this experience, the best strategy for making sense of a situation was to cultivate an act of faith in God. Today she describes herself as being a good person and a hard-working

⁷⁰ I gave my blood there. I was the motor of that posada.

⁷¹ I was healed in the church.

person. She dreams of seeing her children succeed. Her motto is “*Se não poder ajudar, não atrapalha.*”⁷²

When I asked her what she does to try to protect herself from future situations where she is exploited or mistreated, she says she senses a person’s energy. “*Tem certas pessoas que têm aquela boa convivência, carinho para as pessoas, sabe? Aquela energia boa. . . . Então, são pessoas que você vê, são pessoas de deus, que pode ajudar você no que você puder.*”⁷³ Elidalva has learned that there is never a guarantee that a prospective employer will treat her fairly. She relies on an affective response to the person in order to determine how she should proceed. She indicated that there are certainly still people in Itacaré taking advantage of domestic workers in the same way she was exploited but she says it is “*bem escondidinho*” (very hidden). I asked Elidalva what her advice would be to other young women who might be coming to Itacaré from the *roça* looking for work only to end up finding themselves in a similar situation. “*Sair. Porque se a pessoa não está te dando valor, vai vir uma outra pessoa lá na frente que vai. Porque quando uma porta fecha, outra abre.*”⁷⁴ This may very well be sage advice for any woman navigating her worth in an environment not designed for women to succeed.

Conflicting perspectives about domestic violence

This idea that women must like the abuse if they keep returning to experience it again and again came up more than once. On the day that I was preparing to perform my solo show wherein I place myself in an extremely vulnerable position (lying naked on

⁷² If you can’t help, try not to make a mess of things.

⁷³ There are certain people that have that good sense of community, kindness for other people, you know? That good energy. . . . So, they’re people that you see, they’re people of God, that can help you in whatever you can do.

⁷⁴ Get out. Because if a person is not valuing you, another person will come along who will. Because when one door closes, another opens.

the floor asking the audience to shave my head), one local resident asked me to tell him a little about the performance so he could help spread the word. He wanted me to draft a blurb to give to the person who runs the public street radio. He wanted to promote the show and the theatre workshop I was offering to the community. This all seemed very generous of him and I was pleased to accept his assistance. My understanding was that the public street radio markets itself to a broad, general audience. I felt I should make potential audiences aware of the theme and content since I have gotten criticism in the US about the need for this.

He questioned the phrase “*uma quase-comédia sobre violência doméstica.*”⁷⁵ He also questioned the need for the phrase “*não indicada para crianças pequenas.*”⁷⁶ I explained how people with past traumas often don’t appreciate being blindsided by content that might be a trigger for them. His response baffled me and presented a moment of awkwardness and discomfort that made me realize there truly are completely contradictory beliefs that co-exist in the same physical space. He said “*Eu acho que 99 ... 90% das mulheres daqui gostam da violência.*”⁷⁷ I looked him right in the eye told him if he could find me one woman willing to say that women here like violence I would talk about that comment. I had to eat my own words a few weeks later when I did, indeed encounter a woman from the Porto de Trás community who casually commented to me “I don’t understand it. These women must like the violence. They keep going back for more.”

This moment of discomfort forced me to recognize how different people’s views are on this topic. In my little bubble, I have crafted a world where that kind of absurdity

⁷⁵ An almost comedy about domestic violence.

⁷⁶ Not indicated for young children.

⁷⁷ I think that 99 . . . 90% of the women here like violence.

does not exist. I always hear stories about people who think of victims of domestic violence as being partially to blame or that somehow they must really like being treated that way. I have always convinced myself they are not true or they are exaggerations. Hearing this man say those words right to my face and later hearing them confirmed by a woman in town forced me to confront the idea that I could remain comfortable in my ignorance of these problematic belief systems. In this situation one could argue that the substance causing these kinds of distorted perspectives is patriarchy. The members of this community who believe women like to be beaten do not see how the metaphorical glass of water (patriarchy) bends our perception of the pencil (domestic violence).

Paula's story and refraction through disillusionment

One of the most moving examples from the data that offered a rich and profound way of understanding this phenomenon of refraction is the story of Paula. Paula specifically asked that her real name be used because she believes that these kinds of stories need to be told. She has observed too many women in her community who show up with bruises and try to pass it off as an accident. I met Paula at a dance workshop held as part of the Dance Festival of Itacaré. She was friendly, congenial, and seemed naturally to assume a kind of leadership role in the community of Porto de Trás even though she was still a relatively young woman. She has a pre-school aged daughter and lives in a small building built off to the side of her mother's house.

There were two major events in Paula's life that resulted in the kind of experience I am calling an opportunity for refraction. The first occurred when she was an adolescent, she realized that her father was always trying to beat her mother. "*Mas minha mãe era muito valente.*"⁷⁸ So it was usually a fight more so than him beating her. She talked about how this was all because of drinking, that before her father began to

⁷⁸ But my mother was tough.

drink he was an excellent father. She describes a moment that “*marcou muito a minha vida*”⁷⁹ when her father came home drunk one night. She and her sister were already in bed and her mother was on the couch. “*E ele chegou e ele estava tentando matar a minha mãe.*”⁸⁰

She describes the moment when she realized what was happening, walked into the living room and saw him with his hands around her neck, choking her. “*Quando ouvi os gritos dela acordei.*”⁸¹ When she suddenly realized that her mother was not able to scream, speak or breathe anymore she said to herself “*Eu vou ter que tomar uma atitude agora, se não vou ver minha mãe morrer aqui agora.*”⁸² She describes how she went to the back of the house near the kitchen and found a large piece of wood. She came back in, and with all her force, slammed her father over the back and side with the piece of wood until he released her mother. Her mother was able to breathe again, started screaming, and was able to escape.

She admitted that when she tells the story it might sound horrible for a young girl to beat her father with a stick like that. But she knew she had to or else she would see her mother die. The family was able to escape into the streets and ask other people for help. She describes how the event made her realize instantly that she could not bear to watch an act of violence in which her father would kill her mother with his bare hands. “*Aquele tipo de violência não pode acontecer.*”⁸³

This example shows, in extreme and stark imagery, how a young girl’s perspective went through a sudden and severe moment of discomfort, unease, and uncertainty and

⁷⁹Made a big mark on her life.

⁸⁰ He got home and he was trying to kill my mother.

⁸¹ When I heard her screams I woke up.

⁸² I’m going to have to do something right now or else I’m going to see my mother die right in front of me.

⁸³ That kind of violence cannot be allowed to happen.

provoked her to see the situation for what it was: a horrible situation of violence and abuse. Fortunately for her and for her mother she was able to move as quickly through the moment as she did in order to save her mother's life. She also describes how people remain blind to these kinds of abuses. She compared it to pedophilia. She lamented that pedophilia is so hidden from public dialogue, and because of that social taboo the problem is worse than it might be otherwise. In this case, this is one woman recognizing the need for this perspective to shift not only for her own or her mother's safety, but for the well-being of the community.

The components for this refraction to occur in this situation can be described as follows: Paula's perspective shifted dramatically and drastically when the trauma of seeing her father nearly kill her mother stimulated an urgent need to recognize something that perhaps had gone unrecognized or at the very least ignored or hidden. In that moment, the metaphorical pencil in the cup of water suddenly became clear. The metaphorical water that was distorting the family's view of the situation was the denial that the father of this family was violent and had a problem with drinking. This experience for Paula, served as an opportunity to re-fract, re-cognize (*re-conhecer*) the situation and her understanding of it to provide her with a new perspective. To this day Paula can see when a woman in the community is hiding the evidence of physical abuse that occurs.

The second event in Paula's life that provided her with an intense experience that shifted her perspective was her failed marriage. Before I conducted the interview she told me about this story and the story of her childhood experience saving her mother from her father's violence. She mentioned that she had written some poetry and a song. She knew I was a singer because she had seen my performance. We talked about the idea of putting her song to music. She was nervous because she said she is not a trained

singer. She asked for my help. I have taken her words, the loose structure of her melody and rhythms, and am in the process of creating a song for her. This song will be made public as a music video.

The collaboration has presented a few challenges. The first challenge had to do with the musicality. Since Paula's experience as a musician is limited, my creative partner and I worked diligently to understand the musical tonality, the melody and possible harmonization to adequately and artistically support her melody. We are still in the process of crafting this in a way that both honors her original source melody but also conforms to accepted musical conventions of tonality and harmony. The second challenge had to do more with my honoring her lyrics and structure in the best possible way. I had to accept that her song could not represent the entire community and its diversity. She felt strongly that there was no space to allow for alternate interpretations that might include paying homage to the Orixás in addition to a Christian God because it would violate her expression of faith. I am obligated ethically to honor her request.

This challenge hints at something I was not able to uncover during fieldwork that could be a possible research question for future projects. When I realized that the community of Porto de Trás was not entirely made up of Candomblé initiates, but rather included a variety of religious practices including Catholicism, Candomblé, and Evangelical Christian religions, I began to ask around casually what the dynamics were like between people of these different faiths in the community. Every with whom I spoke responded in a way that seemed to brush off the question and its importance. There are no difficulties between religious faiths here. The question seemed silly to most. I could take these responses at their face value and not probe further. But there have also been subtle indicators that the potential for conflict might be present.

A newsletter published by one of the main Afro-Centric cultural centers in Itacaré, “Casa do Boneco,” indicated that when a group of initiates arrived at the steps of the Catholic Church to clean the steps in an annual ritual important to their faith, the priest chased them away demanding they not bring this kind of *Macumba* to his church. Young people on multiple occasions expressed that their parents have forbidden them to have anything to do with Casa do Boneco or of any Candomblé practices in general. I even asked one young woman why everyone was so afraid of frogs here. She looked at me as if I was foolish and indicated that frogs are dangerous because they can shoot a poisonous milk at you that can blind you and they are used in “*Macumba*.” These kinds of uses of the pejorative words for Afro-Brazilian religious practices might seem innocuous now. But I only need to peruse the national newspapers to see that there are instances where Candomblé and Umbanda initiates are ousted from communities with strong Evangelical ties. The existence of active national movements to reduce discrimination against African-derived religions throughout Brazil nationally indicates that discrimination exists, even if the popular notion is that there are no problems.

One of the members of the Porto de Trás community expressed how much she loves her *festas* at the *terreiro*. She wanted to share her stories with me some day. Alas, her camera-shy nature prevented us from conducting that interview this time around. I later visited the grounds where her *terreiro* stands. The *terreiro* is on the outer bank of the peninsula, accessible only by boat, usually canoe. So, it may be true that there are no conflicts or problems between the people of various faiths here in this community. In the future I will want to understand the complexity of these dynamics more clearly, when the time is appropriate. In the mean time, it is my obligation to reflect back to these women what they have shared with me. In the case of Paula’s story, I honor her desire to

share the inspiring words that lifted her from a deep depression, through an act of faith in a divine power.

This song came to me in a very difficult moment. Maybe the most difficult moment of my life. After my separation ... that period of adaptation, that period when we think “What went wrong? What did we do? And why?” You know? We sit there wondering. [...] I love to write. So I started to sing. Actually it was a prayer that I wrote. This is why it’s called “clean my soul” because of the weight I was feeling, it was as if I couldn’t even work anymore.

Hoje eu acordei com vontade de chorar

São tantos meus problemas, Parece que vão me sufocar

Às vezes acredito que não vou conseguir

Me sinto tão pequena e um imenso mar vai me engolir.

Me ensina pai a ter a coragem de David

Me ensina pai a não desistir.

Cura as minhas feridas e me limpa limpa limpa dessa dor.

Limpa minha alma. Limpa minha alma.

Limpa minha dor Senhor Jesus.

Pousa do meu lado. Pousa do meu lado pertinho de mim.

Eu so quero te adorar, de todo meu coração, Jesus⁸⁴.

⁸⁴ Today I awoke with the urge to cry
I have so many problems, I feel like I will suffocate.
Sometimes I feel like I just won’t make it
I feel so small and an immense sea will engulf me.

Teach me father to have the courage of David
Teach me father how not to give up
Heal my wounds and clean me clean me clean me of this pain.

My husband never hit me. But what he did to me was worse than beating: humiliation, rejection, that kind of thing. Because I had a friend whose husband would beat her and he went to jail. And I asked myself “And those who kill dreams? What happens to them?” [...] I dreamt my whole life of having a family, I dreamt of it my whole life ... a wedding and everything. And when it finally happened, it wasn’t anything like I thought it would be. It was a terrible letdown. To be humiliated and abandoned ... abandoned ... I was sick and pregnant, pregnant with a baby ... but it was dying. And I thought “what kind of a human being is this?” I stopped believing in love and marriage. I don’t believe in that anymore.

As she continues her story I believe Paula reveals an important aspect to the ways this experience shaped her and how it relates to refraction. She describes the experience as a great disillusionment. This is exactly the kind of thing that refraction does. It unmasks the illusions (or delusions) under which we might be operating.

After going through something like that, there’s no use dreaming anymore. It’s too much disappointment. It’s disillusion. It’s fear, fear of repeating everything all over again. If it were to happen to me all over again, I don’t think I’d be able to get myself up out of bed anymore. Because if it happens once to me, then I didn’t expect it. But if it repeats, I’m going to think I’m worse than an idiot. Because I’ve been hit before, you think I’m going to let myself be hit again? No way. I have a lot of fear of getting into a new relationship.

Clean my soul. Clean my soul.
Clean my soul, Jesus.

Rest by my side. Rest by my side right next to me.
I only want to love you with all my heart, Jesus.

I have my daughter. I'm happy. I haven't been in a relationship for a long time and I don't want to. When I think about being in a relationship ... I can barely breathe. I was in a deep depression for three weeks. I almost never left the house. I lost a lot of weight. I almost lost my job. I mean ... it almost destroyed my life from so much disappointment I passed through, so much humiliation. [...] I think my problem was that I believed that he could change, that I shouldn't leave him. I believed that if I just worked harder, he could change.

I found myself responding to her story in contradictory ways. On one hand, I applauded her for being so determined to remain happy and single. But on the other hand I found myself holding out hope that one day, she would be free of the fear and be able to find love again. I caught myself before I made any comments to her because I wondered if perhaps I was just perpetuating the heteronormative narratives of male-female coupling as being equated with happiness. This could very well stem from my own mother's constant questioning "When are you gonna' get married?" that I withstood for years before I finally tried marriage, unsuccessfully.

This conflict of emotional responses to her story made me realize that the process of refraction might not necessarily result in any kind of permanent shift in perspective. These conflicting responses also made me realize I should be cautious about even assuming that any of these shifts in perspective might be necessarily positive. The proposal here is not a prescriptive action where refraction becomes some magic pill to recover from past trauma. My intention is to explain a process I observed and offer it as a possibility for analysis. There is plenty of room to argue that different sets of experiences in life require different strategies for negotiating identity and making sense of the world in a way that feels right to us. The narratives I inherited from my own

upbringing might elicit that oh-so-not-useful affective response of pity, about how sad it is that she is such a hard-working single mother with no man to help care for her and the house. But in Paula's reality, she has found a way to relieve herself of the weight of depression that resulted from an unhealthy marriage.

It is perhaps fitting that I close this section, the section named for and honoring the Orixá Iemanjá, with a recognition (re-cognition) of the ways I inherited narratives from my own mother. For most of my life I viewed my mother as the quintessential maternal figure. It wasn't until much later that I began to see how my interpretation of her and her story affected my own navigation in the world. The work of those realizations is not the work of this dissertation but the echoes of my previous perspectives still linger.

It is also perhaps fitting that I end this chapter in a zone of discomfort. The process of writing this ethnography caused me so much uncertainty and indecision for a variety of reasons. I felt in some ways obligated to share the most dramatic stories, such as Paula's story of saving her mother's life and Elidalva's story of her nearly back-breaking labor going unappreciated. But I also felt as if I might merely be putting the "pain of others" on display, something for which Susan Sontag might scold me if she knew I selected material that offered the most drama for the reader to be interested. This is, after all, a dissertation in a theatre and performance studies program. I can only hope that I have not made my reader too comfortable. I hope this collection of stories has confirmed what many of us in theatre have always already known: that it is only in the zones of discomfort that we can begin to reconsider how our narratives have contributed to our ways of being and knowing and performing ourselves in everyday life.

CHAPTER 5

PROPOSAL FOR PERFORMANCE ETHNOGRAPHY

Overview And Intent

My goals with this performance project are several. I seek to offer a performance ethnography project to potential spectators, largely based in the US or other Western regions, who might be considered part of a privileged class that is able to engage in foreign travel for leisure. I seek to challenge the assumptions underneath the idea of leisure. Some of those assumptions came from my own blind spots. Some of them came from perspectives of others with whom I have had rather intimate relationships. The lessons I learned through the exchanges, the disagreements, and the painful separations I had from people about whom I cared very deeply, were painful lessons. I believe that these painful lessons are the ones with the richest possibility for raising awareness of my own shortcomings and possibly helping others to recognize some of their own blind spots as well.

The ethnographic report of findings in this dissertation is about the women I met and interviewed. The ethnographic film projects I create that result from this research will also be about these women. But because of the way I conduct my research, heavy with deep critical self-reflection and critical autoethnography, the live performance piece I am developing will highlight some of my own journey in conversation with the stories I encountered. But I will have to fictionalize many of the story events in order to protect the identity of those involved. For many years I have argued with myself about the ethics of including my own stories side by side with the people I have studied, and for whom and with whom I have been conducting this research.

I subtitled this dissertation “An Ethnography with Women in Rural Bahia, Brazil.” I deliberately chose the preposition “with” to indicate that this study is not a study upon human beings as my object of inquiry. This study was a journey that I shared with these women. They helped me learn things about them but also about myself. But

even more importantly, I want the lessons I learned to be shared in a creative and dynamic way that will be provocative and entertaining enough for my audiences that they will be intrigued and inspired to learn more about this work. By exposing my own mistakes and injuries with a critical vulnerability, I can invite people in to the conversation. I am not authorized to expose the mistakes and vulnerabilities of others. Ethically, I can not do this. This is why I believe this new piece of performance ethnography will be best served with a strong autoethnographic component. I want my audiences to know why I chose to conduct my research in Itacaré and why I believe the lessons I learned are important to anyone who seeks to engage in foreign travel to places like Bahia. If I have done my work well, audiences will see this work as a reminder of an ethical imperative for this kind of travel: consider one's assumptions and prepare to travel with a willingness to release those assumptions, This will necessarily result in the awareness of how important it is to be present to what the local residents might be doing and saying. I am a performer and a creative writer. This is how I can best do that.

Excerpts and Articulation of Concepts Enacted

Scene: Sympathy for Exú

Theoretical Mash-up of "Sympathy for the Devil" with the Jogo do Exú

Please allow me to introduce myself. I'm woman of perceived wealth and taste.

I've been around for a few years now, seen a few people struggle in vain.

I was around when a woman I loved had her moment of doubt and pain.

Made damn sure I cut her out of my life and washed my hands of her fate.

Pleased to meet you. I hope you catch my name.

But what's puzzling you is the nature of my game.

I stuck around the favela bar, much longer than was good for me to be
I killed I don't know how many bottles of cerveja geladinha
I rode the beast of gluttonous feasts while others found their food in the trash
I blamed it all on culture shock, but the truth is I had cash.

Zé Pilintra! I hope you catch my name.

But what's puzzling you is the nature of my game.

I danced with glee to the samba beat, and sang your songs of protest in the street
I shouted out who killed ZUMBI, when after all it was you and me!
I sang like a goddamned troubador, was it blackface blues or was it real?
And when I sang about Insensatez, I felt your eyes say "How does it feel?"

Pomba Gira! Did you catch her name, tell me did you?

But what's puzzling you is the jogo do Exú.

Just as every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints,
You can call me Lucifer, or the devil too, but I'm really just a reflection of you!
So if you see my oferenda at the crossroads, step aside and show some restraint.
Not out of fear, but out of respect my dear, if you mess with me, You might not
like my game!

Pleased to meet you, Will you join me for a drink?

I'm not pure evil, my dear, I am more human than humans even think.

Pleased to meet you, did you catch my name?

What's confusing you is the nature of my game.

Articulation of Concepts Enacted: Sympathy for Exú

This song is a riff on the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil." As I mentioned in an earlier chapter, the syncretization of Exú with the Catholic devil is problematic. By showing sympathy for Exú, I hope to invite the audience to engage in an process of de-demonizing Exú. Even more important to this work than the de-demonization of Exú is an attempt to offer the song as a reflection. In the Candomblé religion, the myths and characters from those myths often serve as mirrors for humans to reflect on their own behavior. I have found in my own personal consultations with *mães de santo* that when the mythological character offers that kind of parallel it opens up possibilities for critical self-reflection in ways that reduce the emphasis on guilt and instead, present the narratives as reminders of how to avoid falling out of balance.

Some of the lessons I learned personally are woven throughout the song and throughout the entire piece, disguised either as mythological narratives or as fleeting lyrics about "a woman I loved in her moment of doubt and pain." Once again I reiterate that the lessons I learned personally occurred in relation to other people whose stories I am not at liberty to recount. These stories must be hidden, disguised, encoded so that only those closest to the story will see the specificities. This has a twofold benefit. One of my study participants from my dissertation research project made a comment to me about an autoethnographic performance piece I presented in Itacaré. She asked me why so much of my own story was included in such detail. She wanted to be able to fit her own story onto mine so she could find the parallels and connections. In this sense, the mythic structures and ambiguous references become a way of taking her opinion into account for the current work-in-progress.

The structure of the Rolling Stones song has been left intact and many of the lyrics have been maintained but substituted with Brazilian references. For example, while Mick Jagger might sing the question “Who killed the Kennedys” I pose the question “Who killed Zumbi?” a reference to Zumbi dos Palmares, the legendary Quilombo leader from the 17th century who resisted colonial forces for decades before finally succumbing to their violence. Zumbi has become a rallying icon for Black rights movements in Brazil.

The other main throughline of this song is the recurring points of hypocrisy I include in order to remind audience members that what might initially seem like innocent vacation fun is always already situated in histories of oppression of colonized peoples. For example, the most popular bar in the town of Itacaré where I conducted my fieldwork is called “Favela Coffee House” (also commonly referred to simply as “Favela Bar”). The bar stays open quite late (usually until dawn) and often hosts live music. The bar is open to the street and the fresh fruit, ready to be crushed into a *caipirinha*, lines a table along the sidewalk. The choice to name the bar after a word used to describe urban shantytowns in Rio, São Paulo and other major cities in Brazil is problematic. The idea that these rich European and US American tourists might be coming here to “slum it” with the locals is a trope enacted nightly.

Because the bar is open to the street, those who might not be able to afford the prices of Favela Bar’s drinks can often purchase cheaper cans of beer from local street vendors who roll their drink carts into town from neighborhoods outside the tourist areas. In this situation the space in front of Favela Bar becomes a zone of encounter between locals and tourists. Quite often these involve what some locals call “*caça-gringos*” or “*caça-gringas*.”⁸⁵ After the *capoeira* demonstration ends at the Jungle Bar

⁸⁵ Gringo-hunters or *gringa* hunters.

next door, sweaty, shirtless *capoeiristas* can be seen being invited for drinks by foreign visitors. Local men can be seen eager to find a rich foreign girlfriend to be able to teach her the local dance, *forró pé da serra*. What happens after that is not for me to tell here. I once overheard someone call this region of town the place where the devil resides. If the devil is the embodiment of booze, dancing, money, and music then I would agree. It seems an apropos place to cite for this song.

One other important aspect this song incorporates is a questioning of who or what is that persona that many have come to know as the devil. The names of various manifestations of Exú are included, like Pomba Gira (a female manifestation of Exú) and Zé Pilintra (a cultural archetype associated with Exú who is a kind of urban trickster-scoundrel, dressed in a white suit and fedora). These names are included not because a US American audience will recognize them, but rather as a reminder that the culture is complex and quick assumptions should be rejected. Following up on this concept that quick judgments should be avoided I include a subtle reference to Póvoas' body of work where he insists that Exú is more human than humans think. I interpret this to include the implication that the devil is only as evil as humans are capable of imagining him to be.

Scene: S'mores by the fireside with narrator, Jack Colby

A note on the character of Jack Colby: This character should probably be played in drag. You might even dress him in yellow and white to highlight his cheesy name. He sits by a fire. It should be overtly fake. Grotesque even. It could be like a drag version of the already campy cheesy "Waiting for Guffman" narrator who sits around the fire.

Well howdy there. My name's Jack Colby. Pretty cheesy, name, right? Well, I s'pose it fits. I'm the one who likes the cheesiest jokes. And puns. Some folks even call me the PUN-isher. Ya see what I did there?

Anyway, you're welcome to sit and join me around the fire. My daddy used to always take us camping. And as soon as nightfall arrived, he'd say "let's all gather round the fire and tell some lies!" It always made me laugh to hear him say that. I thought "who would want to deliberately tell lies?" My daddy did. He made an adventure about it. And it was fun! He would put on funny voices and stretch that truth so far it almost snapped. These lies never felt mean or deceptive. It was an exercise in tellin' a tall tale. Spinnin' yarns. For a long time I thought it was just some silly thing my dad liked to do. Him and his buddies. But I once met a fella in Bahia, Brazil who told me... well, you're not gonna believe what he told me. He said his family was from the roça. That's like livin' in the jungle ... well, jungle is such a silly word. It's got so many strange connotations. They don't have a separate word for jungle and forest. Well they do, but ... it's different. So the roça really just means way out in the middle of the countryside somewhere. Maybe deep forest. Anyway. He told me that out in the roça, there's no television or radio or iPods or CD players or what-have-you. All they had was each other. And when it got dark, it was time to tell lies. I kid you not. Tellin' lies. Must be some kind of deeply human urge. You know what he said about telling lies? He said it was like a competition to see who could tell the most creative lies. For him and his family, telling lies was a way for them to have fun keeping their creative skills alive.

Ya see, I'm what'chya might call a Cowboy Anthropologist. I know I know. Some of you all are probably thinkin' ... what in the Sam Hill is he even talkin' about? Who ever heard of a Cowboy anthropologist?! Well, probably no one. Most cowboys don't even know what an anthropologist does. If they have heard the word they usually just think of it as one of those fancy ivy-league or ivory tower or I-voted-for-every-bleeding-heart-liberal-since-FDR kinda folks. You know, the academic types. The ones who wanna save the world with their social theories and what not?

See, here's the thing about cowboys. Everybody's got an idea about what a cowboy is. There's the stories of the good guy vs the bad guy. There's always a cowboy in a black hat who wants to cheat at poker and rob from the miners and rape the women. And then there's always a good guy in a white hat ready to come in and save the womenfolk. But that ain't really how it worked. There was no code of black hat -white hat determining who did what. There were no blacks or whites. Everyone had a bit of a mottled complexion. Kinda like that Colby jack cheese. Or the black and white spots on a Holstein cow. No one is purely good or purely evil. People are capable of anything, given the right circumstances. Or the wrong circumstances as the story might go. We were survivors. All of us. On all sides. And sometimes we killed. And sometimes we rescued. It wasn't all battle scenes. And honestly, ain't you tired of hearing stories of cowboys and Indians killin each other all the time? That wasn't the way it was back in the early days. I mean yeah, you had some encounters with some of the warrior tribes. But the real fighting didn't get goin til the large groups of settlers started comin in and crowdin the place. Like the Mormon settlers and the miners and the military.

Once people were comin out here in those kinda numbers? Well, you can see how it looked like an invasion, can't you? But back in the early days ... the cowboys ... they was mostly solitary folk. One guy runnin' cattle. Another guy farmin' his little plot of land. My great granddaddy settled his little plot of land before much of this place was even part of the US of A yet. This was all still Mexico. Most people forget that. Some folks think it should go back to being Mexico again. Anyway, back in those early days, a solitary traveler was not attacked. On the contrary, a solitary traveler was considered a sacred visitor. Why? Because the solitary traveler brought stories with him. And that exchange of stories was considered sacred.

You know what was REALLY goin on back in those days? The cowboys were coming into this territory and observing. And those who were here first were hunkering down in the sidelines. Also observing. If we could have left it at just a few...? Well, maybe things would have turned out differently. But you know how it goes. As soon as someone sends the story back home that this is the land of milk and honey... that this is paradise on earth ... that this is the promised land ... or whatever kinda story you wanna tell about the place Well, it's like the way those anthropologists went down into those exotic places and found the stories and the myths of the other people fascinating. They came back and told their academic folks all about what they learned. And soon, everyone wanted a piece of the pie.

So, ya see? You could almost say my great granddaddy was the first. I come from a long line of cowboy anthropologists. Well, maybe not that long a line. But a

line anyway. The lone cowboy. The solitary traveler. The bringer of stories. The teller of tall tales. The spinner of yarns. The weaver of ... a web of lies.

Articulation of Concepts Enacted: Jack Colby, Cowboy Anthropologist

Jack Colby, Cowboy Anthropologist, is officially becoming a recurrent character in my work. I have only recently named him with this current name and title. His persona stems from my own personal upbringing. My family has more than a century of history in Arizona. My father's family was considered a frontier family, tending the land in southeastern Arizona. My father grew up with the tradition of telling stories around the fire. At first I thought my own upbringing had absolutely nothing to do with my research. But of course, as with anyone who engages in deep critical reflection will probably admit, our histories are always intertwined with our present activities.

When the theme of liars (*mentirosos*) emerged in my fieldwork, I took special care, through shadow work and meditations, to pay close attention in order to avoid allowing instances of lying to trigger me in some way. (I have a history of being triggered by lying). What this offered for me was a chance to see connections about the ways lying can be both a strategy for resistance and an exercise in creativity. Because my father used to say "let's sit around the fire and tell lies" and because people I encountered in my fieldwork talked about lies and deception in similar ways I understood that there may be opportunities for intercultural connections I hadn't imagined.

Jack Colby also points out the complexities involved historically in the discipline of anthropology. This character reminds audiences that the impulse to share the exotic cultures the anthropologists encountered became the seeds for colonial domination. He draws the parallel between anthropologists visiting "exotic" locations to the ways the Western US was developed through Manifest Destiny, resulting in the colonization and genocide of Native American peoples too numerous to name here. One of my objectives,

as a scholar, is to find ways to point out the initial impulses that contribute to the development of oppressive regimes. Genocide does not occur overnight. By asking the audience to recognize the similarities between their own seemingly innocent desires and vacation habits and the impulses that led to the colonization of Africa and the Americas, I hope to elicit an attitudinal shift in the audience which will cause them to think twice before engaging in the kinds of habits and practices that might not be harmful today, but could lead to oppressive structures.

Another performative aspect that Jack Colby holds is the ability to hail spectators as “good old regular folks.” This prevents the performance piece from ever feeling overly didactic, even when Jack Colby discusses things like the binaries of the Western genre, the complex and complicated history of the southwestern United States and Mexico, or anthropology as an act that has historically supported colonization efforts. His regular folk persona allows these potentially hot button topics to educate and entertain in a non-threatening way. This is designed so that academics can laugh at themselves and their desires to try to “save the world with their social theories and what not” and so that the implications of these concepts can be planted in the minds of the audience without an overtly judgmental or accusatory tone. In the end, Jack Colby reminds the audience that the oral storytelling tradition is the act that unites us across disparate cultures.

Song: The Postcolonial blues

Não me diga, I’m like a chili verde

So (sou) picante but also saboroso

Não me diga that I’m a colonizer

Just because I love your virgin forest.

Sweet but not too sweet (Vai fundo)

The deeper I go, the deeper I know that you are ... (Don't tell me)

So sweet, but not too sweet.

I'm just an outsider lookin in ... so sweet.

Não me diga my chocolate's (chocolate es) branco

If you cleave me my sangue is vermelho

Não me diga mestiçagem é morto

Please believe me on the periphery of something I can't see

That you're sweet, but not too sweet. (Vai fundo)

The deeper I go, the deeper I know that you are ... (Don't tell me)

So sweet, but not too sweet.

I'm just an outsider lookin in ... so sweet.

Não me diga, my privilege precludes me.

Não me diga, my privilege excludes me.

I will tell you I'm not my father's keeper.

All I want is to go a little deeper.

Articulation of Concepts Enacted: "The Postcolonial Blues"

The song begins with a borrowing of lyrics and phrases from the song "La Llorona" featured in the motion picture *Frida*, directed by Julie Taymor. The graduate program at Arizona State University where I made my home for the last five years is steeped in theories about Borderlands, particularly the border between Mexico and Arizona. The producing arm of our PhD program is called "Performance in the Borderlands." Many of the theories we study about the construction of metaphorical

borders center on the ways *mestizaje* and *mestiçagem* have become structures for navigating multiple identities. In Brazil, in particular, the rich history of cultural cannibalism inspired by Oswald de Andrade Cannibalist Manifesto in the 1920s elicits tendencies for co-opting and borrowing fragments from dominant cultures in order to digest and regurgitate new cultural expressions. What I have done here with this set of lyrics might be considered to some, the exact opposite of what Andrade called for. I am, after all, a US American, raised in a suburban middle-class household, with European ancestry. To co-opt cultural fragments from Mexican folklore might be considered a transgression in the academic world. And yet, at the heart of the postcolonial blues lies the desire to identify with various cultures, even knowing it may be wrong, inappropriate or dangerously close to cultural appropriation. And so the shadow expresses itself here in song.

This song incorporates a rhythm reminiscent of Brazilian Bossa Nova but follows a basic musical structure. The musical structure is not technically blues but the lyrics follow a pattern of many blues songs where the opening line repeats through all verses but shifts in each verse. The simplicity of the structure offers audiences an easy way to hear the lyrics through repetition that might not be grasped if offered only once, particularly because the opening phrase is always sung in Portuguese.

The song expresses one of my shadow responses to early doctoral studies where so much of our curriculum was rooted in postcolonial theories. I call this a shadow response as a way of articulating what I developed as part of my research methodology where the researcher's shadow aspects must be acknowledged lest they color or distort the data encountered in the field. In this case, the song speaks of the desire for "the other" that I felt was quashed in graduate school. In this instance, the desire for the other and for cultures historically exoticized is openly addressed.

Viewing colonized lands as a female body to be possessed is reflected in the line “*Não me diga*⁸⁶ that I’m a colonizer, just because I love your virgin forest.” So often in the site of my fieldwork, which is a tourist location touted for its idyllic location, I heard the place referred to as paradise or the beaches as “pristine.” The more remote a beach was, the bigger a status symbol it was to reach it and proclaim you had been there. The song is crafted as a kind of love song where a woman’s virgin forest becomes the thing desired. Once again, these metaphors reside in a complicated space. They reflect the struggle to act ethically as it is in conflict with the desire for cultural taboos.

Parallel to the recognition of a latent desire for the other is a set of conflicting desires: the desire to find universal connections and the desire to point out differences. This concept is reflected in the line “*Não me diga* my chocolate’s (*es*) *branco*. If you cleave me, my *sangue* is *vermelho*.” “Chocolate’s (*es*) *branco*” is a utilization of a series of sounds that are neither completely in English nor completely in Portuguese but become intelligible in both English and Portuguese. “*Branco*” is fairly well understood among most Western literate audiences familiar with any of the Latin languages to mean “white.” The pronunciation of “chocolate” (shoh-koh-LAH-chee) in Portuguese is clear enough to a discerning ear to mean “chocolate” in English. The words “*sangue*” and “*vermelho*” are close enough to “sanguine” and “vermilion” in English to offer an understanding of “blood” and “red” to a well-read English speaking audience. This phrasing embodies the differences of the two languages in its sounds, points out the difference in the assumed non-brownness of white chocolate, but also points to a desired universality with the indication that once cut open, we all bleed red.

The song riffs on the idea that the researcher inhabits that space between insider and outsider. The refrain calls back to this status and echoes the “sweet, but not too

⁸⁶ *Não me diga* means “Don’t tell me” in Portuguese.

sweet” as a way of remembering the encounters with other peoples and other cultures. We must not exoticize too much, yet the attraction is palpable. Finally, the song points out the fact that, while the singer might wish not to be excluded because of her privilege, she has a responsibility to acknowledge it and understand it. The line “I am not my father’s keeper” reflects the desire not to be held accountable for the mistakes of our ancestors. And yet, in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé religion, one must always be held accountable for what our ancestors have done. The kinds of privileges that result in histories of oppression are, indeed, inherited. The fact remains that tourist privilege, if left unchecked and unpacked, may leave a funky smell in the suitcase.

The remaining segments of the performance piece are still very much in their infancy of development. They most likely do not resemble anything close to what the final performance will be. I have included them here in order to give a glimpse into the ways my creative research develops alongside my qualitative research.

Scene: (Unknown characters in an unknown scene)

Part of my story is about the twins. Twins separated by a lifetime and a continent and ... a few centuries.

She didn’t want them. Oxum. She didn’t want her babies because she was too vain. She cast them off.

Iansã was desperate for children. Perhaps all her battles she had fought left her womb too dry to conceive. So she grabbed them, and held them, and cared for them. And now we have to pay homage to Iansã for bringing our lost twins into her fold.

The stories are not pretty. Two women. Two sons. Two brothers searching for their lost sisters. Two sisters so lost they didn't even know they were searching. Cosette has lost her Damian. Damiana has lost her Cosme. And the mothers lie bleeding on the floor. The story is complicated. For the myth we have to simplify it in order to learn a lesson. Oxum was vain. That's why she did it. But the real stories are complicated and painful. And messy. Two women bleeding and vomiting on the floor. Two boys, unaware of the stories behind the moaning and groaning. It wasn't really vanity. Well maybe just a little. But really it was shame. Each one of these women looked into the other's eyes and saw the recognition ... the shame... They saw each other's pain in this most surprising of places, in a nearly-forgotten story told out of some bizarre and desperate need to connect. How could I have let myself get in that situation? How could I have been so stupid? How could I have let him do this to me? Why did I trust him? Do you understand what I'm saying? Yes. Oh yes I do.

Song: Win or Lose Blues

This song is dedicated to Brazil, Copa do Mundo 2014. This was at the point that they had already lost to Germany in the semi-final match.

It don't matter what Brazil does on Saturday
It don't matter what Brazil does on Saturday
It don't matter what Brazil does on Saturday
Whether they win or lose, Brazil's goin' away.

It don't matter what Holanda does on Saturday

It don't matter what Holanda does on Saturday
It don't matter what Holanda does on Saturday
Whether they win or lose, they're goin away.

Os manifestantes estão na cadeia.
Os manifestantes estão na cadeia.
Os manifestantes estão na cadeia.
Whether they win or lose, a cadeia está cheia.

O Belo Monte dam is gonna fuck the Kaiopá.
O Belo Monte dam is gonna fuck the Kaiopá.
O Belo Monte dam is gonna fuck the Kaiopá.
Whether they win or lose they got the win or lose blues.

Final thoughts about the performance in progress.

In honoring the ways Exú has been interpreted as a Yoruba trickster, this performance piece plays with and disrupts many of the notions of what is and is not appropriate in an academic setting. One of the main objectives of trends such as “public ethnography” or “public humanities” is to bring academic scholarship to a broader audience. In many instances the dry, seemingly “objective” writing style so commonly accepted in academia can be alienating for a non-academic audience. This piece seeks to bring the insights I gained through rigorous academic research and scholarship to audiences who might not usually find themselves at an event labeled “performance ethnography.” I do not propose to be objective in my work, nor do I believe objectivity is even possible. I aim to be transparent in my subject position and all of the complexity that entails. Sometimes I have to expose aspects of my subject position of which I am

not proud in order to perform the kind of critical vulnerability that I believe results in a shift in attitude or perspective on the part of the audience.

CHAPTER 6

CLOSING: TENTATIVE CERTAINTIES AND FORWARD THINKING

I will follow the guidance of my mentor and assert that this study or any ethnographic study rooted in postcolonial ethics cannot arrive at conclusions, per se. Any truths that might have been unearthed as part of the grounded theory methodology must be considered to be tentative. As I hope the concept of refraction has also illuminated, encountering a conflicting perspective on a future day could challenge any perspective I hold as true today. In my life experience I have found it to be true that the tighter I cling to a particular belief system, the more likely it is to be something that will lead me to distress at some point. So yes, the sun will rise tomorrow and I know that to be true. But I will try not to cling too desperately to that truth, just in case it doesn't.

The tentative certainties I have reached about this research are as follows. 1) Most residents of Itacaré agree that tourism is required to maintain a viable living there. The degree to which tourism is desired varies from person to person. But nearly all participants agreed that the current conditions need to be improved for tourism to be sustainable in this community. For this reason I will want their assistance in dialogue to be sure that the work I do for US-American audiences who might be potential visitors to this or other similar locations honors the desires of this community. 2) Both among locals and between locals and foreign visitors, it is common for there to be drastically different views on a variety of issues relating to the well-being of this community. For this reason I believe continued creative process-based exercises for improving community dialogue could be beneficial to the community in Itacaré in general, and perhaps in the neighborhood of Porto de Trás even more specifically. I identify Porto de Trás as a potential site for this continued work mostly because the Centro Cultural

located there has proven itself to be an important center of cultural work, both in terms of community organizing and hosting artistic productions. Finally, 3) the conditions in which the process of refraction could be utilized, seem to hint that the process could be tapped as a means of avoiding traumatic disruptions in a person's life. Refraction as I have described it here in this dissertation could lead to a method for self-analysis and community-analysis for anyone who seeks both intercultural and intracultural understanding. This seems to be particularly true for instances where dissenting opinions are unable to reach consensus. The exploration of refraction as an epistemological approach to understanding one's varying perspectives holds potential for it to be my life's work.

The final stage of this dissertation project requires that I approach the community with whom I have conducted this study for a dialogue about the research to determine two important things: 1) how do these women want their lives to be narrated in this study; and 2) how can this research serve their community? The other day my son asked me "Mom, do you think it's possible that the people in Itacaré might think it is presumptuous for this white woman to come in and try to tell them something about themselves?" Yes, of course. I wrestle with this question almost daily. For this reason it is essential for me to go back to the place where I conducted this research and continue the dialogue that began during fieldwork.

This will present some challenges because the dissertation has been written in English. The intended audience is an English-speaking academic audience. So the main concern becomes, how do I present the work in a way that is accessible and useful to them. My first intention is to present the research as a kind of "mirror back" to them. Part of this process will be a proposal where I indicate how I have perceived their realities and ask them how accurate or how true that reflection seems to be. This, of

course, may present an opportunity for refraction to see where these incongruencies might exist between and among the various perspectives of individuals in the group.

The other main aspect to the question of how their stories get narrated has to do with the ways the results of this research get shared. I have a series of works-in-progress that have all had their inception in this research. The performance project that is resulting from this research is largely aimed at a North American and/or “Western” audience. I will want to share with the members of the study how this performance is being framed, where my own voice is highlighted, and where their stories will enter. Because my performance work is heavily autoethnographic I will want to be sure that, through these dialogues, I can come to an understanding with my study participants how these stories can all be woven together.

Paula’s song will be the first component of the creative research to be shared. I will be making a music video with images from Itacaré to serve as visual ethnographic details while the music plays. This will be easily shared via Youtube on the internet. I will offer it for Paula to share however she desires in order to allow people to hear her artistic voice. I believe Paula would agree that an understanding of the circumstances that led her to write that song are also important to share. She, herself, said these stories need to be told. For this reason I will offer a lead in to the song that includes some of her own story as voiceover.

The second video project that I will be sharing with the community is a project I am describing as a visual walking tour with a cacophony of voices of the women who took part in this study. Excerpts from their audio interview recordings will serve as an underscoring to the visual images I captured during my fieldwork that show the physical environment. My focus of these visual images has been the “sidewalks.” I have to use scare quotes when I talk about the sidewalks there. Those who have been there have

even joked that sidewalks are a very special thing in Itacaré. From the pounded sand and mud of the resort areas to the haphazard storefronts on the main tourist street, to the poorly maintained *paralelepípedo*, each section of sidewalks tells its own story of aesthetics and infrastructure. When I present this video to the community I will include my observations about the Cidade Fantasia community outreach effort that took place as part of the Dance Festival. I will be arriving in Itacaré the day the festival opens this year and my intention is to work with the director, Verusya Santos Correia, to present these findings as part of the lectures and workshops that typically accompany the festival.

This brings me to the most important aspect of this dialogue. When Verusya and I spoke about my research, she and I agreed that the work we are both doing is something we believe we can offer the community by helping them to see and understand what it is they are already doing that is noteworthy. She has been working with the Porto de Trás community for several years now. She is aware of the complexities that exist in the community relations of this *Quilombo* community. She sees how many of the elders are trying to preserve traditions rooted in the histories of resistance associated with the nature of being a *Quilombo*. She and I have both seen the level of frustration the members of the community feel when they try to work through official channels to make improvements to their situation. We have seen these efforts, and we desire to share with them, to reflect back, what we have seen. I see this as the act of committed witnessing that Boaventura de Sousa Santos asks scholar-activists to perform.

What will be challenging about this sharing of research findings will be the manner in which this can become a healthy dialogue in the community. It is certainly possible that the members of the community will think this research has little to offer them. Should this be so I will have to follow the words of Samuel Beckett and “Try

Again. Fail Again. Fail Better.” However, I believe the key to utilizing this research to find ways for the community to conduct their own dialogues lies in the work they already began under the direction of Correia and choreographer Thiago Ribeiro, who studied his technique with João Fiadeiro of AND_Lab. In Ribeiro’s workshop he taught a group of dancers, myself included, the technique Fiadeiro developed called “*composição do comum*.”⁸⁷ This technique offers a method for a group of artists, or in this case even simply community members, to engage in the creation of an aesthetic intervention based on certain rules, which require that the group try to understand each individual’s logic behind their actions. This non-verbal collective composition becomes what I believe to be a tool for paving the foundation of the kinds of community dialogue that can help disparate and dissenting voices to try to see each other’s perspectives and views and make choices about which forms of logic serve the larger collective and which choices must be abandoned.

The way in which this became clear to me involved a process that lasted for several months. When I first saw the flyer for the workshop Ribeiro was offering, I thought the combination of political activism and dance was the perfect place for me to be. During the workshop I remember feeling like I couldn’t see the political activism. It was just an activity for a group improvisation, or so I thought. After a few days I realized that the very act of collective creation is, in and of itself, a political act. A month or so later I found myself having an argument with my son about the social nature of the world we live in. I was urging him not to find himself perpetually holed away in isolation, because that could only lead to suffering later in life. I tried my hardest to make him understand that the world is necessarily already a social phenomenon. This could not be

⁸⁷ Composition of the collective.

avoided. He wanted proof, an example, at least. I grasped for straws and had none to offer him.

Then, a few months later when Ribeiro's group from Porto de Trás offered a work demonstration of their process, my son was in the audience. Afterward I asked him what he thought and he was confused. He saw no inherent meaning and thought it was just a bunch of people walking around making floor patterns until they kicked up a bunch of dead leaves at the end. When I explained the process of collective creation, and how that series of movements came about out of a process whereby the collective develops a logic specific to those circumstances, I could almost see the light go on in his head. He finally understood, through witnessing this example, how the social nature of the world might make itself manifest more clearly.

Because there were so many instances in my field notes where members of the community had such opposing views to some of their fellow community members, to the point of calling each other *malandros/as*, I believe these kinds of community dynamics are indicative of needed work in this area. Perhaps this community could benefit from an artistic exercise that can bring them together in dialogue in order to challenge others' perspectives and to have their own perspectives challenged as well. Together with Correia in collaboration, I hope to be able to adapt the Fiadeiro/Ribeiro model in a way that can offer a metaphorical refraction as an exercise in clarifying the various perspectives that exist within one community. There are certainly possibilities to adopt practices from Michael Rohd's work as a model and combine them with the work already started in the community by Correia and Ribeiro. With this fusion of practices, I can envision possibilities for artistic process-based collaborations to contribute to creative, dynamic cultural citizenship practices in this community.

As I complete the final revisions on this dissertation, I have been prompted to revisit the ways I described my first encounters with this setting and with this research. I entered the scene quite clearly as a tourist, “dipping my toes” in the proverbial water. Through the process of becoming a researcher in the setting I learned how to use grounded theory methods to embrace waves as they came to me rather than to force a research question that was not appropriate for the time or setting. And now I recall something that happened during fieldwork that hints at the murky and often uncomfortable work of refraction as an epistemological approach to learning.

There was a day where I spent the several hours on a boat that was docked at the pier near the fishermen’s co-op. My companion took me there so I could learn how to *catar siri*⁸⁸ and enjoy the slow pace of a relaxed day floating on the water. After several hours, floating, observing, and even trying my hand at catching them and putting them in our bucket in a way that they wouldn’t escape, (and that I wouldn’t get pinched by their claws!) we decided it was time to go. My companion and her son were quite thin and agile. I was not. The tide had gone out a bit and the boat was much lower than the pier was when we first got on the boat. They were able to climb up the ropes with little difficulty. I tried, unsuccessfully, to climb out of the boat via the pier. Some of the men on the neighboring boats laughed and shook their heads at how crazy I was to even try. I noticed the broken mollusk shells stuck to the lower part of the pier and remembered how my canoeing instructor told me how dangerous they were. They cut with a jagged edge and generally contained contaminants that would infect the wound and make it very difficult to heal. Fortunately, I did not cut myself.

I began to get worried that I would be completely stuck there on the boat with no way to get off the boat and back on to shore. Considering my options, I said I could very

⁸⁸ *Siri* are small crabs and are caught (*catado*) using a small round device about the size and shape of a bicycle wheel, covered in netting. Bait is placed in the center of the wheel and the device is thrown into shallow water for approximately 15 minutes at a time.

easily just jump overboard and swim to shore. The distance was really nothing and I was an adequate swimmer. One woman, who had been otherwise quiet all afternoon *catando* her own supply of *siri* for the night, looked at me like I was insane. She shook her head, berated me and said it was way too dangerous. I asked why. She just kept shaking her head saying I would be crazy to even try. She said she has been coming here to these waters her whole life and she would never even think of jumping into that water. I never quite got an adequate answer but I decided to respect her warning and try to find another way off the boat. Later I was told stories of innumerable amounts of sharp, rusty, dirty objects below the surface, and stories of predatory marine life. I got the feeling I was being told lies or perhaps exaggerations. I suppose I will never know. But reflecting back on that day now, after spending months engaging with refraction and the nature of the deep uncertainty that comes with a profound shift in perspective, I realize that sometimes, when the water is murky and you cannot see below the surface, the danger is very real that something unknown might cause a deeper distress than we might be prepared to handle.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL CERTIFICATE



EXEMPTION GRANTED

Sarah De La Garza
Human Communicationsunication, Hugh Downs School of
602/492-1957
delagarza@asu.edu

Dear Sarah De La Garza:

On 11/5/2013 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Performance and Social Justice for Women in Rural Bahia, Brazil
Investigator:	Sarah De La Garza
IRB ID:	STUDY00000028
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PORTER Informed Consent Adult GENDERwRevisions110313.pdf, Category: Consent Form;• HRP-503a-PORTERPROTOCOLSOCIALBEHAVIORAL Revised 103013.doc, Category: IRB Protocol;• Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• PORTER verbal-script-1.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;• GPSA Graduate Research app.docx, Category: Sponsor Attachment;• PORTER Revised CV 2013.pdf, Category: Vitaes/resumes of study team;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 11/5/2013.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc:

Tamara Underiner
Laurelann Porter

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PORTER Interview questions

Basic research question: How are women in the rural area of Itacaré, Bahia and southern Bahia working towards social justice for women? How do these efforts reflect insights about the Lei Maria da Penha? How do these efforts interact with daily realities of power structures relating to patriarchy, *coronelismo*, tourism, religion, and existing prejudices?

Initial Interview questions

ENGLISH

- When you hear the phrase “social justice”, what does it mean to you?
- Do you think social justice exists here in your community? Why or why not?
- What do you think is required to achieve social justice here?
- What do you think people are already doing to achieve social justice for women here?
- What are the things you do in life to feel valued? Happy?
- How would you describe the relations between men and women here? (in general)
- Is there someone in your community that you believe is a great model for healthy relationships between men and women? What are the qualities or habits about this person/people that you think are admirable?
- How are the relations between tourists and locals? Is there a difference between foreign tourists and Brazilian tourists?
- How are the relations between the local government and members of the local community?
- In your opinion, what is the best way to have a life of dignity, tranquility, and full of success and/or joy?
- What is your knowledge of the Maria Penha Law?
- Do you think it will help reduce violence against women in your community? Why or why not?
- What do you think it would take for this law or others like it to have a real effect on violence against women?
- What resources are you aware of in your community for victims of domestic violence?
- When someone uses the word “victim”, what images or thoughts come to mind? What about the word violence?
- Do you think it is ever OK to use violence against an intimate partner? Why or why not? If so, in what conditions?
- What person or organization has done the most work for improving the lives and conditions for women in your community? What work has been the most effective? Why?
- Is there an institution or system of power that hinders efforts for achieving social justice for women? How?

PORTUGUESE

- Quando você escuta a frase “justiça social”, o que significa para você?
- Você acha que justiça social existe aqui? Por que ou por que não?
- O que precisa para que haja justiça social aqui?

- O que você acha que as pessoas já estão fazendo para conseguir justiça social para mulheres?
- Quais são as coisas que você faz para se sentir valorizada? Feliz?
- Como são as relações entre homens e mulheres aqui? (em geral)
- Há pessoas na sua comunidade que você considera modelos para relações entre homens e mulheres? Quais são as qualidades desta pessoa(s) que você acha admirável?
- Como são as relações entre turistas e os nativos daqui? Existe diferenças entre turistas de fora e turistas brasileiros?
- Como são as relações entre o governo municipal e os nativos daqui?
- Na sua opinião, qual é a melhor maneira de conseguir uma vida digna, tranqüila, e cheia de sucesso e/ou alegria?
- Você conhece a lei Maria da Penha?
- Você acha que esta lei vai ajudar a reduzir violência contra mulheres na sua comunidade? Por que ou por que não?
- O que precisa para ter um efeito real nesta situação?
- Quais recursos são disponíveis na sua comunidade para ajudar mulheres nestas situações?
- Quando alguém usa a palavra “vítima” quais imagens vêm na sua cabeça? E a palavra “violência?”
- Você acha que há algum momento quando é aceitável usar violência contra uma pessoa com o qual você tem relações intimas? Sob quais condições?
- Qual pessoa ou organização aqui está fazendo o trabalho mais efetivo na área de melhorar as condições para mulheres daqui?
- Há alguma instituição ou sistema de poder que atrapalha a luta para justiça social para mulheres? Como?

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM

Social Justice for Women in Rural Bahia, Brazil

Informed Consent - Adult

Caro participante:

Meu nome é Laurelann "Laurinha" Porter e estou realizando uma pesquisa para minha tese de doutorado no programa de Teatro e Performance das Américas na Universidade Estadual do Arizona nos Estados Unidos. Estou trabalhando em um projeto de pesquisa que investiga as táticas e estratégias desenvolvidas por mulheres da região rural da Bahia para aumentar consciência de justiça social para mulheres.

A doutora Amira de la Garza, PhD, D. Min., professora da Escola de Comunicação Hugh Downs da Universidade Estadual do Arizona será minha orientadora durante este estudo etnográfico que contará também com a colaboração do grupo Kâwé, Núcleo de Estudos Afro-Baianos Regionais, afiliado à Universidade Estadual de Santa Cruz, Ba.

Caso você se decida a participar da pesquisa, vou conduzir uma entrevista com você, gravadas em vídeo digital. Cada entrevista deverá ter a duração de aproximadamente uma hora. Existe a possibilidade de que os participantes sejam convidados a participar de outras entrevistas, caso a equipe decida que mais informação seja benéfica ao estudo.

Você nunca será pedida a divulgar qualquer coisa que você não queira divulgar. Você tem todo controle sob o que você conta. Você tem todo direito de não responder a qualquer pergunta. *(Veja consento abaixo).*

Mesmo que este projeto não lhe traga benefício direto em curto prazo, a sua participação nesta pesquisa poderá trazer-lhe uma sensação de participar de alguma forma de uma comunidade composta por outras pessoas que tenham superado problemas semelhantes. Outros ainda poderão se beneficiar ao ver suas experiências e estratégias compartilhadas.

Se você CONCORDAR, sua participação poderá durar um dia, ou durante um prazo de até seis (6) meses. Entrevistas podem ser conduzidas em lugares determinados por os participantes. Você tem direito de não responder a qualquer pergunta caso não se sinta a vontade, podendo também determinar o fim da entrevista, e requerer o término da sua participação nesse projeto em qualquer momento.

Caso você decida retirar-se do estudo, você terá três (3) opções sobre o que deverá ser feito com as informações já fornecidas: 1) Você pode decidir que os arquivos e vídeos com suas informações e dados pessoais sejam destruídos. 2) Você pode decidir que os arquivos de vídeo sejam destruídos, mas que suas informações, obtidas durante as entrevistas sejam incluídas no estudo como dados anônimos. - OU - 3) Você pode se decidir a terminar sua participação, mas permitir que as entrevistas e os dados nelas contidos sejam incluídos na pesquisa.

Pedidos para a destruição de dados e arquivos devem ser feitos até o final do período da pesquisa principal (agosto de 2014).

Na haverá custo para a sua participação nesta pesquisa. Como uma forma de lhe - agradecer por sua participação, você receberá um único pagamento no valor de 50 (Cinquenta) Reais.

Social Justice for Women in Rural Bahia, Brazil

CONSENTIMENTO VOLUNTÁRIO

Qualquer pergunta ou dúvida em relação a essa pesquisa ou à sua participação na mesma, antes, durante, ou depois do seu consentimento, será esclarecido por Laurelann Porter, laurelannporter@asu.edu.

Assinando abaixo, você está concedendo aos pesquisadores o direito de usar sua imagem, semelhança, figura e performance— quer seja em gravação, em videoteipe, arquivo de vídeo digital, filme, fotografias ou imagens impressas – para apresentações, publicações e divulgações desse projeto de pesquisa (ou para qualquer outro uso).

Por favor, assinale sua opção preferida:

_____ Concordo em aparecer em vídeos com o uso do meu nome verdadeiro. Entendo que isto vai prevenir a garantia de confidencialidade.

_____ Concordo em aparecer em vídeos com o uso de pseudônimo, usado em lugar de meu nome verdadeiro. Estou ciente que posso escolher o pseudônimo de minha preferência e que caso eu não o faça, um pseudônimo será escolhido pelos pesquisadores. Entendo que isto não garante confidencialidade.

_____ Concordo em ser entrevistada desde que sua imagem e voz sejam disfarçadas, e um pseudônimo usado no lugar de meu nome verdadeiro. Estou ciente que caso eu não escolha um pseudônimo, os pesquisadores poderão escolhê-lo para mim.

_____ Somente concordo em responder a questionários anônimos onde meus dados pessoais não sejam coletados.

_____ Assinatura da participante

_____ Nome Completo

_____ Data

_____ Representante legal
(se for aplicável)

_____ Nome Completo

_____ Data

AFIRMAÇÃO DA PESQUISADORA

Afirmo que expliquei ao indivíduo nomeado acima a natureza e objetivo do projeto de pesquisa, os benefícios potenciais e os possíveis riscos associados à participação no mesmo; que já respondi às perguntas que me foram feitas; e que testemunhei as assinaturas acima.

Este documento de autorização de participação está de acordo com os parâmetros da Arizona State University para o Office for Human Research Protections a fim de proteger os direitos dos participantes. Eu dei/ofereci-me a dar, uma cópia deste documento assinado por ambas as partes às pessoas entrevistadas/participantes.

Assinatura da pesquisadora _____

Data _____

Social Justice for Women in Rural Bahia, Brazil

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document."

Signature of Investigator _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

PUBLICITY FOR PERFORMANCE AND WORKSHOP

**COMO NÃO FAZER AMOR
COM UMA MULHER**

Nova data marcada!!



Adultos!
Fazer inscrição naquela
noite para uma oficina
de teatro.

De 2 a 11 de junho

Solo Performance da Laurinha

Às vezes a gente tem que rir.

Um espetáculo sobre um casamento que foi para o saco.
Uma quase-comédia sobre violência doméstica.

Sexta-feira, dia 30 de Maio, 19:00h

Centro Cultural do Porto de Trás

**COMO NÃO FAZER AMOR
COM UMA MULHER**

Nova data marcada!!



Adultos!
Fazer inscrição naquela
noite para uma oficina
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De 2 a 11 de junho

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Uma quase-comédia sobre violência doméstica.

Sexta-feira, dia 30 de Maio, 19:00h

Centro Cultural do Porto de Trás

COMO NÃO FAZER AMOR COM UMA MULHER



Solo Performance da Laurinha

Às vezes a gente tem que rir.
Um espetáculo sobre um casamento que foi para o saco.
Uma quase-comédia sobre violência doméstica.

Domingo, 29 de Abril às 20:00h

Centro Comunitário de Porto de Trás

Tribo do Porto

Oficina de Teatro



Venham participar num seminário de teatro com a Laurinha.
A especialização dela é o solo performance (monólogos).
No trabalho dela o foco está na autoetnografia: desenvolvendo
suas próprias histórias.

Utilizando poesia, movimento, ritmo, e canto, você vai
aprender contar sua própria história com criatividade.

De Terças as Sextas às 19:00h até às 20:00h
6 de Maio até 16 de Maio

Centro Cultural de Porto de Trás

Oficina de Teatro



Venham participar num seminário de teatro com a Laurinha.
A especialização dela é o solo performance (monólogos).
No trabalho dela o foco está na autoetnografia: desenvolvendo
suas próprias histórias.

Utilizando poesia, movimento, ritmo, e canto, você vai
aprender contar sua própria história com criatividade.

De Terças as Sextas às 19:00h até às 20:00h
6 de Maio até 16 de Maio

Centro Cultural de Porto de Trás

APPENDIX E
SAMPLE CODEBOOK

Sample Codebook: Major Categories and Subcodes

Group Dynamics			
	Expectations		
	Convivência		
	Helping		
	Commerce		
	Love in the Time of Neo-Liberalism		
		Homens daqui não prestam	
		Get the feeling...	
		Ya gotta ask the right woman	
		No, Woman, No Cry	
	Something regarding her relationship was wrong		
		Violence and abuse	
		Judgment	
		Prepare for the end	
		Caçar gringo/as	
		Sempre solteira	
		Needing attention	
		Apathy	

Power Structures			
	Difficult Power Structures		
		Over & over & over again	
		Resistance is futile	
		Familia	
	Progress		
		Change is too quick	
		Chaos	
	Health		
	Education		
	Tourism		
		Back door	
		Drinking and eating	
		O Eterno Encantado	
		Wandering through the back door	
	Religion		
	She's gotta hustle to survive (work)		
	Time		
	He's gonna ask you for money		

Perspective			
	There are 2 sides to everything		
		Towards Porto de Trás	
		You live here, now?	
	The vibe shifted		

Identity			
	Mentirosa		
		Malandro	
		Devil	
	Memory and story		
		Muita história	
		Too much cultural memory	
		Baiano thing	
	Performing a role		
		Tem que mostrar cara bonita	

CODE	DEFINITION	SUBCATEGORIES	Sub-Sub Categories
GROUP DYNAMICS	Inter-group and Interpersonal dynamics	Convivência	
	Negotiations of solidarity	Expectations	
	Responding, reacting, ignoring, provoking	Helping	
	Conflicts, fights, dialogue, discussions	Commerce and Business Exchanges	
	Relating to each other within power structures	LOVE in the Time of Neo-Liberalism	Homens daqui não prestam
	Sensitivity to others' needs and feelings		Get the feeling...
	Co-habitation, residing in a community		Questioning Desire
	Dynamics of inter-relations		Ya Gotta Ask the Right Woman
	Issues of trust, promises and broken promises		No, Woman, No Cry
	Trying to understand the roots of problems within a relationship	Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Violence and Abuse
	Blaming and anger		Judgment
	Co-dependency		Prepare for the End
	Manipulations and abuse		Vulnerability
	Navigating or mitigating others' expectations		Caçar Gringo/as
			Sempre solteira
			Needing attention

CODE	DEFINITION	PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS
Convivência	Comments relating to the community or the larger social group. I often interpret this as a sense of community.	Helping vs hindering
	Literally translates as "living togetherness"	Togetherness or aloneness
		Scale of acceptance or resistance to accepting a person or making a human connection
		Miscommunication vs clarity
		Expressions about others ranging from respectful to disrespectful
		Commitment/ involvement or apathy

CODE	DEFINITION	PROPERTIES / DIMENSIONS	EXAMPLES	Number
Expectations				
			He said they have to show proof that they are in school and they have to show basic responsibility in terms of hygiene and behavior. He said the parents the mothers have to be involved too. He said algumas mães não estão nem aí!	MAXQD A FNJ #1 Line 550
			The beauty and the aesthetics lay in the balance between the aliveness and energy of each individual and the fluidity of the collective. There were no solos, no stars, no gratuitous acrobatic displays. There was the beauty of the living organism made of individual living parts.	MAXQD A FNJ #2 Line 199
			Sonhei a vida inteira... casamento... tudo ... a quando se realizou, não foi nada haver com que eu pensei	Paulinha 3:05

CODE	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	EXAMPLES	Number
Helping			Eventually I walked up to the girl called Lady Gaga and said "You know, if you can find me a broom I'll start sweeping." So she did. And once I started sweeping Geisa and Nonna showed up with keys and suddenly there were many brooms and multiple people sweeping.	MAXQD A FNJ #2 Line 426
			Daniel reiterated that spirits are around us all the time. Some times they are helpful and sometimes they are harmful.	MAXQD A FNJ #2 Line 91
			One woman even said she longed for the days before the building was built because they never had trouble getting volunteers when it was just "Barra"	MAXQD A FNJ #2 Line 240

CODE	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	EXAMPLES	Number
Commerce and Business Exchanges			When she complains about how she is treated at work, she frames it as a "how can they treat me, this beautiful negona, like a slave?"	FNJ #1 Line 76
			It reminds me of what the old lady said to me last Saturday. She had just gotten through describing to me how she went into city hall and demanded What they wanted for the festival. "você vai ter que me aguentar!"	MAXQDA FNJ#2 Line 207
			O proprio comercio, ele já segrega.	Verusya 3:23

<u>CODE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	<u>Number</u>
LOVE in the Time of Neo- Liberalism	Sub Category: Homens daqui não prestam		Meu marido nunca me bateu. Mas as coisas que ele fazia comigo eram pior do que bater.	Paulinha 2:24
	Comments relating to "baiano" men: how they act, how they are, what their "nature" is, other opinions.		Ai voce sai na balada e voce ver o marido da sua amiga com outra mulher...	Paulinha 12:14
			She said "I'm not ugly! Why are they getting them and I'm not? I mean, I'm married but if I could land a gringo, I'd do it."	FNJ #1 Line 359

<u>CODE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	<u>Number</u>
LOVE in the Time of Neo-Liberalism	Questioning Desire		Hoje em dia eu vejo muitos casamentos ruins ao meu redor. Entao acho que isso seria bem dificil	Paulinha 11:46
	Critical Reflections on the nature of desire and pleasure and how they are at play in the context		Still not sure what to make of this Brazilian insistence on love and romance.	FNJ #2 Line 343
	What activities induce pleasure and why? Questioning the effects of desire acted upon and ethics of intimacy.		But her trickster, deceptive, malandrinha ways aren't necessarily what I normally go for – or do I?	FNJ #1 Line 70
	Coziness, food, intoxication and other things that can be interpreted as pleasure or can improve comfort or desire		But how do we engage ourselves fully, without fear, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and still prepare for the inevitable end that will come?	FNJ #1 Line 1138
	Questioning socio-historic context of ideas like luxury, beauty, aesthetics, etc.		"Duas mulheres gostosas aqui em cima do palco" the singer says. And the rhythm and lyrics continue "vem rebolando." Very sexual. I'm torn. I never know whether to embrace it or think of it as grotesque baixaria.	FNJ #2 Line 337

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	EXAMPLES	Number
LOVE in the Time of Neo- Liberalism	Ya Gotta Ask the Right Woman		She is really worried about young women in this town because they have no official curriculum or training to get them any kind of legitimate professional career	MAX QDA SFNJ Line 12
	Comments relating to gender and the status of women in the community, in Bahia and in Brazil		The woman who was working there had several small children she was trying to take care of while she worked.	SFNJ Hard Copy A- 50
	Traditional gender roles in Bahia. Women in authority, how do they perform this?		I didn't notice at first how the positions were so gendered.	SFNJ Hard Copy D- 65
	Actions: what are women doing? What is women's work?		Você quer ficar com essa nega bonita? Eu tomo no minimo 5 banhos por dia, no minimo!	SFNJ Hard Copy F105- 106
	Displays of masculinity and femininity. Gendered positions and placement.		the funny part is, every time I have ever met her I've seen her as this spunky, fun-loving free-spirited. I never would have pegged her for someone who gets lonely.	SFNJ Hard Copy G- 35-37

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	EXAMPLES	Number
LOVE in the Time of Neo-Liberalism	No, Woman, No Cry		As soon as M started to sing "No Woman no Cry" the woman (the owner) started crying.	SFNJ Hard Copy F-49
	Crying, emotional expressions or distress		And then the guy dumped her. M found her crying on the steps.	SFNJ Hard Copy F-122
			She said it happens a lot. Some foreigner comes in for a few weeks and they have a fling. She ends up crying when the person leaves.	SFNJ Hard Copy G-26
			The only time it got weird was when one - woman got upset.	FNJ #1 Line 892
			At some point she started yelling something about how someone had no respect for her.	FNJ #1 Line 892
			I asked "Ela tá bem?" B said "Não, ela não está bem. Ela tá chorando toda hora."	FNJ #2 Line 139

CODE	DEFINITION	PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS	EXAMPLES	Number
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Violence and Abuse		Graças a Deus. Porque ainda mataram um bocado de gente.	Angela 13:41
			Em Itabuna matam crianças de 12 anos. Não chegam aos 16 anos.	Angela 13:57
			For a split second I actually felt myself getting provoked to rage	FN #2 Line 54
			So she went over, slammed their heads together and told them never to lay a hand on her kid again. The video store got closed down because of her. Now they are afraid of her.	FN #2 Line 109
			Porque tinha uma amiga minha que o marido batia nela e ele foi preso	Paulinha 2:38

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	Number
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Judgment		"Sabe, é porque você me trata como uma pessoa de verdade. Tem muita gente que me trata como um objeto."	FNJ #2 Line 118
			The woman apparently said "Isso ai! Tem que prender ladrão mesmo!"	FNJ #2 Line 89
			Dona Fatima was the first to stop and ask about it. She wanted to add a suggestion. I said "Oh, você quer escrever algo aqui?" She said "Não. Não escrevo, nem ler." She said it with no shame. For her it is just a simple fact.	FNJ #2 Line 206
			So she is making this huge, unflattering judgment based ONLY off of what she sees from her own cabana on the beach where she lives and works.	FNJ #2 Line 250
			Several people have mentioned that they have been called names (usually malandro) by other people in the community who think they are making money off the center.	FNJ #2 Line 240

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	Number
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Prepare for the End		She says "Eu não quero te perder." "Perdi tantas pessoas na minha vida."	FNJ #2 Line 48
			In relationships AND in arts practices what is the healthiest way to prepare for the end of a relationship in a way that allows all parties to go away from the experience feeling enriched in some way – not abandoned or lost or used?	FNJ #2 Line 9
			"Eu não quero te perder." "Perdi tantas pessoas na minha vida."	FNJ #2 Line 48
			Then we chatted. She said "Mas, você volta, ne? Você não vai embora para nunca mais voltar, ne?"	FNJ #2 Line 458
			ai eu tive que me decidir	Paulinha 9:58

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	Number
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Vulnerability		And yet, these moments of vulnerability are perhaps the most important moments to consider.	FNJ #2 Line 10
			Maybe I need to recognize that vulnerability might not always be desirable or helpful. Or when those moments are encountered, they need to be handled with extra special care. But WHAT care?	FNJ #2 Line 12
			abandonada ... eu estava doente e grávida, estava grávida com um filho nos tombos mas que estava morrendo.	Paulinha 3:34
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Sempre solteira		Tenho a minha filha, sou feliz, não tenho nenhum relacionamento faz um tempo, não quero.	Paulinha 4:51
			a maioria das meninas não são casadas. eles têm filho mas não têm marido, a maioria	Paulinha 10:44

CODE	DEFINITION	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	Number
Something Regarding her Relationship was Wrong	Caçar Gringo/as		Before the interview Josemaria was joking about how she couldn't understand how all these other women she knew were landing gringos.	FN #1 Line 359
			She gets some kind of disability money from the government once a month but she still thinks landing a rich gringo is the way to do things."	FN #1 Line 360
			He said yes and he has tried to complain about that but people say oh well you're a foreigner you should be able to pay.	FN #1 Line 521
			The tourists loved it. They took photos and videos of this shirtless, sweaty, muscular black man.	FN #1 Line 922
			Esse desejo de casar com gringo é o que mais tem aqui.	Verusya 34:28

CODE	DEFINITION	SUB CATEGORIES	Sub-Sub Categories	Number
Power/ Structure OVERALL	Structures of power including coronelismo, colonialism, continuing power struggles,	Difficult Power Structures		
	Discipline, control and punishment.		Over & Over & Over again	
	What does power feel like? From inside? From outside?		Resistance is futile	
	Willingness to face and interact with power		Familia	
	Parental rules, mandates, actions	Progress		
	Wielding authority		Change is too quick	
	Marks, scars, traces, evidence		Chaos	
	Weapons, tools, threats	Health		
	Levels of strength	Education		
	"The streets"	Tourism		
	Modern and historical slavery		Back Door	
	Physical and symbolic barriers		Drinking and eating	
	Abuse		Festas	
	Legal and illegal activities		O Eterno Encantado	
			Wandering through the Back Door	
	Freedom from ...	Religion		
	How does intolerance exist within these structures?	Work & Money		
	Property, land and money	Time		

CODE	DEFINITION	PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS	EXAMPLES	Number
Difficult Power Structur es			P* said it has been a long struggle with city hall. He said there are a little more than 20k inhabitants and the prefeitura makes over 5 million Reais in income every month.	FNJ #2 213
			Even my rasta buddy friend said "Yeah the bureaucracy humano, cultural, racial, economico, etc." That there are all kinds of bureaucracies bringing us down or complicating things.	FNJ #2 Line 241
			C* said these were all existing alongside each other with Samba. To disguise practices that were prohibited.	FNJ #2 Line 443
			Tem beneficios do governo federal. Mas eles nao querem vender a propriedade.	Verusya 8:56
			But M* said she knows her rights and knows how to defend them. When she goes in and fights for custody, she seems "quase sobra"	FNJ #1 Line 864
			Then something about how he better watch out. He better bring it and he better not bring the police like he did last time. Then something about how the only reason he was even alive was because they were waiting for the julgamento.	FNJ #1 Line 1125
			"Why are the politicians getting their 40 thousand, with the corruption it becomes 150 thousand and a	FNJ #2 Line 425

			pobre trabalhador works for a measly 700? Que Brazilzinho é isso que nos temos."	
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<u>CODE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>SUB CATEGORIES</u>	<u>Sub-Sub Categories</u>
Power/ Structure OVERALL	Structures of power including coronelismo, colonialism, continuing power struggles,	Difficult Power Structures	
	Discipline, control and punishment.		Over & Over & Over again
	What does power feel like? From inside? From outside?		Resistance is futile
	Willingness to face and interact with power		Familia
	Parental rules, mandates, actions	Progress	
	Wielding authority		Change is too quick Chaos
	Marks, scars, traces, evidence		
	Weapons, tools, threats	Health	
	Levels of strength	Education	
	"The streets"	Tourism	Back Door
	Modern and historical slavery		Drinking and eating
	Physical and symbolic barriers		Festas
	Abuse		O Eterno Encantado
	Legal and illegal activities		Wandering through the Back Door
	Freedom from ...	Religion	
	How does intolerance exist within these structures?	Work, Time & Money	

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Progress			Vamos permanecer quilombos, nao vamos ser atuais?	Verusya 10:19
			Se não tem educação, se não tem esclarecimento de tão dependente, tão escravo .. e esse corpo do brazil dos pais subdesenvolvid	Verusya 35:07
			Tem um desejo para modificação e para qualidade de vida para os filhos...	Verusya 25:52
			Melhorou um bocado. Porque antigamente para ir pro Salvador tinha que ir pela Itabuna, Ilheus. E a distância era mais longa.	Angela 10:18
			Tem alguns que querem mudar, por isso fizeram o centro.	Verusya 23:37
			Tudo chronometrado, tudo organizado, tudo eficiente para tudo correr bem .. e o dinheiro	Verusya 29:05

<u>CODE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	<u>Number</u>
Health and Education			Ja tem alguns ai, 2 ou 3, que conseguiram entrar na universidade por conta das quotas.	Verusya 11:19
			Não é como a gente que vive aqui nesse caos.	Verusya 29:33
			We interviewed Fatima and her daughter and Fatima doesn't read or write at all. And yet she owns her own business. She owns a little bar on the bank of the river.	FNJ #1 Line 349
			She said she was mostly concerned about kids being murdered on the streets here.	FNJ #2 Line 210
			Paula agreed it is a problem. She said these dances are very erotic, very sexualized, and girls are dancing these dances at a very young age.	FNJ #2 Line 445
			Sempre faltam essas coisas. Faltam bateria no hospital.	Angela 3:52
			Para ter uma qualidade de vida boa aqui em Itacaré, é o convênio cuidar do hospital. Porque é o unico que tem.	Angela 7:58
			Mas ela não trabalha mais no hospital. Ela so trabalha para cliente particular. O hospital não tem suporte para ela trabalhar	Angela 18:01

<u>CODE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>PROPERTIES/ DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>	<u>Number</u>
Tourism			Eu não sou contra prostituição. Sou contra exploração sexual, esta me entendendo?	Verusya 33:33
			We talked about the tourism industry. We both wondered about the structure and why people get paid so little.	FNJ #1 Line 103
			He blames the prefeitura. If they really wanted a tourist economy they would improve the infrastructure and start putting city buses to go to the beaches and other tourist destinations.	FNJ #1 Line 522
			Like the Festival de Rappa. But she says there is no infrastructure for it. The event drew 25 thousand people. But I think she said Itacaré's lodging capacity for tourists is only 5 thousand.	FNJ #1 Line 805
			I asked him if he thought it was because the tourist price and all the restaurants was just too much for anyone to pay.	FNJ #1 Line 521
			If they really wanted a tourist economy they would improve the infrastructure and start putting city buses to go to the beaches and other tourist destinations.	FNJ #1 Line 522
			Tourists bring money and business.	FNJ #1 Line 654
			I also wonder if the reason there is such a rift is because there are tourist places (where natives can't afford to go) and other places where tourists rarely roam.	FNJ #1 Line 655
			She said the mayor is on a trip to Salvador to talk to the governor about getting more tourists to Itacaré for world cup.	FNJ #1 Line 807

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Religion			She said he was a total macumbeiro, that ele mexe com Candomblé.	FNJ #1 Line 14
			They talked about an instance where they "quase caiu na macumba."	FNJ #2 Line 15
			I overheard someone say she was a pomba gira and it was best to leave her alone.	FNJ #2 Line 892
			There was a gentle, ethereal background music playing and there was a sign that said "Silence. This is a place of prayer."	FNJ #2 Line 78
			The meeting had already begun so I felt awkward but the man seated at the front of the room asked us to come in and sit down.	FNJ #2 Line 85
			She said Umbanda was more like people doing good but Candomblé was full of macumbeiros.	FNJ #1 Line 14
			M* also mentioned her mom and how her mom knows a lot about this stuff. I said "but I thought your mom was a Catholic nun?" She said "She IS Catholic but ela mexe com Candomblé."	FNJ #1 Line 17
			"Enh filha de Iansã! Vem conversar com a minha mãe! Ela tem uma carta para você."	FNJ #1 Line 42

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Work, Money and Time			She asked who the current mayor is and he said "Jarba Ladrão!" He said Itacaré has the most expensive water and sanitation bill in BRAZIL and he said they're not even doing anything with that money. He says he knows they are not treating the waste water but he can't prove it because he is not a technician. HE says if you complain they will turn it on just to show you that it is working. But as soon as you leave they will turn it off again.	FNJ #2 Line 214
			She started talking about how, when she arrived in Itacaré 17 years ago, "cheguei com a estrutura de uma mulher rica." She said she was very naïve foolish.	FNJ #2 Line 322
			eu tenho dinheiro, eu tenho poder. e o outro nao, mas tenho ascensão...	Verusya 36:32
			But if someone is let go for "justa causa" they don't get the benefits. (like getting fired). Plus if you are making minimum wage and have a carteira assinado, the employer pays more AND the INSS is deducted so the minimum wage is even less.	FNJ #1 Line 949
			Apparently a woman was mugged right outside our house. The mugger took advantage of the power outage and assaulted her when it was dark. He apparently had some fake toy gun made out of wood and tape or something like that.	FNJ #1 Line 1130

			Here is where it gets really weird. Apparently the mayor said "You know, when I leave this office I'm gonna take all the money with me. And the next guy who comes in is not going to have any way of proving I took it. Unbelievable.	FNJ #2 Liine 215
Work, Money and Time (cont'd)			She also said if she were to open a business here in Itacaré and do it all over again she would Not do something related to tourism.	FNJ #1 Line 808
			She never seems to have money and seems to be pretty good at mooching drinks and cigarettes off of people.	SJ Line 176
			She said they made lots and lots of things to sell and never saw any money from it.	FNJ #2 Line 175
			Last night D* said "That's what they all do here. They capture you, reel you in with their charm and then they suck/leech off of the people who are actually hard working.	FNJ #2 Line 255
			Pessoal aqui trabalha praticamente dezembro, janeiro, e fevereiro ... para viver o ano inteiro. Essa e a logica da cidade.	Verusya 30:38
			What seemed like a no-brainer to me finally was made strange in a Brechtian sort of way. She couldn't understand why someone would want to "do good" for a community. "What's in it for her?"	FNJ #1 Line 93
			That in this economy where you might work for a company for 10 years and then the company goes bankrupt, you won't get any retirement. So there is no loyalty to the company.	FNJ #1 Line 103