UNDERGROUND
SOCIABILITIES

identity, **culture** and **resistance**
in Rio de Janeiro's favelas

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Brasilia Office

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

To the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, to their people and their history.

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FOREWORD

This publication is the result of an innovative and efficient North-South collaboration between the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the UNESCO Office in Brasilia, with the support of Institute Itau Cultural, Foundation Itau Social, AfroReggae and CUFA. The partnership brought together a range of different stakeholders around a subject that is at the very centre of UNESCO's work to promote sustainability and peace. We are delighted by the achievements of this project and very pleased that our Brasilia Office was able to contribute by sharing its expertise and very successful approach to preventing violence and exclusion in different communities across Brazil.

Social inclusion is one of the most important international political challenges of this decade and more research is required to understand it. The study reported in this book offers an in-depth exploration of the psychosocial world of favela communities and the work methodology of two community-based NGOs in Rio de Janeiro: AfroReggae and CUFA. It systematises and illuminates an experience of social development that combines social inclusion with the arts, culture and creativity and innovates by establishing unconventional partnerships with the State, the private sector, the media and other social movements.

The project is exemplary of bottom-up research that creates strong links with local protagonists and the transformative capacity of social actors. In this sense, it is an effort that lies at the very heart of UNESCO's Programme for the Management of Social Transformations (MOST), which aims at supporting sustainable and efficient policy dialogue between the academic community, policy makers and practitioners.

Enabling social inclusion and reintegration through civic engagement, the arts and sport is a key strategy of UNESCO. Empowering the most vulnerable, particularly young women and men, is at the core of what we work for and advocate. I am certain that the findings of this research can greatly contribute to further our understanding of the role of social capital in development and how collaboration between multiple actors in a democratic public sphere generate innovative social technologies for positive change. The research shows that the model of social development created by AfroReggae and CUFA in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro is transferable and UNESCO looks forward to contributing to its international dissemination while reaffirming its own strategic mission: to create capacities and act as a catalyst for international cooperation.

PILAR ALVAREZ-LASO
Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences

PREFACE

When I met Jose Junior and Celso Athayde back in 2006 it was clear to me that something new and powerful was taking place in Brazil. Yet again I saw Brazil showing its vocation for beginnings. This time right in the middle of its invisible territories: the favelas in the borders and hills of the city, where underground sociabilities are usually hidden. I was impressed by the power of their voices, by how articulate they were and by the story they told. They reminded me of Samuel Beckett, who found humour in adversity, and of Jorge Amado, who wrote of Brazil's capacity for mixture and dialogue as its greatest contribution to a global public sphere. I was reminded of the *Tropicalia* movement and of Caetano Veloso's Tropical Truth (*Verdade Tropical*), of the encounter of high culture and popular culture, of crossings (*travessias*).

There was something of both in the voices of Celso Athayde and Jose Junior: there was agency and wisdom in the middle of poverty and harsh conditions of living. There was desire to cross into the city and to showcase a proud and rich identity, usually hidden away. There was confidence, protagonism and defiance. They were unconventional, they were funny, they were gutsy and they were producing something utterly new and bottom-up in the Brazilian public sphere. Indeed, my first impression was that they were changing the Brazilian public sphere. AfroReggae and CUFA represented a sign of new social actors, of unconventional partnerships and dialogues, of original responses to the idea of Rio de Janeiro as a 'broken city'. They represented a challenge to those of us, who wanted to understand how communities living under poverty and exclusion could produce positive responses and new pathways for social and individual development. To study their experience and the context from which they emerged became the focus of this research and of the wider partnership that produced *Underground Sociabilities*.

I am delighted that we now understand what makes them unique and a potential model for other contexts of exclusion. We studied the sociability of the favela and uncovered the wisdom and knowledge of its people. We mapped out the working methodology of AfroReggae and CUFA and we established who they are, how they work and what they want to achieve. We heard people who have been shaping policy and debate in Rio, who have been working to transform the city, who have collaborated and sponsored these new organisations. We collated views and perceptions of external observers and partners. The research has amassed a robust and comprehensive database about the determinants of exclusion and inclusion in the favelas of Rio as experienced and narrated by key protagonists of these processes.

My very special gratitude goes to my co-author, Jacqueline Priego-Hernández, whose work, support and dedication have been essential to the successful completion of this work. My colleagues at the LSE's Department of Social Psychology provided me with a collegial and inspiring research culture and, as always, I owe much to the interest, enthusiasm and sharp intelligence of my students, who have helped me to elaborate and clarify the ideas and stories coming out of this research for the last 3 years.

Our approach has been based on a conception of development as freedom (Sen, 1999). We have emphasised the social and psychological capacity of individual and collective agents to produce innovative and productive solutions to conditions of deprivation. Throughout the research we encountered protagonists who turn upside down the de-personalisation and homogenisation of people living in poverty to show that despite social exclusion there is resilience, a vibrant culture and a powerful and proud collective intelligence living in the edges of the city. I very much hope that this report will be useful for governments, policy makers, academics, social movements, activists and all of those who are interested in human-centred community development and communication across asymmetries in the contemporary city.

SANDRA JOVCHELOVITCH

1. Why Underground Sociabilities?

1.1. Introduction

The research reported here examined patterns of sociability and social regeneration developed in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. It investigated how favela communities, despite harsh conditions of living, poverty and segregation, have been able to mobilise local resources – individual and collective – to resist exclusion, fight off marginalisation and rewrite relations between the favelas and the city. To this end, the study focused on the work of favela-born organisations AfroReggae and *Central Unica das Favelas* (from hereafter CUFA), which use the arts, sports and civic engagement to transform favela environments and establish lines of communication and exchange between marginalised communities and mainstream society. Central to our study is to understand agency in contexts of deprivation, how positive action for change emerges and what its conditions of possibility are. Poverty and marginalisation produce exclusion and human suffering, but people living in these conditions hold competencies and skills, wisdoms and rationality, which can resist exclusion and produce social development. This requires understanding and recognition.

In this project we have called *underground sociabilities* those subterranean forms of social life that are made invisible to mainstream society by geographical, economic, symbolic, behavioural and cultural barriers. The hidden nature of these sociabilities is socially constructed by dominant representations, institutional control, social exclusion and social psychological mechanisms such as denial of the conditions and living patterns of others. Historically associated with violence, exclusion and marginality, these sociabilities are frequently brought to the surface by eruptions that involve violent and/or criminal behaviour.

Examples of how mainstream societies come face to face with their subterranean sociabilities include the many battles between the police and drug trade bosses in the streets of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo in the last decade and, in a completely different context, the summer riots of 2011 in London.

In Rio de Janeiro underground sociabilities are particularly prominent. Regularly described as the broken city (*cidade partida*) by its residents and everyone else in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro contains a multitude of fractures, at once exposed and hidden by its beauty and complex internal geography. The manifold distances between its neighbourhoods are vast and operate at various levels; nowhere are they more evident than in the separation between the favelas and paved affluent areas, spoken of in the colloquial and everyday language of *cariocas* (patronymic for Rio de Janeiro's inhabitants) as the separation hill (*morro*) and asphalt (*asfalto*), a signifier everyone understands and uses to navigate the different communities and areas of the city.

The separation between *morro* and *asfalto* is deeply intertwined with the process of urbanisation in Rio de Janeiro, which kept apart and yet grew dependent on the favela communities it marginalised. Despite being integral to the economy and socio-cultural life of the city, favelas became invisible and hidden away, their multiple life forms shut down by geographical, economic, symbolic, behavioural and cultural barriers. The city excluded its residents from mainstream society by lack of policy and by stigma, enveloping them in negative representations. Rio chose to think of favelas as a problem and of favela dwellers as criminals by erasing distinctions between people who live in these territories and the drug dealers who operate there. Through stereotype and constructed stigma favelas are only visible through the lenses of discrimination and otherness.

For much of its recent history Rio de Janeiro has experienced an undeclared and subterranean war between the police and drug bosses, whose location in favela territories is well documented and discussed (see for instance, Justica Global, 2008, in particular Souza e Silva, Fernandes & Braga, 2008). Caught in the middle of this confrontation, favela dwellers became a target for the police and were

exposed to the control and routes of socialisation opened by the institutional and business-like character of the narcotraffic. As the population of favelas grew, the increase in violence and homicides combined with chronic lack of services and socio-economic deprivation configured an environment of intense social exclusion. Favela communities were pushed underground, their actual sociability hidden away by fear, geography and socio-economic limitations while symbolically represented by stigma and negative representations.

From this context of constructed invisibility and socio-economic exclusion, there emerged from the early 1990s onwards new social actors – young, mainly black, favela dwellers – who started to organise bottom-up responses to poverty, violence and segregation. They entered the public sphere through novel grassroots organisations that turned the traditional model of the NGO in its head. Using voice and life experiences frequently absent from traditional social movements and unafraid of unconventional actions and partnerships, these organisations started to change the position and the political importance of favela populations.

These new social actors and the organisations they have built offer exemplary case studies for the study of how communities exposed to poverty and segregation resist social exclusion and generate positive practices of social regeneration. To understand these processes of exclusion and agency we investigated the lifeworld of favela communities, paying attention to the individual and community levels of analysis. We sampled the voice of people living in four different communities of Rio de Janeiro – Cantagalo, City of God (Cidade de Deus), Madureira and Vigario Geral – and heard what they had to say about themselves, their communities and the city. We listened to life stories of leaders and activists of AfroReggae and CUFA and mapped out the identity and method of work of these organisations, as construed by its participants, partners, interlocutors, and external observers. To gather empirical evidence about the experience of Rio de Janeiro and to reflect on how it can inform other similar contexts was a central aim of the project. In a conversation with partners and stakeholders the research pursued an agenda that recognises local knowledge and community identity as essential assets for social development.

1.2. An Innovative Partnership

The research reported in this book is the outcome of a pioneering partnership between AfroReggae, CUFA, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), the charitable foundations of Itau Bank, Itau Social Foundation and Itau Cultural Institute, and UNESCO Office in Brazil. It involved academics, practitioners, favela communities, and the private sector in a collaboration without which this research would not have been possible. Each stage of the project developed through a participatory methodology that consulted stakeholders throughout the process. The research also engaged government, academics, practitioners, policy-makers, the media and social movements' activists in two discussing seminars held in Rio de Janeiro (November 2010) and London (March 2011).

LSE led and executed the research with the academic support of Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). The fieldwork, which involved a considerable logistic related to a hard to reach territory, was enabled by partners AfroReggae and CUFA who negotiated the entrance of the researchers in the favelas and supported the fieldwork throughout. Itau Social and Itau Cultural funded the research and collaborated in its elaboration and development. Itau Cultural played a central role in organising research meetings, covering the national and international mobility of partners and supporting the logistics of fieldwork. UNESCO Office in Brazil used its expertise in Brazil throughout, worked with academic partners in enabling the fieldwork and acted as mediator and translator, managing the, at times difficult, communication between all partners. Itau Cultural and UNESCO Office in Brazil played a central role in the project's dissemination and in the organisation of public seminars to launch the research in Rio de Janeiro (September 2012) and London (November 2012).

This project has been collectively produced in a real and profound way: indeed, one of its key lessons has been the value of the partnership itself. Each stage of the research from the establishment of research objectives, to the constitution of the sample to the execution of the fieldwork through to the data analysis and the direction of the final report has been discussed in a series of meetings and working labs in London and Rio de Janeiro. From the first meeting to the final stage of the data analysis there was collaboration and, in this process partners found that without each other it would not have been able to do what has been done. Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the research partnership and how the partners worked together.

Figure 1.1 The Research Partnership

A central lesson of our project is that research partnerships enable collective research action that cannot happen within the confines of single institutions. Partnerships foster productive alliances between different people, practices, knowledges and powers. In working together academia, NGOs, the private sector and UNESCO Office in Brazil learned to cross borders and understand each other; the partnership evolved through differences in language and institutional culture to find common ground in our commitment to the research and its goals. Today, universities have become more concerned with the impact of the knowledge they produce, the private sector with social responsibility and organisations at the sharp end of social development with theory and concepts. The partnerships enabled meeting points for the negotiation of views, strategies and projects as well as for the pooling of resources and symbolic assets. Our experience has shown that:

• Partnerships are best for researching hard to reach populations.
• Research partnerships are an effective and efficient way of benefiting all partners and extending the reach and impact of knowledge production.
• International collaborations work because people feel attracted, intrigued and challenged by other cultures and want to tell their stories to a wide range of audiences.

1.3. Research Design and Database

The research comprised three ethnographically-informed studies: an investigation of the lifeworld of favela communities, a systematic study of favela organisations AfroReggae and CUFA and an investigation of elite external observers in the wider city. This is presented in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 The Research Design
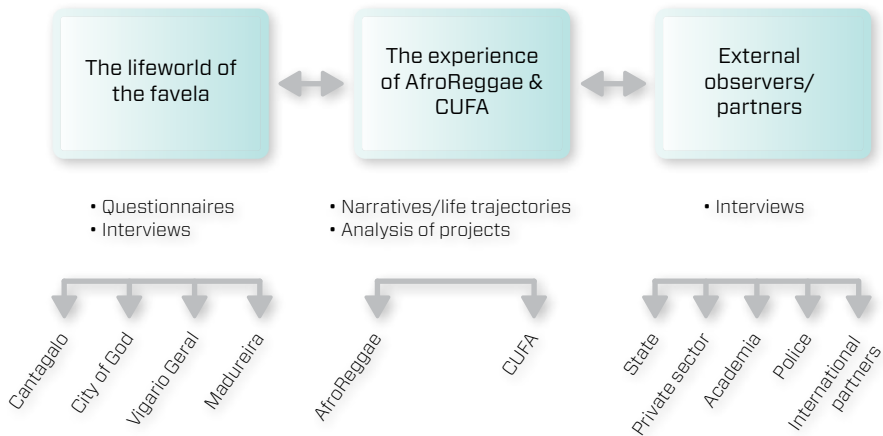
The first study on the lifeworld of the favela sought to capture the views, perceptions and experiences of favela dwellers. Using a survey and semi-structured qualitative interviews, we talked to 204 residents of Cantagalo, City of God, Madureira and Vigario Geral (see Appendix 1 for full details of the sample).

These communities were selected taking into account their geographical position and link to AfroReggae and CUFA. The interviews and questionnaire investigated:

- the Self, its past and present through family history, personal trajectory, leisure and networks, role models, dreams and aspirations, relation to religiosity and faith and the experience of violence, security and crime;
- representations of the community, both the neighbourhood and Rio de Janeiro;
- representations of AfroReggae and CUFA.

The second study investigated the experience of AfroReggae and CUFA, in terms of who they are, how they work, why they work and for what ends. Data comprised:

- narratives about the life stories of leaders, their perceptions on the work they do, the communities they work with and the challenges and obstacles associated with AfroReggae and CUFA;
- views and narratives about AfroReggae and CUFA by actors of these organisations, favela dwellers and external observers;
- content analysis of the projects developed by these organisations, identifying partners, target-populations and the aims and objectives of the each one of their projects.

The third study investigated 'elite' informants whose work and expertise are closely connected to these organisations and environments. Included in this data stream was a case study of the police, whose relations with favela residents and the drug trade have been at the centre of Rio de Janeiro's history of violence. The voices of external observers and partners express the different representations and views circulating in the city as well as an informed opinion about the overall interactions between favela and the city. Semi-structured interviews investigated:

- representations and overall perception of the origins, identity, method of work and actions of AfroReggae and CUFA as well as experiences of working together with these organisations.

The three different data streams correspond to a conceptual framework that sees AfroReggae and CUFA as mediators between the favela and the city so that they are in-between the lifeworld of the favela and the external observers who belong to the city's mainstream society. This configuration mirrors the phenomenology of the 'broken city', where favela communities are isolated from the mainstream city by borders constructed by both the built environment (*morro/asfalto* metaphor) and the symbolic landscape of social representations about the favela and the favela-dweller. Table 1.1 presents the different methodologies for data collection and analysis in each one of the studies.

Table 1.1 Data Streams and Methodology

Data streams	Data collection	Data analysis
The lifeworld of the favela	Questionnaire Interviews	Factor analysis (SPSS) Thematic analysis (NVivo)
AfroReggae and CUFA	Life stories Projects and actions	Narrative analysis (NVivo) Content analysis (SPSS)
External observers	Interviews	Thematic analysis (NVivo)

The data collection and analysis allowed the triangulation of different perspectives expressed by the different social actors being researched: we were able to consolidate different perspectives around the same core issue that is AfroReggae and CUFA – their identity, their work, their role as mediators – and at the same time to gather views, experiences and representations that branch out into different directions, each connected to the particular standpoint of the actors in question. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used, avoiding the pitfalls of relying on one single approach to research. Data collection took place between October 2009 and February 2011. The research contains five datasets, which were stored in appropriate software and systematised for analysis:

- 204 questionnaires with favela residents equally distributed in the communities of Cantagalo, City of God, Madureira and Vigario Geral, totalising more than 70 visits to the field, 250 hours of face-to-face contact plus 100 hours of observation and field-related activities;
- 204 semi-structured interviews applied in the same communities and with the same procedures mentioned above;
- analysis of 130 projects (70 of AfroReggae and 60 of CUFA);
- narrative of life trajectories of leaders of AfroReggae and CUFA (10 life stories amounting to more than 32 hours of face-to face interview);
- 16 interviews with external observers and partners, including government, private sector, the media, academia, research centres, other NGOs, international partners (UN and UNESCO Office in Brazil), and the police. We conducted an extra five interviews with the police given the importance of the institution in the lifeworld of the favela.

1.4. Theoretical Inspirations

Theoretical inspiration for the research came from a number of concepts and research traditions which included the concepts of *sociability*, *social representations*, the *imagination* and *psychosocial cartographies*. The research also enabled theoretical innovation by proposing the concept of *psychosocial scaffoldings*, which is introduced in Chapter 6.

The notion of *sociability* was introduced by Simmel (1950) to describe the play-form of social life and the joy and imagination that accompany the experience of the social. Simmel defines sociability as the play-form of sociation, that is, the pleasurable, joyful and delightful experience that comes out of people's interaction in society. Imagine the perfect social situation: having fun with peers, chatting, laughing, joking and enjoying the sheer delight of being together. For Simmel, this experience is the essence of sociability. This pure pleasure of sociability is possible because social actors are able to detach themselves from the real, material and concrete forms of social life, which involve structures and positionings related to hierarchies and inequality in social fields. If one abstracts from wealth, position and power, if one forgets status and other burdens of 'real' life, then it is possible to playfully engage in the game of sociability, of enjoying the presence of others, or playing the conversational and relational games that make conviviality and shared experience. A central marker of Brazilian culture, sociability as playfulness is particularly present in favela culture, both as expression of cultural identity and as an act of resistance against harsh living conditions. Simmel's analogy of sociability with play, game and art emphasises the power of the imagination as a central resource of individual and social lives. To understand the culture and sociability of favela life we also drew on the concept of *lifeworld* (Schutz, 1967), a system of meanings, practices, values and objects that constructs the background horizon within which and against which people experience their lives. The lifeworld of underground sociabilities tends to remain invisible, thus underground; it is hidden by a curtain of segregation that does not permit its forms to come into the full light of an integrated public sphere. Against this trend, the research set out to identify how the bonding and playful energies of sociability operate as a tool for re-writing individual lives, regenerating social spaces and connecting urban environments where segregation is a prevalent feature.

Social representations are systems of ideas, values and practices constructed by social groups with the twofold function of enabling orientation and communication. Introduced by social psychologist Serge Moscovici (1961/2008) in a study about how ideas change in the public sphere, social representations are ways of thinking and acting in the world; they express the mentality of a group, the thought and behaviour, the identities and the culture of a community. Our contemporary world is made of a plurality of social representations, each expressing projects, identities, ways of life and different levels of power in social fields. How representations meet, compete and transform each other in public spheres is one of the most interesting problems of our time (Bauer & Gaskell, 2008; Jovchelovitch, 2007). In *Underground Sociabilities*, we investigated social representations developed by Rio's communities about themselves, their individual trajectories, their neighbourhood, the city of Rio and the future. The research sought to map out how favela communities are staging representational struggles in relation to the overall public sphere of the city, trying to re-signify how they are seen and perceived by mainstream society in Rio. Central to the experience of our partners AfroReggae and CUFA is to transform social representations of favelas and favela dwellers, actively demonstrating that crime, drugs and violence are far from being the dominant features of favela culture. By pushing what is invisible into the open public sphere these groups are challenging dominant symbols and stereotypes and making a significant contribution to changes in social identities and inter-group relations across the city. At the same time we researched how different actors in the city, including academia, NGOs, international organisations, the media and the police construct representations about favela life and the work of AfroReggae and CUFA. Our key focus is the crossroads where different representations, stemming from different constituencies in the city, meet and transform each other.

Because the arts and creativity are such a crucial component of social regeneration in favelas, the *imagination* has been a central concept of the research. The imagination refers to the human capacity to go beyond the immediate present and play with possible realities. It involves the projection of hopes and anticipation of futures that challenge the present and actual configuration of things. Imagining other worlds is

a key adaptation unique to modern humans (Bloch, 2008). Counterfactual thinking coincided with significant increase in hominid brain size some 300,000 years ago and around 50,000 years ago a proliferation of human artistic activity expressed in cave paintings, ritual, songs, dance and body ornaments demonstrated the onset and sudden acceleration of this new and distinctively human cognitive capacity. We also know that in ontogenesis the human capacity to imagine alternative possibilities and to work out their implications emerges early and fundamentally transforms children's developing conception of reality. It allows children to switch between frameworks, from reality to make-believe and back, and establishes a relationship of mutual inspiration between pretend-play and reality. For the child, pretending is not a distortion but a playful relationship with reality that is central to a healthy cognitive, social and emotional development (Harris, 2000; Winnicott, 1971). Fantasy, play, daydreaming and imagining are essential for the healthy development of thinking and rationality. In this sense, the work of the imagination is central for producing the visions and alternative representations that move individuals, communities and public spheres into social action for positive social change. Through play and art AfroReggae and CUFA are repositioning favela life in the agenda of Brazilian society and showcasing the work of the imagination in developing resilience and resistance to contexts of poverty.

Finally, the notion of *psychosocial cartographies* is derived from the work of Brazilian social psychologist Sueli Rolnik. Inspired mainly by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (2004), it combines a psychological and geographical perspective to express how lived worlds can be encompassed in territories that are both spatial and psychosocial, that contain languages and behavioural patterns that define a certain landscape requiring understanding and unpacking. It is used to describe a space or territory in its subjective and objective totality: its languages, representations, practices, emotional investments, behavioural patterns, modes of relating within and outside its boundaries as well as its geographical materiality, where it is located, and how it establishes borders and crossings in relation to larger spaces and wider territories. Rolnik suggests that a psychosocial cartography is "not a representation of a static whole – it is a drawing that accompanies and creates itself at the same time as the transformation movements of the landscape" (Rolnik, 1989). The

notion of psychosocial cartographies was the last to arrive in the research. It was found inspirational at the point of data analysis, when it became clear through the qualitative examination of the semi-structured interviews with favela residents that each one of the communities we studied was revealing to us a specific psychosocial cartography that was both psychological and territorial.

1.5. The Structure of the Book

This book contains seven chapters, each of them presenting elements of the research and its results as well as the conceptual foundations that guided it and that were used to interpret the findings. Chapter 1 introduces the research and the partnership that sustained it. It reports on the execution of the study and provides information about the origins of the research, its concepts and overall design and methodology. It emphasises the importance of institutional partnerships for the efficacy of the research process and the learning processes that it enables.

Chapter 2 introduces the context, the areas of Rio de Janeiro that were researched and the central research problem. The chapter focuses on Rio de Janeiro, city that combines undisputed natural beauty and a socially divided territory, formed by complex relationships between two worlds. It is in this urban environment that new actions and new social actors such as AfroReggae and CUFA emerge, challenging the context and presenting a live laboratory for the study of agency and positive bottom-up responses to exclusion, poverty and violence.

Chapter 3 reports on the main findings about the lifeworld of the favela, as it is told and experienced by its inhabitants. This chapter presents the institutions and the everyday life that constitute the world of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. It highlights individual and collective trajectories through the analysis of the Self and its affective states as well as the analysis of the community, the city and the relations between the two. As the lifeworld of the favela comes to be known, there come to light the main elements that prevent or enable agency and resilience.

Chapter 4 presents a case study of the relations between the police and the favelas, including data about the perceptions of the police and of favela dwellers about themselves and each other. The chapter reports on how relations between the favela and the police developed and their future direction. It shows that these relations, historically complex and troubled, are changing.

Chapter 5 systematises the method of work and objectives of organisations AfroReggae and CUFA, as described and experienced by favela inhabitants, activists, leaders of these organisations and external observers. The chapter analyses the identity and main innovations of these organisations, showing how they transform underground sociabilities and produce a model of intervention that can inform similar contexts.

Chapter 6 presents a theoretical and conceptual framework as well as a synthesis of the research results. It maps the routes of inclusion and exclusion experienced by underground sociabilities. This chapter discusses the relations between agency and social context, presenting the psychosocial cartographies of each one of the communities studied. It offers a model to consider the levels of porosity between the favelas and the city, and shows that these are a central factor in defining life trajectories and routes of socialisation. The determinants of choices and ruptures in the routes of socialisation are discussed and the importance of psychosocial scaffoldings in this process is highlighted.

The last chapter presents a synthesis of the book, summarising the main research findings and offering conclusions and recommendations. A full bibliography and detailed information on sample, instruments and analytical procedures can be found at the end of the book.

2. Rio de Janeiro: Wonderful City, Broken City

"Young, black, fresh, little
A Falcao holds his shift in the rooftop, under the night dew
Drugs, arms, no future
A kid full of hate, invisible, in the dark."
(MV Bill)

2.1. Poverty, Inequality and Violence

A young, black, little boy dutifully overseeing the entrance of the favela, exposed to drugs and arms, invisible, filled with hatred, waiting in the dark: that is how the fighting sensibility of MV Bill, a Brazilian rapper and leader of CUFA describes the predicament of children employed by the drug trade in the favelas of Rio. They are the other face of Rio, a city whose raw human and natural beauty co-exists with poverty, inequality and violence. Although levels of victimization, inequality and poverty drastically decreased in Brazil and to some extent in Rio de Janeiro, the urban landscape of the city, both in absolute number and in human experiences of suffering, loss and segregation, continues to challenge the imagination of politicians, social scientists and policy makers. This wonderful and mixed city is also a *broken city* (*cidade partida*), where the beauty of the natural landscape, the warmth and conviviality of the *carioca* and openness to the world co-exist with violence, crime and radical social divisions.

Already for two decades the idea of a broken city/divided city proposed by Ventura (1994) captures the complexity of the divisions and lines of segregation that characterise Rio de Janeiro, and to some extent the whole of Brazil. This is an idea that adds to the notion of *Belindia* (a neologism constructed out of the names of two contrasting countries, Belgium and India) that has marked for a whole generation the condition and image of Brazil as a country made of immense inequality, containing in itself both India and Belgium, a product and at the same time producer of an acute internal separation that came to be known as the Brazilian social apartheid.

Although more recent debates invite us to reposition the classic description of Rio as a broken city and recognise it as an integrated whole made by the multiple interconnections of its different areas and citizens (Souza e Silva, 2003, 2009), the socio-economic indicators and the subjective experiences of its poor provide compelling evidence that the metaphor of the broken city cannot so easily be laid to rest. The reality of segregation and inequality in Rio is clear in numbers, in the low level of services provided by the State and by the private sector inside favela territories and in the voices of favela-dwellers. In 2010 more than 20 per cent of Rio's population was living in sub-normal agglomerates, as the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) describes areas known as favelas or communities (*comunidades*) in Rio.

> Favelas are defined as subnormal urban agglomerates, irregular settlements in areas considered inappropriate for urbanization, such as the steep hillsides of Rio's mountains: a set constituted by at least 51 housing units (shacks, small houses, etc.) occupying – or having occupied – till recently, land owned by a third party, private or public); disposed in general in a disordered and dense form, and lacking in their majority, essential services, public and private.

Over a million people live in these areas of the city, which have grown dramatically since the 1950s as can be seen in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Population Growth in Favelas and in Rio de Janeiro

Year	Favelas' population	Rio's population	%	% Favelas' population growth	% Rio's population growth
1950	169,305	2,337,451	7.24%	-	-
1960	337,412	3,307,163	10.20%	99.3%	41.5%
1970	563,970	4,251,918	13.26%	67.1%	28.6%
1980	628,170	5,093,232	12.33%	11.4%	19.8%
1990	882,483	5,480,778	16.10%	40.5%	7.6%
2000	1,092,958	5,857,879	18.66%	23.9%	6.9%
2010	1,393,314	6,288,588	22.16%	27.5%	7.4%

Source: IBGE.

Figure 2.1 shows the disparities in the Human Development Index (HDI) for Rio's different neighbourhoods. With some higher than Norway, which held the highest HDI for a country in 2000, and others close to Kyrgyzstan, ranked 102, the different areas of the city show, in their staggering inequality, what Rio's imagination calls the division hill (*morro*) and asphalt (*asfalto*). There is a sharp distinction between the favelas in the hills and the elegant neighbourhoods in the asphalted areas.

Figure 2.1 Ilustrative Comparison of HDI in Rio's Neighbourhoods and Countries
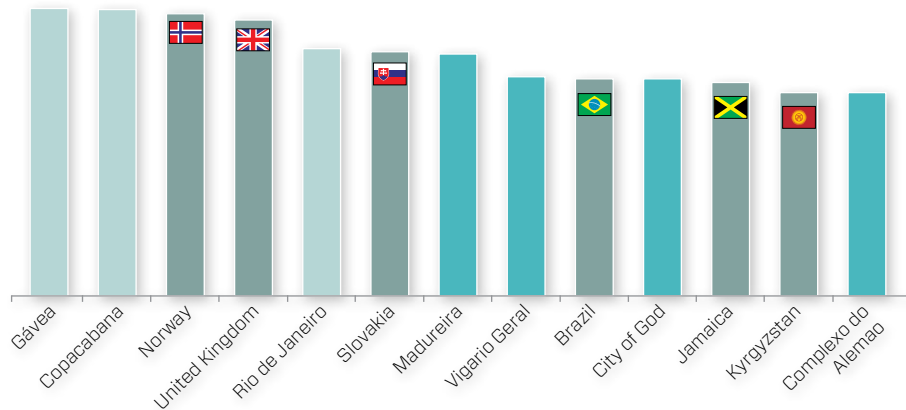
Source: IPP, 2004; UNDP, 2002.

Since 2000 there have been marked changes in the landscape of poverty and inequality in Brazil. The poverty index sharply decreased in the last decade, and Brazil is part of a select club of nations whose GINI has improved. But the city of Rio did not follow this development as we can see in Table 2.2. The indices for inequality and poverty show that little has changed in the last years in terms of inequality in Rio (Neri, 2010). Today it is higher than Brazil as a whole. The poverty index for the city has equally increased, although poverty in the favelas has actually decreased. The increase is due to impoverishment and inequality hitting the administrative regions of asphalt, as we can see in the table below.

Table 2.2 GINI and Poverty Index: Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Favela and Asphalt

	GINI		Poverty index	
	1996	2008	1996	2008
Brazil	0.602	0.549	28.82%	16.02%
Rio	0.577	0.576	9.61%	10.18%
Favela	0.397	0.384	18.58%	15.07%
Asphalt	0.564	0.570	7.87%	9.43%

Source: Neri, 2010.

Important as it is, improvement in the poverty index of favelas does not erase other numbers that continue to tell a story in which early death by homicide, low income, illiteracy and teenage pregnancy, amongst other indicators, have a clear address in the city. A more recent report from Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) (Neri, 2010) comparing the five larger low-income communities of Rio with its high income neighbourhoods found that it is the variable 'favela' that explains more than half of the differentials related to income per capita. To live in a favela significantly

decreases the average income of people with similar occupations. For instance, professionals who live in favelas earn in average 4.8 times less than professionals living outside favelas. Monteiro (2004) found that residence in a favela and lack of maternal education play a major role as determinants of mortality at young ages, with increased risk of mortality among under five year olds being particularly prominent in the favelas.

The social, economic and geographic context gives a clear indication of the problem, but its overall configuration goes far beyond this context to acquire specific cultural and psychological dimensions. The favelas of Rio are environments of great psychosocial and cultural complexity, where the institution of internal and external borders circumscribes the experience of individuals and groups living both inside and outside these territories. The relations between the favela and the city, characterised by the dichotomy *morro/asfalto* bring to the surface the political and psychosocial problems of segregation and exclusion which are produced by representations that systematically discriminate and stigmatise the favela-dweller. As we heard many times during the research,

> "... *we do have some prejudices, police is police,* favelado *[favela-dweller] is* favelado, *each one in their patch and place let's say...* Favelado... favelados *are all the same, they do not make for good people, they carry the seed of what is bad.*"
> (UPP Police Commander, community based)

The social psychology of the favela shows that the chronic invisibility of the underground sociability is produced through lenses that erase its lived reality to make it into a criminal and violent identity, 'a seed of what is bad'. To be of the favela, to live in the favela, and to go about town with the social marking of the favela constitute an experience made of discrimination and identification struggles that take away from its population the right to a positive self-interpretation.

> *"Here, what happens is this, not in the hill but in the asphalt. They look at you 'oh, you are from the hill…', without shame, hide their bags, pretend that they are talking to someone behind you, 'hello there', just to cross the street, no shame, they run."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 21 years old)

> *"The place where I live, is hard to travel to work… for instance, I have lost some four to five jobs, just because of the place where I live. You say City of God and people start… they look at you, it is also because of the colour of your skin, you see, there is a lot of prejudice, because of the area and also the skin colour…"*
> (City of God, male, 25 years old)

However, as we will see later, it is precisely to resist and to fight this predicament that the new social initiatives produced by favela communities are forged.

2.2. Territory in War: Socialisation and Violence

During the 1970s and 1980s there was a dramatic increase in drug trafficking in Rio de Janeiro. This expansion was accompanied by the territorial rooting of the drug trade in the favelas of Rio, described by Misse (1999) as a political, territorial and military process. The paramilitary structure of narcotraffic organisations instituted a territorial war between its own internal factions and between these and the police. The police, having inherited from the Brazilian military dictatorship an ideology of national security

concerned with the extermination of the 'enemy within', found in the favelas an opportunity to relocate the enemy and fill the vacuum left by the democratization of the country in the 80s. The occupation of the favelas by the narcotraffic and the war between the factions and the police sparked a sharp increase in violence that is clear in the evolution of homicide numbers for the city of Rio de Janeiro, in particular for its young population (Dowdney, 2003).

Figure 2.2 Evolution of the Homicide Index in Rio de Janeiro, 1980-2005
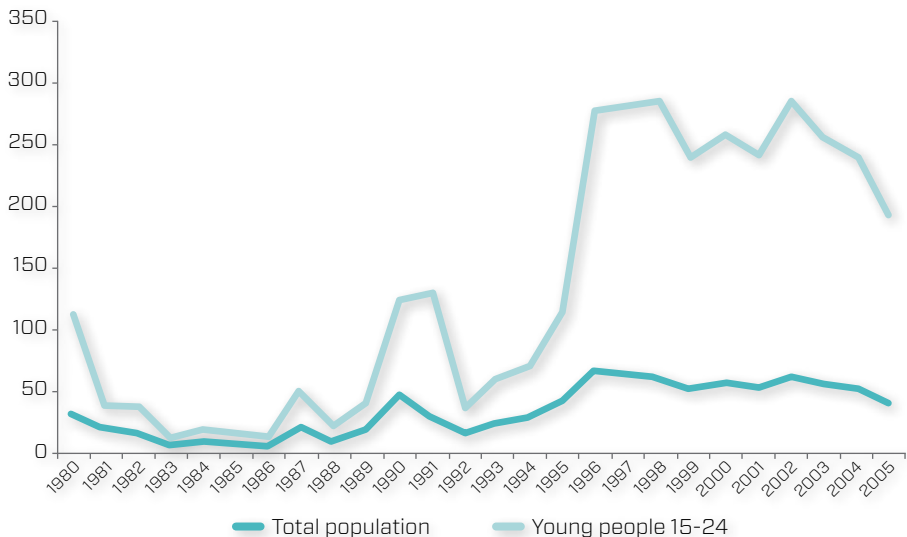
Source: SIM-DATA/SUS.

Whereas more recent data from the Map of Violence report (Waiselfiesz, 2011) show that homicide rates for young people have decreased substantially in Rio (from 1,352 in 1998 to 675 in 2008), when it comes to colour and race they continue to be alarming, showing the unequal distribution of violent deaths in the city. Figure 2.3 shows that for each white person murdered in the state of Rio more than two black persons have died in the same circumstances.

Figure 2.3 Homicide Rate (in 100,000) by Race/Colour in Total Population, Rio de Janeiro
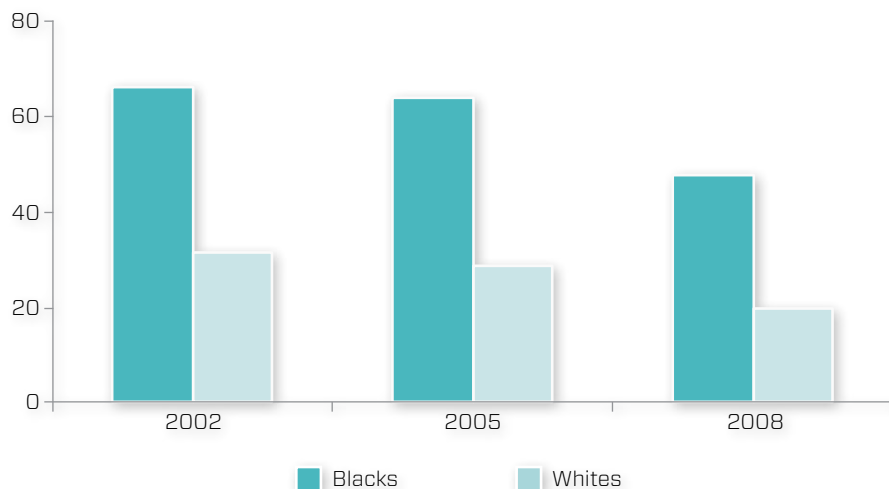
Source: Waiselfiesz, 2011.

Professor Silvia Ramos, a leading Brazilian expert on human security and rights, who has played a central role in developing research and policy in this area in Brazil, said during our interview:

> *"Brazil has the sixth larger index of homicides in the world for 19-24 year olds – 50,000 homicides per year. Fifty thousand! In Rio alone, we are talking 7,000. The homicide rate is 26 per 100,000. England, as I remember, is about 0.8 or 0.9. The USA rate is 4 or 5, and Western Europe is 1.2 or 2. But look at this: Brazil is 26 per 100,000; Rio de Janeiro's state is 50 per 100,000, that is, twice as Brazil's; the index for young people in the city of Rio is 100 per 100,000... and my team calculated that if you are young and black living in*

a favela of Rio, it is 400 per 100,000… Both in absolute and relative numbers the problem is big enough to be a national issue; but the distribution is so heavily concentrated that Brazil spent decades without responding, making it into something invisible. The problem went underground because the people dying all these years were black boys living in favelas."

As well as being a major determinant of homicide violence, the organised drug trade affects indiscriminately the totality of favela communities emerging as a major organiser of the underground sociability. Its presence carries institutional power offering a parallel system of norms and behavioural codes as well as a route to work and 'professional development'. The narcotraffic regulates, allows, interdicts and commands the life of children, youth, men and women in the favela, giving raise to the expression 'owner of the hill' (*dono do morro*). At the same time, the imposed violence produces a psychosocial ecology of danger and easy dying, a constant exposure to fire arms and the construction of a culture where brute force and criminality become natural. As a predominant culture, that is added to the chronic absence of the State and its services, the narcotraffic institutes in favela territories the harsh reality of a society without State, where rights, responsibilities and patterns of sociability lack a legal and normative framework.

In its totality the drug trade means fear, suffering and loss for the vast majority of favela residents, but it can also become, at times, the only option. The lack of opportunities associated with segregation and discrimination show that the routes of socialisation for young people who join criminal gangs involve a combination of socioeconomic difficulties, absence of basic State services and psychosocial variables such as desire to be recognised and to belong to a group that gives status, a role and identity. As we discuss in more detail later, there is nothing natural in the criminalization of the youngster who takes the route of the drug trade, and as research shows, his/her choice is not an individual decision.

2.3. A New Model of Public Security?

During the life time of our research, these conditions started to change due to the introduction of the Police Pacification Units, the UPPs. The UPPs are gradually reclaiming favela territories from drug bosses and changing radically the action of the police inside poor communities. UPPs are presented by the Department of Public Security of Rio de Janeiro as "a new model of Public Security that intends to bring police and population closer together, as well as to strengthen social policies inside communities"[1]. The aim is to build a new and positive relationship with favelas and, at the same time, to reclaim State control and expel drug bosses from these areas. There have been massive investments in recruitment and qualification of personnel and a strong emphasis on a humanist and community-based approach to policing. Since 2008, when the first UPP was established, the police have been launching new units throughout the city and today a total of eighteen units are established across the city. In all these areas the police have displaced the drug trade and are now working with other sectors – State, private sector and NGOs – to rebuild relations with the community.

These changes were real enough for the communities we studied but, as we report in Chapter 3, the socialization and subjectivity of favela-dwellers continues to be deeply marked by the culture and governance imposed by the drug trade and its war with the police. Perceptions of the police are contradictory, something that is reinforced by processes of transition and change in the institution itself. The UPPs are still a process, open to consolidation. In Chapter 4 we report on these issues and examine how new relations between favelas, police and AfroReggae and CUFA are challenging and transforming traditional urban divisions in Rio de Janeiro.

2.4. The Research Areas

The research studied four areas in Rio de Janeiro, which were sampled considering location and link with AfroReggae and CUFA. Cantagalo and Vigario Geral are associated with AfroReggae whereas City of God and Madureira are linked to CUFA. These associations are strong and essential for understanding both the areas and AfroReggae and CUFA.

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[1] RIO DE JANEIRO. Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro. Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora (UPP). Available at: <http://www.upprj.com/en>.

Figure 2.4 Location of Research Areas
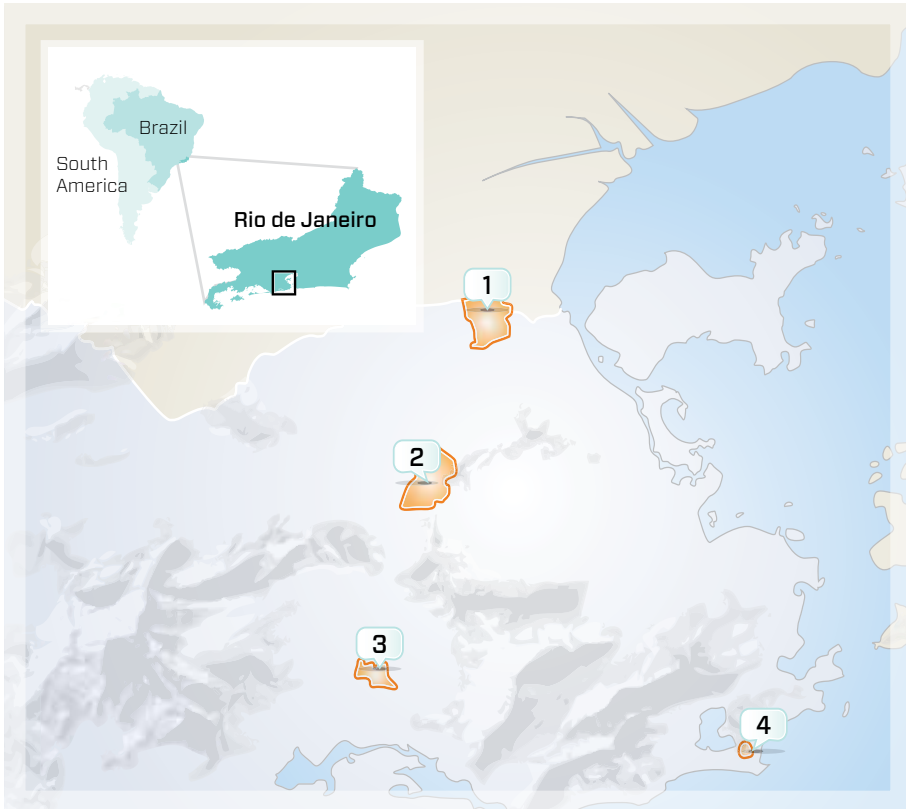
1. Vigario Geral | **2.** Madureira | **3.** City of God | **4.** Cantagalo

Figure 2.4 shows the location of each of the communities in the city. Cantagalo is in a hill close to the sea in the south of Rio, while City of God, Madureira and Vigario Geral are away from the coast, in the west, centre and north of the city. Cantagalo and Vigario Geral are classical favelas as defined by IBGE, whereas City of God was built as a planned area for allocating dwellers displaced from favelas in the centre of Rio during the military regime. Madureira is a formal neighbourhood surrounded by favelas. All of these areas have experienced lack of private and public services and historical depreciation. This is the case even in Madureira, despite its being a formal neighbourhood. All have been exposed to organised crime and in different degrees to the war between the police and drug bosses.

Although very different, the research areas have in common a history of stigmatisation and, as we have seen above, social indicators put them at disadvantage in relation to the city average.

Cantagalo as viewed from Ipanema and a view from Cantagalo

Cantagalo is part of a group of three favelas (Cantagalo, Pavao and Pavaozinho) located in one of the most affluent areas of Rio de Janeiro, between Ipanema, Copacabana and Lagoa. It is a small favela if we compare it to others in the city. However, the fact that Cantagalo is located in a hill gives the impression that it is bigger than it really is. Its location in an upper middle class area makes immediately visible the differences in the built landscape of the favela and the sophisticated facades of the buildings in the affluent neighbourhoods surrounding it. This proximity with upper class and middle class neighbourhoods accentuates the contrasts, as well as the tensions between the favela and the formal neighbourhood. This is evident in the discomfort instigated by the presence of favela-dwellers in Copacabana and Ipanema, a discomfort aggravated by fear and prejudice particularly in relation to young and black favela-dwellers.

Cantagalo is connected to Ipanema by a lift and a paved road, which facilitates displacement and transit from and to the formal city. In December 2009 a UPP was established and the drug trade was displaced as an organiser of community life. There have been massive investments from the PAC (the governmental Programme for

Accelerating Growth), which involved urbanisation and new housing. Cantagalo enjoys a large centre of social activities and education provided by Crianca Esperanca Centre (*Espaco Crianca Esperanca*), a national programme of social development lead by UNESCO Office in Brazil and Globo Network (the largest Brazilian media organisation).

AfroReggae has an important presence in Cantagalo. Its headquarters next to *Crianca Esperanca* are a hub of social activities, workshops and psychosocial services, attracting people from different areas of the city.

City of God, during the 1960s and during fieldwork, at the beginning of 2010

City of God is internationally known due to the homonymous film which received four Academy Award nominations in 2004. The neighbourhood was one of the largest tenement house areas in Rio de Janeiro, built during the sixties by the military regime as a flagship settlement to shelter poor families coming from the favelas that were being 'eradicated' from the city centre. Located in the Jacarepagua region, in its early years the area did not have urban infrastructure and transport links and commuting to the centre of Rio could take almost 3 hours. Isolation, absence of basic infrastructure and jobs meant worsening of social conditions and lack of means to pay and maintain the new houses that steadily depreciated and were dramatically modified by the arrival of the drug trade and other illegal settlements. In the following years, City of God became one of the most problematic areas in Rio due to poverty and the actions of the drug trade.

Today, City of God merges a formal residential area with several informal settlements that can be called favelas. Its location is remote in relation to the southern zone of Rio. Since the expansion of the far west end of Rio (Barra da Tijuca), City of God has found some new connections to the city and is not as isolated as it used to be. In February 2009 a UPP was established ending the long-term control of drug bosses in the area. CUFA has a significant presence in City of God through projects, workshops and social activities.

Sunshine and rain in Madureira during fieldwork

Madureira is a very large neighbourhood of Rio and the centre of the northern zone of the city. It is an important transport hub and an active and important commercial centre. The raising of the district took place in the early 20th century, when the Market of Madureira was created by local producers. This developed into a very large and popular market during the 1960s, which today is one of the largest in the city. Madureira is distant from the 'wonderful' southern zone of Rio, but contains in itself the many popular sources that make Rio the Wonderful City: samba, popular culture, conviviality and music. The area is home to important cultural venues linked to samba schools such as Portela and Tradicao as well as Jongo da Serrinha, a traditional Afro-Brazilian group.

Due to its commercial activities, the district has a considerable number of middle class residents, which improve its socio-economic indicators and bring them close to the city

average. However, these are low in comparison to other middle class areas. Overall, the neighbourhood is considered a working class region belonging to the formal city, with legal settlements under the control of the State. It is surrounded by favelas and various factions of the drug trade, which make it a point of conversation and passage, a community at the crossroads.

Vigario Geral in the news: 'Killing of 21 provokes anger in favela and shocks Rio'; and the research team crossing into Vigario (2009) with the Waly Salomao Centre in the background

Vigario Geral is located in north Rio de Janeiro, close to the international airport in what is now considered a declining industrial area. The first settlements in Vigario Geral took place during the 1940s, following the construction of a new train line (Leopoldina). The construction of Avenida Brasil (a busy and central highway linking Rio to its surrounding areas) has also contributed to the increase in population in the region. During the sixties, the government built extra housing in the area to accommodate low income populations removed from favelas in the city centre (a policy that also gave origin to City of God). Its location is clearly in the edge of the city and distant from the southern zone along the coast. The train line is just opposite the community, which is approached via a bridge that operates as a border.

Vigario Geral is heavily influenced by the drug trade; armed drug dealers stand at the entrance of the community and determine who can come and go. Any strange face

is seen with suspicion at this border. Only AfroReggae has open access and its brand provides a passport for easy admission and circulation. Of special importance is the relationship with Parada de Lucas; the two communities, which are just next to each other, were for almost two decades the centre of a war between drug factions. The dispute became famous in the city, and the border between the two favelas became known as the Brazilian 'Gaza Strip'. The community also became known for a tragic episode in 1993, when 21 of its residents were assassinated by policemen avenging the killing of a colleague. This event became a major signifier in the life of Vigario Geral and it is widely recognised as the episode that helped to found AfroReggae.

2.5. New Actors, New Actions: AfroReggae and CUFA

Research has consistently pointed to the uniqueness of Brazilian social capital (Zaluar & Ribeiro, 2009) and a civil society characterised by strong associational ties. Based on a culture of conviviality, miscegenation and intense sociability, the country has produced technologies of intervention for social transformation that became international references in areas such as health, education and food. These policies are being institutionalised by a new political will that has put the State in a very close dialogue with social movements and grassroots experiences (Avritzer, 2002). However, the emergence of organised groups of favela-dwellers is a new and striking development in the Brazilian political landscape, differing from all preceding manifestations of civil society in Brazil (Ramos, 2006; Vianna, 2006).

Since the early nineties, bottom-up initiatives in the poor and peripheral communities of Rio and other Brazilian regions resulted in groups such as AfroReggae, CUFA, *Nós do Morro* [We from the Hill] and Olodum, which radically differ from traditional organisations that 'educate' and 'intervene' in poor areas, because they comprise and are enacted by people who come from the favelas and who sustain a strong and close relationship with these specific territories. They use the arts and cultural production to reclaim identity and reposition the ideas, visions, perspectives and experiences of favela youth in the agenda of Brazilian society.

Central to these experiences is the introduction of a new social actor in the process of re-democratizing Brazil: the presence of black young favela-dwellers in the actions of organised civil society. These new social actors, notes Ramos (2007), innovate in various dimensions. They resist contexts of segregation, considering and even putting emphasis on individual trajectories and subjectivity. They relate to markets, the private sector, the media and the State, defending and reclaiming territory, and putting openly in the political agenda the problem of racial pride. Through their very existence they signal new conditions in Brazilian culture and political life. Anthropologist and cultural producer Hermano Vianna, whose seminal 2006 text *Central da Periferia* pointed clearly to the new interrelations between the centre and the periphery in the city, stated during our interview:

> *"I think that the major political initiative of the 90s was the emergence of these groups. And this with a new culture, which in Rio de Janeiro is the* funk carioca *– there is also the* forro pop nordestino*, there is* technobrega *in Belem do Para, etc. – which did not come out of large musical producers, or mainstream mass media, but are crowd phenomena, very commercial but do not go through the traditional centres of cultural production. Today, you do not need to be in Globo TV to be a success."*
> (Academic and cultural producer).

When Vianna (2006) wrote that the favela now states '*Quale, mane! O que não falta aqui é cultura! Olha so o que o mundo tem a aprender com a gente!*' [What's up, bro? What is not lacking here is culture! Have a look at what the world has to learn from us!], he was referring to a new kind of protagonist that embraces the identity, the way of life, the resources and the potentialities of favela life as paradigmatic of what can develop under the sign of exclusion and harsh conditions of living. It is a new type of actor who resists stigmatisation and homogenisation to show that despite poverty and exclusion there is resilience, intelligence and a proud identity to be found in the favelas and periphery of the city. This

is corroborated by Salles (2007), who sees in the movement of these young people the introduction of a new subjectivity in the peripheries of Brazil. Here we are before a process of renovation of traditional political actors and innovation of methods for intervention in the public sphere, where the agenda of social transformation emerges decentralised and poly-located in the unconventional collective action of young peripheral populations.

AfroReggae and CUFA are exemplary of these new social actors and novel forms of collective action. AfroReggae emerged in 1992, through the actions of a small group that used music and dance as a platform for mobilisation and self-organising. Its explicit mission is to "promote inclusion and social justice using Arts, Afro-Brazilian Culture and Education as tools for building bridges that combine differences and work as foundations of sustainability and citizenship"[2]. Its history is directly linked to the 'massacre of Vigario Geral' and this area of the city is a central constituent of its identity.

CUFA emerged in 2001, with an explicit racial and political agenda associated to the culture and identity of the favelas. Born in Madureira, the organisation continues to have strong links with this community. In its publications, CUFA defines its mission as "to act towards social transformation, development and social inclusion and against racial discrimination"[3]. For them, although it is important to raise awareness that favelas are seen through stigma, the central issue is the internalisation of the invisible condition by the favela-dweller. Through sports, the arts and joint action they want to change these conditions.

Both AfroReggae and CUFA use culture, arts and new communication technologies to present themselves in the public sphere. They are connected and yet independent from traditional media, growing through viral and rhizomatic activities. The academic literature has just started to document this process, which will require further study and systematization. To investigate the identity, methodology and objectives of AfroReggae and CUFA in relation to the lifeworld of favela communities in Rio de Janeiro forms the backbone of the present study.

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[2] AFROREGGAE. *Grupo Cultural AfroReggae*: official website, 2010. Available at: <http://www.afroreggae.org/>.

[3] CUFA. *Central* Única *das Favelas*: official website, 2012. Available at: <http://cufa.org.br/>.

3

3. The Lifeworld of the Favela

"We have to be against ghettos, above ghettos, out of ghettos. And we need to create connections: a bridge, a two-way road where you can bring together different thinking and different social spaces."

(Jose Junior)

3.1. Social Institutions

The lifeworld of the favela comprises a complex institutional framework where the scarcity of State services, the family, Churches of evangelical denomination and NGOs such as AfroReggae and CUFA coexist with the presence of the drug-trade as a central organiser of favela life.

Figure 3.1 describes social institutions of favela life showing the overlap between family, Church and drug trade, the occasional action of the State through the police invasions (now changing with the UPPs) and the action of AfroReggae and CUFA in relation to each one of them. The overlap indicates the connections and constant communication and exchange between favela institutions. Members of one single family belong to different institutions and the same person can move around or have friends and relatives in all of them.

Figure 3.1 Social Institutions of Favela Life
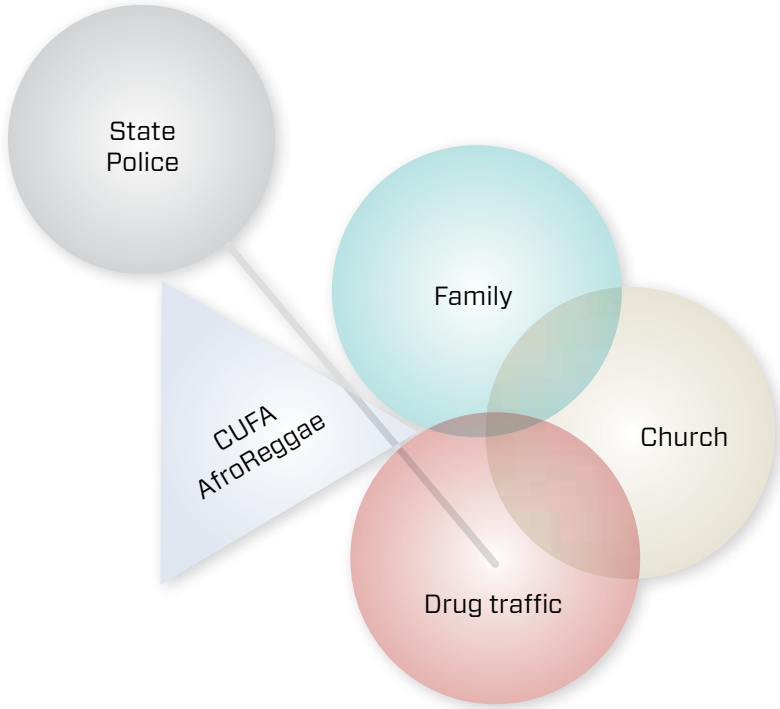
Note. The family, Churches and drug traffic are present and overlapped in favela life. The State is represented only by the police, which occasionally intervene when fighting the drug trade. AfroReggae and CUFA take on functions performed by all institutions.

The Family

The family appears with great intensity in the voices of our interviewees despite being overall an unstable institution in their lives. Figure 3.2 shows that between 12 and 17 years old, for every three children two report an absent father (only 33.3% live with their father), one in four reports an absent mother (26.4% do not live with mother) and 18.1% report both parents absent; 5.6% already have a partner and 4.2% have children themselves.

Figure 3.2 Family Composition (12-17 years old)
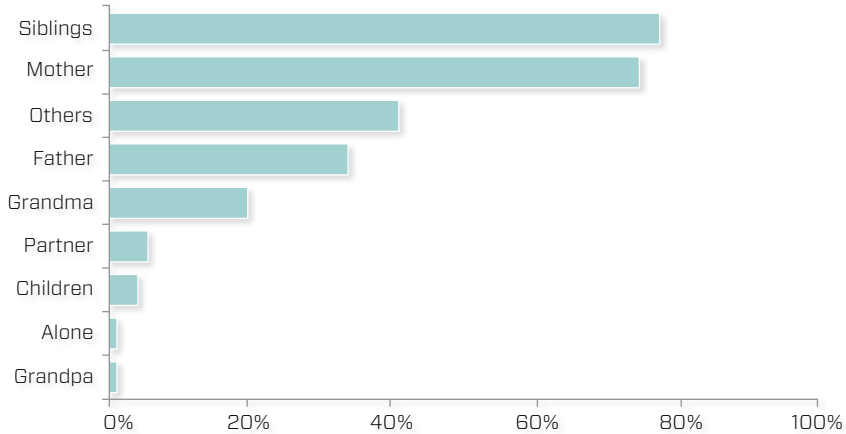
Note. Household family members in percentage of responses. Multiple answers allowed.
Source: Questionnaire.

As people grow older, family composition changes. Figure 3.3 shows that one in two report living with their mother (51.6%) and nearly one in four have extended their families to include a partner (28%) and/or children (22.6%).

Figure 3.3 Family Composition (18-29 years old)
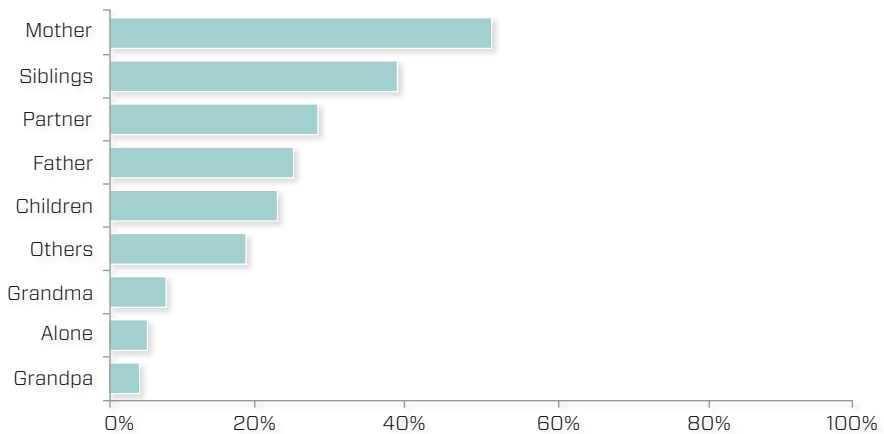
Note. Household family members in percentage of responses. Multiple answers allowed.
Source: Questionnaire.

By the age of 30 years old and/or older, family composition includes mainly children (61.5%) and partner (61.5%). However, the extended family is still present, with nearly 1 in 4 mature adults reporting living with their mother (23.1%) and with other relatives or with their partner's relatives (23.1%). Others, which include friends and undisclosed people, is also a notable category, which might refer to those who are in the streets or constantly changing address because of involvement with the drug trade. This can be observed in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 Family Composition (30+ years old)
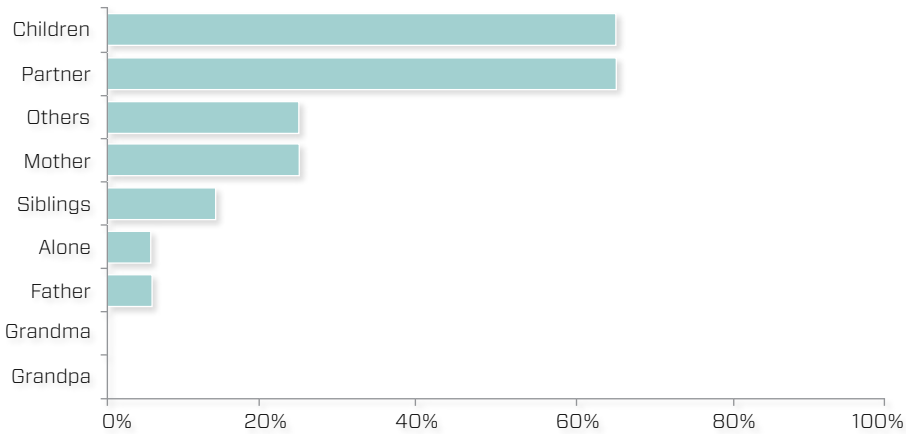
Note. Household family members in percentage of responses. Multiple answers allowed.
Source: Questionnaire.

Whereas most people report unstable family environments, participants are unanimous in describing the family as a central factor in shaping life trajectories. Instability is a key marker of the family, but favela residents of all ages expressed the importance of the family in their lives. As will be discussed later, talk about the family appeared through two very different experiences: the family that supports and 'saves from the environment' and the family that condemns and 'lets the environment take hold'. There are stories of abandonment and early introduction in a criminal pathway and, in less proportion, stories of resilience and resistance to the adverse context. The experience of instability reinforces the view that a loving and stable family structure is essential for surviving the

difficulties of the environment. Women have a major role in sustaining the structure of the nuclear and extended family given the considerable incidence of absent fathers. Fear of loss of loved ones is a major aspect of family experience; there are many reports of losing one's child to the drug trade or in the frequent crossfire between rival drug gangs and between these and the police. These aspects are discussed in more detail later in this section.

The Drug Trade

The drug trade is the central institutional organiser of community life. Notwithstanding the introduction of the UPPs during the life time of our research (see Chapter 2) there can be little doubt that the drug trade is the institution that has defined the lived experience of favelas in Rio, for the last 25 years or so. Having established a firm footing in these territories for some 30 years, the drug trade constructed an informal set of rules and regulations that governs the moral, political and behavioural life of favela communities, establishing codes of conduct and even the physical right to come and go. Drug dealers have imposed their law along the formal legal system – which until recently was, and to some extent continues to be, broken by the police itself on a regular basis. Residents usually find themselves in paradoxical situations: if they follow the laws of the drug trade they break the law of the State, and if they break the law of the drug trade they are simply likely to be killed, or to have one of their loved ones killed. As we report in the subsequent pages, the drug trade is by far the most significant institution defining the laws and regulations of the favela, at the level of the individual and at the level of the community.

The State and the Police

The police, which tend to be the only or the main face of the State in the life of favela communities, are in a direct and complex relation with the drug trade and with the community itself. Associated with the drug trade by a system of bribes and corruption and until recently known for its policy of violent confrontation, the Military Police of

Rio has been predominantly represented by favela-dwellers as a force of persecution, a source of aggression and crime, homogenising residents and drug dealers and treating everyone as a criminal. Events such as the killings of Vigario Geral in 1993, in which 21 innocent people were murdered by the police as a revenge act against the drug faction that 'owned' that community, play a central role in the imaginary of the city and in particular of favela-dwellers. Participants in all communities studied express fear of the police and see the institution as an unruly and aggressive force. The introduction of community policing is producing change and gradually allowing for a different type of representation to emerge, but our findings show that negative representations are resistant to change and continue to be present in the community. Most participants are positive about the UPPs, but at the same time narrate tales of police aggression and show ambivalence in relation to the transformation taking place in the police.

The Church

Evangelical Churches have a strong presence in the favelas and emerge as an important reference in the discourse of participants. Religiosity and faith are a central aspect in the experience of the Self, and many report belief and Church practices as a means of support and salvation from the challenges of the environment. The Churches work closely with NGOs and even with the drug trade to support families and to keep young people away from the police and crime.

NGOs (AfroReggae and CUFA)

NGOs have an important presence in the lifeworld of the communities we studied, and are referred to as a source of occupation, support and development of competencies. They act on favela life taking on multiple institutional roles, including the family and the State services. They compete directly with the drug trade for primacy in the routes of socialization of young people. Chapter 5 will discuss in detail the role of these organisations.

All the institutions above coexist and relate in complex ways to make up the lifeworld of the favela. The scarcity of the State's input, the instability of the nuclear family, the drug trade as a central organiser of community life, and the police as the concrete face of an aggressive State shape the favela environment. All have a direct channel of communication with the drug trade, competing and yet working with it if necessary, and at various levels negotiating the everyday and the culture of favela life.

Understanding the institutional framework of the favela is important because of the role these institutions play in defining routes for socialisation. Living in the crossfire between these institutions, learning how to dive for cover and finding strategies to cope with both the drug bosses and the police invasions is part and parcel of favela wisdom. It is expressed in its language, in its codes of behaviour and slang, in the intensity of the stories of human loss and grief that emerge out of the qualitative interviews. The Churches and at times the family are the institutions that juxtapose positive actions to the harshness of the environment and compete for the attention and training of young people.

3.2. The Experience of the Self

Narratives of the Self and its trajectory are dominated by the experience of hardship, suffering and hard work to earn a living, bring up children in safety and grow up without succumbing to what favela-dwellers see as the threat and perils of the context. Participants tell stories of discrimination, poverty, loss of friends and family and the ways in which they struggle to live a positive life. The centrality of the drug trade is unequivocal; virtually all participants in our research talk about 'being involved', the euphemism used to describe those who join the narcotraffic. Violence and war between the police and the drug factions are almost taken for granted and it is part of the know-how of the Self to recognise the signs of danger, to know when to look to the other side, to avoid specific areas and activities inside the community and, importantly, not to cross the wrong border in the city. They understand the importance of the context in the making of life trajectories, because the external determinants of the favela environment impact on their lives

with a constitutive force. Nowhere it is clearer than in contexts of poverty how much the interface between individual and society is real and concrete; 'no man is an island' wrote the poet, and favela-dwellers know this very well.

> *"We have a very painful life, nothing is easy here... everything is a lot of sacrifice... to bring up a child is a sacrifice, a lot of struggle, it's not easy."*
> (Cantagalo, female, 37 years old)

> *"My major achievement maybe is to live through all the experiences that we live inside a favela and manage to be unscathed, to manage to go through all this and not fall... to live with, but not to live through the situation. To live with, but not live through, I think this is my major achievement."*
> (Cantagalo, female, 47 years old)

Human pain dominates the narratives of the Self: in each of the interviews there are stories of abandonment, early death, segregation and racism. And yet, the Self in the favela is not hopeless or devoid of enjoyment. People find ways to cope and to carry on. Permeating descriptions of suffering, hardship and loss are those that we call *anchors of the Self*: the role of a loving and stable family, of religiosity and faith, of leisure and of role models from organisations such as AfroReggae and CUFA, which are described as lifesaving and empowering, enabling people to cope and overcome loss, addiction and crime. Figure 3.5 shows the importance of the family, of fear, crime and loss, of everyday exposure to the drug trade and to the war between its factions and the police. With these dimensions, we also observe the prominence of religiosity and faith followed by the importance of identification models and the contradictory experiences of leisure and suffering. The social institutions of the favela are present in the experience of the Self and its emotional states.

Figure 3.5 The Experience of the Self
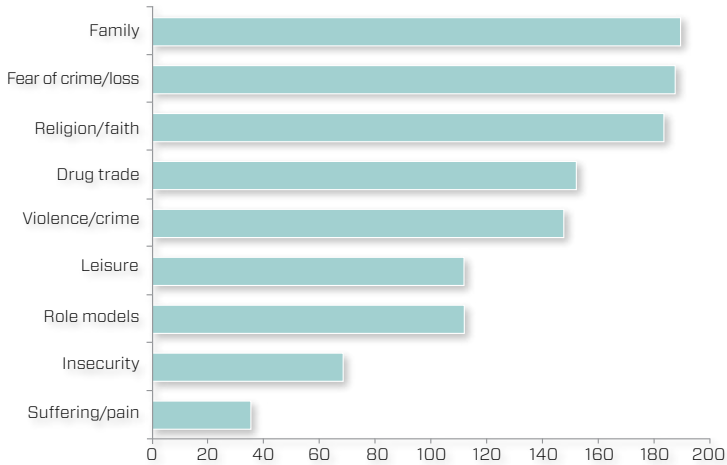
Note. Reported experiences of the Self, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

The Family

As seen above, the instability of the family is predominant in the lifeworld of the favela. Against this given instability, participants consider the presence of a structured and supporting family essential for the Self and for a positive life, a determinant factor in both the trajectory of the Self that is being narrated and the relationship to the future that is being dreamt of and projected. As briefly mentioned earlier, there are two main avenues for how the family features in the life of participants:

• *The disabling family*: the family reported as the cause of loss of one's way (*descaminho*), the reason why life has taken a turn to the wrong path. In this avenue we find the people with parents involved in the drug trade, stories of abandonment and life in the streets. This kind of family background is frequently reported as a reason for seeking a new life, frequently motivated by the birth of a child.

- *The enabling family*: this refers to the family as a support structure that keeps violence and criminality at bay while enabling resilience in relation to the immediate environment and its invitations towards the drug trade. In this pathway we find the presence of a 'heroic' mother, who works hard to bring up her children and keep them out of trouble. She is seen as a warrior who sustains her children, a general descriptor being that 'it was for my mother that I survived and stayed away from the drug trade'.

For interviewees there is little doubt that a good family structure guarantees a positive life trajectory. The positive family is frequently sustained by mothers and grandmothers: they are the centre of the family, creating a secure environment, occupying themselves with the children, organising their lives and childcare, and going out to work during the day as main breadwinners. Mothers work, get involved in NGOs, try to make sure children go to school (normally far away) and are active in finding support with neighbours and other women so that the children are looked after. Many of the participants refer to mothers and grandmothers as idols.

> *"... My mum... looked after us, my parents had a difficult relationship, my mum took over the family, she worked so hard, she taught us manners, educated us... She worked so hard, she was a clothes-washer for others, she used to wash more than six baskets per day, washing, washing... My vision was only work, she used to take us to school, cook, everything was good and safe in my home, simple, humble, but so good... These principles mark a lot one's life. We were poor and humble, but... how can I explain this to you? Yes, we had the presence of a mother!"*
> (Madureira, female, 39 years old)

The family is associated with key feelings and emotions of favela life such as fear of loss and violence due to involvement with the drug trade and pride for being able to 'save' young people from a disadvantageous environment.

> *"... my dream is to take my mum out of here, because of the crossfire. When there is crossfire, the bandits they shoot just next to my bedroom. And I am afraid of a stray bullet. That's why I am afraid, I have never liked living here. If I could I would go to my dad's house, but I do not want to leave the circus [AfroReggae]."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 12 years old)

Fear of Crime and Loss / Violence and Crime

Exposure to violence and crime is a frequent experience of the Self. It belongs to the everyday and is intensely talked about. Participants report extraordinary situations, where crossfire, stray bullets, arms, the killing of friends and family are regular occurrences. Fear of crime and loss is central to the lifeworld of underground sociabilities and a central dimension in the life of the interviewees, from the young to the elderly. The vast majority talks about the fear of a stray bullet and what is it like to live in the crossfire. Violence and firearms are part of the experience of life each day, which demands a cognitive and emotional effort to read and make sense of the signs and criminal behaviours surrounding the community. Participants also report fears of loss and frequently refer to the possibility of losing a child, a relative and/or a friend in the crossfire.

> *"... my biggest fear, is my son to say: my father was... my father died in the drug trade, should I then...? Should I avenge my father's death... How I have seen people doing just that! My biggest fear is that, to see my son dying."*
> (Vigario Geral, female, 29 years old)

The majority of participants have been directly affected by violence and have had either a family member or a friend involved with the narcotraffic, with consequences ranging from imprisonment to death.

> *"... the ones who studied with me from the 5th to the 8th year, of these there aren't many alive. The majority of the boys died because of the traffic, they got involved and ended up dead. Very few alive, I can count in my fingers... it is sad, you end up losing a piece of your own history. You remember things we did, the friends you had and are gone by stray bullets."*
> (Vigario Geral, male, 23 years old)

Religiosity and Faith

Religiosity and faith are important categories for the Self, although it is important to note that the high frequency of the category can be a function of the interview guide, which contained a specific question on the topic. This said, the analysis of the content shows that religiosity and faith are important aspects in the life of favela residents. They emerge as central dimensions of support in the personal effort to sustain a positive pathway of socialisation and/or to change one's life. It has a clear function of psychosocial scaffolding and involves a dimension related to Churches and a dimension related to belief. Table 3.1 shows the distribution of religion in the four communities studied.

Table 3.1 Religious Denomination in the Communities Studied

	Evangelical	Catholic	None	Mixed	Spiritism	Jehovah	Atheist
Cantagalo	29%	32%	26%	5%	8%	-	-
City of God	41%	29%	7%	19%	2%	-	2%
Madureira	40%	17%	13%	11%	13%	6%	-
Vigario Geral	44%	23%	18%	13%	-	3%	-
Total	39%	25%	16%	12%	6%	2%	1%

Note. Religious denomination was coded from interview data. N = 166, which is 81.4% of all cases as not all interviewees mentioned religion. Numbers have been rounded.

The vast majority of participants reports having a religion and being a member of a church, distributed between the Evangelical Churches (39%), the Catholic Church (25%), a mixture of religions (12%), and others including Jehovah's Witnesses and Kardec's Spiritism. While 16% report having no religion, all, with only one exception in the sample, believe in God. Many avoid contact with the Churches because it imposes a life-style they find incongruent with theirs, as we can see in the voice below:

> *"No, I do not go to Church, but I believe in God. I am not of the kind who goes to church, because many say that when you start going to church you cannot go out, you cannot do anything, go to parties, to* baile funk *parties... I like to dance and I dance all styles, and I don't like to be forbidden of doing things, in particular by the Church, so I don't go."*
> (City of God, male, 18 years old)

While for Catholics observance of religious rituals and practices is unusual, this is a frequent behaviour among Evangelicals, who actively observe and participate in Church activities. When stories of breaking free from the drug trade and antisocial

behaviour are related to religious conversion, they are all related to the Evangelical Churches. These Churches clearly compete with the drug trade; this is the case in the route of socialisation and in the process of 'conversion', of supporting those who want to get away from the drug trade. Interestingly enough we have reports that this is well accepted by the drug bosses, who do not interfere with those who want to leave, as long as they are seen as making a life choice.

Ten per cent of the people interviewed report having a mixture of religions, which they accommodate and use depending on those aspects felt to be in accordance with their needs and outlook in life. A direct evidence of Brazilian religious syncretism, interviewees describe their religion as 'a bit of each'. In City of God almost 20 per cent of the participants report a 'mixed' religion.

The majority of respondents believes in destiny, and thinks it is defined for each person by God, right from the beginning of life. However, they qualify this proposition by introducing a subset of ideas that almost transforms it into its opposite: interviewees assert that within one's given destiny God gives options, so that one can be agent and protagonist of one's life. This is a very strong and widespread view amongst favela-dwellers, the idea that one's life is of one's making and that 'if you want, you can'. This relationship with faith and destiny expresses a state of *cognitive polyphasia* (Jovchelovitch, 2007; Moscovici, 2008), a mental framework where contradictory representations and ways of thinking, live side by side. This stock of common sense knowledge works as a constructive resource in triggering positive action because it allows a sense of agency to coexist with belief in destiny and faith; it is one of the rich resources of local culture that, in combination with other elements, carries the potential for effective individual and social development.

Researcher: *Do you believe our destiny is given?*

Interviewee: *I believe more or less. God gives destiny, but He put choices in your hands. He can give two destinies, if one*

goes to this side, this will happen; if you go to the other side then that will happen. He knows what will happen and gives the choices to us.

(Madureira, female, 17 years old)

This is corroborated by the philosophy expressed by AfroReggae's leader, when talking about the mixture and religiosity in relation to their identity:

"We have this aspect. It's an aspect... spiritual aspect. But it is spiritual without being a religious movement. It is Shiva and it is Ogum, you see? It's Allah. It's Our Lady of Fatima. It's Jesus. It's a mixture. It's a mixture... They're cultural influences from many beliefs. It is a thing a bit... because when you are in AfroReggae, people end up having an enhanced spirituality without necessarily having a belief."

(AfroReggae, leader)

The Drug Trade

We found that the presence of the drug trade and its consequences is a major experience for the Self. It is a constant referent from which it is hard to escape. It defines the perception of the immediate environment and the reflection about the trajectory of the Self. It is usually part of what participants describe as 'the best and the worst experience of their lives' and a central factor in experiences of loss and suffering. In the description of the drug trade in their lives, we can observe the logic that makes it an almost 'natural' dimension of favela life, what it offers and what it commands.

"… [the drug trade] *it offers you opportunities. You work a whole month and get the minimum wage, or you work a week with them and get more… isn't it more appealing? Isn't it easier? It is very hard, you know? The family is going hungry, sometimes has nothing to eat, the brothers offer you a job, and you take it: 'I will get this, I will work. It turned up, I will get it.' It is one child after the other, the mother does not work, lives off benefits, of begging, the children seeing the mum in that situation, and in a while they take a step, join, and soon everyone is inside, you see? But they have a short life and this breaks my heart…"*
(City of God, female, 29 years old)

"… *in the* morro [hill]*, you know there is an ethics code, an honour, that is followed, much stronger than in the asphalt… here, if you are wrong, the law of here will be applied to you, there is no way out…"*
(Cantagalo, male, 30 years old)

"… *the worst thing that happens to me is when there are these operations here in the* morro*, you know? The worst happens, there is crossfire, the heart starts to beat, I don't like it, I get nervous, afraid. And people, residents, who are honest, who work hard, end up dying with this violence. But we say: It is life. And we carry on."*
(Cantagalo, female, 17 years old)

"... when there is war here, it is each one for themselves, if you are in the street, you need to be careful, hide, when the police arrives... it is hard. Lots of bullets, a bullet here, a bullet there, they don't want to know if you are a bandit, if you are the police, if you are a resident. If you are in the street and there is war and you are out, you are a bandit!"
(Vigario Geral, male, 20 years old)

These descriptions show the drug trade as provider, legislator and organiser of everyday life in the favela. Favela-dwellers live with it and deal with it: we found a rich diversity of strategies adopted to cope with the impositions of the drug trade. Different dimensions and values associated with the drug trade as it is spoken comprise:

1. *Controller of space, circulation and behaviour in the favela:* drug dealers are agents of control, of ordering time, relationships and space.

• The war between different factions of the drug trade imposes curfews and prevents transit between communities so that for most people the right to come and go in the city is dictated by the drug bosses. Common to the experience of our interviewees was that they could not visit a relative or a friend who lived in another favela because it was controlled by a different faction of the drug trade than the one controlling their own community.

• In addition to manoeuvring within the war between the factions residents must accommodate the dangers of the war between the State (represented by the police) and the drug dealers. For anyone living in favelas it is just impossible to ignore the different and incompatible laws imposed by these conflicting institutions, which use firearms as a matter of course and on a frequent basis. For many of the former drug dealers we interviewed life was a battle between their allegiance to the community, the imperatives of the drug trade and the war with the police. Many have sent their children to the NGOs we studied, reporting that '*I do not want for my children the life I have, it is a bad life, a difficult life*'.

2. *Work and survival:* the drug trade is for many an option for work and survival, which is directly experienced and associated with the absence of the State and discrimination from employers in the asphalt area.

3. *Agent of loss and separation:* the drug trade is strongly linked to experiences of suffering and loss, with stories of death and bereavement involving close relatives and friends. When asked about their worst life experience, the vast majority of participants reports a situation related to drug trade violence and loss of friends and family.

4. *Appeal towards socialisation:* the drug trade is a strong appeal to a socialisation route that promises 'power, status and guns', even if it is a short-lived and an illusionary dream. This is specially the case for young boys living in the favelas, although in a lesser extent it can be equally appealing for girls.

5. *Stigma:* the stigma of the drug trade is a heavy burden for favela-dwellers due to the homogenisation of favela communities and the widespread representation that equals favela with the drug trade. Many speak of this burden and the challenge of avoiding stigma, stating for instance, that it is acceptable and 'normal' to see a young child playing with a gun in an asphalt context but highly problematic in the favelas as it evokes the fear of being associated with a criminal identity.

6. *Organiser of the future:* the drug trade imposes fear of the future and of what it can bring, it compromises planning and the building of projects shortening the psychological perception of the life cycle and creating a state of constant immediacy for the Self.

Role Models

There is a significant reference to the role of stable and loving identification models in the trajectory of the Self, and in particular to the role these models play in helping individuals to confront and work through difficult experiences. Participants are aware of how support from family and/or institutions helps them to make choices and avoid the appeal of a public sphere where the drug trade is a constant presence. Actions

of support and the presence of role models who allow positive identification are interchangeably identified in both family figures and organisations such as AfroReggae and CUFA. Interestingly, many participants use the word 'mother' to describe these organisations and compare them to a family.

> *"I was only 13 years old, it was a stage of... trying everything, a lot of influence from friends, you see? And I talked to my mum about everything: 'Mum, is this right? Is this wrong?' And talking to her my mind opened... as CUFA,* [my mum] *means many things because I think that without her I would have changed a lot, I could have taken other* [wrong] *ways..."*
> (City of God, female, 15 years old)

Identification models thus can be found well beyond the family, in NGOs and also in Churches. These institutions offer what we will discuss in Chapters 4 and 5 as *psychosocial scaffoldings* and *holding and handling*, defined as intersubjective structures that provide support, encouragement, boundaries, and love to the Self.

Leisure

Dancing, sport, conviviality and going out with friends, parties, enjoying Rio's natural landscape, and the beach are described as the main sources of leisure, and important for the experience of the Self. Favela-dwellers like to party, they are musical and social. They keep alive cultural practices and traditions through interaction with others and through strong engagement with the music, dance and party culture of Rio's popular culture. Carnival is important, as it is *baile funk*, which is now under threat by the entrance of the UPPs in City of God and Cantagalo. Participants resent the loss of these spaces, which they refer as important for sustaining the happiness and lightness that is part of their self-interpretation.

Whereas leisure options are dependent on location in relation to the city, finding time for conviviality and enjoyment is central to favela life and to the experience of the Self. There is an intense sociability inside favelas, which is expressed in the way people gather and come together to sing, dance or play football. Despite poverty and hardship, the pleasure of sociability has not disappeared from favela life.

Affective States of the Self

Figure 3.6 shows the predominance of fear, insecurity and suffering coexisting with pride, belonging, and hope. Although less intense, these emotions show the conflicts and contradictions in the relationship between the Self and its context.

Figure 3.6 Affective States of the Self
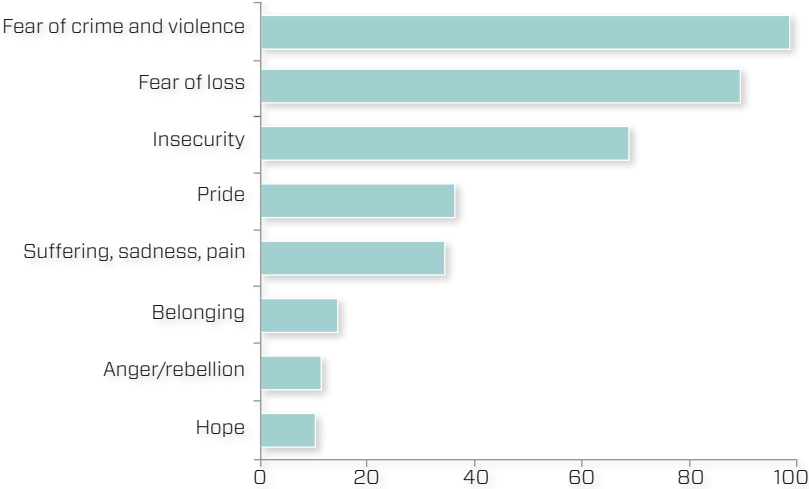
Note. Reported emotions and feelings, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

In expressing the context through personal experience, favela-dwellers show how the Self is constituted in relation to its social location. Negative feelings and experiences of suffering coexist with positive expectations and a desire to overcome difficulties and construct a positive future. In the favela context the Self is in the middle of contradictory forces. It is shaped by institutions that are in opposition themselves offering parallel routes of socialisation that can lead to inclusion and exclusion. This can be seen in Ana Carolina's voice, which brings together her dilemmas as a favela-dweller and the contradictory forces that shape her mind and experience:

> *"Well, Vigario… I love my favela. I am proud to live here because here we learn, I have learned the good life and the bad life, do you understand? I know the two ways: those who want, join, those who have a weak mind, join, I think so… I can see my father, he was a drug addict, he died with weed… then my mother got the drugs, threw them away, and that is why I say… Today, I could be an addict, I could be an alcoholic because my dad always was…, but today I think people need to stop and think about what life is really about. Because the favela… shows one side, a bad side, but also shows good things. What people who come from the outside bring in here, things that give you the opportunity to grow, to change your thinking."*
>
> (Vigario Geral, female, 24 years old)

3.3. The Community

Results show that strong social capital within favela communities coexists with a sharp perception of the divisions between the favela and the city. A sense of belonging, an attempt to reject fear and a perception of social cohesion and conviviality are the three factors that emerged in the analysis, corroborating previous research that identifies strong social bonds and high levels of social capital in the poor communities of Rio (Pearlman, 2010; Zaluar & Ribeiro, 2009).

Table 3.2 shows each one of the items, as well as the factors and their loadings. The first factor, *belonging,* shows strong attachment to place and to people, as well as feelings of belonging and desire to stay in the community. This is reinforced by the second factor, *rejection of fear*. The items that comprise this factor show that 77 per cent of respondents strongly disagreed or just disagreed with the item 'I am afraid to live here', and 61 per cent of respondents strongly disagreed or just disagreed with the item 'It is dangerous to live in this community'. This rejection of fear is further indication of participants' attachment to place and of the need to defend community. This is confirmed by the interviews, where it becomes clear that fear is not about living in the area, but of a stray bullet, the fear of loss and the suffering related to the war between the narcotraffic and the police. The community is not considered dangerous and commands a strong sense of belonging.

Table 3.2 The Self in the Community: Belonging, Rejection of Fear and Cohesion

Items	Factor 1 Belonging	Factor 2 RejFear	Factor 3 Cohesion
I am very attached to this place.	0.820		
I like to live in this place.	0.722		
If I could I would leave this place.	-0.670		
In this place I feel at home.	0.645		
When I leave this place I want to come back.	0.633		
I am strongly attached to the people who live here.	0.548		
I am afraid to live here.		0.884	
It is very dangerous to live in this community.		0.883	
People here are united and fight for what they want.			0.839
People here get along with each other.			0.817
Eigenvalues^2	3.512	1.442	1.166
Cronbach a	a=0.765	a=0.795	a=0.619

Note. Rotated 3 factor solution. Varimax Rotation. Items ordered by factor loadings. 61.2% of variance explained. Source: Questionnaire.

Fear is a strong and powerful feeling in the lifeworld of the favela, but it relates to the dangers of losing a loved one for the narcotraffic, the fear of losing out in the route of sociability and finding that crime and exclusion have won over education, self-realisation, work, and social inclusion: this is what community dwellers are afraid of, not of their communities. This complex experience of fear can be seen in the voice of a young man from Vigario Geral. His narrative is found throughout the four communities we studied.

> Researcher: *And how is it to live here?*
>
> Interviewee: *It is easy going, easy going. Yes, we can be a bit apprehensive, you know! At any moment there can be an invasion, or perhaps not… you see? We can be apprehensive because we don't know what is going to roll… all can happen when you live inside! It is not bad, it is only this question. Something can explode and there can be crossfire out of the blue. But apart from that, if you take out the drug trade, it is easy going, very calm, it is more secure in here than outside.*
>
> Researcher: *Why more secure?*
>
> Interviewee: *It is more secure… for example, here you can be sure nobody will enter your house and rob you, put a gun in your head. Of this we are sure. Theft and burglary here, no! Only if someone is mad to come and burgle in the favelas… what we see in the Southern zone is more complicated.*
> (Vigario Geral, male, 28 years old)

What the extract above shows is that, if it were not for the drug trade, this young man would consider his community safer than the rest of the city. For him, Vigario Geral is free from the dangers he identifies outside the favela.

The third factor found is *community cohesion*, with participants tending to agree that people in the community are united and they like each other. This factor adds to the sense of belonging and suggests that favela communities sustain strong bonds and social capital. This is corroborated by the literature and embodied in practices such as the *mutirao*, where collective efforts are deployed for mutual help towards building a house, repairing a public area, or executing a service that benefits the whole community (Pearlman, 1978, 2010; Moreira Alves & Evanson, 2011; Zaluar & Ribeiro, 2009).

The analysis of the questionnaire is complemented by the analysis of qualitative data that reveals in more detail the contradictions and ambivalence that permeate the positive attachment and relation to place we find in the survey. Whereas solidarity, friendship and social cohesion are important aspects of the discourse of participants, it is the dichotomy *morro/asfalto* and the problem of crossings between these two worlds that take centre stage when favela-dwellers talk about the community.

Figure 3.7 shows the preponderance of segregation, urban frontiers and security followed by the presence of the police and the social capital of the community. We can observe thus that these contradictory elements make the overall lifeworld of the favela, at the level of the Self and at the level of the community.

Figure 3.7 The Community
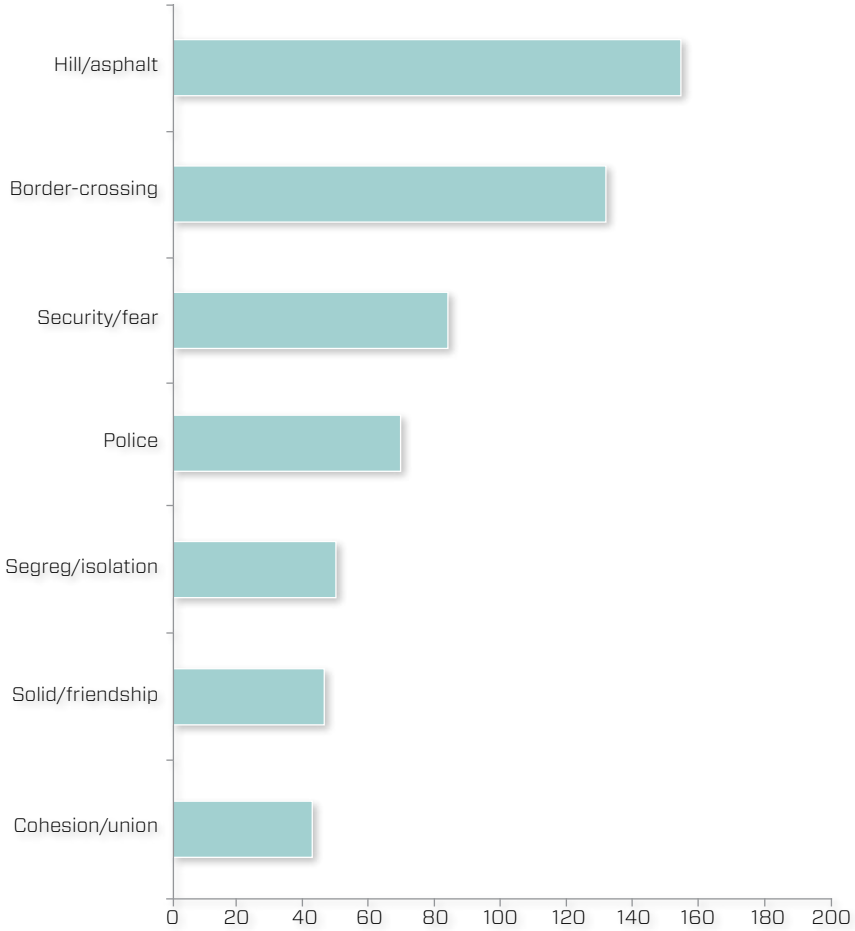
Note. Reported experiences of the self, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

The Importance of Place

There are significant differences in the perceptions of the lived world of each community studied. They differ in terms of belonging, fear, prospects for the future and satisfaction with living in Rio and in the neighbourhood. We did not find significant differences for cohesion and feelings of influence.

Vigario Geral and City of God show a stronger sense of cohesion and satisfaction with the house, the neighbours and the city. This is followed by Cantagalo and by Madureira, where cohesion and satisfaction are less predominant. This is compatible with the latter being a larger district with a more dispersed and diverse population. This can also explain why, although not statistically significant, it is in Madureira that people feel less able to influence their community. Contrary to what could be expected, it is in the poorest and more troubled community that we find stronger feelings of cohesion, belonging and satisfaction. Attachment to place and to people explains these perceptions and feelings. In contrast, rejection of fear is less predominant in Vigario Geral, something that can be explained by the presence of the drug trade, and the violence that usually accompanies it. This is indeed what residents report in the qualitative interviews.

These findings show that, although similar at many levels, there are important differences to be considered in Rio's favelas and no single context should be treated as equal as another. They demonstrate the heterogeneity of popular communities and the importance of place in circumscribing and defining peoples' experiences. This is something that will be further explored when we present the psychosocial cartographies of each one of the studied communities.

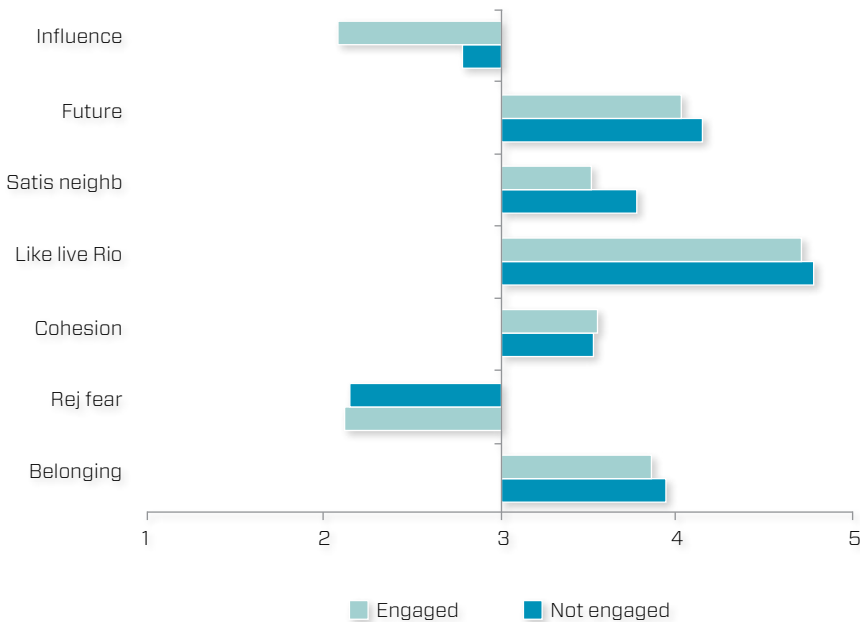**Figure 3.8** The Importance of Place in the Community
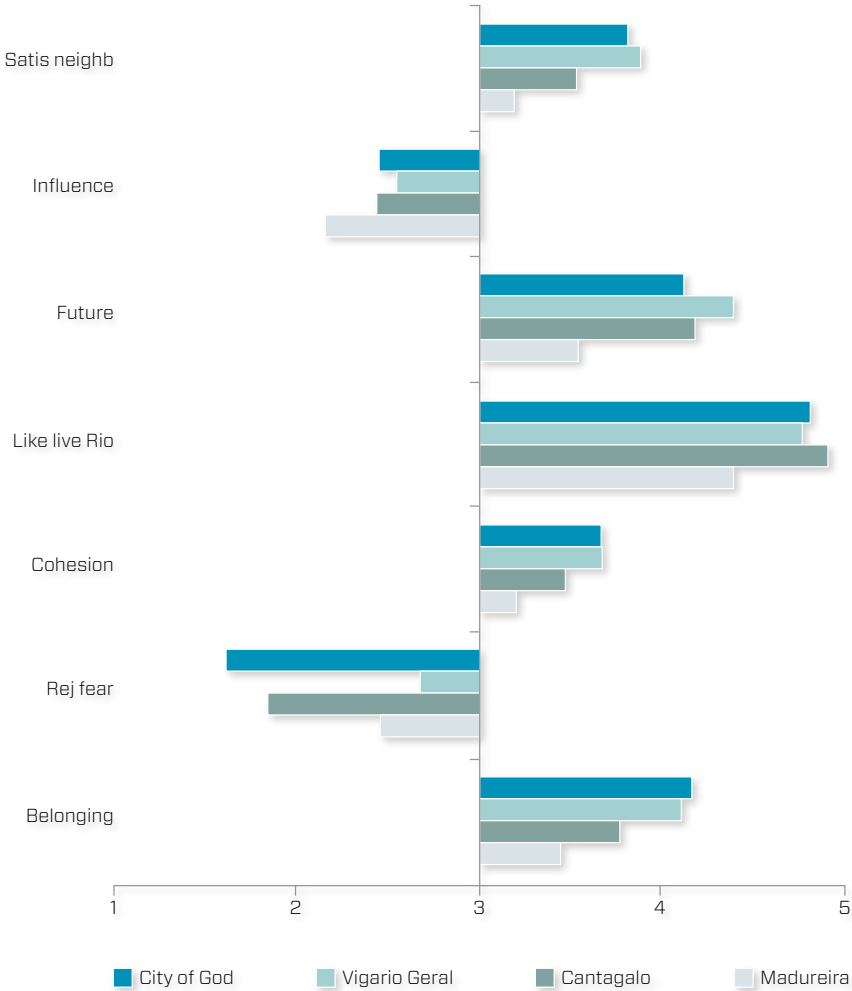
Note. Average response on a scale of 1 to 5 (corresponding to 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). Responses were reversed when relevant. 'Future' refers to participants' position in relation to item "do you think the place where you live will…": 1 = get much worse; 2 = get worse; 3 = stay the same; 4 = get better; 5 = get much better. 'Satis neighb' refers to levels of satisfaction in relation to the house, the neighbours and the city.

Participation in AfroReggae and CUFA

Results show that participating in AfroReggae and CUFA does not change the evaluation and perceptions about the community and the city, as well as feelings of belonging, rejection of fear and cohesion. Only the perception of influence, as measured by responses to the item 'I have little influence on what happens in my community' yields differences, indicating that people who participate feel less able to influence what happens in their community. The perception of lower influence suggests that participation in AfroReggae and CUFA increases critical awareness and realism of perception.

Figure 3.9 The Experience of Favela Life and Engagement with AfroReggae and CUFA

Note. Average response on a scale of 1 to 5 (corresponding to 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). Responses were reversed when relevant. 'Future' refers to participants' position in relation to item "do you think the place where you live will…": 1 = get much worse; 2 = get worse; 3 = stay the same; 4 = get better; 5 = get much better. 'Satis neighb' refers to levels of satisfaction in relation to the house, the neighbours and the city.

Main findings related to the experience of community are:

- *strong social capital:* despite the difficulties imposed by context, favela communities maintain a positive link with place and neighbours, expressing cohesion and trying to live without fear;
- *rejection of fear in relation to place:* this stands out given the presence of war violence and the predominance of fear in the affective states of Self (see above). Participants feel at home and do not fear their immediate environment; indeed many report that they fear going down to the 'asphalt', which they perceive as more dangerous. The fear of the community, which appeared strongly associated with the experience of the Self, is fear of the war between the narcotraffic and the police and its devastating consequences;
- *engagement and participation in AfroReggae and CUFA:* it affects the way people perceive their ability to influence what happens in the community with those participating more likely to express a critical assessment of their limited power in relation to what happens in the places they live;
- *the importance of place:* as the community itself is the variable that most significantly alters the perceptions and experiences of the favela-dwellers. These differences need to be fully understood and apprehended; it is important to recognise that favela communities are not identical – the poor are not homogenous and should not be seen as undifferentiated.

3.4. The Favela and the City

We found an unequivocal and widespread love for the city of Rio de Janeiro: 93.1% of the interviewees agreed and strongly agreed with the questionnaire item 'I like to live in Rio'. However, the strong and affective bonds that link favela communities to the city are marked by the ambivalence between beauty and violence.

Ambivalence in the City

Figure 3.10 shows the almost perfect division between beauty and violence in the characterisation of Rio.

Figure 3.10 Rio de Janeiro: Beauty and Violence
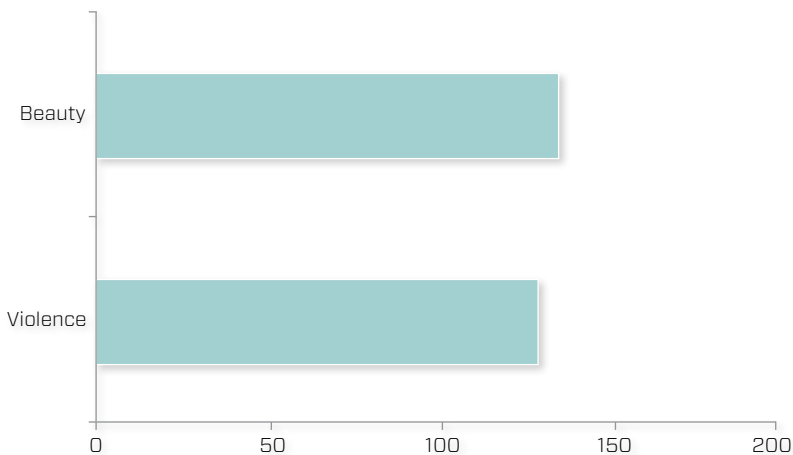
Note. Reported experiences of the Self, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

This division maps, however imperfectly, onto the relations between the favela and the city, with the generalised idea that the beauty of Rio is associated to its affluent areas and the violence to the favelas. It is a division that erects a complex urban frontier in the city, made by the geographical, socio-economic and symbolic dimensions that characterise the internal relations between different favela communities and other areas in the city.

Urban Frontiers

The preponderance of marked urban frontiers is a central component of the lifeworld of the favela. Favela-dwellers love their communities, but they are acutely aware of the negative social representations and stigma generated in the asphalt (affluent areas of Rio). Crime, violence and marginalisation are equated from the outside to the identity of favela-dwellers, who report a range of experiences of discrimination and segregation as they cross the border into the wider city.

> *"... it happens all the time in the streets. We are walking in the street and a person sees us and moves away. They see us, they see us, like... they discriminate. We pass by, they hold their bags, they change the way, they think we will steal... this is horrible! Because people think that all blacks are thieves, that will do evil, will steal, will kill..."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 28 years old)

> *"Because of the impression people have of the hill is shocking, that people speak badly, don't have manners, that they go down to make trouble... People think that whoever lives in the hill is a* favelado*, lives in a shack falling apart, in a dirty house, they just link poverty and dirt. Then, people have this impression and don't give you a job because you will be problem."*
> (Madureira, female, 35 years old)

> *"Once I went to look for a job, and a woman said: here is the money for your ticket. Where do you live? And I said, 'Vigario Geral,' so the woman goes: 'Vigario Geral? You will*

not work here, you will not!' And I asked, 'but why?' And the woman: 'because you live in Vigario.' And I said: 'but tell me the reason?!' And she said, 'people there are very angry'... and I said, 'not all, I work hard, I am a worker!' But the woman did not give me a job because I live in the favela. Many cannot get a job and sometimes do not work because they live in Vigario."
(Vigario Geral, male, 24 years old)

These negative representations have an affective load for the Self and for the community. At the same time there is a concrete implication for finding jobs and being able to make a living in the city. Stigma and discrimination hurt psychologically and socially by affecting self-esteem and identity and, at the same time, blocking access to work and earnings.

However, crossing urban frontiers is a complex practice that involves movement from both sides of the city. As José Junior wrote in 2002 about the *boca de fumo* (literally 'smoke mouth', a site of encounter and crossings where drugs are sold):

"The popular boca de fumo *is a meeting point between people from different social classes and all young people in search for a place under the sun. Have you seen one? In the evening it becomes the place where all the cool crowds hang around, bringing together beautiful and well-dressed people, weapons, chicks, music. Business is going on full gas, and there is a huge amount of people coming and going. The site seems to be a magnetic field that attracts people, mainly opposite people. Most of those who are hanging there are not users, not even drug dealers. Most boys and girls are there because it is cool – and believe me, it is just that, because it is cool!"*

His statement is echoed by many of the testimonials we collected, which reveal the appeal of favela life in relation to the wider city and the many interactions and exchanges that take place between hill and asphalt.

> *"Discrimination I have never felt. What I felt was curiosity wanting to know more about my reality. When I said I was from the favela and did not pay for water or for light, but only paid for gas, phone and* gatonet [illegal cable TV] *they were really impressed. I said that with ten thousand* reais *you can build a two-storey house in the hill, with tiles and all. They were impressed, because many of my friends are saving money, something like 100 thousand to buy a flat. I, with 100 thousand, would buy the favela..."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 20 years old)

> *"People study in the same school, there are girls from the asphalt who go out with the drug bosses. There are the addicts who go up to get the drugs. And there is also a lot of favela girls, who go out with asphalt boys."*
> (Madureira, female, 20 years old)

Nowhere this is more evident than in the crossings of favela cultural productions, which are foundational of Brazilian culture and reach not only the whole city but the entire country. The crossings of favela experiences and cultural production, which are actively appropriated and consumed by the whole city, are part of the contradictions that permeate urban frontiers, comprising affects that are made of denial and attraction, of a need to isolate and separate and, at the same time, a desire to cross and to enter the culture and life of the favela.

Participants make clear that access to resources and violence are unequally distributed in Rio. They know that between the drug trade and the police they stand little chance of emerging unscathed. There are issues of social representation as when the mainstream asphalt and the police see favela-dwellers as criminal and dangerous. There are issues of survival as when families cannot rely on the State for routes of socialisation for their children. Furthermore, there are human rights violations as when the police invade homes, summarily kill and fail to investigate these crimes. What the imagination of Rio has named the division *morro/asfalto* is as real as ever for a favela-dweller living in Rio today. Figure 3.11 represents the dynamics of Rio's urban frontiers and the relations that construct them.

Figure 3.11 Psychosocial Dynamic of Urban Frontiers
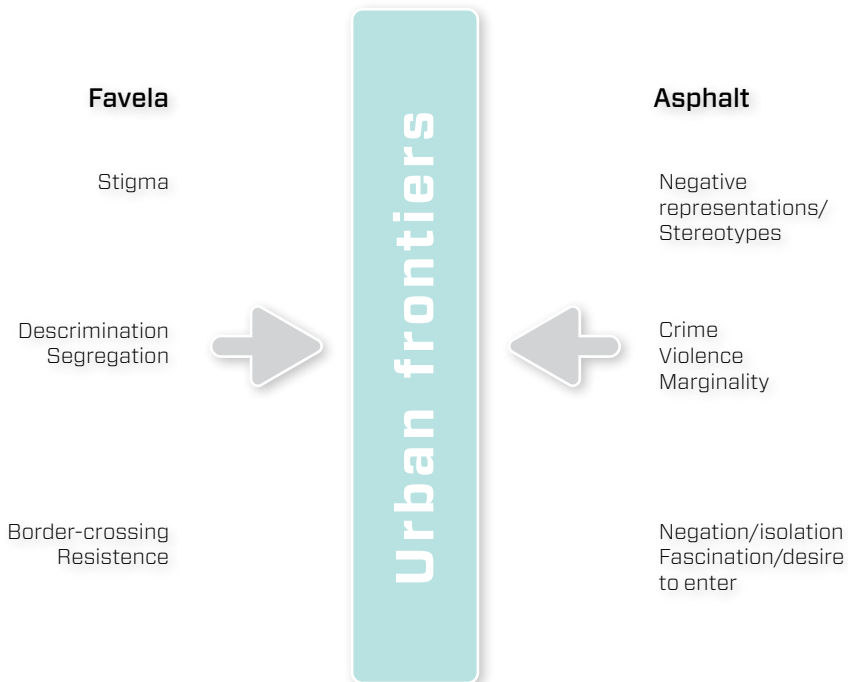
Note. Stereotypical representations of crime, violence and marginality outside produce stigma, discrimination and segregation inside. Attempts to resist and cross borders inside meet denial and isolation as well as fascination outside. Source: Underground Sociabilities.

Thinking a Divided Society

The complexity of urban frontiers and social divisions in Rio creates a mental framework for coping with barriers and navigating the relations between the favela and the city. We found that favela-dwellers develop two sets of representations and behaviours for each one of these territories, which become a resource they use depending on the requirements of the context:

- The city outside the favela is thought as relatively unknown and dangerous, a place to be handled with care: compared to the security of the framework offered by the closeness of the favela communities, the city is seen as 'loose', a place where one is just an 'individual' without support and rights. The city is regulated by few rules and ambivalent laws, a view justified by the perception of corruption in the police and in the public administration.
- The favela is thought as safe and familiar despite the violence in the environment: people are recognised as a 'person' known and supported by friends and family; the rules and regulations are clear – the law of the narcotraffic may be harsh but it is clear and unequivocal.

Perceptions about the relations between the favela and the city corroborate some of the classical dichotomies of the Brazilian public sphere (see Da Matta, 1990, for a discussion of the differences between the individual and the person in Brazilian culture and public life). They illustrate the complexity of two separate and yet inter-related worlds living side by side in the city. To manage the crossings between these two worlds and make it into a source of positive potentials is precisely what we discuss later as central to the contribution of bottom-up favela movements to the overall culture of Rio.

4. Talking to the Enemy?
Favela-Police Relations in Transition

"... the essence of the police should be with the people, with the city, but we created a barrier, we separated police and society. I am not saying that this has ended, but today we have a different position."
(UPP commander, community-based)

Given the importance of the police in the lifeworld of the favelas, in the dynamics of violence in favela life, and as an interlocutor of AfroReggae and CUFA, we conducted a special case study focused on favela-police relations. Five additional interviews with different actors from the police forces of Rio de Janeiro were conducted: four with senior members of the Military Police with different levels of involvement in the Pacification Police Units (UPPs), and one with a member of the Civil Police (*Policia Civil* – the non-military police), who has experience working in AfroReggae's projects. Their views are juxtaposed to those of favela residents who narrated their experiences with, and beliefs about, the police.

What follows is a case study that zooms in on one specific relationship constructed amidst conflict and confrontation. It shows the dialogical processes at work between bottom-up favela organisations and social institutions, as well as the dilemmas and contradictions involved in processes of change. The data give a particular and illuminating insight of the Military Police as an institution undergoing processes of change in its thinking, procedures and internal and external relations. The perceptions about favelas, favela-dwellers and relations with organisations AfroReggae and CUFA must be seen in this context of transition, which is described by interviewees through a number of key categories and main themes. The talk of favela residents corroborates this process of change, showing how historical representations and practices are being resignified and changing their lives.

4.1. The View of the Police

Institutional Reform

The police are unanimous about experiencing a process of institutional reform; interviewees report major changes in progress in the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro, clearly triggered by the policy of pacification and by the abandonment of an explicit policy of confrontation with the drug trade in favela territories. This is unanimously considered as positive, not least because there is clear evidence that confrontation and war have failed to work.

> *"I confess to the researcher that a lot was also changing in my mind along the way. When one is younger, you have that drive, you think that issues will be sorted out by a culture of repression... today I am certain, that it is not the way... We need to do pacification work that is working well... I can tell you, I have a history of combat... I enjoy being police, I like what I do and I have lived with a lot of extreme action, with repression... and I can tell you, it takes you nowhere, it does not solve the problem of security..."*
> (Military Police commander, headquarters)

> *"The problem of the narcotraffic and its geopolitics has impacted here. We had community posts, but they were very fragile, isolated and without support, they were left to themselves and this created a symbolic perception of failure, of not being operative... This stayed in the more conservative discourse in here, do you see? The more conservative here always had this discourse. This continues, but today we have*

an inversion in this dispute. We are strengthening the UPPs, the strategy of communication, the community, society, all this strengthens the UPPs. Today this product is not ours, it is society's."
(UPP commander, headquarters)

"In past decades we used to confront and arrest, and what happened? Criminals died or were arrested and others took their place. And that territory continued to be in their hands... Today, I can tell you that things are literally changing. It is established that continuous repression, without something that would also bring permanence to the service and some satisfaction to the community, it is a policy that just does not work..."
(Military Police commander, headquarters)

Police interviewees report an ideology of national security against an internal enemy as foundational for their way of thinking and training as soldiers/policemen. Having lost a clear target after the dictatorship, the territorial disputes with the drug trade were framed through this ideology that homogenised all residents of favelas as enemies. Through the war with the drug trade – and by extension, favela-dwellers – they were able to find the enemy within and sustain the rituals and mental frames that prepare the police for war.

"We will get there... Now we need a humanisation ritual... because we are Military Police. It is in our DNA, our reference is militarism, there is no escape from this... We have a reference of national security, you form the warrior, the warrior ethos, you build this symbolically. There are rituals, we have them imposed. You need male virility, you need distance... We have

one side that is the police trying to be a modern institution, to have interaction, contact. And on the other extreme, the militarised side... and we had a strong influence from the dictatorship... We say it to ourselves, it is an identity crisis..."
(UPP commander, headquarters)

*"The military policeman, because of his military training that is very strong and present,... the transmission of knowledge is not oral as it is in universities, where the professor's orality is what fascinates. For us, it happens through rituals, by mimetism, by copying: I learn by doing. And if I don't, I can have the best CVs in community policing, but if I do not have a lab for practicals, where I can get this all **done**, I cannot fight the other rituals..."*
(UPP commander, headquarters)

Interviewees talk openly about their own prejudice and equating favela-dwellers with drug dealers. The war with the drug trade took precedence over understanding favela communities, something that started to change with the work of the UPPs and the continuous contact between favelas and police. Nevertheless, the perception that prejudice is one of the key obstacles for the new policy is unanimous.

"The police of Rio has a history: favela people are all the same, nobody is good, they are a seed for evil. Yes, they will become a seed for evil, if no one looks after that seed. It will be evil because they are in a medium where there is evil, and the evil is a good reference for them, because evil has nice-looking women, has clothes, has gold, has power, so evil is good. Now,

this is changing, this will change because there is another view coming in, there is no point in just criticising them. My vision today I acquired here. I did not have it before… Today, I see that in a community of 10,000, I will find perhaps some 80 who are no good… all others are workers, people I applaud because if I were in their condition I don't know if I would have been able to achieve what they have…"

(UPP commander, community-based)

Stereotypes and Prejudice

Change in policy entails challenging established attitudes, representations and rituals that historically form the organisational culture of the police and the favela. This is identified and described as a process that requires continuous contact and interaction so that the two sides can learn how to coexist and to change respectively. The police point to the problems of their own culture and how they altered their conceptions once they started to work in favelas.

"I am a proof of the resistance in the police because I did not want this job [UPP commander]. *You know when you get a new job and every day you curse your luck? Well, that was me. You need to overcome yourself and then you listen to something that worked as the outcome of something that you have done that is good… This changes you. But there is resistance, of course, coming all the way from myself to the most recent policemen I have in my troop. And as a commander I could not pass this to the troop because the guys would go around kicking."*

(UPP commander, community-based)

> "We lost our sensibility because we were trained as warriors… The guy must lose his sensibility because he must only listen and obey, go there and do what he is told without knowing exactly why he is executing that order. He goes and does it. He kills, arrests and dies."
> (UPP commander, community-based)

> "In one of my first police operations 3 boys died. There was intense crossfire. They fired, we returned. All that stuff people hear about favelas… and the boys died. When we got closer to the boys, and I saw them it was very bad because I went back to the memories of boys I had seen in favelas in Rio. I remembered a black mother crying, a grandmother, possible children… On the other side, I saw some indifference in the face of the police. It was not even indifference, because the guy could not love anymore, he did not feel that, it was routine: 'I am not taking this home with me.' It was self-defence and not disdain."
> (Policeman, Civil Police)

These extracts exemplify the burden of the previous relations between favela and police, as well as the extent of mutual prejudices and real confrontation they experienced. They show both how difficult and challenging the pathway of change is, and how powerful are the contact, the will and the joint experience to overcome a troubled history. They also indicate how much favela communities need to re-signify the police as an institution and learn that the law is an element of citizenship, not something the police disposes at will.

Rights and Obligations

Interviewees also note that the rule of the drug trade and negative experiences of the police displaced what should be an ordinary relationship between favela-dwellers and the law. There are stories of how these issues are experienced in everyday life and how the police are learning to change their approach at the same time that new services, procedures and regulations enter the favelas. These stories report a sense of liberation and real relief by community residents, who now feel free from firearms and uncontrolled criminal behaviour in their doorstep.

"The UPPs today... the relations between the police and the community today... are better, but it was difficult when we started; the idea of law and following rules is complex for people who grew up under the rule of the drug trade. If you are older you have experienced something else in favelas, but for young people this has been all they know. This new relation with the law is difficult. How are we, the police, going to handle this? With kicks? Not possible anymore. With bullets? It didn't work. With firearms? At times you need this, but not when we are trying to get closer. We know we have made a mistake and today we have a new attitude. There is a new era. I am not dreaming, I have my feet very firm on the ground."
(UPP commander, community-based)

"Issues of culture are complicated. As many of us in the police have a culture of repression, that repressed demand inside, there are those people there who have been injured, suffered injustice, many lost their children, if not in confrontations, then to organised crime. These are localities where there was no law."
(Military Police commander, headquarters)

There is a view that the UPPs focus on rights and reclaiming territory for the State so as to reintroduce society and its regulations for the benefit of favela communities. This is seen as more important than fighting the drug trade; the fight against criminals and their expulsion from favela territories is not an end, but the means through which other services and the overall process of social integration can start taking place.

> *"The UPPs came to bring rights back... the right of persons to go out, to go to a* pagode *and return without the preoccupation of a stray bullet. The control of territory by the State over what we do is the point: where the drug trade used to rule, today is ruled by the State. A young boy asked me: 'Captain, are you the new owner of the hill now?' His reference was of the drug dealer as the owner of the hill. And I said: 'What do you mean, son?* **You** *are the owner of the hill, the owner of the hill is the* **community**. *Actually the hill does not have an owner, you have the right to study, to play, to cycle, to work. This is ours.' The reference he had was of a leader, a boss, an owner to whom everyone had to ask permission – and I broke that. 'No, son, this is not the way.' And the reference he has today is different, of a policeman who works with the community to support him, to be with him..."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

Community-Police Relations

The voices of the police indicate a gradual process of transformation in the relations between favela communities and the police, which is driven by top-down policy but mainly by *bottom-up practices of dialogue and communication* at the sharp end of police work in the favelas. This is supported by meetings and joint programmes being developed by the police and the community, as well as by inter-sectorial State policies that are seeking a novel intervention in favela territories.

Police interviewees unanimously point to awareness and acknowledgement of prejudices and negative perceptions as central for the process of change.

> *"It is a question of culture, a question of the violence that is passed on to the police, what is expected of us. We are the ones going in as aggressors of these communities, so no doubt this is a factor that makes it very hard, because culture impregnates you. This weight has been there for a long time, so it is a great difficulty, repression is in people's heads. How am I going to be there together with a favela person? But we need to explain, to get that policeman to see. That is why we want to have younger policemen serving in these communities. Because they will have been trained with this new conceptions of communication. Community police don't carry this burden."*
> (Military Police commander, headquarters)

> *"I am going to be very frank. I believe that the majority of us have prejudices. It was practically impossible to imagine a good conviviality between police and favela for a long time. When we started this work, we did not have the dimension we have today.... We have gone through a lot of problems that are cultural, of relations, not exactly related to crime... People used to see the military police as enemies, even if they had nothing to do with crime. Things changed fast because we did not come alone, we came with other State sectors aiming to improve things."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

Another important aspect is the gradual and developmental nature of the process, which requires time, understanding of the resistance to change, and most importantly, understanding of the culture and frame of mind of the community.

> *"In the first months it was stone-hard. Police walked through the alleys and it was urine in a bag, even faeces, stones, and bricks in the head. So, how could we handle this? In the same way? To shoot? No. We needed to get there and talk, and that is what we started to do. We created the 'getting closer' task force. And things started to work. Slowly, they started to change."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

Equally important for the interviewees is the emphasis on processes of contact and interaction, which are also producing transformations inside the police. Contact and interaction are processes challenging the historical logic of separation between soldier and society, inherited from the institutional culture of the Brazilian army. The internal prejudice against the UPPs refers to its search for community and opposition to the logic of war, which is now precisely seen as the source of its effectiveness. Usually nicknamed as 'duck' (*pato*), the UPP policeman is now becoming a 'swan' (*cisne*) because he can deploy different techniques and master different skills:

> *"The Army failing in Alemao* [Complexo do Alemao, a favela of Rio]. *We need to get there as soon as possible. Look, how to talk to a guy from the Army, totally formal, that he needs to interact with the community, to play, to dance* capoeira, *to fly kites with the boys? Impossible... The logic is separation. I have to separate. It is as if it were contagious, polluted. If I mix too much I get contaminated... We, in the UPPs, don't even wait for the community or the children to ask us to play, to*

*fly kites with the boys… The commander in Cantagalo, he **is** a percussionist. They do not invite, and he goes there and play. This is the magic of interaction. This is the magic."*
(UPP commander, headquarters)

"Unfortunately, an UPP policeman, when in contact with other sectors of the police, he will frequently hear: 'This guy is UPP, he does not shoot, he does not arrest.' As if our work were to shoot and to arrest… It is totally the opposite, as an UPP you need to be smart, you are community police, you need to anticipate the problem, to be proactive and to use your brain."
(UPP commander, headquarters)

"UPP is the great avenue for us to transform the police. Why? I have in an ex-skull, an ex-BOPE[4] my team. He was like a robot, and I said: 'Now my friend, the game is different, let's go?' 'Let's go', he said. One day, he came here and the guy was crying, all sentiment [laughs]*: 'Colonel, I had never had a hug from people in the community, only bullets'…"*
(UPP commander, headquarters)

In these extracts we can observe that the UPPs and the new relations they foster are producing a new self-perception for the policemen themselves, not only for the community. There are many anecdotes of 'humanisation', of rediscovering that there is a human dimension in themselves and in their work. This allows a new sense of pride and worth; it changes identities and practices both inside and outside the police.

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[4] BOPE stands for Special Police Operations Battalion *(Batalhao de Operacoes Policiais Especiais)*. 'Skull' *(caveira)* is the nickname given to a BOPE member.

The Future: 'I am not dreaming, I have my feet firm on the ground'

There is a strong sense that the UPPs are going to change the relationship between the police and the favela communities, and that the current partnerships and the day-to-day collaboration with favela organisations are building the dialogical skills that are required to change stereotypes and negative representations on both sides. At this stage, the two sides report ambivalence and contradictions. It is necessary to systematically observe how the UPPs evolve. The initial evidence is positive, not only because there is a clear process of institutional change in the police and to the fact that AfroReggae and CUFA have elected the police as important partners in their activities, but also because the communities themselves are starting to see that the police can take a different form from the historical aggressive face of the State. The data point to transition in the institution, in the favelas and in the city as a whole.

> *"This is a double-way road, a mutual transformation, the community starts to represent the institution in a different way. And the institution starts to represent the community in a different way. Because of our rituals, they de-humanise, de-humanise… We lose sensibility, we need to do it. The UPPs are the opposite, it is the possibility of humanisation, and contact is fundamental, contact with symbols of sensibility. The creativity of humanisation that sends us to what is deeply human in us, the child, the mother, the family. This is being fantastic…"*
> (UPP commander, headquarters)

> *"We notice that the community is starting to like the police. Today we get hugs here. Two young guys from the community sat the examinations to join the police and they have gone through. In the past, they could not do it, and if they did, they would need to leave the community."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

> *"Rio de Janeiro is going through a unique moment, a moment of credibility of police institutions, particularly the Military Police."*
> (Military Police commander, headquarters)

4.2. The View of the Favela

For favela-dwellers, the police are perceived through a divided social representation that splits the institution into threatening and criminal, and into the UPPs. However, even the UPPs are not perceived as wholly positive. There are also contradictions in the image and the direct experience that residents have of the UPPs.

Perceptions of the Police

Of all participants who talked about the police, the vast majority reports experiences of violence, discrimination, corruption and lack of trust. There are very few who report a positive perception. This can be seen in Figure 4.1, which shows the preponderance of negative categories. These configure a view of the police as threatening and criminal.

Figure 4.1 Representations of the Police
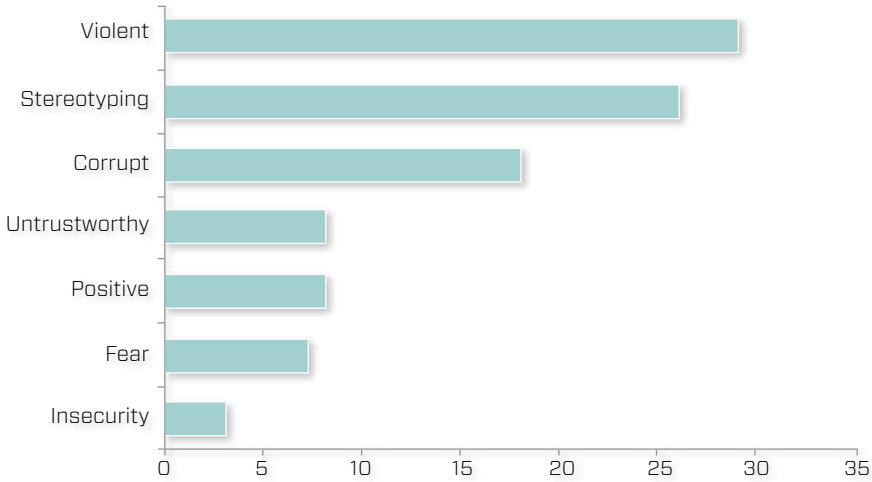
References to the police are peppered by narratives of illegal invasion of homes, breaking doors without a warrant, frequent and discriminatory body search and other forms of violence. It is frequent for residents to say that there are no burglaries or muggings in the community; the only crime they fear is the misuse of force and authority by the police. Encountering the police and their aggressive practices is considered by many as the worst experience of their lives.

> *"I don't like the police, I feel uneasy when I am around the police because I have had problems with them, they approached me because I was arriving late at home and I live here in the hill. If there is a drug dealer on my side, I prefer him to the policeman with that huge weapon.*

I think the police have to change completely, to be a citizen police, for the people. They are full of prejudices. They have approached my brother in front of the house because of his colour, only because he is dark [speaks with eyes full of tears].*"*

(Cantagalo, female, 23 years old)

Interviewees identify parallels between the police and the drug dealers comparing the way they act and intervene in the life of the favela and the asphalt. The police are seen as corrupt and untrustworthy, a source of fear and insecurity for favela-dwellers.

"... inside the community we know who the villains are, and in the asphalt people also know. Because here we are submerged in the drug trade, and out in the asphalt we are submitted to the police... The police earns to protect us, but they take money from the residents themselves. If you want to be safe from bandits, you need to pay. So, for me they are the same thing."

(Vigario Geral, female, 25 years old)

This view is strikingly shared by favela residents in Vigario Geral, where almost the same words are used to state that the police are corrupt and that there is little difference between the favela and the asphalt in this regard, with the favela being 'protected' by the drug dealers and the asphalt by the corrupt police. Here it can be seen how favela-dwellers equally stereotype the police, condensing all policemen in a category that see them as corrupt, violent and threatening. The frozen nature of these identities and the fact that they are mutually established is a challenge for a change both in the community and in the police as an institution.

The intensity of these experiences spills over representations held about Rio – as we have seen in Chapter 3, violence is a very important signifier in representations of the city –, because the category of violence is consistently triggered by reference to the police. Indeed, living in the favela and living in Rio are described as pleasurable and easy, except for the actions of the police and the drug trade.

> *"I think there is the positive side, but also the other side, the negative. Due to violence, of the police. Not violence in the favela, violence of the policemen."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 28 years old)

The research shows that there is a considerable way to go before the favelas forget the negative nature of their experiences and the consequent processes of stereotyping and prejudice, which compromise the readiness of this population to engage with the police on a different basis. Because these experiences are associated with intense feelings of discrimination and anger in the life of the Self, they are hard to forget and they scar people for life. To turn this history around and to build a different story is a major challenge which guides the new practices being implemented by the police.

The UPPs

The UPPs are making a difference and there is a clear distinction in the perception of the police between communities with and without their intervention. City of God in particular shows that the UPPs have changed life in the community. They have helped to improve relations between favela and police. However, there is a considerable way to go, as Figure 4.2 shows.

Figure 4.2 Views about UPPs
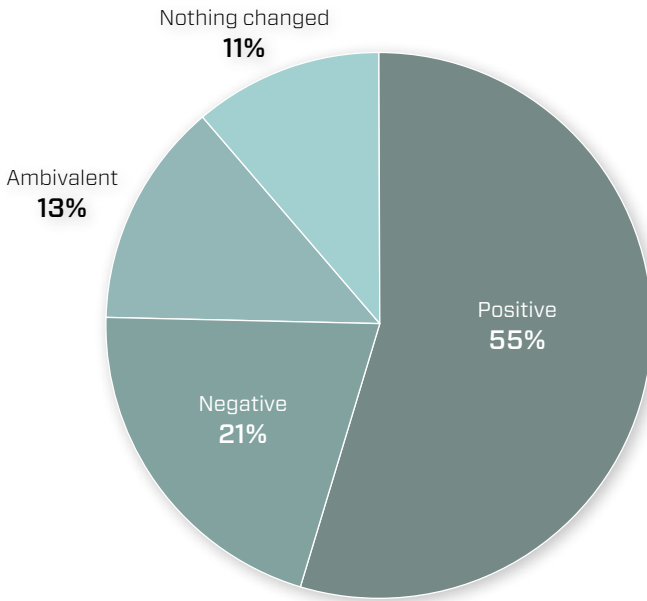
Note. Views about the UPPs as reported by those who referred to them when talking about the police. Source: Interviews.

It is when the UPPs are mentioned that the police emerge as a more positive institution, seen as going through a process of transition. However, representations of the UPPs are not consensual. Of all the participants who speak of the UPPs, just above half see it as a positive development and as a force for change.

Interviewee: *Here, in the City of God it is calmer, we are not having crossfire. Here, it was not even about muggings or burglaries. The problem was the crossfire, to be in the middle of the stray bullets, police on one side, police on the other side, and you not knowing where to go. Now it is calm.*

Researcher: *Do you think it has improved?*

Interviewee: *It has. Only the fact that there is no crossfire, of you knowing that you can be sitting here. Security is better because you know that a stray bullet is not going to enter your head.*
(City of God, male, 20 years old)

"... all the entrances of the favela have a police post. They are not protecting the people, they are invigilating the population. Then, it is ridiculous to say that they are pacifying, doing this or that, because I do not see a policeman politely saying 'hello' to the citizen, I don't see a policeman without a gun. Then, there is no pacification, they are controlling the population."
(City of God, female, 25 years old)

"It continues the same thing, the hill has always been good, nobody disturbs nobody."
(Cantagalo, female, 26 years old)

The positive perceptions that are linked to the UPP relate to hope that there will be peace inside the favelas and that these will become better places to live.

4.3. New Directions: Between Fear and Hope

Juxtaposing the views of the police and the views of favela-dwellers shows that discrepancies exist and that a sustained effort is needed to consolidate changes in their relations. Narratives of contact are filled with stories that carry the heavy burden of stereotype and rigid identities on both sides. They show that encounters between the two are unstable territories of negotiation, where new practices are being tried out and the lingering power of the old continues to have an effect.

Corruption and illegality have been foundational to define the perspective of favela-dwellers with regards to the police, a perspective based on concrete experiences of violence and violation of basic human rights. These views are lived and that is why they will be difficult to change. This has brought about a legacy of ambivalence in relation to the law of the State, which we have observed throughout the dynamics of underground sociabilities. Retrieving citizenship and understanding that security with human rights is essential to a democratic society is a joint task for the city, for policy makers and for those who are working to build partnerships and positive encounters on the ground. Our research indicates that there is a process of transition in the relations between the favela and the police and it is important to support its achievements, to recognise its challenges and what remains to be done.

Fear and hope are the two sides of a process of communication between favelas and the police. Fear is based on the experience of violence, stray bullets and living in the crossfire, as well as the complex and multiple relations between the police and the narcotraffic. The intervention of the UPPs and the dialogue between the favela and the police trigger hope. This hope comes from renewed feelings of security, freedom from the border control imposed by the drug trade and the

expansion of horizons enabled by coming and going in the city. These are still promises of a future not-yet-become, but they are decisively shaping action and efforts of the police and the favelas in Rio.

As will be discussed in the following chapter, there are partnerships and productive alliances being built between the police and favela organisations. These are not devoid of difficulties, which reflect what the case study with the police indicated. There is a struggle for change inside the police and a contradictory representation of the police inside the favelas, but actors on both sides are coming together to talk about these issues and to act to remedy decades of conflict. Languages of art and joint activity, forged through dialogue and commitment to a project of change are opening the way to the renewal of the favela-police relationship.

5. New Actors, New Actions: AfroReggae and CUFA

"... I want to leave a legacy of achievements, of people looking into a truly better world, for their own lives as well as for the lives of others."

(Nega Gizza)

5.1. Who are They? Identity and Life Trajectories

AfroReggae and CUFA are hybrid organisations characterised by a multiple identity: they combine elements of NGOs, social movements, business and cultural entrepreneurs; they are activists, artists, social workers and partners of the Brazilian State. They emerged out of the favelas and target favela publics, but have expanded well beyond favela boundaries to reach national and international partners. They are political and openly own an ideology. Yet they are not afraid to engage with markets and make money so that they can be financially independent from sponsors and the State. They rely on strong leaders, use the charisma of their leaders and are clearly hierarchical. Each organisation relies on leaders who are well-known musicians – mainly rappers and hip hoppers – in the Brazilian cultural scene.

AfroReggae and CUFA play in the periphery of Brazilian cities as well as in mainstream national and international cultural circuits. They engage widely recognised artists and cultural personalities in Brazil and have their support and commitment to all they do. They are internally and externally seen as a 'holding of actions' and resist to a single-type classification as illustrated by the following extract:

"AfroReggae is not an NGO, not anymore… It's a movement that has a strong direct and indirect activism. Today it's difficult to say who is and who isn't AfroReggae. There are people who are as AfroReggae as I am and who have never been in Rio. But they raise the flag. It is something [typical] *of AfroReggae to create bridges, a double way, where you integrate different classes, genders, ideologies, all very different. …In the morning, I am in going to make a social action at Complexo do Alemao favela, and this afternoon I am going to the World Economic Forum. I have decided that instead of having me, they will have Feijao, who is a former drug boss, ex-owner of the* boca*. He will be talking about the economy of the favela. So let's break paradigms: what is bad, what is good? Let's think and understand the culture of the Other. Even if you don't like it, it needs to be understood, respected."*

(AfroReggae, leader)

"Citizenship, gender, racial consciousness, political consciousness, we put all in our projects. We are a political act in society… We encourage people to see themselves, to perceive their importance, to perceive the political importance of what we do and to see the importance of the political in society, too."

(CUFA, leader)

A unique and significant characteristic of these organisations is their organic relation with the context of the favela. Contrary to traditional models of social development in which external agents propose and lead the execution of projects, or even to participatory models, in which local peoples are included in decision-making processes controlled by the aid industry or the State, these organisations have not been built by outsiders. They have emerged and developed as a product of favela territories and are widely recognised as such. Their activists and leaders were born, grew up and continue to live in the favelas of Rio. Each one of these organisations holds a strong territorial link with a specific community: Madureira in the case of CUFA, and Vigario Geral in the case of AfroReggae. Indeed, territory is central to their identity and their activities.

> "... These groups **are the favelas**; these groups are the very expression of the genuine and true strength of the favela, of what is beautiful, diverse, original in the favelas of Rio, in the communities of Rio de Janeiro. This is what is common, what they have in common."
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

The analysis of the characteristics, methods and actions of these organisations shows that they are *sui generis* and innovative. Their explicit aims are the recognition of the culture and the rich potential of favela lifeworlds, the demolition of urban barriers, and the dialogical crossings that can produce transformations both in the public sphere and in social and individual subjectivities. They openly compete with the drug trade for influence in the routes of socialisation open to young favela people. They also work as mediators of conflict in disputes between the drug factions, the police and favela-dwellers. Their range of actions is extensive, engaging both favela communities and the larger public sphere of the city. They put emphasis on the regeneration of the built environment of favelas, on the construction of spaces for positive sociability and conviviality, and on psychosocial interventions that aim to foster self-esteem, self-control and conscientisation for the transformation of individual and collective trajectories.

Life Stories of Leaders and Activists

The life trajectories of AfroReggae and CUFA activists reveal the importance of personal experience and social identification in defining the identity and method of work of AfroReggae and CUFA. Telling a life story and showcasing it as an example, exposing its determinants and experiences, its moments of decision, rupture and choice, the lessons it can offer and the model it can provide: this is the elementary method at the basis of all conversations and projects developed by these organisations. They tell life stories, use the life stories of their leaders and activists as a starting point and take them as the raw material that exemplifies how Self and society combine to define a human life. We found these life stories consolidated as narratives of community life and even of Rio as a whole. They go around as resources that are told again and again as examples of survival and determination, as warnings, as containers of hope and potential futures, as alternatives to what is the case and guidance for choices and decision-making.

Central to these life stories is that they are exemplary of favela trajectories. They operate as 'mirror stories' that reflect and express pathways widely found in favela communities and are thus stories favela people understand and recognise well. The first and perhaps most important finding related to the identity of AfroReggae and CUFA, corroborated by all data streams of the research, is that they are organisations solidly connected to the lifeworld of the favela. They were not produced outside and taken into favela environments. On the contrary, they were generated inside the favela by people who belong and are deeply connected to favela territories.

The analysis of life trajectories shows remarkably similar patterns described through a succession of events that involves:

- growing up in a context of hardship in the favela or on the streets;
- a situation of personal crisis, danger, near death;
- an encounter that saves and opens up the way to a more positive life;
- a process of enlightenment, discovery, conscientisation;
- the engagement with collective action;
- the rediscovery of the Self and of a life project.

Figure 5.1 The Life Trajectory of AfroReggae and CUFA Leaders
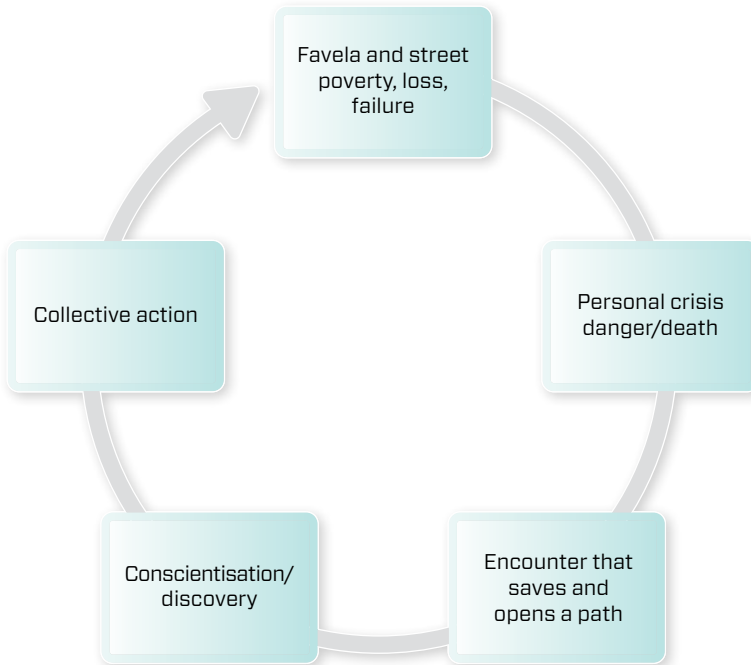
Note. Cycle of life events as told by leaders/activists of AfroReggae and CUFA.
Source: Narratives of life trajectories.

Leaders and activists were born and brought up in the favelas of Rio, exposed to broken homes and to poverty, used to confrontation with the police and to the violence and loss caused by the drug trade. Most did not finish school, and those who did mention issues of access and quality of education. They tell personal histories where failure, loss, poverty, racism and discrimination were frequently experienced. Contained in the narrative of the background are situations of desperation, of being 'fallen', of being on the floor, situations that push them to the edge and produce intense personal crises.

These crises include the loss of loved ones, being close to death and to entering the drug trade and attempted suicide. As it is the case with the majority of the interviewees in the communities studied, the family appears as a fundamental structure that can either save or enhance vulnerability.

> *"... a lot of prostitution, drug dealing, a lot of crime, a lot of marginality, a lot of* jogo do bicho [illegal lottery]... *My school were the streets of downtown Rio. There I completed my post-doc."*
> (AfroReggae, leader)

> *"At that moment* [after brother was killed by police], *what I saw was to go and join the drug trade to beat them, to fight the police head-on and to kill them. Then I went to the* boca *I even talked to them that I wanted to join, that I wanted to be part of their movement,...that I was going to be of some service..."*
> (CUFA, leader)

> *"I am a product of the favela... living in that ghetto, in that life of survival, of having few options, few opportunities, but my father always expected a lot from me... you must study, you must go up, ... and I tried to follow his rules... my life was like that, a life common to all here, a guy from the favela, who struggled, who studied in a very bad school, who graduated from a horrible school, but who had a basis, a very good family basis... and this is key, inside this marginalised areas this is essential, because if you do not have this, you go down, you definitely go, you go under."*
> (AfroReggae, activist)

The narratives continue through stories of coping and finding a way out from personal crisis and danger. Most tell how they were able to stand up thanks to a positive encounter that provides intersubjective help and support, offering a positive model for relating to others, the perspective of creative activity and the potential for collective action.

> *"AfroReggae is important for me. I had personal conflicts, something with my family and this helped me, it helped me to find motivation, to give me hope, to give me strength, to overcome my own problems. Everyone was telling me that I was not able, could not, that I was not going to achieve and so many other things, and it so happens that here I am, I fought to be here… Junior, I have him as a father, because every time I needed him, there he was, he wanted to listen to me, he listened to me, he is an example for me."*
> (AfroReggae, activist)

> *"And I could not understand why it had to happen like that. And when Bill called me, he was calling me to join this struggle. He was the guy, he gave me a hand at the hour I needed the most. He trusted my talent… he saw in me something that I didn't."*
> (CUFA, leader)

These encounters are presented as key structures for moments of rupture and decision-making in the life trajectory. We find in these trajectories a process of standing up through interaction with another person who holds and sustains and, as we discuss in the next section, it is this vital experience of intersubjective support that AfroReggae and CUFA take up and put into use at the basis of their methodology. Each one of these events is described through stories of emotional tension and eventual change in their personal outlook and understanding of context. Such experiences are described in the life stories of leaders and activists as moments of discovery and conscientisation through which they acquire a more profound and comprehensive understanding of life and a desire to transform life and engage in collective action.

The experience of collective action and interaction with supportive others triggers conscientisation and enables the cognitive and emotional expansion of the Self.

This process empowers the Self and makes it into an asset; it provides resilience and ability to cope with adversities. Resilience is unanimously seen as a resource given by hardship, a skill given by the very life conditions they want to transform. This skill is considered to be the very basis of the determination that eventually resulted in AfroReggae and CUFA. Part of the success of these organisations is that their leaders and activists are aware of possessing the wisdom and knowledge of the vanquished, of those to whom defeat and hardship are sources of learning and motivation for social change. It is possible to fail and to carry on trying as immortalised by Beckett in his *Worstward Ho* prose poem: *Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.*

The life stories show correspondence between the routes of socialisation experienced by the leaders and activists of AfroReggae and CUFA and those of favela-dwellers. The former are not outsiders but people who belong psychologically and socially to favela communities. Whenever these leaders and activists speak about these organisations they tell their own life stories. These are stories anchored in the language and reality of the favela, which they both express and overcome with their example. They are stories that mix languages of exclusion, poverty, loss and contravention with stories of resilience, coping with failure and ultimately success.

This correspondence is central to explain the effectiveness of the method of work of these organisations. AfroReggae and CUFA systematically draw on life stories as examples and models for identification. Life narratives are used as a resource, a methodological tool that conveys lessons, potential futures, alternative pathways and models to be followed. The stories become essential to the methodology of AfroReggae and CUFA and are constantly deployed by individuals and the community as tools for re-writing identities and producing social change. The overall narrative of the lives of AfroReggae and CUFA leaders shows that intersubjective structures of support are essential for moments of rupture and choice in the lives of leaders and activists. They constitute central moderators of decision-making and action in the pathways of underground sociabilities.

5.2. What Are They Doing? Method of Work

The View of Favela Residents

Figure 5.2 shows how favela residents describe the meaning of AfroReggae and CUFA in their lives.

Figure 5.2   What do AfroReggae and CUFA Mean to You?
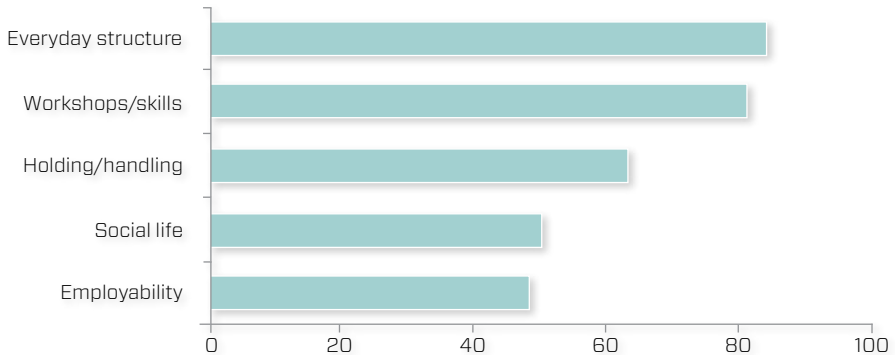
Note. Reported meaning of organisations, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

The structuring of everyday life takes a central role in the communities' perception and is seen as vital for avoiding criminality and engaging people in meaningful activity. Participants explicitly say that AfroReggae and CUFA give them something to do, something to commit to, an opportunity to be responsible, to establish markers in the week and in the day so as to frame everyday life. Routine, structure, activity are all systematically described by participants through the folk understanding that it is necessary to occupy

one's time so that the 'wrong life' is not taken. During fieldwork we frequently heard the popular saying '*mente vazia, oficina do diabo*', which finds its English equivalent in the proverb 'an empty mind is a devil's workshop'. Sometimes appearing in English as 'an idle mind is a devil's workshop', the saying suggests the wisdom and rationality embedded in common sense, as the notion captures the vital link between activity and mind as well as the dangers of obliterating the work of cognition and meaningful activity.

> *"I am unemployed now and if I stay with an empty mind, it is a devil's workshop... So I come to CUFA, and here I have what to do with my life..."*
> (City of God, male, 25 years old)

The importance of activity and framing of routines is reported with an emphasis on the development of competencies, skills and psychosocial support (holding and handling). Respondents report that they learn as individuals when they participate in workshops; as well as skills and competencies, they learn how to keep their focus, discipline, attention, self-value, and self-expression.

> *"...It* [to have something to do, to learn something] *helps me to get away from the drug trade, because it is something opposite, because it is art, it is dance, it is salsa, it is all that is good. It prevents a lot, prevents you from going into that world* [of drugs, of destruction]*, because it transmits the opposite to you, it transmits peacefulness. You use your body in a different way, you learn how to value your body, to use it for good things... I learned how to work in a group with people, who I didn't know that are from another* morro [hill]*, and I learned*

many things. I also learned how to be more humble, to respect people you don't know, to talk, to learn things I never imagined I could learn."
(Cantagalo, male, 21 years old)

"I think that I learned not only to make many things... I learned things that are good to my daily life that I can profit from at home... I learned, gosh, I had many teachings for life at CUFA. The teacher does not teach us only how to make things... She teaches us... a lifestyle. She gives us an example of life, so we can follow a good example. She gives us personal advice. She talks and exchanges cool ideas."
(Madureira, female, 16 years old)

This is provided in a context of care and support, where there is a combination of cognitive, practical, emotional, and social skills, as indicated below:

"It helps me professionally, as it is something that I can use further ahead to find an occupation, no doubt. It helps me culturally because here I can get to know different things, to go to events, to meet different people and things that I would not have the opportunity to, if I were not here."
(City of God, female, 17 years old)

"To be part of AfroReggae it is everything in my life. Because all that I am in my life today, I thank AfroReggae. When I started here I was a child, a teenager, I was 13. I didn't know

a thing. I didn't go outside to get a bus or to buy something.
I didn't even know how to catch a bus… Today, it is different.
Through AfroReggae I got to know different places, I started
to live life in a true way. My mum gave me more freedom.
She trusted those people and let me live my life with them.
Today, I am with AfroReggae and it is the most important
thing in my life."
(Vigario Geral, female, 19 years old)

In these extracts we can observe how processes of education and training provided by these organisations act as schools and families by proxy, combining functions of both. Our field observations show that by emphasising movement and a combination of mind and body activities, the workshops and training provided circumvent aspects of formal schooling that tend to exclude favela children. This bypasses traditional obstacles of formal education that separate learning from the body and from emotional scaffolding. These are together in the manner in which participants report the meaning of AfroReggae and CUFA in their lives.

These meanings are further emphasised by how participants perceive AfroReggae and CUFA's work and what they consider to be the main methods used by these organisations. As Figure 5.3 shows, attention to individual subjectivity and identity and crossings/mediations/dialogue are predominant, followed by an important presence of holding and handling and material incentives.

Figure 5.3 Work Methodology of AfroReggae and CUFA
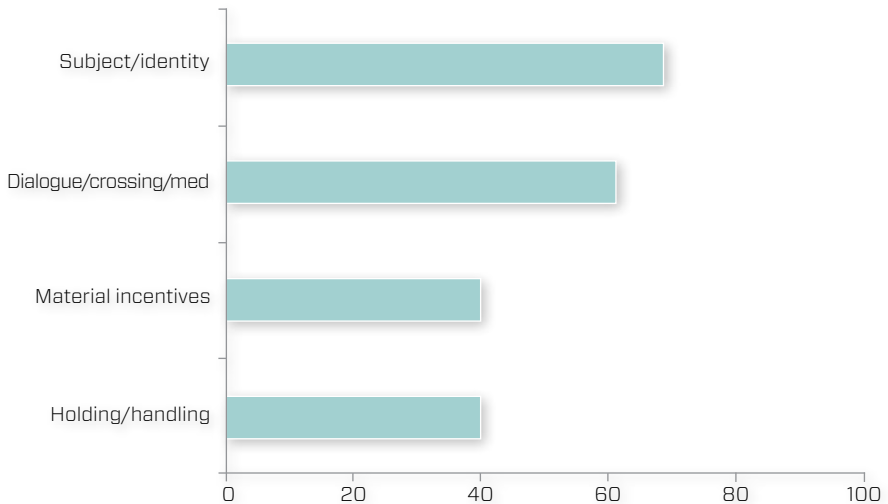
Note. Perceived work of organisations, ranked by frequency. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Interviews.

In the talk of participants there is robust presence of metaphors related to the family, as when they state that these organisations are like 'a father' and/or 'a mother', they are like 'a family'. Their most important action, referred to again and again, is to 'give a hand', to talk and to help, taking people away from the route of crime.

> *"AfroReggae, ah,* [laughter] *let's put it like this: AfroReggae is a mother! Our mother, AfroReggae!"*
> (Vigario Geral, female, 17 years old)

> *"They are like a home, a family, as if they were a home. I get here, people know me. I am respected here. You see? I have to have responsibility here, as I would at home."*
> (Madureira, male, 20 years old)

Workshops focusing on a variety of skills and competences allow personal development and provide psychosocial support. At the same time, thanks to partnerships and the funding they offer, there are material incentives available, which involve small grants, clothes and most importantly, food. Clothes are much desired by children and young people in the favelas, and they can be a strong attractor towards the drug trade. AfroReggae and CUFA understand this culture and are able to anchor their own behaviour and partnerships to respond to this demand. Nike, for instance, is a sponsor and regularly offers trainers and other garments to the kids.

> *"… the best thing that happened to me […] last month I went to the Congress, there were lots of important people; lots of new things, and I was there with CUFA. This was one of the best things for me."*
> (City of God, male, 20 years old)

> *"I tell you, they went there and saved me, and now I am here, doing all this. What they did with me I am now doing to others, that is how AfroReggae works, And it works!… The social bit helping people, those who do not want to be part of the drug trade anymore, those who do not have a criminal record, even those who have been in jail, they help to find a job. This is very nice. This is what motivates me to be here!"*
> (Cantagalo, male, 28 years old)

"They work for the good, like a church. There are people who are falling apart and need help. Money is not even the case. It is something to do, to have an objective in life. 'I am nothing in this life'. Then you go and find break [dance]. *'Ah, this is nice, to dance, to work. I am going to do something, to be someone.' CUFA invests in you. They create social things that make you think that you are someone. They give you support, ask what is happening at home, offer you a job, teach you. They make a difference."*

(City of God, male, 20 years old)

The Projects: Objectives, Target Population and Partners

The analysis of projects shows similarities as well as some particular differences between AfroReggae and CUFA. At the same time, we found a strong correspondence between the perceptions of the communities and what the projects show about the overall aims and methodology of work of AfroReggae and CUFA. Taking the perception of favela participants as indicator, it can be said that the projects are reaching favela populations and meeting their objectives.

Figure 5.4 shows similar objectives for the two organisations, with some variation in emphasis. Both organisations mainly work with the development of skills, while sustainability seems to be especially important for AfroReggae. Objectives combine individual and social attention: subjectivity, citizenship, regeneration of the community and of the public sphere.

Figure 5.4 Objectives of AfroReggae and CUFA's Projects
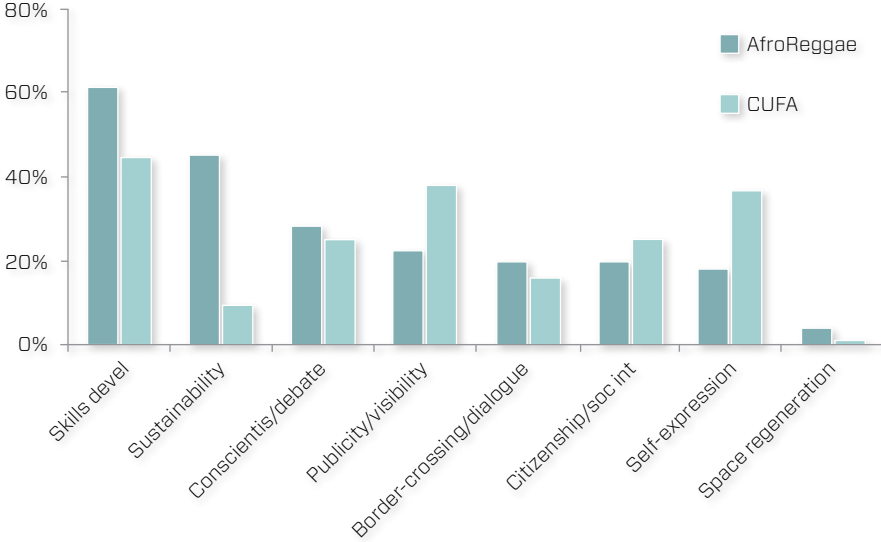
Note. Projects' characteristics coded on the basis of archival records and documents. Multiple coding allowed. Source: Project documents. N = 130.

These objectives show a focus both inside the community – consolidating self-development, community cohesion and internal networks – and outside the community, seeking bridges and communication with the city. Overall it can be said that these projects operate at the crossroads between the favela and the city, developing actions that are directed towards the inside, the outside and the communication between the two.

In relation to the populations targeted by the projects, the analysis shows that AfroReggae and CUFA have diversified the publics they engage with. Aligned with the objectives of crossing borders and exposing to mainstream society the culture of the favela, they have aimed their projects to a wide range of publics that are presented in Figure 5.5.

The majority of projects is directed to favela communities, children and young people, and society as a whole, reinforcing the crossing of urban frontiers. Data also show crossing of city boundaries and work of mediation, as in projects directed to bridging relations with the police and supporting ex-detainees who want to abandon the link with criminal activities.

Figure 5.5 Target Population of Projects
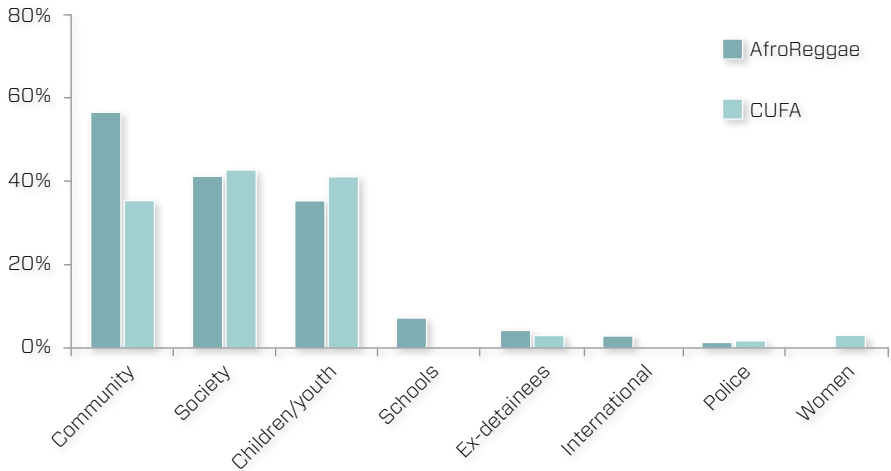
Note. Projects' characteristics coded on the basis of archival records and documents. Multiple coding allowed.
Source: Project documents. N = 130.

Some of CUFA's projects are directly concerned with women while AfroReggae
targets international spaces and schools.

> *"AfroReggae cares. Isn't there a metaphor about the water that goes far but the grass that is close dies? The grass starts to die... The roots start to lose strength until others that get the water far away start dying too, because the basis close to home is not being looked after. AfroReggae concerns itself with those who are close, and then it reaches for the world."*
>
> (AfroReggae, activist)

"Different from other institutions, here [at CUFA] *there is equality that is lacking in Rio. Here I can go in and meet completely different people. For example, in the break* [dance] *class, there is a boy who lives in Barra* [da Tijuca], *other in Vila Isabel* [Rio de Janeiro's neighbourhoods]. *She also comes to do class here, you see, this is a place of equality."*
(City of God, female, 17 years old)

"We have a line of action, a strategy, but we do not have only one audience. We used to have it, but today no more. Because we, at the same time that we are in the favelas, in jails, in social action, we are involved with FIESP [Federation of Industries of Sao Paulo]. *We have a show in Eldorado Radio that is one of the most elitists in Brazil, so... today, we have a TV show in an elite channel. This thing of 'ghetto only talks to ghetto' is a vision of the past. So we have a show called* From the Favela to the World. *That is it. From the favela to the world."*
(AfroReggae, leader)

The analysis of partners and sponsors shows that AfroReggae and CUFA work inside their communities of origin, but their outlook is much wider: they are interested in establishing a channel of communication with the city, the country and indeed the world. They develop projects in partnership with a wide variety of actors that include the Brazilian State, the private sector, social movements, the media, academia and international organisations. The partnerships they establish and the sponsorships they are able to attract show emphasis on both the State and the private sector. Figure 5.6 shows the different sectors involved in work with AfroReggae and CUFA.

Figure 5.6 Sponsors and Partners of AfroReggae and CUFA
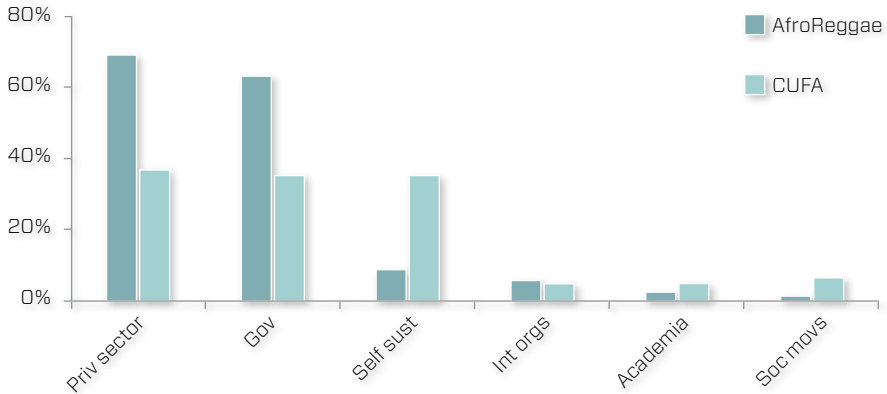
Note. Projects' characteristics coded on the basis of archival records and documents. Multiple coding allowed. Source: Project documents. N = 130.

The private sector supports their work by sponsoring their projects. Some businesses have already extended their services to favela areas where they would not traditionally operate. The State is a key partner and State-owned companies such as Petrobras (Brazilian Petrol) and Banco do Brasil (the Bank of Brazil) provide vital sponsorship for projects. Whereas AfroReggae shows a higher number of partnerships with industry and finance, both organisations show links to the media (strong links with Globo Media Network and a diversity of radio stations). CUFA's partners also involve social movements and NGOs. Academic partners are present, although in a much smaller proportion. Worth of note is that both organisations are involved with international partners, which indicates an open avenue for exploring the efficacy of their work in other contexts.

These findings corroborate a point made by Ramos (2007), raised in Chapter 2 and further discussed in section 5.3. She suggests that these organisations innovate in their capacity to relate without fear with the State, the media and markets. They productively use the mixture of ideas and the combination of differences gathering actors, activities and institutions that would rarely operate together otherwise. Both organisations recruit the Brazilian avatar of mixture, subverting its subtle subliminal negativity and foregrounding its positive side, exploring effectively the fact that segregation in Brazil is intermeshed with fascination and desire for crossing boundaries (Vianna, 2001). This, as we have seen in Chapter 3, also

regulates relations between the favela and the wider city. Here we find another important indicator of why these experiences work: they draw on deep seated elements of the Brazilian cultural context and of the city of Rio de Janeiro. This is a feature that emerged as a central category in interviews with external observers, as we discuss in more detail below.

Table 5.1 presents a summary of the actions developed by AfroReggae and CUFA and their immediate and long term results.

Table 5.1 AfroReggae and CUFA: Activities and Results

Activity	Immediate result	Long term results
1. Workshops 2. Employability 3. Symphonic Orchestra 4. Bands	1. Skills/training 2. Everyday structure 3. Reflection, conscientisation 4. Education 5. Social life 6. Psychosocial and cognitive development 7. Material incentives (scholarship, snacks)	1. Attention to individual subjectivity 2. Border-crossing/ expansion of networks 3. Imagination
1. *Pracas* (Squares) 2. *Viaduto* (Flyover)[5] 3. Waly Salomao Cultural Centre	1. Regeneration of public space 2. Improvement of the community space 3. Social identity 4. Improvement of the relationship with place	1. Border-crossing/ expansion of networks 2. Imagination
1. Bloco AfroReggae (Carnival Group) 2. Orilaxe Prize 3. Hutuz Prize 4. *Conexoes Urbanas* (Urban Connections) 5. *Reis da Rua* (Kings of the Street) 6. LIIBRA (International Street Basketball League) 7. Anu de Ouro Prize	1. Visibility of favela culture 2. Communication with asphalt/dialogue and mediation 3. Relaxation of urban frontiers	1. Border-crossing/ expansion of networks 2. Imagination

Source: Underground Sociabilities.

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[5] The *Viaduto* (Flyover) is a large area under a flyover that has been regenerated by CUFA. From being a meeting point for drug dealers, drug users and prostitution, it became a space where CUFA holds workshops, sports games and artistic activities. It has become a successful cultural venue in Rio, attracting people from different social classes and neighbourhoods of the city.

5.3. How Are They Perceived? Partners and External Observers

Interviews with external observers and partners of AfroReggae and CUFA reveal an overall positive evaluation of these groups, punctuated by a consensual view that they represent a new type of social actor in the Brazilian public sphere and are essential for the processes of redesigning urban frontiers in Rio de Janeiro. The analysis of these interviews shows five central dimensions in the overall perception of external observers and partners: the *context*, the *culture*, the *actors*, the *method,* and *future challenges*.

A New Public Sphere

Transformations in the Brazilian public sphere in the late 90s are seen as a crucial context to understand the meaning of AfroReggae and CUFA. Three factors are singled out:

- the appearance of new social actors: young and black favela-dwellers;
- affirmation and new development of civil society;
- issues of racial identity.

The entrance of young and black favela residents is seen as a major novelty in the landscape of civil society mobilisation in Brazil.

> *"... I think that the appearance of favela youth – the young black person from the periphery as a new political actor – is the most important thing that has happened in Brazil."*
> (Academic, partner)

> *"... the leadership of these communities in the hills have realised that they could get organised, tell their stories, build their own organisations, and have a base for power and action. This is new."*
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

As well as introducing themselves in the public sphere, observers point to the manner in which they contribute to the development of civil society and social movements in Brazil. They challenge traditional association movements and NGOs by combining issues of citizenship and social justice with cultural production and artistic initiatives that aim to be professional and compete at all levels of media output. They use languages coming from theatre, music, cinema and dance to express the ideas and perspective of favela youth and seek to counteract dominant representations that stereotype favelas as sites of criminality and failure. They are self-organising and start locally, growing in a direct relationship with their communities of origin and a wide variety of partners. They are seen as important innovators, both of cultural productions and of political action, changing the position of peripheral actors in the public sphere and introducing a social movement that is cultural as well as political.

> *"I think that is what AfroReggae and CUFA are in the process of Brazilian democratisation: they are a new wave of cultural production and at the same time a very strong leadership, which **can put itself** in the agenda as new political actors. Today there is no way for the Ministry of Social Development to create a programme of action without listening to AfroReggae and CUFA. Whether they decreased the drug trade I am not sure, but they certainly constructed themselves as political actors. This is what has changed."*
>
> (Ford Foundation, sponsor)

> *"There is a bit of what Rubem César discusses in his early texts about NGOs in Brazil. The idea of being an advisor, that **we** do it for **them**... There are NGOs for the indigenous, we are the translators, **we** do it for **them**. When these boys came along, they said: 'hang on, don't worry, I can speak. You have already spoken, a lot. If the issue is us, you can let us speak, OK'?"*
> (Academic/policy-maker, partner)

The identity of these new actors and their new form of doing politics are seen as strong influences in developing a new context for Brazilian social movements and civil society. They are seen as rejecting and/or renewing traditional discourses of NGOs and social movements for four reasons: first, AfroReggae and CUFA do not display the traditional reluctance to work with the private sector, the State sector and the media; on the contrary, they engage all in partnerships. Engagement with media and markets is particularly innovative and much debated as a dangerous option by traditional social movements. Others, such as Yúdice, see it as strategic: "rather than view certain social movements' collaboration with the media and markets as simply a form of co-optation, it is also accurate to see this as the strategic management of the use that these groups make of these venues and vice-versa" (Yúdice, 2001:53).

Second, they do not display the traditional view that only the collective matters; rather they speak in the first person, place a great deal of importance in personal trajectories and they believe that protagonists should be considered as individuals. This assessment is in accordance with findings reported earlier: life trajectories are indeed used as tools for Self and community development. Third, they put a strong emphasis on place and permanently convey a narrative of pride and defence of their territories of origin, which counteracts dominant negative representations about favelas. They constantly reclaim territory proudly shouting '*Eu sou favela*' (I am favela) in national and international presentations. Fourth, they bring the racial question to the debate, putting black identity at the centre of discussions. Our data show that skin colour is a constant issue in everyday

life, and indeed we found that favela-dwellers experience racism as a frequent event in their lives. AfroReggae and CUFA are very explicit about their black heritage and foreground black culture and identity in all they do, seeking to tackle head-on the often unacknowledged racism of Brazilian society. And all of this is done through a language of colour, sport, art and *alegria* (joy) that destabilises associations between poverty, exclusion, sadness and suffering. It is a language that invites and attracts, and at the same time resonates deeply because it is the language of a culture that is already there.

> *"AfroReggae has a component which I find beautiful, that is to always work with joy. You must have noted that all the movements, the work, the dynamics, all is an explosion of colour, light, beauty, rhythm, energy that is really contagious. We noticed this immediately in the work they do. All they do has this beauty, which of course comes from the Afro thing, from the reggae thing, from diversity, from our creative diversity, from ancestral Africa that was brought here and then mixed on arriving here in Brazil, and it is present in the history and the roots that AfroReggae carries."*
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

As NGOs and as social movements AfroReggae and CUFA propose the culture, the music, the dance and the style of the favela as acts of citizenship. That is how they intervene in the public sphere and that is how they make visible a positive sociability that tends to be displaced and pushed underground by negative representations, stereotypes and social movements that do not communicate or represent favela youth.

> *"Another thing is to value music, culture, and celebrations as something fundamental, even for social movements, for conveying values, etc. This is not something that is part of*

the culture of the left that tends to be more rational, more bureaucratic, with everything having to be very functional... Here you have this closeness between working and partying. This is another thing that works. You go and it 'clicks'. People like it."

(NGO, partner)

In this sense they are innovators of political action and transformers of civil society, drawing on the deep resources of Brazilian culture and identity to reject and to renew traditional discourses of NGOs and social movements.

The Culture

The culture of Brazil and, in particular of Rio de Janeiro, is considered an important aspect that enables AfroReggae and CUFA to act. Observers point to three factors:

- The culture of Rio embraces what is considered marginal and makes it a central symbol of its identity;
- It embraces diversity, conflict and tension as productive forces for creating the new (for example, *Antropofagia* and *Tropicalia*);
- Celebrations, joy and arts are central for Brazilian culture and its African heritage.

AfroReggae and CUFA are seen as organisations typical of Rio, despite their national and international reach. They share and express the culture of the *carioca*, the way it embraces edges and off-centre experiences and brings the marginal back to the centre of its identity (Lima, 1996; Velho, 1994). The relations between the hill and the asphalt have always been emblematic of this dynamics, explored by Brazilian social scientists not only in relation to Rio but also to Brazil as a whole (Vianna, 2001). Drawing on these cultural practices, they treat differences, conflict and tension as sources of transformation. They are explicitly inspired by Brazilian cultural movements (Ramos, 2007) which subvert logics of colonisation and exclusion by advocating mixture and the blending of extreme difference.

> *"... there is proximity with the favela that is linked to the culture of Rio... samba is middle class and favela, Carnival is artists, the public at large and favela. Despite the chasm, the inequality and prejudice, there is this paradox of an intense communication, an easiness to communicate, a pleasure in communicating...they used to call this populism in Brazil. But populism is gone and this continues. This, you know, makes a great difference out there because in many places, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, they are more analytical, aren't they? I am either one thing or I am another... This playful thing of being two things at the same time, of going in and out of places, to pretend, this does not exist... The culture of Rio is a culture made by this kind of process. Samba comes precisely from this. It is a kind of manifestation that was seen as marginal and has become the symbol of the city, the culture of the city. And even of Brazilian culture.* Feijoada [a traditional dish] *is the same thing..."*
> (NGO, partner)

> *"... it is an immensely plural culture, super plural. In this sense I think their inspiration is very* Tropicalia... *there is an enormous identity with Brazilian culture."*
> (UN, partner)

A culture of celebration and of artistic expression mingled with partying and entertainment is another element that characterises AfroReggae and CUFA, stemming from Brazilian culture, in particular from its black heritage. Despite the harshness and suffering of favela experiences these groups introduce the favela through colour, music and dance, breaking away from what is seen as an 'angry',

'annoyed', 'moaning', style of putting forward an agenda of social change. They draw lessons from the experience of slavery and survival in adversity and use, in particular, music and bodily expression as forms of resistance, something that is clearly recognised by observers. So, when speaking about the reaction to the police invasion that killed 21 innocent people in the favela of Vigario Geral in 1993, observers and partners note that music and dance were the answer to the adversity and pain of the event. Inscribed in the memory of the community as pain and as the event that gave origin to AfroReggae, it generated a desire to heal and to respond through the opposite of pain and destruction:

> *"... AfroReggae was born out of the massacre in Vigario Geral, and imposed itself by beauty, through its ancestry, through music. Maybe because they had an origin in that moment of pain, they came as an explosion of colour, energy, beauty, recovering all this for healing, for curing. All this strong and beautiful thing they have, full of light, energy, beat, drums, and after that the* Afro Lata [a band that uses tin as drums, thus African Tin]... *And CUFA comes in as the mediation with the world of the asphalt, mediating the favela and the others, saying: 'This is the voice of the favela, we will impose, we will express, we will talk, we will tell our history, nobody will speak for us...'"*
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

By using and expressing cultural resources that reverberate across a wide range of partners and the diverse landscape of the city and the country, AfroReggae and CUFA's actions trigger cognitive and emotional solidarities both inside and outside favelas. They irradiate cultural codes across the city and beyond while at the same time pushing an agenda of citizenship, social justice and urban equality.

The Actors

Observers consider the characteristics of actors and leaders of AfroReggae and CUFA as central for what makes them unique, effective and innovative. The aspects singled out are:

- the connection to territory and bottom-up nature of their experience;
- the experience of its leadership, which has gone through poverty, failure and exclusion;
- the resilience and competence of their identity: the *marra* (a term in Portuguese later on explained in detail) and the sense of humour of story-tellers.

The direct relationship between the people who created and run AfroReggae and CUFA to the favela territories or Rio is paramount: these are people who belong to these communities and have had first-hand experience of the context. Their leaders know poverty, failure and exclusion, which is widely recognised as indication of the authenticity of these groups and the genuine connection they have with favela-dwellers. This was found in their life stories as we have seen in the previous pages, but importantly, it is recognised by opinion makers and agenda setters as what distinguishes AfroReggae and CUFA, what makes them unique and innovative.

> *"… they are community organisations, this is an important characteristics of both organisations. They have a strong community base, in other words, they have emerged through people who live in these communities, who have the same identity. They are extremely connected to the place of origin, and this is fundamental in Rio de Janeiro's context…"*
> (UN, partner)

> *"… the leadership speaks for itself. They are leaders who come from these territories, with capacity to speak for themselves, to think for themselves…"*
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

*"Why are there millions of projects working with youth in Brazil, loads of them, and why are these different? What is the point of the social fabric that they touch and that makes it vibrate? This is the image I have of them; their leadership seeks to cross borders, to cross limits, to break segregation. Their work does not remain internal, they want to go out, and with a leadership that belongs there. This is the difference. It is not a leadership that comes from the middle classes and has gone to Vigario Geral or to City of God. They are young, they are black, they hardly have completed secondary education and they represent the place, they **are** the place."*
(Ford Foundation, sponsor and partner)

Aspects unanimously raised by interviewees are the resilience and competence of the identities involved in these organisations, the fact that they have survived a harsh and difficult environment and became positive models – not only for favela youth but for the city as well –, and because they are at once fun and determined. These representations held by external observers substantiate the findings of the life stories discussed earlier in this chapter. Observers point to their capacity to sustain a sense of humour and joy amidst adversity. As pointed out earlier, it is this ability that makes them universal characters, akin to those of Samuel Beckett for whom adversity and human collapse could be a rich source of humour.

"... they are a privilege to be with. Their basic matter is... wonderful. They are wonderfully pleasant people. We sit here to talk, they bring aims, actions that are well-intended for the good of all, with passion. They are passionate, you see? The life story of one and the other, gosh! Do you know Celso [Athayde]*'s life story? He was a street kid, he lived*

in an orphanage. Then you sit to have a conversation with him... He was pulled from every possible way, he spent time with Comando Vermelho [Red Command, a criminal faction created in 1979]*, then you read his book... He is an example of a person who overcame all and put his energy to channel the traumas he had. And instead of following evil, he went after good, really good.* [Jose] *Junior, as well... what I think is interesting is that we can play with them, we can joke about things... which I think it is great. They have a great sense of humour..."*
(Globo Media Network, partner)

"... many of these guys, who started this process since the beginning, are genuinely good. They have a good heart. They have a compassion for others that is genuine; it is not a political thing. They have this basis upon which they build their political discourse. If you look at Junior, the guy is genuinely good, he dedicates himself, he pulls strings, he gives space, he helps..."
(Ford Foundation, sponsor and partner)

This competence, which is permanently expressed in an impressive capacity for lively and intense story-telling, is also seen as *marra*, a peculiar personality trait that is seen as characteristic of the *carioca*. *Marra* means a combination of being feisty, lively and overly self-assertive, in a cheeky and bold way, of not being too impressed by the powerful, of feeling empowered to cross positions, and 'not to know one's place'. Observers note that this is a quality they all possess, a way of subverting the conventional position of the subaltern.

> *"... and another thing: they are too* marrentos *[people with* marra*]! Do you know this expression? This is the guy who believes in himself, who says 'Here I am!'...He gets to talk to the president and he is there full of himself. Of course he is very happy to be talking to the president, but at the same time he is showing himself off to the president. Celso is* marra *personified... Junior is too, he is* marra *in person. And they are getting worse. As they get famous and popular, they become full of* marra*. This is really interesting, the thing of forcing space, it has to do with their trajectory, of forcing one's space."*
> (NGO, partner)

> *"... they bring their work to the centre. They are not afraid of going to the secretary of State to negotiate. They are not afraid. They do not feel intimidated. They build this self-confidence that is disturbing, because it makes people think: 'Is this guy a citizen, this black favela guy?' Yes. He feels like a citizen, therefore he is a citizen."*
> (Ford Foundation, sponsor and partner)

The Method

Three aspects of the working method of these organisations are seen as essential to whom they are and to what they do:

- communication, crossings and mediations;
- diversity of partnerships;
- attention to the individual person.

External observers and partners recognise what favela residents perceive and what the analysis of projects has shown: establishing bridges between different people, social actors, geographies and cultures is right at the centre of what AfroReggae and CUFA do. This process of enabling crossings and building communication is identified in their projects, actions and mission. Key to this methodology is the goal of "making the invisible visible": they invite the city to go to the favela and at the same time they take to the city a different perspective about favela life.

> "… what is unquestionable is that these two organisations coming from favelas, from the peripheries, from poor communities, change the relations between the 'broken city'. They build the so talked about 'bridge', they provoke, they do not bow to anyone, they question us…"
> (Private sector, partner and sponsor)

> "… the outcome is the positive visibility… because this is the first thing: these are areas that always have a negative visibility. This is the great difference. And it is serious, profound, not a joke. It is easy to gather 15 boys and to put them to play music, and people go back home and have a happy sleep. No, it's more profound than that. They know how to commit themselves. They make a real show. You go there, they like it, they commit, and you change the place of these people. You gain space and visibility, but you are not a victim, you are not the poor one, you are the guy who is hosting the party. I am the one who is invited to that party. So if Junior promotes a prize ceremony, he hosts it, and I am invited."
> (UN, partner)

> *"... this is clear! If you run a quick search in Google, in* Folha de Sao Paulo, *in* Estadao [major Brazilian newspapers]*, and you write* AfroReggae *and* CUFA, *all you get now is cool stuff, good stuff, and why? Because they have noticed that these two institutions of Rio have changed the country, because of their interlocution with all areas and segments of society."*
> (Private sector, partner)

Diversity of partnerships is a key marker of these organisations, unanimously noted by external observers. They engage all sectors of society and are adamant about the importance of working with government, the private sector, artists, academia, international organisations and other social movements. While their key concern is the favela-dweller, through their various partnerships they target very diverse populations, indeed they target society as a whole.

> *"*[MV] *Bill, CUFA, AfroReggae and others are essential for conquering these new kinds of action, in a joint action, in going beyond the dichotomy between* one *and* another. *The police, yes, the State, yes, but it is the community and the social actions that can interact with that community. They are decisive in this process."*
> (Ministry of Justice, partner)

> *"I think that both CUFA and AfroReggae put their fingers on the sensitive spot and seek very bold, daring partnerships."*
> (Globo Network, partner)

> *"Junior said: 'I am feeling...' See how intuitive he is. He said: 'This tool we use to get boys away from the drug trafficking, it works for boys in the drug traffic... drumming workshops, dance, theatre, you get the guy out, you show there is another protagonism possible.' He said: 'If we can save the criminals, who knows, may we be able to save some policemen?' It was his logic: 'Let's do this business of cultural invasion in the barracks as well.' And so they did."*
> (Academic, partner)

Observers note that in enabling double crossings, they facilitate the listening of demands and of realities which were literally physically obstructed by urban frontiers. They give Brazil its favelas hidden away by the borders of the hill-asphalt division.

> *"... and above all, we walked into those communities, and they allowed us to enter in a way that, until then, nobody had been able to. This is something crucial. For years and years, the favelas became inaccessible territories. We could go up to a point that nobody would be able to step in there."*
> (UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

> *"... they are the guys who make the interlocution. They are the interpreters... Are you interested in the world of violence? What does a boy from the favela think? If you want to understand what a young boy from the favela thinks you will be forced to listen to the music of* [the hip hop band] *Racionais MCs. If the president wants*

to understand him, he has to listen to it. If the governor wants to understand him, he has to listen to it. The mayor has to listen to it. Listen! Listen to what they say, to what they complain about. So these guys became the mediators. As a researcher, if I want to research in a favela, I need them because I do not enter the favela. If Globo wants to enter there, they need them. If the mayor wants to do cultural politics, he will need them. They are now doing the campaign for dengue fever because they made it possible. Before that, the government could not reach there. Think! What does that mean? They became the political mediators of Brazilian society."
(Academic, partner)

"And I went up to the stage of Teatro Municipal [Municipal Theatre] *to get my prize and I had never been in that stage, which is a central place for Rio's culture. And it was AfroReggae, from the favelas, who took me there. And I, who to some extent belong to the world of* Teatro Municipal*, was taken to that stage by them."*
(Cultural producer and academic, partner)

AfroReggae and CUFA are media savvy and use television, internet, social media, newspapers and radio to communicate. Observers are impressed by the way they have engaged with television and have established a very strong relationship with mass media of communication, in particular with Globo Network, Brazil's most influential media corporation. Globo have broadcasted in the high audience prime time TV show *Fantastico* [Fantastic], the stories of children in the drug trade as described in a book written by Celso Athayde and MV Bill of CUFA.

> *"Globo adopted them. Globo has dedicated a whole* Fantastico *to* Falcao. *And this is something that Globo does not do for anyone. They don't do it for the pope, they don't do it for the president, for no one. A whole* Fantastico, *to one story, to one character. This is unbelievable!..."*
> (NGO, partner)

> *"CUFA showed a documentary of fifty minutes in Globo TV that held Brazil in a trance. No commercial intervals. They had the courage of demanding this to Globo... the next day President Lula said: we want to talk to these guys."*
> (Research Institute, partner)

Last but not least, observers recognise in their method the focus on individual lives, an emphasis on understanding and valuing aspects related to the psychological and personal experience of exclusion, of recovering self-esteem and of investing in the development of competencies and skills, in the rewriting of the Self.

> *"It is not me, it is the group. Myself? The self cannot be exposed too much, comrade. It is not one life, it is always the 'us', the party cell, etc. But they are the opposite of this... They are about individual trajectories. Politically. They invest in individuals. When you see the film* Favela Rising, *what is it? They bet in the creation of a myth... If you ask them something, and this is from Mano Brown all the way to the boy in the favela and to AfroReggae and CUFA, which are big institutions, you ask them something, they tell you a story.*

It is not 'Sandra, it is because this and that.' No, it goes like this: 'Sandra, when I was…' It is a valorisation of subjectivity."
(Academic, partner)

"… in Rio, the control imposed by the drug trade is what makes your ability to circulate, your right to the city is absolutely compromised. Then, this possibility that you can cross and be in more than one place is also something very powerful. So, both CUFA and AfroReggae allow, from an individual perspective, to think of a future, to have a desire, an aspiration. To have this capacity to desire and to aspire, I think that is what they give to people: it is security. It is something that during childhood… if you have a childhood full of love and tenderness, you think of yourself as a secure person in the world. This gives you containment, you find your identities, you feel held, you are part of something, you can go around because you have a ground. They have this role, 'I am part of this, I am OK in the world…'"
(UN, partner)

Perceptions of external observers corroborate the perceptions of favela-dwellers and confirm the analysis of the projects developed by AfroReggae and CUFA. The synergy between these three sources suggests that the findings are robust and provide a reliable indication of the overall characteristics of these organisations.

The View of the Police

There is a unanimous positive evaluation of AfroReggae and CUFA and of the partnerships that are evolving between the police and these organisations.

"... they are institutions that help us a lot. I see AfroReggae with the same objective as ours. They want citizenship for people here, they want rights. They are great partners, they help us with crime prevention, with concientisation, with people getting out of the drug trade, with education, with jobs..."
(UPP commander, community-based)

"... [About CUFA] we know they act in these communities, that they take children and teenagers away from crime... They do not have the stats, but I know because they are part of a lot of our interactions with these communities. We know how useful they are, how good it is to take people away from that influence, so we applaud their initiatives."
(Military Police commander, headquarters)

As seen in Chapter 4, the police do report stereotypes and difficulties that the institution as a whole felt when developing work and partnerships with favela organisations. As described above, prejudice and accumulated experiences of conflict are difficult to eradicate and they spill over perceptions of AfroReggae and CUFA.

"There is always prejudice inside our institution in relation to these groups. There has always been... a certain uneasiness... It is that military vision. It is that vision that if you get too close,

you become contaminated. So, here I am separated. It is the simple and pure vision of separation. So, many times, the way they talk, their habits... this causes a certain discomfort, but you also need to understand that this our DNA... and to force it down is not good. Once, they brought AfroReggae here to HQ, but it was not a good experience. There is no need to do that, things do not necessarily need to be imposed..."
(UPP commander, headquarters)

"Of course, obviously at the beginning there was that intrinsic understanding of some policemen [that all favelas are the same]*, but these are things we need to change because their work is very good. AfroReggae had already started their activism before pacification, with the aim of getting people out of the drug trafficking ... CUFA is an organisation that looks for partnerships, they have power over these communities and we have, as an obligation, to deal with these issues, with communities that have become vulnerable due to injustice, so we seek to work in synergy with them."*
(Military Police commander, headquarters)

"There is a view that AfroReggae is linked to crime. Some policemen have this vision, but we're partners, we're working together. It is because they don't know, they still think: 'Ah, if you're in favela, you're a drug dealer.' I have a very positive view of what they do. I see what they do. They struggle for the social rights, they positively nudge people, and I'm a percussionist, so I know them..."
(UPP commander, community-based)

As they refer to residual prejudices, they also point to new practices of contact and communication that are gradually dispelling them. This is evidenced in the partnerships between the police and favela organisations, which were reported in the sections above and constantly referred to by interviewees. Although few in numbers, if compared to the overall projects of AfroReggae and CUFA, the significance of what they do should not be underestimated. These joint projects and actions:

- put together former detainees and policemen in conversation with young children and youth in schools and in the community;
- bring into the police training workshops led by musicians and dancers of AfroReggae and CUFA;
- develop languages of communication through the use of shared identity and common cultural references in music, dance and sport;
- pool resources for spotting people in trouble and for building employability.

These projects and conversations are overcoming barriers. They are challenging old ideologies and representations of segregation and conflict.

> "I said, I will go and bring Junior... 'Junior, I want to have a chat with you.' He came with his troop [laughs]. This is the style, you know, the same representations, from here to there and from there to here. But I started to talk and he got interested. He was there. Beto was there, and we ended up deconstructing those things. I showed my good will, and you know, strategically, we have a lot in common... Soon after we started the employability programme, it was published as O Globo's [major Rio's newspaper] headlines. And now we have a partnership."
> (UPP commander, headquarters)

The partnerships are themselves leveraging new actions, as they become strong attractors for other parties seeking innovative actions and collaboration with favela territories. This is the case for the private sector that has been pulled in by these developments, offering jobs and sponsoring activities.

> *"Other industries are proliferating now… and this is not only because people are good. They started to see that the favela is a potential market. They are getting there because they can see that it is a promising market. And you need to give something in return such as qualification, education, otherwise you will not have a consumer, you will only have a sub-citizen… There are many interested* [institutions]*: Sky, Itau-Unibanco, Santander. Natura has called me, they were here just yesterday…"*
> (UPP commander, headquarters)

In the interviews, the process of building communication and partnerships is narrated through a series of paradigmatic stories that contain both conflict and dialogue. They involve experiences made of old representations and rituals of confrontation all the way to a resolution that uses dialogue and mutual recognition as tools for moving the process forward. Willingness to sit down and talk, involving both people in positions of command and those at the sharp end of favela communities are described as essential to enable processes of perspective-taking and mutual recognition, leading to positive resolutions and de-escalation of conflict.

We found specific episodes and stories being told by different people on different sides of the conversation. Three recurrent stories are: i) the presentation of AfroReggae in the police headquarters; ii) the development of work with CUFA; and iii) how the partnerships deal with areas of conflict and disagreements involving favela-dwellers and policemen who work with them. These stories travel

and circulate reinforcing the representations and practices they carry while working as resources for future action: they allow working through conflict and elaborating possible responses, while presenting a striking convergence about the importance of processes of dialogue and perspective-taking as tools for furthering the process of change.

> *"We have noticed that after our problem, we got closer. I have a very good contact with... who are the coordinators here. And after my policemen started to go more to AfroReggae, things are getting better."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

> *"We work together, including the employment project. A lot of people come to us and we send them to AfroReggae. Many people see the light, want a job, don't want to stay in the drug trafficking, and we send them to the programme..."*
> (UPP commander, community-based)

5.4. Challenges and Risks

While the vast majority of favela-dwellers were positive, and external observers were unanimous in their positive evaluation of AfroReggae and CUFA, a number of challenges and risks that permeate these organisations emerged in our study.

Sustainability and Capacity-Building

Capacity-building and sustainability are recurrent themes for key actors and for observers and partners of AfroReggae and CUFA. The latter identify in their own

institution procedural limits for the very implementation of the discourse they preach. How can these organisations be sustainable over time and how can they construct procedures that will allow them to survive the immediacy of the present? The real dilemma at stake is one that belongs to a much wider debate of the relations between the formal institutional world of aid and development agencies (national and international) and the informality and operational style of bottom-up, grassroots organisations (see Cornish; Campbell; Shukla; Banerji, 2012). As the interviewees were all Brazilian nationals, they could comment on how this dilemma scales up to the relations between the headquarters of international organisations and their national offices, whose lenses to read the context are very different.

"... an important way for sustainability is to train people. This is something I see historically, to preserve and to guarantee what they have achieved. There is always a danger of going back, but a critical view is necessary. Today, they need to look at themselves and think, if they are not going too much in the wrong direction, if they are not too exposed, this kind of thing..."
(Private sector, partner)

"... these groups... I would say, are indomitable objects. And why? Because they were born... they are grassroots, they come from the favela, they need to learn, to learn how to organise themselves. They have a challenge to learn how to get organised and they need our help, the help from institutions such as ours that have in their discourse, in their professional jargon, the capacity-building and the empowerment, but before jailing them into our rules, they need time..."
(UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

The lessons that come out of the observations of partners and sponsors are:

- interactions sustained with grassroots organisations must push reform and adaptation inside formal agencies themselves;
- it is easier to the private sector, to adapt, and to adjust to working with unconventional organisations, as their procedures show more flexibility to accommodate uneven skills and capacities.

At the same time, because of the youth, flexibility and, to some extent fragility of its institutional system, Brazil offers a terrain, where there is more capacity for dialogue with novel, bottom-up movements of civil society. This, however, leads to another challenge, which is the danger of *co-optation*.

Co-optation versus Collaboration

Direct relations with the State and markets may be a risk, indeed one that the leadership of AfroReggae and CUFA themselves openly voiced when interviewed. Engaging with unusual partners without the traditional scruples of social movements opens these organisations to criticisms such as selling out, compromising and avoiding the critical position that should be the hallmark of all social movements. However, this danger is underplayed by the new potentials identified in partnerships and collaborations developed. Most see these potentials realised in a positive way, both for the development of AfroReggae and CUFA and for the development of the sectors they engage with (as demonstrated above). This is visible in what one of AfroReggae's leaders stated:

"I changed, didn't I? If I tell you I didn't, I will be lying to you. Twenty years ago… my friends, most of my friends died. They were killed. I thought I was going to die, too. I tried to anticipate some problems in my life. I felt the threat of my own death. So, I am not that person anymore. But I think I kept an essence… a good essence. For instance, I had a lot

of prejudices. Against whites... against gringos [foreigners]...
against companies... but today I don't anymore..."
(AfroReggae, leader)

The actions and partnership of AfroReggae and CUFA with the State, the
media and private sector are theorised as containing risks but being positive
overall, in particular because they allow for bringing vitality and innovation to
all involved. In the context of Brazil's economic development this is particularly
the case, as the private sector is rediscovering both the market represented by
favela populations and the need to develop policies of corporate responsibility.
There is an economy of the favela, as there is a requirement for governance
that takes into account the favelas; this is being played out and elaborated
through a dialogue between the multiple stake-holders involved. One example
of this discussion is the assistance provided by AfroReggae and CUFA in the
various educational and training activities they offer. These organisations offer
a first point of call when it comes to the lack of basic State services in health,
employment and training. Many question if this is something NGOs should be
doing. In this process it can be observed that the risk of co-optation coexists
with the potentials of collaboration:

*"... there is a limit between being a laboratory of public policies
and a public policy executor. In this sense it is difficult,
because this is a very delicate border. It is a border that
CUFA and AfroReggae are sitting on today.* Viva Rio *has been
there and so has* Observatorio das Favelas [Observatory of
Favelas]. *So, we have these organisations and I think... their
success also means, to some extent, a closer involvement
with the State. For the State it is: 'You guys go, and we will
give you conditions.'"*
(Research Institute, partner)

However, observers are unanimous in pointing to the main outcome of the interactions with State, media and markets: the repositioning of these new social actors in the agenda of the Brazilian public sphere. In this sense collaboration is judged as valid and overriding the risks of co-optation, something that is expressed in the following voice:

> *"… it is important to listen to them and to have interventions as the ones they produce, but they refuse to scale up their projects. They want to produce demonstration-projects because scale is something the State must do. They say it to themselves. Junior has already said that AfroReggae is not a franchise… so what is my hypothesis? They are mediators. AfroReggae and CUFA are important because they talk to Globo. They talk to the National Congress… What happened in Brazil in the 2000s is this: they became interlocutors of the president, of Globo TV, of the mayor, of the London School of Economics, of CESeC* [Centre of Studies on Security and Citizenship]. *That is what they did. Is this little? They changed Brazil. They can be important for the boy in Vigario, but… forget this it is not true. It does not change a lot. Of course it changes individual lives, but other things also change individual lives: the football school, the Evangelicals, but AfroReggae changed Brazil. CUFA changed Brazil."*
> (Academic, partner)

While the overall research did not focus on the specific differences between AfroReggae and CUFA, results point to some important distinctions, which are particularly related to the style of leadership and to organisational structure. These aspects are mentioned as challenging areas for these organisations both internally and externally.

External observers point to the need to reflect on leadership style, succession and the role played by leaders in sustaining the institutions.

"I cannot imagine what would happen to AfroReggae if Junior decided to live in Jamaica. This is a problem. But of course, AfroReggae exists because of Junior, but it cannot be a project that will only exist thanks to Junior. I think that the challenge, when you talk about a base, is that they have to be self-sustainable."
(Globo Network, partner)

"AfroReggae is a more centralised institution that has a commander, as it were. We work with them and we know. Junior makes a big effort to de-centralise it, but you have the personality of the creator. Because AfroReggae has the AfroReggae creator and AfroReggae created... CUFA, they have a network process of distributing leadership..."
(UNESCO Office in Brazil, partner)

The challenges of professionalisation, development of competences and understanding the role and style of leaders are just some of the issues these organisations will need to face as they grow and establish their position in the Brazilian public sphere. The complexity they present relates to the fact that they are hybrids and do not fit into any one single model of NGO, private company or social movement. They incorporate elements of all these and do not easily conform to frameworks that juxtapose styles of dealing with and thinking about social transformation. If for some the opposition is between markets and politics, the experience AfroReggae and CUFA shows that these two ways can be successfully combined. They do not oppose States and markets, nor distance themselves from

international agencies and academia, nor separate social movements from these various arenas, instead they work with all; in this process, they demonstrate that the benefits of interlocution across sectors exceed the dangers.

5.5. Towards Social Integration: Self, Favela and City

In this section, we present a synthesis of the core elements of AfroReggae and CUFA's aims and methodology as perceived by the community, external observers, partners and police. We use data from the projects and from the analysis of their relations with the police, including the case study reported in Chapter 4. There is convergence between sources which adds robustness to the findings.

The core aims and methodology of AfroReggae and CUFA comprise:

- *attention to the Self and the individual level:* skills, intersubjective support and self-esteem;
- *the use of arts and imagination for social transformation:* working with the arts and the artistic sensibility of favela culture;
- *partnerships, crossings and expansion of networks:* engaging a wide range of partners and breaking barriers, crossing borders in the city, operating in situations of extreme conflict and violence in favela territories, producing the expansion of networks and the rehabilitation and visibility of favela culture.

Attention to the Self and the Individual Level

Attention to individual life stories and self-esteem is a main aim of these organisations, directed towards recovering the Self as a crucial resource for rewriting individual and social lives. All the projects and workshops of AfroReggae and CUFA aim at development of the Self, be it in terms of skills and employability, self-expression, raising conscientisation and debate, or forging new pathways for socialisation. These

aims combine the psychological and social regeneration of individual and community, showing how larger stories are linked to individual stories through the methodology of the projects.

AfroReggae and CUFA take into account individual lives and understand the link between the *micro* and the *macro* levels. They act on the production of subjectivity and the rewriting of identity as they seek to improve the institutional framework of the favelas and the range and quality of institutional support individuals receive. Engagement with AfroReggae and CUFA contributes to the recovery of the Self as a key resource for a pathway of positive socialisation. Through strong and positive identification models, psychosocial support and expansion of horizons, individuals report enhanced self-esteem and ability to act as protagonists of their own lives and that of their community. The findings suggest that the Self is a central asset in developing a positive pathway for socialisation and essential for rewriting devalued identities and urban environments.

The Use of the Arts and the Imagination

AfroReggae and CUFA use the arts and cultural identity as a major tool to bridge social and cultural divides in the city. In doing so, they subvert dominant representations that see people in the favelas as dangerous, criminal and drug-related. They use the symbolic and cultural resources of their communities – music, dance, conviviality and social capital – to show that these are in fact constitutive of Brazilian culture as a whole. At the same time they enhance the work of the imagination, a psychosocial asset that operates by freeing the Self from its immediate environment and allowing it to explore alternative possibilities. Opening up the mind is a central aim of these organisations. It is something that emerges in the trajectories of their participants and in the narratives of many interviewees exposed to their work. Imagining allows new visions and alternative representations that create in the mind the potential for regeneration in individuals, communities and public spheres. To be able to imagine futures and anticipate things is a key function of the arts in psychological life, and AfroReggae and CUFA effectively use it for individual and social development.

Consider for instance what Lev Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist, wrote about art and what a young man living in the favela had to say about playing the violin. They said:

> *"Art is the organization of our future behaviour. Musical activity is action that creates the impetus for more action, an action that opens the way for the emergence of powerful and hidden forces within us; it acts like an earthquake as it throws open unknown and hidden strata [...]. Art [...] forces us to strive beyond our life toward all that lies beyond it"*
> (Vygotsky, 1971: 252-253).

> Researcher: *What is the violin in your life?*
> Interviewee: *The violin is... more than music. It is the pleasure to be present... Music... in itself in my life; it is the pleasure of playing, it is the satisfaction and joy of the people who are listening to it. For me, this is the violin, for me this is music, all of this in one.*
> (Participant of the Orchestra of Violins in Parada de Lucas, male, 25 years old)

This young man speaks of what Vygostky described: the playing and the music connect him to both the pleasure of action that opens the way to what is inside him and the relationship with the audience that opens the way to a wider social world. As he says, this is combined in what music is for him, 'all of this in one'.

Partnerships, Expansion of Networks and Border Crossing

The modus operandi of both AfroReggae and CUFA is to "make the invisible visible" and to establish a line of conversation with a wide range of partners and society as a whole. These groups bridge urban boundaries in a way that enables favela-dwellers to cross the urban divide and concretely experience the right to come and go in the city, challenging stereotypes and behaviours while opening up the mind and life horizons. They foreground the different types of people and experiences that take place in favela life, challenging dominant representations about the favela-dweller that are typical of life in the 'asphalt' and building solid relationships with the public, the private and the cultural sectors. These groups push State, institutions and ordinary people into looking at excluded and 'invisible' parts of town in a different way. They present themselves in a new light and show that there is more to favela life than violence and drug trade. What is important is that by doing so they also renew the self-esteem of young people in their communities and offer crossings and novel networks to sociabilities that remain marginalised and underground.

AfroReggae and CUFA also mediate conflicts and operate in situations of extreme danger. They are called to, and tackle head-on situations of conflict produced by complex relations involving the police, drug trade factions and favela communities. These frequently entail death sentencing and extreme danger.

"...when it comes to putting our life at stake, we are the only ones! When the situation gets tough, there are no NGOs, no human rights group...nothing. When it gets tough, it gets very tough and we are the ones who put our faces out there. Somebody coming with me? Never! When the time comes there´s nobody else there, only AfroReggae people. Who are these people? Those who were defeated in their lives, people who failed, criminals... they dare, because they know what it's like."
(AfroReggae, leader)

During fieldwork we have observed these organisations literally saving lives and mediating when the drug trade would sentence someone to death or when people from different favelas crossed 'forbidden' borders established by drug factions in war. Activities of conflict mediation established by AfroReggae include projects with the police, with whom they have a variety of actions. These are deployed in schools, where former detainees, former drug dealers and police officers sit together to talk to children and to tell their stories. They also run music and drumming workshops for policemen conducted by AfroReggae artists. CUFA establishes a direct relation with children involved in the drug trafficking and they have produced books and widely recognised media programmes exposing the situation. This work aims to counteract violence through communication and hope.

6. The Routes of Underground Sociabilities: Trajectories of Self and Community

"When I was growing up my father kept me inside [the house] *a lot, it was difficult. We wanted the freedom of the world and he wanted to protect us because he knew what the world was like. Today, I understand this notion because I have a son and I know what life in the favela is like."*

(Young man in Cantagalo)

6.1. Agency and Context

Agency and context are mutually constituted in the lifeworld of the favelas. Favela residents clearly understand that context is a central determinant of the Self and socialisation. They constantly use the word 'world' to describe the public context of the favela and those elements of its lifeworld associated with the drug trade and its criminal activities. In the public sphere of the favela drug trafficking is identified as a paradoxical opportunity structure: it offers work and money, prestige, status and affiliation, but it takes people down the wrong path into the direction of a 'bad life'. Awareness of the role of the external environment in shaping a life trajectory is central to the system of representations that comprise the way of thinking of the favela. And yet, it is also clear for favela-dwellers that people can resist the appeal of the 'world'; people 'make choices', people 'want', people 'allow or do not allow' the environment to take hold of their lives. Throughout the interviews participants refer to volition, to the notion of what

'one wants', as a central determinant of personhood and routes of socialisation. A sense of agency and self-determination is equally central to the way of thinking of the favela: we found the importance of volition in relation to faith and destiny as well as in relation to the 'appeal of the world'. Favela-dwellers state time and time again the importance of the individual person and of the appeal of the world in the making of life trajectories. Combining the individual and the context is the key marker of the logic found in the everyday thinking of favela communities.

> *"It is up to each person entering a life of crime, but there are many other things:* [social] *influence also helps a person to go bad..."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 28 years old)

The interplay between context and individual person that characterises the thinking of favela residents is essential to understand routes of socialisation for underground sociabilities. As shown in the experience of AfroReggae and CUFA, it is possible to develop strategies to resist the environment and to reaffirm the sense of agency and belonging, the social cohesion and rich culture that is expressed in the thinking of favela residents. Yet, living in a social context whose public sphere is mainly characterised by the near absence of the State, the instability of the nuclear family and a criminal business that until very recently provided State-parallel structures, poses particularly hard challenges for life trajectories. Capacity to actively resist and respond positively can be compromised when contextual determinants impose too heavily on the Self, on its needs and motivations. This is the very real day-to-day dilemma that defines moments of decision-making and rupture for favela communities.

The material and institutional conditions that frame everyday life in the favela institute a pedagogy, require strategies for coping and a set of representations to think through the environment. Favela-dwellers learn from an early age to read the signs of the context, to recognise those who are 'involved' (an euphemism for those who join the drug trade) and to adjust their own behaviour in relation to what is available. Children

and young people rely on a fragile family structure to help them avoid the 'mirrors' of the environment and the 'appeal of the world'.

> *"... I know how difficult it is: now it is not as bad because the drug trade is gone, and if my son goes out to buy bread, he is not going to see the images of the drug trade. He will not see the* boca de fumo*. He will not see a criminal and find a mirror for himself. I have seen this all my life, and did not mirror myself. I am an artist and I have distinguished myself, but my cousins died in this life. I have an uncle in jail. I have 4 people of my family in jail. I don't talk much, but I don't forget."*
> (Cantagalo, male, 20 years old)

These circumstances are not just a background; they are the uncertain stage in which people live. They are perceived and appropriated by human subjects, both developing children and adults. The experience of the Self in the favela is made of poverty, hardship and a daily struggle to stay a step ahead of the 'appeal of the world'. The presence of lethal violence and crime is extensive as it is the associated human pain and loss of friends and loved ones. Individuals know discrimination through being discriminated against: stigma is not a distant theoretical word, but a very real experience felt by the Self and encountered in the behaviour of those who cross the road to avoid contact and hold their belongings in fear when they see a favela-dweller.

> Interviewee: ... *I don't go out of City of God to* [go to Rio's neighbourhoods] *Barra* [da Tijuca]*, to Recreio* [dos Bandeirantes]*, but I think that if I did I would have had a lot of discrimination... for being black. It would end up happening.*
> Researcher: *Has this ever happened?*
> Interviewee: *No.*

> Researcher: *And do you fear that this would happen?*
> Interviewee: *No, not fear, but shame.*
> Researcher: *Why, why do you think this happens?*
> Interviewee: *Ah… because of my being black, being poor…"*
> (City of God, female, 15 years old)

The staggering logic of this fifteen-year-old girl is a powerful demonstration of how discrimination is a practice internalised by the Self, partly as shame and partly as resignation to the reality of a harsh divided world. Social circumstances are thus lived and become someone's personal life; they engage the subjectivity of persons, they interact with and shape fundamental psychological needs and motivations. Desire to be recognised and to hold prestige, the need to survive, to find work and to escape poverty to gain access to the world of consumption, the anger, the tiredness, the suffering that comprise the emotional experience of hardship are all subjective dimensions that mediate the ways in which favela-dwellers perceive, appropriate, contest or surrender to the 'appeal of the world'. They constitute important psychosocial mediators interacting with the context in which favela-dwellers inhabit.

The interplay between individual needs and motivations, and the nature of the context are at the core of processes of decision-making and agency to resist the environment. We found that agency is not something defined by individuals alone. It is in and with the context that the possibility of agency and resilience is co-constructed in the life trajectory. Favela residents put strong emphasis on 'holding and handling', on the family, on Churches, and on AfroReggae and CUFA as structures of support; they understand well that the enablement and empowerment of the Self as protagonist necessitate other people, what they call 'a holding hand', or 'the embrace of a mother'. They emphasise the importance of crossing the borders of the community, of extending networks and encountering positive role models inside and outside the favela. They know too well that the choice and ability of the Self to stay out of gang crime are enabled by those intersubjective structures of support that manage to persist in the unstable social institutions of

favela life. They also realise that the community itself, its internal configuration and location in the city defines a great deal of the pathways they have available. Place matters, and contributes further to define the context disabling or enabling positive socialisation of the Self.

6.2. Moments of Choice and Rupture: Social and Psychological Determinants of Life Transitions

Young people living in favelas make decisions all the time: they decide with whom they are going to associate, in which places they are going to spend time, whether they are going to try and get to school or stay in the street, whether they will listen or not to their mothers or caretakers. They are exposed to a public sphere of multiple and contradictory signs, which for the last decades have been predominantly shaped by the war between the drug trade and the police and by experiences of violence and loss. There is a sense of community and cohesion in favela life, but there is also poverty and chronic absence of State services. As seen in previous pages, families are unstable and struggle to make ends meet; many children and young people grow up only with siblings and without the reference of adults. When the reference of the family is present it can be compromised by involvement with crime or just the knowledge that friends and/or family members are in prison, have died or are employed by the drug trade.

Amidst this environment, favela-dwellers work hard to sustain a positive life, to find a job and to give their children a positive socialisation. To avoid or to join the drug trade is one of the most important decisions open to people in favela communities. Our findings show that to understand how this decision is made it is necessary to take into account:

• *the institutional framework of favela life*: the social institutions of the favela and the ways in which they are experienced by the Self and the community;
• *the psychosocial cartography of community*: the levels of porosity in the borders

between the community and the city, which shape the range of references available for socialisation and for the networks and models that can be utilised by favela-dwellers;

- *psychosocial mediators*: needs of identity, work, consumption and the emotional experiences of the Self. Each one of these mediate how people appropriate, perceive and experience the context;
- *psychosocial scaffoldings*: the role models, sources of positive identification and intersubjective support that moderate choices and behavioural pathways. They refer to the role of the *other* in the trajectory of the Self, which can be both people and institutions inside and outside the community.

Institutional Framework

The range and the quality of the institutional framework available in the favela emerge in the narrative of life trajectories and experiences of community life. Interviewees' life stories reveal the institutional matrix of the psychological subject, the different configurations of the institutions available in daily life and how they can be either supportive or obstructive for individual trajectories. As reported in Chapter 3, the social institutions of the favela comprise the family, the drug trade and Churches. The main face of the State is the police, an institution whose presence is changing qualitatively since the establishment of the UPPs (see Chapter 4). NGOs such as AfroReggae and CUFA, although not institutions properly speaking, act as institutions adopting multiple roles that include the family and the State (Chapter 5).

The different ways in which the family, Churches and police present to favela-dwellers contribute to the quality of the context and are decisive for determining moments of rupture and choice towards social exclusion or social integration. These institutions are not just points of departure that shape the context of a life at its beginning; they stay with people throughout their lives, they are reported as self-experience, shape significantly the range of networks and options available for the Self and processes of decision-making in life trajectories. The following is an analysis of how the institutional framework is present in the communities studied:

- *The drug trade*: a central organiser, providing work and regulating behaviour, as well as producing violence, introducing a culture of weapons and frequent fire exchange with the police. It controls borders and holds power to both close down and open up the favelas to the wider city (literally at times).

- *The family*: essential for the experience of the Self, it appears as a structure that can save or marginalise, depending on the behaviour and the presence of key actors. The presence of a heroic mother and a holding grandmother are key determinants of choices towards social inclusion. Absent fathers, who are in jail or involved in criminal activities are significant determinants of vulnerability towards social exclusion. This is accentuated if mothers are also absent. The nature of the family is a central factor in enabling or disabling border-crossing and social integration.

- *The police*: important institution of favela life and a major presence in the discourse of participants. The police are experienced as an institution that merges with the drug trade in the mind and in the life of the average favela-dweller. It is seen as the only face of the State. In general, it is considered an aggressive and criminal institution, involved in a complex process of inter-relations with the drug trade. The vast majority of our participants report feelings of revolt and the experience of injustice in their dealings with the police. Some even state that it was to avenge a relative that they decided "to join the drug trade and go to war against the police". These perceptions operate as significant determinants of social exclusion as they corrode trust in the actions of the State and undermine the role of the police in the provision of security and fight against organised crime. During the timespan of the research this has changed significantly with the introduction of the UPPs, which are gradually allowing new representations of the work of the police. There is initial evidence that through the UPPs favela communities have started to perceive the police differently. As seen in Chapter 4, there has been change in the way the police themselves perceive the community and the emergence of a new set of representations related to rights, dialogue, community support and services. There is a very clear difference in relations with the police in communities with and without UPPs.

- *Churches*: Churches are structures of support in moments of transition and rupture of underground sociabilities, sustaining options that break away from

crime and social exclusion. The various Evangelical Churches working in favela contexts provide support to the Self and offer inclusion in a religious network. Although important for sustaining social inclusion, for many favela-dwellers these Churches are not an option, because the lifestyle they impose clashes with many of the cultural practices of favela life. Whereas the Churches offer support and help, for many identification is not possible.

• *NGOs (AfroReggae and CUFA)*: they are crucial for moments of transition and rupture of underground sociabilities, providing a clear alternative to the drug trade and competing with it for the preference of young people. They are widely recognised by participants. They play a key role in offering support and opportunities for the Self and in helping people to cross urban frontiers. An important finding discussed in Chapter 4 is that these organisations take on roles that cover functions of all other institutions. They act as providers of State services and as parents by proxy. At the same time they compete directly with the drug trade by offering similar, although inclusionary, symbolic and material rewards.

Psychosocial Cartographies

Psychosocial cartographies describe a space or territory in its subjective and objective totality: they combine a psychological and geographical perspective to express how lived worlds can be encompassed in territories that are both spatial and psychosocial, containing languages and behavioural patterns that create a landscape with more or less open borders.

Because territory is a central signifier for favela life and because border crossing and border control are essential practices regulating the life of the Self and of the community, psychosocial cartographies of each community studied are key to understand the routes of inclusion and exclusion that are open to their residents. The cartographies combine elements of the lifeworld of the favela with socio-spatial elements related to the geography and location of each community in relation to the wider city. As with any map, psychosocial cartographies are established by borders; these are drawn as a function of the relations between the favelas and the city and they can be more or

less porous depending on a combination of psychosocial and geographical elements. In order to systematise the nature of the borders in each community we constructed a typology of borders based on the following indicators: *social institutions of the community*, *location in relation to the wider city*, *urban connectors*, *social representations/ key events,* and *leisure*.

These elements are brought together in Table 6.1, which shows that each community presents borders with different levels of porosity, varying between closed and open.

Table 6.1 Indicators of Density of Borders in the Communities Studied

Indicators	Cantagalo	Madureira	City of God	Vigario Geral
Institutions	• UPP • Drug trade (expelled) • Church • Commercial services • State	• Police • Drug trade (diffuse) • Church • Commercial services • State • Culture	• UPP • Drug trade (residual) • Church	• Police • Drug trade (full control) • Church
Location in Rio	Close to Southern Zone (Copacabana and Ipanema, 'Wonderful Rio')	Centre of North Rio (crossroads between different Rios)	Remote (distant from southern zone but closer Barra, new west end)	Remote (distant from the city)
Urban connectors	• The Lift • *Crianca Esperanca*	• The Big Market • The *Viaduto* (CUFA)	-	Cultural Centre Wally Salomao (AfroReggae)
Social representations	• New social projects • Social change	• Samba schools • Mixture of favela and neighbourhood	The Film *City of God*	The Massacre: killing of 23 people by the police
Leisure	Across town	Between community and town	Around community	Inside community
Porosity of borders	• **Open** • **High porosity**	• **Semi-open** • **Medium-high porosity**	• **Semi-closed** • **Low porosity**	• **Closed** • **Minimum porosity**

Source: Underground Sociabilities.

While the experience of border control and border-crossing is a common signifier shaping thought and behaviour across all four communities studied, there are important differences in the nature and experience of borders. The psychosocial cartographies reinforce the centrality of *place* in defining the lifeworld of communities and life trajectories.

Cantagalo: High Porosity

Cantagalo has dramatically changed during the life time of our research because the UPPs displaced the drug trade and opened the borders of the community. Cantagalo is located between Ipanema and Copacabana, at the heart of Southern Rio and its beautiful natural landscape. It enjoys the State services and commercial facilities of these formal neighbourhoods, despite the absence of these in the favela itself. Cantagalo is connected to Ipanema by a lift and a paved road, making it easy to come and go, and even more so since the establishment of the UPP and the expulsion of the drug trade. AfroReggae is important, but it is not the only reference for the community; alternative references are available because the city is much closer and relatively accessible. The borders of Cantagalo are now open and some of its activities attract people from the 'asphalt', too. There is flow both ways in terms of leisure, services and intergroup contact.

Madureira: Medium to High Porosity

Madureira is in the centre of Northern Rio and it is a formal neighbourhood surrounded by favelas. It is open to the city, although its distance from south Rio gives density to its borders. There are multiple institutions in Madureira, and the neighbourhood is open to its own facilities and vibrant popular culture. It is a place located at the crossroads between different 'Rios' for it contains the roots of samba, intergroup conviviality, bossa nova, and MPB (Brazilian Popular Music), which make Rio a city of multiple cities within. The

Evangelical Churches are very important institutions and there is a strong connection with CUFA. Despite being distant from south Rio, Madureira offers multiple references of sociability for its residents. The Big Market of Madureira is a strong urban reference as is the samba school *Portela*, its musicians and the rich influence it has offered to the cultural life of Rio. Its borders are very wide and are not controlled by the drug trade.

City of God: Low Porosity

City of God is remote in relation to Southern Rio, but its location gives it a rural feel placing it closer to the forests of the Western part of Rio and Barra da Tijuca neighbourhood, as well as to its beach and overall facilities. City of God has been 'pacified' by the UPP and this has introduced a different dynamics in the community, although the favela has a strong history of socialisation via the drug trade, which continues to have a residual presence. Evangelical Churches are important institutions in City of God. References for sociability are still concentrated in the drug trade and in the Church, although the UPP is introducing a new, even if uneasy, relationship with the State. There is no control of borders by the narcotraffic. Residents have acquired a new sense of freedom to come and go, although the horizons of the community remain mainly centred inside its own territory. That makes CUFA an important reference for City of God.

Vigario Geral: Minimum Porosity

Scarcity of social institutions and distance from the city centre reduce the references for sociability in Vigario Geral, which are mainly polarised between the drug trade and AfroReggae. The community is apart from the city centre and the police enters and exits due to the drug trade wars. The drug trade is the central organiser of community life and, along with the Evangelical Churches, the sporadic presence of the police and AfroReggae, comprise the institutional framework of

the favela. Crossfire and stray bullets are part of everyday life. The territory is closed and tightly controlled, circulation is difficult. AfroReggae occupies a central position in community life, and given the scarcity of other positive institutions, it takes on a variety of institutional roles, which include the family, the State and the sources of employment. The territory of the community tends to circumscribe the horizons available to its people.

Levels of porosity in community borders shape the specific context that is offered to pathways of socialisation inside favelas, as well as the nature of the relationship between the communities and AfroReggae and CUFA. For favela-dwellers, more or less porous borders correlate with the breadth of social networks and potential crossings that are available in everyday life. The broader the networks and looser the borders, the broader the experience of the Self is. It is clear that the denser the borders the lesser the chances of expanding networks and crossing into the wider city, while the higher the need and importance attributed to AfroReggae and CUFA. Porosity of borders between peripheral communities and the wider public sphere of the city is an essential factor for the individual and collective experiences of favela-dwellers, and for how the intervention of AfroReggae and CUFA is lived and received.

Figure 6.1 summarises the type of border between community and the city in relation to the breadth and scope of social networks, the Self and the relation to the work of AfroReggae and CUFA.

Figure 6.1 Porosity of Borders in the Four Communities Studied

Rio de Janeiro, the Wonderful City

Cantagalo

Open

Distance from the city
(geographic, social and
psychological)

Madureira

Semi-open

Density of the border

Control of the border

City of
God

Semi-closed

Work of AfroReggae
and CUFA: the more
closed the borders,
the greater the need.

VG

Closed

Expansion of the Self

Expansion of networks
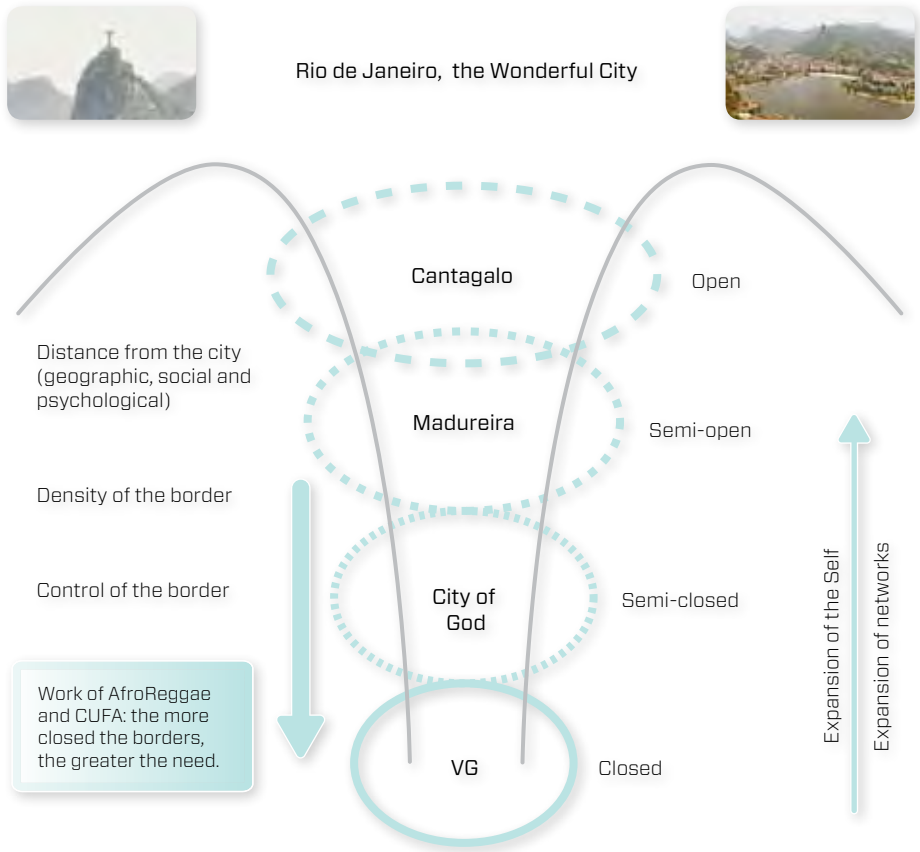
Source: Underground Sociabilities.

Narratives about crossings and mediations between the favela and the city were frequent in the interviews. The possibility of traversing different worlds and territories emerged as vital for the process of social and personal regeneration. These findings corroborate recent reflections on the need to decentre urban planning and to consolidate the rich view on offer by the multicultural, mixed city of the 21st century (Sennett, 2011), of which Rio de Janeiro is a paradigmatic example. The desire for clean vistas, for 'removing' unwanted populations and for putting emphasis on the centre of towns undermines the vitality of cities and the potentials embedded in the cultures, identities and dialogues that can emerge out of interaction between its different communities. Acting on the porosity of community borders is essential for individual life trajectories, self-identity, community development, and urban regeneration.

Psychosocial Mediators

Psychosocial mediators are the other set of determinants of moments of rupture and choice of underground sociabilities. These are fundamental psychological needs and motivations that exert pressure on how people interact with the context given; they co-construct transitions and ruptures and the way people respond to the overall context of the favela. Analysis of the experience of the Self reveals the following psychosocial mediators:

Identity

A central psychosocial mediator for young people making choices in favela life is the need for recognition, affiliation and self-realisation. The possibility to be part of a group, to be recognised as someone important and to enjoy the power that is promised by money, status and firearms are strong appeals for young people in the favelas. The drug trade has capitalised on this specific psychosocial mediator when dealing with young people without structures of support. It presents itself as a clear 'brotherhood', an organisation that offers access to a group, a career,

recognition and money. The negative aspects of the drug trade are overlooked if there are no other voices calling for social integration and supporting youth who are attracted by its offerings.

Work and Consumption

The need to work and the desire for consumption are basic and widespread. They are much mentioned needs and no different in favela communities than they would be in any other area of the city. We found major concerns with the need to survive and to work, which are significant in determining involvement with the drug trade and the clear pathway to jobs and the 'career' it offers. Consumption and the desire to possess coveted brands and objects are important aspects that clearly determine choice and the behaviour of young people in favelas.

The Emotional Experience of Hardship

We found general and widespread feelings and experiences of daily struggle, suffering, grief, and loss. The human cost of poverty and exclusion should not be underestimated. Despite the strong social capital and the positive dimensions of favela culture, everyday life is traversed by harsh and difficult experiences of poverty and discrimination. Stories of human pain have been intense and overwhelming in the voices of participants and play an important role in mediating choice in favela life.

6.3. Psychosocial Scaffoldings: Conceptual Framework

Psychosocial scaffoldings are actions and structures that support development at the individual and social levels. A central finding of our research, they refer to the

fundamental role of supportive people and institutions in the healthy constitution of the human subject, in the origins of joint action and shared intentionality, as well as in making and sustaining community. Traditionally thought of by psychologists as the provision of the nuclear family and mainly effective in early years of the life cycle, we found that psychosocial scaffoldings can be provided by manifold support institutions, are effective across the life span and play a crucial role in fighting marginalisation and exclusion.

The concept we propose is inspired by Jerome Bruner's theory of *scaffolding*, which addresses the support parents and teachers routinely provide children as they grow and learn. In their analysis of mothers playing peek-a-boo with infants, Bruner and Sherwood (1975) noticed that mothers not only helped infants learn the game, but also allowed and even encouraged them to take the game in new directions. Further observations of the role played by teachers and peers in pedagogical contexts (Bruner, 1980, 1983) consolidated the idea that development and learning require supporting structures that come from caregivers and others who love, hold and sustain the child into a sense of self, confidence and trust in the world. Learning with and from others is central for cognitive and emotional development, an insight that triggered Bruner and colleagues to use the metaphor of *scaffolding* to describe mothers and teachers' actions.

Scaffolding as a metaphor for describing psychological structures of support goes back to Vygotsky's psychology of self-other relations and the fundamental insight that human infants need society if they are to grow and fully realise their biological potential at birth. Individuation and socialisation are two sides of the same process of development, in which the integration of a sense of self, physical and cognitive maturation and the establishment of object-relations combine to produce a social and psychological agent. This process takes place through an intersubjective structure that scaffolds the child, holds it and supports its growth into what Vygotsky (1986) calls the *zone of proximal development*. Scaffolding and the zone of proximal development are crucial notions for understanding that social and individual development do not happen inside the individual, but

between the individual and the environment, in a space of mediation, where the input from others plays a major role.

Supporting and holding a child, a young person and indeed any adult from a position of care, be it inter-personal or institutional, not only produces positive specific developmental changes, but can actually lead the macro process of development. Scaffolding is thus central for understanding that learning, health, well-being and social competence do not just follow from the growth and development of the organism, but instead can themselves feedback and lead developmental changes. Psychosocial scaffoldings are necessary for constructing a healthy environment for infants, children and youth, for regulating interpersonal circumstances and enabling the development of coping resources and processes when environments are difficult. Research reliably shows that environments of poverty and exclusion shape mental and physical health across the lifespan and produce pain that is not dissimilar to physical pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman & Williams, 2003; MacDonald & Leary, 2005). To be excluded literally hurts; and to be excluded for good becomes akin to chronic pain. Risky family environments, which include overt conflict and aggression, deficient nurturing and cold, unsupportive relationships, can damage physical and mental health and create a cascade of risks that lays the ground for long-term, lasting vulnerabilities and problems (for a review see Repetti, Taylor & Seeman, 2002). Difficulties in relating to others, in coping with stress and adversity are consistently associated with lower socio-economic status (Yanagisawa et al., 2012; Taylor & Seeman, 1999), which in its turn affects the ability of families to produce psychosocial scaffoldings.

Winnicott, the British paediatrician and psychoanalyst, provides deep psychological foundations for the insights and findings above with the notions of *holding* and *handling* (Winnicott, 1971, 1958). In describing how a human infant moves from an initial position of absolute dependence to one of relative independence, Winnicott proposed that the processes of holding and handling are essential actions for the healthy maturation of the child. *Holding* refers to the initial attitude of support and unconditional giving that is typical of a loving caretaker, usually a mother. It is a potential capacity of human mothers and loving caretakers, who are able to give

themselves over to identification with their babies. Holding installs trust in the world and is at the origins of a combined emotive-cognitive orientation towards others, the object-world and self-identity. *Handling* is the process that follows, equally initiated by intersubjective communication, but now qualitatively different from holding. With handling the caretaker introduces limits and boundaries to the experience of the child and gently moves away from unconditional giving. This communicative engagement enables the growing acceptance of a world that is 'not-me' and a relationship with it. Handling is at the origins of ego-relatedness and of our capacity for communication and dialogue, for understanding other people's perspective and for developing a social orientation towards the world. Both holding and handling are dependent on *identification*, a primary psychological process that allows one to know and to feel what the other is feeling so as to 'know with' and to 'feel with' someone else. Examples of it are infant direct speech or 'motherese', when adults adopt a 'language' that is child-centric and directed to the needs and perspective of the child (Aitken & Trevarthen, 1997; Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). The concepts of holding and handling became a category for the analysis of the qualitative interviews, given the intensity of narratives referring to the impact and importance of psychosocial scaffolding by family, Church and NGOs.

Identification and how a child is held and handled are important in the development of ontological security, of trust in the world and in others. It is equally important in the introduction of boundaries and limits that allow the child herself to learn how to identify back, to understand that she too needs to recognise and identify with others. These intersubjective processes are the basis of self-development and community building, as well as of our capacity to identify with society and learn how to take the perspective of others. Perspective-taking and learning how to put ourselves in the position of others, so that we can identify and understand in order to better communicate, are essential for individual development as they are for the healthy functioning of societies and even of relations between societies. Social cohesion and solidarity depend on identification and on the capacity of individuals to feel *with* and *for* others, to identify themselves with the group and to think and act as part of the group.

Psychosocial scaffoldings thus provide the safe ground from where the human Self starts to know itself and its sociocultural location, to be an individual and to become a social agent. It allows the Self to feel safe to act creatively, to be original and, if necessary, to question its own community: 'daring', having the courage to try, to experiment and to play with potential scenarios. These are capacities that evolve due to the safety of the framework erected by actions of support and care. These offer containment, attention and are ultimately the basis of cooperation, joint intentionality, creative actions and the imagination.

These are key issues for social development and emerged clearly in the voices of our research participants. The consequences for policy and practical intervention are equally clear: education, structures of care, stable and loving families make a difference for individual and social development. It is an obligation of States to invest in and encourage these through sound and effective policies.

In the experiences of family and individual life reported by participants we found clear evidence that contexts of deprivation jeopardise scaffolding and compromise the ability of families and caretakers to engage in processes of identification, holding and handling. This is accentuated by the lack of State resources and the instability of the nuclear family, essential supporting structures whose functions are compromised. Whereas this does not mean that psychosocial scaffolding is absent from such favela contexts – indeed it is not – it does reflect the impact of poverty and absence of State structures on the pathways that are open for individuation and socialisation in favela communities. In what follows, we present a model of these pathways as a function of the presence or absence of psychosocial scaffoldings.

6.4. Social Integration or Social Exclusion? Resilience and Vulnerability

For young people growing up in the favela, poverty, inequality and lethal violence are not the background, but the very stage in which a sense of self and a relation

to the future develops. There are weapons and the drug trade shows its mark in most places; families are unstable. Yet, young people want to grow up and be recognised, they want to have a job and to be able to buy a trendy pair of trainers, a nice watch. They want to think of themselves as other young people who live in the city, forget that it may be difficult to find a job because of their address and forget the negative representations people in the asphalt have of favela-dwellers. These needs, which are not different from the needs of young people in other parts of the city, mediate life trajectories and put children growing up in favela communities at risk of drugs, violence and crime. The 'appeal of the world' (*apelo do mundo*) – as the wisdom of favela-dwellers names the influence of context in an individual life – refers to the pull of the drug trade and of a life of crime. It offers a job, money, symbols of status and prestige, recognition and friends. It is a dangerous route, where homicide and early death are very likely, but it can be appealing for those who are vulnerable and lack other options.

We found that resilience and resistance to this route are possible and pervasive in favela life. Defined as a dynamic process of positive adaptation despite significant adversity (Luthar, 2003), resilience is indeed widespread in favela communities: our findings corroborate those of others who describe the vast majority of people living in the favelas as hard working, determined and brave. They survive, do well and manage to find resources for social capital, social cohesion and conviviality (Pearlman, 1976, 2010; Moreira Alves & Evanson, 2011). The central question to ask is what is the source of this resilience and capacity to challenge context, while producing positive bottom-up responses? Our findings point directly to the presence or absence of psychosocial scaffoldings, suggesting that resilience in face of adversity is enabled by intersubjective structures of support from people and institutions. These not only allow individuals to resist a route of criminalisation but also contribute to the re-writing of the identity of the Self and its development in terms of cognitive, emotional and social skills. This is crucially important as the rediscovered Self can be a major asset in social development.

In the daily life of the communities studied psychosocial scaffoldings were found in:

- role models and key people who allow identification;
- a stable and loving family;
- work of grassroot organisations as AfroReggae and CUFA;
- the Churches.

Narratives of the Self and community life emphasise how psychosocial scaffoldings moderate the social and psychological needs and emotions that can push people into crime when opportunities are limited, emotional crises are intense and desire for affiliation and recognition is not fulfilled. It is through encounters with others, who support and offer scaffolding to the Self at risk, that individuals co-construct agency and make decisions towards positive action. Research participants report that direct experiences of scaffolding from leaders and activists of AfroReggae and CUFA are crucial in their lives because these role models are people they identify with, want to be like and replace the families they have lost. These experiences are enhanced by the offering of structured activities and the development of competencies and skills, which develop self-determination and self-esteem. In this process, the trajectory of the Self can be rewritten and the Self itself becomes a cognitive and emotional asset for resisting criminalisation and marginalisation.

Context, psychosocial mediators and psychosocial scaffoldings are the building blocks that interact to establish pathways of socialisation, as well as the choices and behavioural outcomes in favela communities. Our *indicators of context* are the social institutions of favela life and the porosity of borders between the favelas and the city. The *psychosocial mediators* include identity, work, consumption and affective states of the Self. Finally, *psychosocial scaffoldings*, defined as actions and structures of support, moderate the psychosocial factors. Behavioural results are thus constituted by the interplay between context, people's needs and aspirations, and psychosocial scaffoldings. Combined, these elements provide a conceptual framework to understand the routes of underground sociabilities in the favelas of Rio.

Figure 6.2 Conceptual Framework and Routes of Underground Sociabilities in Rio de Janeiro

Conceptual Framework of the Routes

Context
- Social Institutions
- Psychosocial cartografies

Psychosocial mediators
- Identity
- Work and consumption
- Emotions

Behavioural outcome

Psychosocial scaffoldings
- Actions and structures of support

Routes of Underground Sociabilities in Rio de Janeiro

Context
- Institucional framework: family, State, Church, drug trafficking, AfroReggae, CUFA
- Porosity of borders

Psychosocial mediators
- Desire of recognition and affiliation
- Loss, grief, anger, hardship, work, desire for consumption

Absence   Presence

Behavioural outcome

Avoiding drug trade

Joining drug trade

Psychosocial scaffoldings
- Role models
- Stable and loving family
- Churches
- AfroReggae and CUFA

Source: Underground Sociabilities.

Joining or avoiding the drug trade depends thus on the nature of the institutions and urban borders that are predominant in the route of socialisation and on the presence or absence of psychosocial scaffoldings to moderate psychosocial mediators such as identity, recognition, work, consumption and the emotions associated with hardship.

Two important observations are required here. First, the context at the left of the model is neither a background nor a beginning; its features are *distributed* in everyday life and throughout life trajectories. The model we propose and the data that support it add and substantiate sociocultural approaches that conceptualise cultures as distributed (Valsiner, 2007) and consider context as more than an initial stimulus or condition (Jovchelovitch, 2007). The institutional framework and psychosocial cartographies of favela life, the roles and identification models, the potential Selves and the scenarios produced are distributed and constantly reconstructed not only in objects, artefacts, formal institutions and everyday life actions, but also in individual consciousness and psychological experience. Here, context is a permanent resource for individual and collective action, hence the importance of identifying what kind of resource it is and how it enables or disables positive routes of socialisation. The context contains both the potential for exclusion and for providing the intersubjective structures of support that enable social integration.

Second, behaviour is not a static final result at the 'end' of a chain but an on-going element of the context itself, constantly feeding-back the environment in which it originated. Individual behaviours and collective action that make choices and ruptures in favela life are outcomes that become themselves elements of the context. These behaviours fill the context in the form of stories, role models, tales to be aware of and to be warned against, ideals to follow and to aspire for. In the form of life stories they provide references and resources for identification and decision-making. In a temporal line these actions are constantly filling the overall environment where they provide models of potential Selves and potential routes that come out of the choices made; they become available through stories and narratives which operate as resources and identification platforms so that each one of the determinants of the routes of socialisation populates the context and is integral to the conditions given.

In conclusion, agency and context inter-relate in fundamental ways in favela life. Favela residents consider individual volition and social context equally important in the routes of socialisation. Combining the individual and the context is a central mark of favela logic. Moments of choice and rupture for underground sociabilities are shaped by:

- *the institutional framework of favela life:* the family, the police (as the face of the State), the drug trade, the Churches and organisations as AfroReggae and CUFA;
- *the psychosocial cartographies of community:* the different levels of porosity in the border between the community and the city, which vary from high to low;
- *the psychosocial mediators:* psychological needs and motivations related to identity, work, consumption and emotions;
- *the presence or absence of psychosocial scaffoldings:* referring to the actions and structures that support individual and social development.

Context, psychosocial mediators and psychosocial scaffoldings are the elements that interact to establish pathways of socialisation and define choices and behavioural outcomes in favela communities.

7. Towards the Communicative City

"I don't speak only 'faveles' [favela language]*,*
I want to speak Portuguese."
(Celso Athayde)

7.1. Uncovering Subterranean Sociabilities

There is a vast world that is close to us and yet hidden from our eyes. It is a world made of delicate and specific social relations that are part of Brazilian society, but that nonetheless remains invisible. To study these forms of sociability that tend to remain invisible and underground in relation to mainstream society was the objective of the study at the basis of this book.

The research found that these underground sociabilities are characterised by a complex institutional framework marked by the family, the drug traffic, the scarcity of the State, with the police as its only face in direct relation with the drug trade, the Churches and NGOs such as AfroReggae and CUFA. These institutions communicate and relate in complex ways to provide routes of socialisation for favela-dwellers. The nature of these relations and the frame and support they offer are key determinants of social inclusion and exclusion. Narratives of the Self and its trajectory show that these institutions are not just a background, but in fundamental ways constitute the trajectory of underground sociabilities. They are inscribed in the voices of favela-dwellers and in the manner they report the experience of the Self, community and the relations between the favela and the city.

Institutions and the Self

- The instability of the nuclear family, limited access to positive role models for identification and the lack of opportunities are major determinants of identities and self-trajectories in favela environments. In this context, the drug trade can easily step in offering employment, recognition and status.
- The experience of loss is intense and shapes the identity of the Self: people grow up witnessing friends and family members dying, and going to jail. Losing and failing are current experiences and are sources of both pain and resilience for favela identities.
- *Anchors of the Self* are a stable and loving family, religiosity and faith, positive role models that circulate in favela contexts, as well as leisure and sociality (social capital, conviviality and community belonging). These provide an alternative face for the precariousness of State services and other institutions, enabling pathways of social integration.

Security: Drug Trade, Favela and Police

Security is a central issue in the lifeworld of the favela and in pathways of socialisation. Exposure to violence and crime is an everyday occurrence and fear of loss is a central emotion for favela-dwellers. There are complex relations between favela residents, the police and the drug trade factions. The wars between drug factions and between these factions and the police provide the background for central dimensions of the lifeworld of the favelas:

- Crossfire and stray bullets are 'natural' occurrences in favela life; the majority of participants have been directly affected by violence, having had either a family member or a friend involved with the narcotraffic; consequences range from imprisonment to death.
- Young black men are the most affected, although the communities as a whole feel the impact.

- Favela residents recognise two laws and two security systems, which they adopt and use depending on the context: the law of the drug trade and the law of the police. In order to survive, residents do not, and indeed cannot, exclusively adopt one or the other: they must respond to the situation at hand.
- There is a fragile, if at all existent, sense of entitlement to security both inside and outside favelas. Residents fear life outside the favela more than the space inside: the outside is unknown and its law is seen as alien and uncertain. The majority prefers to stay inside their communities, where they know the rules of the game, they are known by others and do not experience discrimination.
- Favela residents do not speak of a right to security; this seems to be a non-concept in the lifeworld of favela residents. They report frequent abuse and take-for-granted that they are seen as criminals by the police.
- The everyday experience of ordinary people is severed from the concept of citizenship and there is little reference to the fact that it is an obligation of the State to provide security and safe environments to citizens.

The UPPs

The UPPs represent a change in the relations between favela-dwellers and the police, although favela-dwellers feel ambivalent and have as yet not forgotten the historic difficulties of their relations with the police. The UPPs are changing the police by introducing a new framework to understand favela communities and to change the internal culture of the institution. New recruits and new dialogue are gradually building novel representations and channels of communication, which have greatly contributed to an expanded feeling of safety in the communities. There is a very clear difference in communities with and without UPPs.

- There is evidence of change in the day-to-day relations between police and favela communities where the UPPs have been active.
- For many residents the UPPs represent a new beginning and liberation from the rule of the drug trade.

- There are internal contradictions and difficulties inside the police; the institution itself is experiencing a process of change and contains multiple perspectives.
- Continuous contact and collaboration between the UPPs and the communities is changing representations held by both sides and unfreezing stereotypes and fixed identities.

Favela Identity

Favela identities are formed by contradictory forces, which offer different models and platforms for identification. In favela lifeworlds there is no single-sided reality; opposite models coexist and inform processes of identity construction. Poverty, segregation and stigma produce lack of self-esteem and fragile identities. However, these coexist with hope and belief in the future; a mixture of faith in God and in a given destiny co-occurs with a sense of agency, the belief that one makes one's own life:

- Identities struggle between negative representations produced outside and the contradictory institutional forces that act inside favela territories. The stigma associated with the drug trade is a very heavy burden for the identity of favela-dwellers; external representations equate favelas with crime and the drug trade, and their residents with drug dealers;
- The vast majority of residents experiences social discrimination when crossing borders into the wider city, which leads to low self-esteem. Stigma is internalised from dominant social representations that dehumanise and stereotype the favelas as places of violence and crime.
- Through the intervention of the police, the State has reinforced the dominant identity of favela-dwellers as criminal and violent. Although currently in transition, the historical actions of the police have profoundly contributed to sever relations between individuals and the State and undermine citizenship as a constituent of identity.
- Stigma and discrimination hurt socially and psychologically: they produce low self-esteem and block access to work and earnings. The emotional load of stigma is

heavy. There is a great deal of suffering and psychological pain associated with the negative representations that stereotype favela identities.

• Faith and agency are massively important for favela identity. In the logic of the favela these are not contradictory as they consider destiny a background against which the Self actively builds its trajectory.

The Community and the City

Strong social capital within favela communities coexists with a sharp perception of the divisions between the favela and the city. A strong sense of belonging, an attempt to reject fear and a perception of social cohesion and conviviality are present in favela communities together with a widespread of love for the city of Rio de Janeiro.

• Poverty, inequality and violence do not erase social capital in favela communities: a sense of belonging, social cohesion and conviviality are part and parcel of favela communities.

• The presence of marked urban frontiers is a central component of the lifeworld of the favela: love for one's community and place coexists with the difficulties imposed by stigma, discrimination and violence.

• Different socio-economic, cultural and mental frameworks exist side by side yet separated in the city.

• The idea of the "broken city" cannot be laid to rest: divisions ranging from the geographical to the social to the cognitive show that building bridges and allowing crossings remain key challenges for policymakers and urban planners in Rio.

Although similar at many levels, there are important differences to be considered in Rio's favelas. No single context should be treated as equal to another and the tendency to homogenise the poor denies variation and specificity in spaces of poverty. *Territory* is an important variable in defining the lifeworld of the favela, which demonstrates the heterogeneity of popular communities, and the importance of place in circumscribing and defining peoples' experiences.

The lifeworld of the favela reveals that life at home and in the streets is intertwined and co-determined, exposing socialisation to risks and to a set of influences that shape the immediate public sphere of favela communities. Individual voices express personal experiences and, at the same time, reveal the institutional matrix of favela life. They show that favela communities are territories of loss and grief for the Self, produced by a context of war, poverty and discrimination. However, these coexist with agency, social capital and hope. Subterranean sociabilities are resilient, ingenious and practical; there is a creative local wisdom in the favela and people develop positive strategies for thinking and coping with the difficulties of the environment.

7.2. AfroReggae and CUFA: Identity, Imagination and Mediation in the City

AfroReggae and CUFA are organisations that express bottom-up responses to poverty, violence and segregation. They are paradigmatic examples of a process of renovation of traditional political actors and innovation of methods for intervention in the public sphere. The agenda of social transformation emerges decentralised and poly-located in the unconventional collective action of young peripheral populations. They are unique in their organic relation with the context of the favela: in opposition to traditional models of social development that take external agents into territories considered to be in need of aid, these actors are not outsiders. The organisations emerged and grew as a product of favela communities and are solidly connected to favela lifeworlds. Their leaders and participants were born and grew up in the favelas, and there is symmetry between their life trajectories and those of favela-dwellers. They target favela publics, but have expanded well beyond favela boundaries to reach national and international partners.

AfroReggae and CUFA are hybrid organisations characterised by multiple identities: they combine elements of NGOs, social movements, business and cultural entrepreneurs; they are activists, artists, social workers and partners of the Brazilian State. Their explicit aims are the recognition of the culture and rich potential of favela lifeworlds, the demolition of urban barriers, and mediations that can produce

transformative changes both in the public sphere and in social and individual subjectivities. They openly compete with the drug trade for influence in the routes of socialisation available to young favela people. They also work as mediators of conflict in disputes between the drug factions, the police and favela-dwellers. Their range of actions is extensive, engaging both favela communities and the larger public sphere of the city. They put emphasis on the regeneration of the built environment of favelas, on the construction of spaces for positive sociability and on psychosocial interventions that aim to foster self-esteem, self-control and conscientisation for the transformation of individual and collective trajectories.

A central aspect of their methodology relates to their way of being story-tellers of life trajectories. Telling a life story and showcasing it as an example is the elementary method at the basis of all work developed by these organisations. They use life stories as the raw material that exemplifies how Self and society combine to define a human life. We found these life stories consolidated as narratives of community life and even of Rio as a whole; they circulate as resources that are told time and time again as examples of survival and determination, as warnings, as containers of hope and potential futures, as alternatives to their concrete reality and as guidance for choices and decision-making.

The central characteristics which explain their efficacy and the positive results of their work are presented below.

Intervention at the Individual and Community Levels

Attention to the individual level is a key innovation in the work of AfroReggae and CUFA. It helps to recuperate, recognise and challenge life stories and empowers people to make decisions about their trajectories:

- The development of skills, psychosocial workshops and group work offer a space for structuring everyday life and reflecting about 'who I am' and 'who I want to be' as a means to understand and to realise identity projects; motivation reconnects personal trajectory to futures, dreams, and aspirations;

- Reflecting about individual identity is closely connected with community identity and foregrounds favela culture, its humanity and manifold cultural productions;
- The ethics of listening, holding and giving a hand offers intersubjective supporting structures for young people at risk of crime, drugs and gang wars, and helps to retrieve the Self as a force for social integration. Supporting structures offer psychosocial scaffoldings that enable positive pathways of identification and socialisation.
- The efficacy of AfroReggae and CUFA's work at the level of personal trajectories suggests that psychological scaffoldings are not only a provision of the nuclear family: organised collectives can equally scaffold vulnerable, and at times damaged, individual lives.
- Social change requires individuals who understand themselves as agents and believe in their capacity to act as protagonists of their own lives: the Self is a central asset in the process of rewriting lives and its agency is required for social development.

Use of the Arts, Culture and Imagination

AfroReggae and CUFA use arts, culture, imagination and creativity to connect the city and subvert negative representations about the favela, as well as to build bonding and bridging social capital. The resources of local culture, and in particular of Brazilian black heritage, are used to engage the imagination and creativity of favela communities and to showcase the culture of the favela to the city, to Brazil and to the world. This culture is not acquired through formal channels, but it is part of the identity distributed in the life space of Rio's popular communities and expressed in everyday rituals, practices and languages.

- AfroReggae and CUFA pull resources from local lifeworlds and psychosocial landscapes, emphasising the artistic and cultural identity of favela territories.
- Artistic expression is intertwined with a culture of celebration, partying and joy, which is based on a deep avatar of Brazilian culture, in particular inherited by African culture.

- These groups circumvent discrimination, poverty and suffering through strong colours, music and dance. They draw from the experience of slavery and survival in adversity using music, the beat of the drums and bodily expression as forms of resistance.
- Diversity of artistic languages and cultural forms communicates across the city and drives an agenda of citizenship, social justice and urban equality. Creativity and languages of joy operate as attractors that trigger cognitive solidarities and emotional empathy across town: the public sphere at large understands and *enjoys* AfroReggae and CUFA.
- Resources of local identity and culture are identified, worked with and used as tools for social development and healing: sociability, joy, celebration and potential spaces are assets used to counteract experiences of suffering and exclusion.

Crossings and Social Mediation

The intervention of AfroReggae and CUFA bridges urban divisions and constructs mediations between favela communities and the wider public sphere. They draw on a combination of challenging and innovative partnerships and propose an aggressive agenda-setting through effective use of mass media and political intervention in the public sphere. New crossings into the city expand networks and identification platforms available for favela residents, opening up the imagination and bringing about new possibilities for acting, thinking and being. At the same time, these crossings push positive representations of the favela into the wider public sphere, which undermine stereotypes and help to reintroduce self-esteem, a central psychological process for the health of the Self:

- Social crossings and mediations have an impact on life trajectories, producing change in individual biographies and expanding the cognitive, emotional and imaginative resources of the Self: those who cross borders with AfroReggae and CUFA refer to the importance of venturing out of favela environments as central to social integration and staying away from the drug trade.
- Through cultural actions and the media, AfroReggae and CUFA push favela culture into the cultural agenda of the city and offer it new lenses to read favela environments.

- AfroReggae and CUFA communicate with the drug trade and with the police, mediating conflict and preventing lethal violence.
- Wide and unusual partnerships forge new competences and enable communication between people who normally do not talk to each other: social movements learn how to be accountable and systematic about their work while formal institutions are challenged to accommodate actors and organisations that are not used, and cannot easily respond, to their procedures.
- Social technologies developed by bottom-up initiatives operate as demonstration projects that can be taken up and scaled up by the State; the State can and is learning from these initiatives. It is also collaborating with these organisations to establish directions for its own actions.
- The private sector is experimenting in the area of corporate responsibility and social development, considering new actions and services for territories of poverty and exclusion.
- Organisations such as AfroReggae and CUFA have a strong role to play in establishing lines of communication between marginalised communities and governments, as well as offering direction for public policies.
- It is crucial not to expect from bottom-up favela organisations what they cannot and should not provide: they cannot substitute the State or its services, but are partners in designing and implementing social policies.

7.3. Psychosocial Scaffoldings and Communication in the City

The interplay between context and the individual is essential to understand routes of socialisation for underground sociabilities. Choices are not purely individual, and one of the important lessons of this study is that people who live in territories of poverty and violence work very hard to avoid the appeal of the context and its impositions in their life trajectories. As the experience of AfroReggae and CUFA shows, it is possible to develop strategies to resist the environment and to reaffirm the sense of agency and belonging, the social cohesion and the rich

culture that pertain to favela communities. Yet, living in a public sphere marked by the neglect of the State, the instability of the nuclear family and the presence of a criminal business – that until very recently provided State-parallel structures –, poses particularly hard challenges for life trajectories. Capacity to resist can be compromised when contextual determinants impose too heavily on the Self, its needs and motivations.

Favela-dwellers inhabit a segregated world which involves complex crossings and mediations. A considerable proportion of our interviewees reported never wanting to leave the community; the words 'inside' and 'outside' are strong signifiers, which are deployed to express both the differences between these two worlds and the sharp borders that separate them. There are obstacles to the right to come and go between communities and between communities and the city. Drug factions are wary of strange faces coming into the communities they control and completely bar the entrance of people who inhabit favelas controlled by rival gangs. It can be lethal to cross borders between favelas, and children are socialised to understand and manage this danger. Border controls in the city are subjectively internalised: people understand there is danger when crossing into different favelas and feel the pain of prejudice and discrimination when crossing into the wider city. Linguistic and behavioural codes that deal with the drug trade and discriminatory practices must be learned and internalised if favela-dwellers are to circulate between different favelas and to cross into the wider city. The day-to-day dilemmas structuring moments of decision-making and rupture for favela communities are real, painful and socially determined.

Yet, resilience and resistance to joining the drug trade and entering a life of crime is possible and pervasive in favela life. Our findings corroborate those of others who describe the vast majority of people living in the favelas as hard-working, determined and brave. They survive, do well and manage to find resources for social capital, social cohesion and conviviality (Pearlman, 1976, 2010; Moreira Alves & Evanson, 2011). The source of this resilience and capacity to challenge context lies in the presence of psychosocial scaffoldings, i.e., intersubjective structures

of support from people and institutions. Psychosocial scaffoldings provide a safe ground from where the individual learns about itself and its sociocultural location; they allow the Self to feel safe to act creatively, to be original and, if necessary, to question its own community. They offer containment, attention and are ultimately the basis of cooperation, joint intentionality, creative actions and the imagination. Psychosocial scaffoldings not only allow individuals to resist a route of criminalisation, but also to contribute to the rewriting of the identity of the Self and its development in terms of cognitive, emotional and social skills.

These are key issues for social development emerged clearly in the voices of research participants. Contexts of deprivation jeopardise scaffolding and compromise the ability of families and caretakers to engage in processes of identification, holding and handling. This is accentuated by the lack of State resources and the very instability of the nuclear family, which are essential support structures whose function is compromised. The consequences for policy and practical intervention are clear: education, structures of care and stable and loving families make a difference for individual and social development. It is thus an obligation of the State to invest and encourage these through sound and effective policies.

AfroReggae and CUFA play a central role in providing psychosocial scaffoldings and developing new pathways to citizenship and integration between favelas and the city. These organisations take on the role of manifold institutions through their method of work and projects. They act as family, State and even as private sector, building support, developing skills, organising employment and pushing a new set of positive representations about the favelas and about the city as a whole. In regenerating the public sphere and the built environment of popular communities, they also regenerate Rio de Janeiro, establishing a bridge between hitherto separated social worlds and taking a further step towards the communicative city. The *Viaduto* [The Flyover] in Madureira and the *Centro Cultural Waly Salomão* [Waly Salomao Cultural Centre] are exemplary of these processes: they bring the city to the favela and the favela to the city while operating as places of encounter, learning, development, psychosocial containment and conviviality. All

of these amply justify Fernandes's (1994) description of these actors as polyglots of sociability.

Actions on the flexibility of urban frontiers are central for the enlargement of the Self, the regeneration of territories of exclusion and for giving back to favela-dwellers the right to the city. The division hill/asphalt (*morro/asfalto*), the control of borders and the possibility of border-crossing emerged as central to the lifeworld of the favela and to the way favela-dwellers see themselves, their communities and the city. The more porous the borders of a community are, the larger the horizons of the Self and the networks available to its trajectory and identification. Keeping borders open and enabling mediations contribute to the transformation of identities and the development of citizenship, it connects a divided society and avoids the formation of ghettos that isolate and prevent the vibrancy embedded in social and cultural encounters.

In producing their own responses to social exclusion, underground sociabilities offer to the whole city an example of positive citizenship and pathways for action. They are proud of who they are and of what they do. They use communication across differences to create a new paradigm for social development. They reject practices that erase individuality and sociability, and embrace languages of spiritual sustenance and mutual interdependence. What many would consider a policy of hand-outs (*assistencialismo*) is for them simple human generosity, an act of giving, of offering a holding hand, of transforming lives through the power of sociability. The question remains of how public policies and society will respond to this example. How to articulate entrepreneurship, business and social inclusion; how to scale up services and to take transport, education, health, banks and shops to the favela and how to engage its culture that is, after all, the culture of Brazil, are questions that will require an answer from the State, the private sector and Brazilian society. To recognise the favela and the potentials of its economy, culture and people requires social policy and commitment to social integration, without which Brazilian development will always be partial.

Recommendations and main findings of the study are presented below.

Individual and social factors interact to shape choices and decision-making in the routes of socialisation.

- Study the psychology of poverty and the individual needs, motivations and aspirations that mediate decision-making in contexts of deprivation.
- Acknowledge that responsibility for poverty does not lie with the poor: this and other research robustly demonstrate that social context decisively shapes individual choices; life trajectories are not something individuals determine alone.
- Work at the micro and macro levels, paying attention to both the individual and the community.

Psychosocial scaffoldings allow resilience in contexts of deprivation and can be provided by manifold support institutions.

- Assist and invest in families, however fragile they are.
- Emphasise the education of girls and create programmes to support women.
- Build and invest in positive male role models, strengthening the position of the father and other male caretakers in the route of socialisation.
- Increase the range and quality of the institutional framework of favela environments, in particular education.

Bottom-up organisations and social movements offer lessons and directions worth paying attention to.

- Use successful bottom-up actions as models and commit the State to scale them up, introducing more services and opportunities for favela-dwellers.
- Work with favela organisations in designing and implementing social policies; do not expect them to compensate for the absence of the State and other services.
- Commit the private sector to understand the economy of the favela and consider the ethics of bringing business to socially excluded territories.

Underground sociabilities are mobile and can be transformed by an ethics of care; people can and do change their lives.

- Provide platforms to aid young people to escape from fixed territories and open up the potential for new identities.
- Develop narratives that convey positive futures, dreams and aspirations.
- Invest in research that documents the perceptions and thinking of excluded youth, their role models, their projects and hopes.
- Recognise that no identity is 'pure' and homogenous: there are multiple layers of identification in all human beings as there are multiple identities in different territories and institutions across the city.

7.4. A Final Word…

AfroReggae and CUFA are organisations typical of Rio de Janeiro. They share and express the culture of the *carioca* and in particular the way it embraces edges and off-centre experiences, bringing what is marginal to the centre of its identity. They treat conflict and tension as productive forces. They are clearly inspired by movements such as *Tropicalia* and *Antropofagia*, which undermine logics of exclusion by destabilising the ideal of purity and advocating that everyone is a blend of some kind. Brazilian miscegenation differs from multiculturalism in its tendency to amalgamate different sources and traditions and fuse together peoples who forged a way to produce unity in diversity.

One of the most important lessons of this research is that the generative potential of bottom-up movements such as AfroReggae and CUFA derives from the culture, identity and wisdom of the communities they are part of and represent. Brazilian social capital and capacity for innovative social technologies are not tools produced by technocrats or specialists alone, but a set of skills and resources forged in the crossings and collaboration that new social movements engender in

the democratic public sphere. It draws its efficacy from the situated wisdom and social solidarities forged by people who must live a difficult life, face poverty and violence and yet remain staunchly hopeful and optimistic about their communities and their future. That the State is prepared to listen to these experiences and learn from them is a good indicator of the winds of change that are transforming Brazil into a new global player. Facing its social debt and confronting without concessions the still heavy residuals of centuries of inequality and exclusion are essential tasks for moving the country into a fully new position.

AfroReggae and CUFA emerged in Rio de Janeiro; they are quintessentially *cariocas*, and yet, what they are and what they do travels far beyond Rio. They are inspiring others throughout Brazil, in Europe and in countries as remote as China and India; their unique characteristic however is to be very close to home. The central tool they use to change the favelas and the city is to sing about their territory, to speak with a forceful voice to tell their story. "Sing your village", suggested Tolstoy, "and you will sing to the world": this is true for literature, it is true for music and it is true for cities. AfroReggae and CUFA tell the story of the favelas and in so doing they talk to the world.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Sample

COMMUNITY	AGE GROUP			
	12 – 17 yrs	18 – 29 yrs	30+	Total
Cantagalo	14	28	8	50
City of God	17	21	13	51
Vigario Geral	22	25	6	53
Madureira	19	19	12	50
Total	72	93	39	204

Appendix 2:

Interview Topic Guide And Questionnaire

Underground Sociabilities Project
Department of Social Psychology, London School of Economics
Institute of Psychology, UFRJ
AfroReggae
CUFA
UNESCO Office in Brazil
Itaú Social
Itaú Cultural

Fieldwork Records

We are conducting a study about Rio's popular communities and their experiences. It is a joint work between the University of London, UFRJ, AfroReggae/CUFA, UNESCO Office in Brazil. You do not have to say your name, and participation is voluntary. Everything that you say stays between us and the research team. We are going to chat only if you want and you can stop the interview at any time you wish. Thank you very much for your participation.

Date ____ /____ /____ Interview start time _____ End time _____

Community: (e.g. Vigario Geral) _____

Specific place: (e.g. AR headquarters) _____

Interviewers:

1 _____ 2_____

Name chosen by the interviewee:

_____

INTERVIEW

About You

General: Tell me about you, your life, your [daily] routine.

Age and family composition
- How old are you?
- Are you married, a widow(er), or live (cohabit) with someone?
- Do you have children? How many? Do they live with you?
- How old were you when they were born?
- How is your family?
- Can you tell me a bit about how is the relationship with your family?

The Self in Context
- Have you spent your entire life here? If not, when did you come here?
- How was your childhood and adolescence here?
- What was the worst thing that happened to you? And the best?

If in this topic participant speaks about narcotraffic, ask:

How did you enter, how did you get involved?
How was that experience?
What made you quit, search for another way?

- Have you lived outside here? Where? How was it?
- Do you have friends? Where are they from? (church, community, school, work, football?)

- Do you have friends who are not from here? How is that?

Leisure

- How do you spend your free time? What do you like to do to enjoy yourself?

Education/Relationship with School

- Do you study?
- What year are you on?
- If out of school why?
- What is/was it good or bad at school?

Occupation/Relationship with the World of Work

- Do you work? What do you do?
- Do you help at home? And who is the main breadwinner?
- Do you like what you do?

Relationship with Religiosity/Fate

- Do you have a religion? Do you go to church?
- Is religion important in your life?
- Do you believe in destiny? Do you think that people are born with a given destiny?
- Do you think that people can change their destiny? What can be changed? And what cannot be [changed]?

Problems, Realisations and Significant Others

- Who would you like to be? Do you know someone you would like to be like?
- Has any person marked your life? Who? Why?
- What are your main achievements, accomplishments?
- And your fears? Difficulties?
- How do you solve your problems? Do you have help? Who helps you?

Community/City

The Community
- How is it like to live here?
- How would you describe your community?
- What do you have here that does not exist anywhere else? What annoys you the most? What does make you proud?
- Would you like to live in another place? Why, could you explain?
- Do you think that the community is united or divided? (as if it had sub-neighbourhoods?) Why does that happen? (find out if there has been a spatial division, geographical frontiers)

Relationship with violence/insecurity
- Do you feel safe, or do you fear living here?
- What are the places that you find most safe? And those you are afraid of going to?
- What is it that most threatens your day-to-day?
- Have you suffered violence, assault, robbery, stray bullet, etc.? Where was it? Can you tell me how it was?
- Have you lost someone to violence?
- Do you have to change your routine because you consider something risky?

Relationship with other communities/Crossings/Urban Frontiers
- Have you ever been discriminated for living here? How was that? Why do you think that happens?
- Do you feel uncomfortable when you go out of _____ (state community) and circulate in other neighbourhoods/communities of the city? How does it feel like, how is it?
- Do you feel different for being a favela dweller? What makes you different from people in the 'asphalt'? How is your relationship with the people outside here? Does it exist?

Rio de Janeiro

- How is it for you to live in Rio?
- In general terms how would you describe Rio de Janeiro?
- What is the best thing about it?
- And what is the worst?
- What does Rio de Janeiro need to become the "Marvellous City" that we hear so much about?

AfroReggae/CUFA

Participation in groups/Community

- Do you participate in any collective association? Which one? (church, football team, funk, sport, AfroReggae/CUFA, etc.)
- Do you like it, how is it to participate in this/these group(s)? Why did you join? (ask to tell the story of how it was to join)

Specifically about AfroReggae or CUFA:

- Can you tell me how did you join AfroReggae/CUFA? How did you learn about it, who told you about this group?
- How was your life in that moment? What projects/workshops did you start participating in?
- What does AfroReggae/CUFA represent in your life? What do you reckon it helped/helps you with? How do you think your life will be if it were not here?
- What do you learn at AfroReggae/CUFA?
- How is the work of AfroReggae/CUFA?
- What is the best thing about AfroReggae/CUFA? And what do you think does not work too well?
- In your opinion, why AfroReggae/CUFA helps/works? Can you give me an example, a story of something that works well, that you like.
- In your opinion, what is the work of AfroReggae/CUFA for? What do they do?
- Why people do not join/participate? Do you have any friends who do not participate?
- What do you think attracts people? And what can be done to attract people?

For those who do not participate in AfroReggae/CUFA:

- Do you know AfroReggae/CUFA?
- Do you have any idea about the work they do?
- Do you know anyone who has participated in a project/workshop there? Did they like it?
- Do you think that AfroReggae/CUFA improves the life of people, of communities?
- Why have you never participated in the activities there?
- What would make you participate? What do you think AfroReggae/CUFA could do to attract more people?
- What is the use of AfroReggae/CUFA?

The Future

- What is the future for you? When you think about the future, how many years' time from now do you think about?
- How do you imagine your life in the future? (in relation to employment, family, etc.).
- How would you like your life to be in the future? Do you have projects/dreams for the future? What are those?
- What is your biggest dream? What would you most like to be and to do?
- What has facilitated/obstructed the realisation of those dreams/projects?
- What would make you abandon them? What is it that stimulates you to achieve them?
- What are your fears in relation to the future?

At the end of the interview, say:

"So that I can be sure that I understood well everything you said, I would like to write some of the details we talked about. We can do this together".

1. Gender_____ 2. Age: _____ 3. How long have you lived here for? _____ years
4. Were you born here? Yes _____ No_____ If not, where did you live before?

[You] live with:

Father	Yes	No		Husband/Wife	Yes	No
Mother				Partner		
Siblings				Children		
Grandmother				Alone		
Grandfather				Others (who)		

For how many years did you go to school? _____

Currently, you:

Work [ ]
Study [ ]
Are retired [ ]
Are unemployed [ ]
Work as a domestic worker [ ]
Are a worker-student [ ]

Do you frequent the activities and workshops of CUFA/ AR? Yes _____ No_____ If yes, how long for? _____ Which ones do you frequent? _____

Do you like it?

1	2	3	4	5
Like very much	Like	More or less	Dislike	Dislike a lot

How do you know about these workshops?

Through a friend _____ relative _____ on site _____ others_____
Does any friends/people you know currently frequent the workshops? Yes_____ No ___
Who? Friend _____ Relative _____

In relation to the place of the workshops, your house is:

1	2	3	4	5
Very close	Close	More or less	Far	Very far

Is it easy/difficult to travel to the workshops? _____

Do you have to take the bus? _____

How long does it take on foot? _____

Does this prevents you from coming here? _____

In what part of the favela is this street? _____

Is there a name for that part of the favela? _____

To conclude, I would like to ask you a few questions about your opinion about the *place where you live*. **You can also read the questions with me.**

I will read to you some phrases and, for each of them, you will tell me if you agree or disagree by mentioning a number from 1 to 5.

Number 1 means that you strongly disagree...up to number 5, that you strongly agree. See here:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Partially disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Partially agree	Strongly agree

Thinking about (place where s/he lives)**, tell me how much you agree with the following statements:**

1	In this place I feel at home ...	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
2	I like to live in ...	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
3	When I leave this place, I want to come back.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
4	To live here in ... is my own choice/decision.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
5	I am very attached to this place.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
6	I am strongly attached to the people who live here.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5

7	If I could, I would stop living in …	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
8	People in … get along with each other.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
9	People here are united and fight for what they want.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
10	Very different people/groups coexist in this place.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
11	People who live in … see things in a similar way.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
12	I have little influence on what happens in …	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
13	It is very dangerous to live in this community.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
14	I am afraid to live here.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
15	We are badly seen by other people in Rio de Janeiro.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
16	I like to live in Rio de Janeiro.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
17	The Olympics will help the popular communities of Rio.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5
18	The Olympics will be only for the rich.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5

19. Do you think that the place where you live has changed in recent years?

1	2	3	4	5
A lot for the worse	For the worse	Has not changed	For the better	A lot for the better

20. If it changed, up to what point AfroReggae/CUFA are related to those changes?

1	2	3	4	5
A lot related	Partially related	Indifferent	Almost nothing	Nothing

21. In the coming years, you think that your community will change

1	2	3	4	5
A lot for the worse	For the worse	Stay as it is	For the better	A lot for the better

22. In your opinion, the residents of … are…

Very similar to each other	1	2	3	4	5	Very different from each other

23. In your opinion, the residents of ... are...

| Very similar to the people who live in other neighbourhoods of Rio | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very different from the people who live in other neighbourhoods of Rio |

24. Up to what point are you satisfied with:

	Not satisfied at all		More or less		Very satisfied
a) Your house	1	2	3	4	5
b) Your neighbourhood (mention name)	1	2	3	4	5
c) Your neighbours	1	2	3	4	5
d) Your city (Rio de Janeiro)	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you!

Debrief (please write down your immediate observations about the interview):

Appendix 3:

Interview Guide (External Observers/Partners)

1. In your view, who are AfroReggae and CUFA?
2. How do they work, how would you characterise their work?
3. What are the main features of AfroReggae and CUFA?
4. Do you think what they do is effective? Why?
5. To whom do they work?
6. And for what? What are the objectives of these organisations?
7. How is it to work with them?
8. Do you see differences between AfroReggae and CUFA?
9. What is the impact of their actions?

Interview Guide – The Police

Explore:
1. The relationship between the police and the favela communities
2. The approach of the police: history, changes and challenges
3. Working with AfroReggae and CUFA: perceptions, experiences

Interview Guide – Leaders and Activists

1. Can we start by your story – can you tell me your story? (in your own words, in whatever way you would like to tell)

Probing questions:
1. Who is AfroReggae/CUFA
2. How would you describe your work?
3. What are the main features of your organisation?
4. Is it effective? Why?
5. To whom do you work?
6. And what for? What are your objectives?
7. How is it for you to work in AfroReggae and CUFA

Appendix 4: Coding Frame – Thematic Analysis of Open Interviews

1. SELF
a) Community presence
- Support-solidarity

b) Consumption
c) Experience
- Best experience
- Conscientisation
- Drug trade
- Empowerment-agency-protagonism
- Life changing or key experience
- Loss and separation
- Police as experienced
- Poverty, painful life (*vida sofrida*), daily struggle (*luta diaria*)
- Prejudice and discrimination
- Violence-crime
- Worst experience

d) Family
- Domestic violence

e) Feelings
- Anger-rebelion
- Belonging
- Fear of crime and violence
- Fear of loss
- Hope
- Insecurity
- Pride
- Suffering, sadness, pain

f) Identity
- Favela-dweller (*favelado*)
- Gender
- Worker

g) Leisure
h) Religion-faith
i) Role models-significant others

2. COMMUNITY

a) Characters and identities

b) Cohesion and union

c) Militia (*milicia*)

d) Hill/asphalt (*morro/asfalto*)

e) Negative (inside)

f) Police as an institution

g) Safety-fear of crime

h) Segregation and isolation (outside)

i) Solidarity and friendship

j) Survival strategy-favela wisdom

k) Territory

i) Crossings (*travessias*)

- Border control
- Border crossing

3. AFROREGGAE AND CUFA

a) Meaning for person

- Activity
- Employability
- Holding and handling
- Social life
- Workshops-skills

b) Method (how and why it works)

- Conflict mediation
- Dialogue
- Identification
- Material incentives (food, money)
- Mediation-crossing-difference
- Partnerships
- Politics
- Subjectivity

c) Participation

d) Representations and views

- AfroReggae
- CUFA

4. CITY
a) Rio
- Beauty
- Violence

5. FUTURE
a) Cannot think the future
b) Dreams
c) Hope
d) Projects

Appendix 5: Coding Frame – Narrative Analysis of Life Trajectories

I.   **Events/stories:**
- early life/background
- crisis/personal danger/experience of injustice
- social encounter/salvation/opening pathways
- conscientisation
- action
- feedback/using personal life as role modelling

II. **Actors:**
- family
- drug trade
- prostitutes
- petty criminals
- the police
- positive role models
- religious figures
- friends

III. **Causes/Explanations:**
- deprivation
- injustice
- affective and material needs
- the experience of failure/nothing to lose
- identification/encounter with significant supportive other
- connection to the arts
- desire for social change

Appendix 6: Analysis of Projects – Coding Frame

Name	Labels	Values
Identifier	Name/number of project	None (nominal)
Affiliation	Institution to which they belong	1 = AfroReggae 2 = CUFA
SPGov	Sponsor – government	0 = No 1 = Yes
SPGov1	Sponsor – government national/local	-1 = N. A. 0 = No 1 = Yes
SPGov2	Sponsor – government State-owned company	-1 = N. A. 0 = No 1 = Yes
SPPriv	Sponsor – private sector	0 = No 1 = Yes
SPPriv1	Sponsor – private sector industry	-1 = N. A. 0 = No 1 = Yes
SPPriv2	Sponsor – private sector finance	-1 = N. A. 0 = No 1 = Yes
SPPriv3	Sponsor – private sector media	-1 = N. A. 0 = No 1 = Yes
SPIntOrg	Sponsor – international organisations	0 = No 1 = Yes
SPAc	Sponsor – academia	0 = No 1 = Yes
SPSocM	Sponsor – social movements	0 = No 1 = Yes
SPSelf	Sponsor – self-sustained	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPYouth	Target population – children/favela youth	0 = No 1 = Yes

TPComm	Target population – community at large	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPWomen	Target population – women	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPPolice	Target population – police	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPDeten	Target population – ex-detainees	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPInternat	Target population – international targets	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPSchool	Target population – schools	0 = No 1 = Yes
TPSociety	Target population – society at large	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBConsc	Objective – conscientisation/debate/socialisation	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBSkill	Objective – development of skills/employability	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBBorder	Objective – travessia/crossing borders/dialogue	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBSelf	Objective – Self-expression	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBSust	Objective – sustainability	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBPubl	Objective – publicity/visibility/publications	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBCitizSInt	Objective – citizenship/social integration	0 = No 1 = Yes
OBRegSpace	Objective – space regeneration/built environment	0 = No 1 = Yes

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"This research project is an opportunity to give voice to the voiceless, providing them with the means to make themselves heard. This is what UNESCO works to achieve."
Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General

"The project Underground Sociabilities exposes the divisions of Rio de Janeiro and disturbs the imaginary of the city. The research sheds light on what we do and shows that the bridges constructed by AfroReggae and CUFA are important for everyone."
José Júnior, Executive Coordinator and Founder of AfroReggae

"This project is a hallmark in our lives and in the lives of CUFA and AfroReggae."
Celso Athayde, Founder of Central Única das Favelas (CUFA)

"This research has mastered an indomitable object. It offers comprehensive and valuable data about one of the most important and innovative phenomena taking place in the Brazilian public sphere today: the participation and recognition of young citizens of the favelas and peripheries of the cities of Brazil."
Silvia Ramos, Professor of Sociology, Coordinator of the Center for Studies on Security and Citizenship (CESeC)

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