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# Genocide in Northeast Brazil: Dismantling Colonial Legacies of Contemporary State Violence in Salvador

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GENOCIDE IN NORTHEAST BRAZIL:  
DISMANTLING COLONIAL LEGACIES OF CONTEMPORARY  
STATE VIOLENCE IN SALVADOR

By

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Brazil: Social Justice and Sustainable Development  
Spring 2015

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## **Abstract**

The systematic use of violence by the police a lead me to the city of Salvador, Bahia, a city where 80% of the population is Afro-Brazilian. Using a framework of structural violence I develop a critical understanding of how contemporary manifestations of colonialism impact black people in Salvador, Bahia. Through this research I problematize the idea of the “racial democracy” to understand how black people are experiencing the direct use of violence by the Brazilian state in the form of anti-black genocide. I ask how Black Brazilian activists in Salvador resist and challenge state violence, specifically in the context of genocide; what technologies are local activists using to confront and respond to state violence; how is this violence, executed by the state upon members of Black Brazilian community in Salvador, reflective of a history of colonial violence. I explore how the members of the local activist community understand, articulate, and challenge state violence within the context anti-black genocide historically rooted in the colonial institution of slavery. Using a framework of structural violence, I engage in a postcolonial critique to problematize the historicity of the official narrative, exposing a legacy of violent colonialism, and the erection of a structurally violent state apparatus. Furthermore, I connect criminalization of Black people in Brazil and the United States to a broader history of colonialism in the Americas, with a focus on Brazil. Through analysis I explore the colonial roots of the institutionalization of racism and violence that have resulted in the genocide of black people in Brazil.

### *[Resumo*

Na realização da pesquisa com as ativistas locais gostaria de desenvolver uma compreensão crítica de como as manifestações contemporâneas de colonialismo impactam pessoas negras em Salvador, Bahia. Através desta pesquisa procuro aprender como as pessoas negras são impactados pelo o uso da violência direta pelo Estado no Brasil na forma do genocídio anti-negro. Como ativistas brasileiros negros em Salvador resistem e desafiam a violência do Estado, especificamente no contexto de genocídio? Que tecnologias são usadas pelos ativistas em Salvador enfrentar e responder à violência estadual? Como esta violência que aplicada sobre os membros da comunidade negra reflete uma história de violência colonial? Gostaria de entender como os ativistas locais aprendem, articulam, e desafiam violência estadual dentro do contexto da genocídio anti-negro que é fundamente enraizada na instituição da escravidão colonial. Usando um quadro de violência estrutural, vou fazer uma crítica póscolonial e problematizar a historicidade da narrativa oficial, revelando um legado de colonialismo violento, e a ereção dum aparato de estado estruturalmente violento. Além do mais, vou conectar a

criminalização de pessoas negras no Brasil e nos Estados Unidos a um legado colonial mais amplo nas Américas com foco no Brasil. Através desta análise transcultural vou explorar as raízes colonial de institucionalização de racismo e violência que resultaram no genocídio de pessoas negras no Brasil.]

## **Terminology**

**Cordialidade (Cordiality):** defines a system of socialization in which people are socialized to avoid confronting the reality of a situation which is confrontational, challenging, or otherwise potentially conflict generating (e.g. racism, homophobia, sexism, etc.) with the intention of obscuring that reality.

**Criminalização (criminalization):** the process by which behavior and people are associated with crime and conceived of as criminals.

**Genocídio (genocide):** As defined by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948 is “any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious or bodily or mental harm; deliberately inflicting on the group the conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction, in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group” (un.org).

**Periferia (Periphery):** geographic regions that exist outside of the city, are populated by communities of low socioeconomic status, and characterized by a lack of access to social services and infrastructure. These areas are also where police violence occurs most frequently. These areas are also defined by community organization and resistance to manifestations of structural violence.

**Racialização (racialization):** the process by which people belonging to nonwhite racial groups are systematically oppressed and exploited (Omi and Winant 1994).

## **Description of Study Area**

### *Colonial Construction of Salvador*

Salvador, formerly known as São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos (Holy Savior of the Bay of all the Saints) during the colonial period, is a coastal city nestled between the Baía de Todos os Santos (All Saints Bay) and the South Atlantic Ocean. The geographic characteristic of this land mass with its steep gradients, rocky shorelines, naturally occurring aquatic fortifications, and passageways lead Portuguese colonist, Tomé de Souza (granted “governor-generalship” by the Portuguese crown), to establish Salvador as the first colonial metropole in Brazil, in 1549 at the behest of the Portuguese monarchy (Skidmore 1999: 10). The biome of the Atlantic Forest, and coastal tropical climate, was hospitable for the production of sugarcane and tobacco. These environmental factors coupled with its strategic location on the Bay, lead Salvador to become the main port of colonial Brazil--the center from which the plantation economy emerged and the slave trade erupted.

By the 1530's the Portuguese colonists realized that the enslavement of indigenous peoples would not suffice to support the intensive cultivation of brazilwood and sugarcane that the Portuguese crown sought to extract from Brazil, as strong resistance, death from contagious disease and exploitation of the enslaved, reduced the indigenous population that the Portuguese had relied on for labor in the colony. To facilitate the most effective exploitation of the land in the Northeastern sugar plantations, Portuguese colonists increased the import of enslaved African peoples, and by 1580 were importing more than 2,000 African slaves a year--the majority of whom arrived here in Salvador (Skidmore 1999:17). The construction of colonial cities, intensive extraction of resources via agriculture and mining, and the overall maintenance of the plantation economy depended on slave labor. To accomplish this Portuguese colonists mobilized

race and violence as technologies of social control to facilitate the erection of a hierarchical system of social organization that commodified indigenous, African, Afro-descendant peoples.

Scholars now agree that New World slave labor systems differed little in their basic structure. All denied full legal rights and used coercion, including frequent brutality, to maintain subservience. The Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, and Dutch all used whatever it took to extract labor from those over whom the masters had unlimited de facto power...everywhere the work relationship depended on the use or threatened use of violence, by the master and/or by state authorities. [Skidmore 1999: 18]

The systematic use of torture, dismemberment, murder, and public punishment of enslaved people were technologies of control used by Portuguese colonists to subvert the power of the slave population. Violence was integral to the maintenance of this racialized pyramid of power. Despite this regular use of violence in the colonies, enslaved people revolted against the colonial elite in the form of armed rebellion, by escaping the plantation, and through the formation of *quilombo* communities (autonomous communities composed of escaped slaves) after escape from the plantation. Salvador was the site of many insurrections and rebellions against the Portuguese colonists during the colonial period. What have been considered some of the most important anti-colonial revolts during this time were Búzios Revolt on August 12, 1798, the Malês Revolt from January 24-25 1835, (Secretariat of Tourism 2009: 93-94), and the Sabianada. Taking place from 1837 until 1838, the Sabianada was a direct challenge to the power of the Portuguese crown in which rebels drafted a manifesto declaring Bahia to be a “free and independent state”. Rebels attempted to seize control by blockading Bahia but were defeated by the central government. Approximately 1,800 rebels were killed during this revolt (Skidmore 2009:45-46). While the strategic use of violence by colonists to terrorize and pacify population of enslaved people, revolts against colonists waged by enslaved and freed people characterized the colonial period.

The slave trade in Brazil officially continued until 1850, during which *at least* 3,650,000 African people were captured, enslaved, and imported into the Portuguese colony of Brazil (Skidmore 1999:17). While the slave trade officially ended in 1850 the



regime lasted until 1888 and during this time period slaves continued to be imported. Over the course of this period Africans from central and south western regions of the continent were enslaved representing a wide range of ethno-cultural and linguistic variation. The people from West Africa, Egyptian Sudan, and the Guinea and Benin Gulf Coasts were of, what has been considered by historian Boris Fausto, the Sudanese ethnic group, represented cultural groups like the Yorubas, Jejes, Tapas, and Haussas. According to Fausto the second of the two major ethnic groups were the Bantu people from the equatorial and tropical regions of Africa, southern regions of the Gulf of Guinea, Congo, Angola, and Mozambique, some of whom were culturally Angolas, Bengalas, Mojolos, and Mozambiques. In Salvador, Bahia there is strong presence of cultural communities from the Gulf of Benin that is evinced in the presence of elements of Yoruba culture that manifest in the form of religious practice, local cuisine (Secretariat of Tourism 2009: 26), and language. The prevailing influence of African culture in Bahia is reflective of the cultural resilience of Afro-descendant populations that continue to challenge the neo-colonial nature of the contemporary Brazilian state.

### *Geography and Demography*

According to census data from the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), as of 2010 the population of Brazil was 190, 755, 799 people, of this population, 2, 675, 656 live (the population for 2014 is estimated to at 2, 902, 927 people) in Salvador, the capital city of the Northeastern state of Bahia (ibge.gov.br). The geographic area that is defined as Salvador, includes a portion of the Baía de Todos os Santos, is 692,819 square kilometers (267, 499 square miles). While travelling through the city by foot and bus I have seen the high rises and give way to densely packed neighborhoods of concrete, wood, and plastics constructed on the steep cliffs that characterize the topography of Salvador. Approximately 3,859 people inhabit each square kilometer, making Salvador the third most populous city in Brazil after São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (ibge.gov.br). Looking at the landscape, mountains of structures extend as far as the eye can see. Of the 2, 675, 656 people that were recorded as residents of Salvador in the 2010 census, 1,426, 759 were recorded as women and 1,248,897 were recorded as

men (cidades.ibge.gov.br). In Bahia 79.5% of the female population identify as black women. It is important to consider these numbers in the cultural context in which they were produced. The inability to identify as anything other than man or women essentializes gender, and does not provide space for people who do not identify themselves according to the strict gender binary defined by the heteropatriarchal, capitalist, white supremacist system that is Brazilian society. The inability of “scientific” data to be purely objective, due to its production with a specific cultural context, is reflected in the identification of qualitative and quantitative categories for analysis. We will continue to see the ideological influences of white supremacist, heteropatriarchal capitalism as we move through this description of the study area into data that reflects the ways in which race informs societal organization in Salvador.

*Economy, Education, and Employment:*

The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, as of 2012 prices, was 14, 705.51 real (at the current exchange rate, about 3.05 BRL: 1 USD, this is equal to approximately 4, 815.16 USD) (cidades.ibge.gov.br). In Brazil the federal monthly minimum wage is 678 reais/month (approximately 286 USD with the current rate of exchange) (reuters.com). In keeping with the use of data from the 2010 census, 927,774 of the 2, 675, 656 residents of Salvador are unemployed-- 34.67% of the population. At 12% Salvador has the highest unemployment rate, and the highest decline in average monthly income of the 6 major metropolitan regions in Brazil as surveyed by the IGBE (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Recife, Salvador, and Porto Alegre). The IGBE classifies people who are unemployed as people who are looking but unable to find work (riotimesonline). The Rede de Mulheres Negras da Bahia [Network of Black Women of Bahia] explain that according to the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica e Aplicada [Applied Economic Research Institute] (IPEA), that black women and youth represent the majority of the unemployed population. In the Manifesto da Marcha de Mulheres Negras, the Rede explains that of the black women that are employed, the overwhelming majority work as domestic workers whose labor, until this year, was unregulated by the Brazilian government and widely unaccounted for, reproducing relationships of labor during slavery (Rede das Mulheres Negras 2015:1). In 2010, the IGBE reported that the “median

monthly nominal income per capita value” for rural and urban populations were 200.50 real and 510.00 real, respectively; “average monthly nominal yield value of permanent households with household income” was 882.43 real for rural households, and 3064.10 real for urban households. The literate population is reported at 2,371,102 people (cidades.igbe.gov.br) which means that as of 2010 there were 304, 554 people or 11% of the population that had been documented as illiterate.

*Current Socio-Political Climate:*

I have heard it said, and seen it written, many times over the course of my time here, that Brazil is home to the second largest population of Black in the world outside of the African continent, only second to Nigeria. In Brazil, black people make up 52% of the population, approximately 106 million people. In the state of Bahia, black people represent 79% of the population, and about 85% of the population in Salvador (V. Nascimento, Interview, 15/4/2015). The large concentration of black people here in Bahia, particularly Salvador, is the result of the influx of African slaves that were brought into the port of what was the first colonial metropole in Brazil. Besides diverse displays of African cultural influence perpetuated through cultural tourism, specifically fueled by the Brazilian government predominantly targeting African Americans living in the United states (Secretariat of Tourism 2009), what does this mean mean for the people of Salvador? What does it mean that the overwhelming majority of the population of the third most densely populated city in Brazil is black? After spending thirty-three days in Salvador sharing experiences with local black brazilian activists and engaging in traditional scholarly research I have learned that this means oppression, exploitation, and inequality. It means that the ways in which inequality manifests in Brazil is more prevalent and more visible. It means that if you are black, you more likely to be unemployed, and if you are employed, earning minimum wage or less; less likely to have access to quality healthcare, housing, and education. If you are black you are more three times more likely, than any other portion of the population, to be killed by police who kill between five and six people per day (truth-out.org). I have learned that if you are black in Salvador you are more likely to be the subject of systems of violence that inform the structure of Brazilian society, manifesting indirectly through institutional racism, and

directly in the disproportionately high rates of murder experienced by black people throughout Brazil. However, while I have come to learn the ways in which a history of slavery manifests in the genocidal practices of the structurally violent apparatus that is the contemporary Brazilian state, I have also discovered organized spaces of resistance and witnessed the power held by black activists in Salvador, to challenge the existing power structure.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### *Framework of Structural Violence*

During the course of this study I have utilized a framework of structural violence (Galtung 1969) to contextualize my experience in Brazil and to discover how Black people are experience the direct use of violence by the Brazilian state. Structural violence is a concept that intends to express the oppressive nature of socio-economic and political power structures (Farmer 2004: 307), according to Philippe Bourgois and Nancy Scheper-Hughes, by “conceptualizing violence as operating along a continuum from direct physical assault to symbolic violence and routinized everyday violence, including the chronic, historically, embedded structural violence whose visibility is obscured by globalized hegemonies” carried out “in the service of conventional norms and material interests” (Farmer 2004: 318). It is through this lens that I have interpreted all of the background research, and information gathered through interviews and participant observation in Salvador. It is important that we understand that the life experiences of Black people in Salvador are homogenous by no means, but that they are influenced by the cultural context in which they occur and that this cultural context is defined by a racialized system of power rooted in the enslavement of African peoples during the colonial period. This colonial powerstructure was justified through the construction of ideologies of racial difference and maintained through the systematic use of violence. To understand how race functions within the framework of structural violence we must first have a firm grasp on the concepts of race and racism. Race is a culturally constructed concept that categorizes groups of individuals based on phenotype in order to facilitate social, political, and economic stratification. These racialized categories of difference are

experienced by individuals in the form of racism—the process by which people belonging to nonwhite racial groups are systematically oppressed and exploited (Omi and Winant 1994). It is through this process that dominant racial ideologies serve to reinforce social, political, and economic inequalities in Brazil.

The framework of structural violence exposes the legacy of racism from its roots in European colonialism and slavery and enhances understanding of institutionalized systems of oppression. When applying a framework of structural violence in an analysis of the institutionalization of racism and systematic use of violence during the colonial period in Brazil it becomes clear that the use of direct physical violence was mobilized as a technology of social control to subordinate populations of enslaved people. The import of African slaves to provide a justifiably exploitable source of labor was a product of the racist ideology that governed colonial logic. The justification for this exploitation was based on racist ideology that dehumanized African people and positioned them at the bottom of a racialized pyramid of power, constructing the category of “slave” as an easily exploitable and expendable source of labor. Because slaves were forced to provide labor for the construction of Brazilian colony, colonists utilized the threat and application of direct violence to control the extraction of this labor.

The brutality used to maintain slavery was unending...Whipping and mutilation were commonplace, and execution of slaves was not unknown. Physical punishments were still often administered in the city square to provide maximum impact. Hunters of runaway slaves would also still brandish their captives’ ears to prove their prowess. And the high crime of treason was still rewarded by hanging, decapitation, and the display of the victim’s head on a spike. [Skidmore 1999: 39]

The direct use of violence within the colonies was not only meant to extract labor but also to prevent or stop the rebellion of enslaved people. While direct violence was the most visible technology of social control used by the structurally violent colonial apparatus even “more insidious was the socialization of the young into an automatic acceptance of the social hierarchy and their place in it” (Skidmore 1999: 39). Through a framework of structural violence we are able to understand the racialized use of violence in the colonies as a technology of social control that has informed the formation of the current Brazilian state apparatus.

### *De-mystifying the Racial Democracy*

This historically determined process of “racial formation” (Omi and Winant 1994) has facilitated the construction of race-based hierarchies that are shaped within the contemporary context of everyday life through the creation and maintenance of social, political, and economic systems of power. After the formal abolition of slavery in 1850, and nearing the end of the colonial period in Brazil, “the post-1870 Brazilian elite soon fell under the influence of European and North American doctrines of scientific racism, which pointed to biological superiority and historical “evidence” to justify their claims of white superiority”, and there was an effort by the Brazilian elite to reinforce the white supremacist power structure through the “whitening” of the population. Unlike in North America where miscegenation was abhorred, in Brazil, the elite believed that a combination of racial mixing and high mortality rates of Afro-brazilian people would lead to the erasure of African and mixed race people from Brazil’s population (Skidmore 1999: 78). While miscegenation was promoted it is important to remember that it occurred within a specific political project that systematically privileged whiteness and devalued blackness in order to maintain the power structure erected by Portuguese colonists during the colonial period. Accordingly people who were phenotypically closer to the white elite were afforded more privilege. However, unlike in the United States where the racial binary was painfully obvious through both de facto and de jure segregation, in Brazil this racialized system of power was, and still is, obscured through the construction and dissemination of the “myth of racial democracy” (Costa Vargas 2010: 102-103), but through the framework of structural violence we are able to expose the underlying racial hierarchy in Brazilian society.

The idea of “racial democracy” posits that in the context of Brazilian society social, economic, and political systems of power are not governed by race relations--that there was an equality among the races as evinced by the common practice of racial mixing and sizable population of mixed race people (Collins 2007). The “racial democracy” was popularized by Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre in his 1933 book, *Casa Grande e Senzala* (literally, Big House and Slave Quarters but the title is translated

to *The Masters and Slaves* in English). This ideology was constructed within the cultural context of a society governed by ruling elite that sought to “whiten” its population, and reserve power and privilege for the whitest, but Freyre’s text popularized the idea of Brazil as a “racial democracy” The discourse of “racial democracy” has proven itself to be as enduring as the racialized pyramid of power constructed during the colonization of Brazil. Through the obfuscation of an underlying racial binary that privileges whiteness, the idea of Brazil as a “racial democracy” is a convincing facade constructed by the Brazilian elite that hides the institutionalization of racism in social, political, and economic practices of the state and resulting system of social organization. The construction of the myth of racial democracy, much like the myths of meritocracy and post-racialism in the United States, socializes the population to believe that inequalities experienced within the population are separate from a racialized system of power, but you cannot separate race and economics.

While the existence of racial hierarchy of power is described as being obvious in the United States and a discourse of racism is present , a “hyperconsciousness/negation of race” (Costa Vargas 2010) in combination with in what has been termed “cordiality” (Z. Madeira, Lecture, 17/3/15) make racism in Brazil appear either too complicated to understand or non-existent. The manipulation of the discourse surrounding race has resulted in a conflation of race as historically rooted and culturally constructed with a fluid system of categorization for the wide range of phenotypic expressions in Brazil that result from racial mixing, evidence of which can be seen on the 2010 census where “*raça/cor*” (race/color) is the category in which individuals classify their racial identity (igbe.gov.br). Although the idea of a “racial democracy” suggests that there is equality among the races, there is a *cordialidade* (cordiality) that is observed around issues of race. Cordiality which promotes silence instead of discussions of race accompanies an unwillingness among non-white people to identify themselves as Black. This silence and tendency of people to “whiten” themselves, paradoxically, illustrates the centrality of race in defining social, political, and economic relationships. João Costa Vargas describes this practice as the “hyperconsciousness/negation of race”:

One the one hand, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic is an effect of the racial democracy myth insofar as it silences awareness of racial

classifications and ensuing practices and representations. By silencing the relevance of race in social relations, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dialectic obscures the role that race plays in determining one's position in the historical structures of power and resources. When this happens, the myth of racial democracy, based on analogous silencing of the relevance of race in social structures, is maintained. On the other hand, the hyperconsciousness/negation of race dynamic confronts the myth of racial democracy inasmuch as it reveals how Brazilians are acutely aware of racial differences and utilize those to (often tacitly) justify, think about, and enforce behavior and social inequalities.

[Costa Vargas 2010: 103]

Through a framework of structural violence we can understand how racialized ideologies function to create social, political, and economic systems of exploitation, oppression, and power that characterize the current system of social organization in Salvador, Bahia, and Brazil. The concept of structural violence considers the intersection of racialized social, political, and economic power in systematizing inequality and oppression revealing the myth of racial democracy and exposing the underlying system of white supremacy.

### *Genocide in Northeast Brazil*

Colonialism initiated the expansion of a globalized system of white supremacy that institutionalized racism as a violent technology of social control to maintain and reinforce power. This colonial world market system provides the historical foundation on which contemporary Brazilian society rests. Using the framework of structural violence it becomes possible to see how the continuation of racist ideologies and practice by the Brazilian state manifest in “anti-Black genocide” (Costa Vargas 2010). Before beginning my research in Brazil I had begun the process of developing a critical anthropological lens through studies of social complexity, political economy, human ecology, and critical theory. In this learning process I have studied critical race theory as developed in theories of intersectionality in the work of Black feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins, theories of racial formation in the work of sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant, and “whiteness” as defined by scholar George Lipsitz. As part of my coursework I was introduced to the framework of structural violence as defined by Johan Galtung and



applied in the work of Paul Farmer's "Anthropology of Violence" in which he utilizes a framework of structural violence to problematize and historicize the current social, political, and economic climate in Haiti. Additionally, Eric Wolf's development and use of a political economic paradigm in the study of anthropology has contributed my understanding of the way in which critical anthropology can be used to explore the historicity of contemporary systems of power on both local and global scales. "Analyses of political economy confirm and give a concrete, appalling dimension to the White/non-White binary informing Brazilian social structure: greater difference in life chances and outcomes (employment, education, infant mortality, and susceptibility to police abuse for example) exist between non-White and Whites than among non-Whites" (Costa Vargas 2010: 106).

The critical framework I used allowed to me to understand police violence as one manifestation of direct violence used by the state to maintain the status quo and subsequently reveals the hegemonic power structure of the Brazilian state. But more importantly the application of the framework of structural violence exposes the genocide of Black people as evinced in disproportionately high rates of murder. What I found through my research is a tradition, coming out of the United States, in Black radical thought of using the framework developed on December 9, 1948 by the United Nations, in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, to seek justice for the state sponsored murder of Black people. João Costa Vargas explains on the first page of his book Never Meant to Survive: Genocide and Utopias in Black Diaspora Communities that on, December 17, 1951:

William Patterson led a delegation before the United Nations secretary-general charging the United States government with Black Americans' genocide...compiled in a landmark publication by then National Executive Secretary of the Civil Rights Congress, titled *We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition in the United Nations for Relief from a Crime of the United States Government Against the Negro People*" [Costa Vargas 2010: 1]

While the charges in this document were made in a specific socio-historical time period, the use of the articles defined by the UN provide a theoretical framework that is useful in both local and global analyses of the deaths of Black people in the African diaspora.

“What Patterson and his collaborators knew then about the ideological justifications and the multiple manifestations of genocide can be *theoretically* utilized to make sense of countless representations, actions, and public policies whose result is the unmistakable dehumanization, exclusion, and death of Black people” (Costa Vargas: 2010: 4). My research continues this tradition of black radical thought as I seek to understand the historical rootedness of the direct use of violence against Black people in Brazil and how this use of violence is understood, articulated, and challenged in Salvador.

## **Methodology**

### *Ethical Responsibility and Social Relevance*

Historically, the field of anthropology has been used to justify European colonialism and the genocide of peoples throughout Africa and the Americas. In the 20th Century, the production of anthropology as an objective science facilitated the construction of the current global power structure (Sharp 2009) in which predominantly heteronormative white European males define themselves in opposition to “the other”. Anthropology, with its focus on knowing and cataloging various expressions of culture and modes of social organization, has aided the colonial project by substantiating Eurocentric ideologies that reinforce social, economic, and political systems. It is necessary to problematize the discipline of Anthropology to understand how hegemonic power is produced. If we understand knowledge production as part and parcel of the colonial project it becomes possible to imagine the decolonization of knowledge. By privileging voices that have been historically marginalized, recognizing alternative ways of knowing and deconstructing dominant cultural paradigms we are able to engage in a co-production of knowledge that exposes the legacies of colonialism, and seeks to challenge the maintenance of white supremacy.

To begin the process of the decolonization, the production of knowledge, and the use of methodology in anthropological research must be critically engaged, community based, and self-reflexive. During my research with local activists to conduct a three week study of how violence manifests in the Afro-brazilian community in Salvador, it was necessary to be in constant dialogue with my social location, and how this impacted the

re-production of knowledge and power throughout the research process. Because of my position as a black American woman, from an upper-middle class family, travelling abroad I recognized and problematized the power dynamics that were at play throughout the research process. It is because of this position, despite my African ancestry, that I continue to contribute to the reification of Western power. However, through this process of experiential learning and privileging the voices of Carla Cristina dos Santos de Jesus (Carla), Valdecir Nascimento (Valdecir), Antonio Cosme Lima da Silva (Professor Cosme), Gilcinei Lázaro Castro da Silva (Lázaro), and women of the *Rede de Mulheres Negras da Bahia* (Network of Black Women of Bahia) I engaged a co-constructive model of knowledge production with the intention of deconstructing hetero-patriarchal white supremacy through the formation of transnational linkages of solidarity between people of the African diaspora.

While my ability to communicate was limited by my level of competency in the Portuguese language, I was able to understand the majority what was being said in conversation, and ask for clarification if I was at a loss. Even still, I was reliant on the participation of native language speakers and willingness to include me in conversations to facilitate my learning continued learning. Although I have begun to understand more of the language, and engaged in conversations of increasing complexity, it continues to be difficult to understand conversations in which there are multiple speakers, and significant ambient noise. For this reason I was unable to fully synthesize the experiences in real time, and required space to reflect. In order to address this issue, I used the Voice Memo application on my iPhone to record conversations, which I then reviewed and transcribed, and my field journal as a place for reflection. To remain critically engaged with the research process I also analyzed the ways in which conducting this research will contribute to the decolonization of knowledge. In the same way that my social location as an english speaking, American student, reproduces hierarchies of power, it is my situatedness as a Black woman that poses a challenge to the reproduction and maintenance of a global system white supremacy. A goal of my participation in this research process has been to share knowledge cross-culturally, and develop networks of solidarity among Black peoples with the common goal of dismantling a racialized system of inequality that continues to facilitate the genocide of Black people worldwide. The

resulting opportunity to live with Black female activist, Valdecir, and participate in various conversations, both informally and formally, with local Black activists throughout my time here in Salvador has continued the transnational dialogue between people of the African diaspora that are needed to expose, denounce, and dismantle the genocidal powerstructure that functions both locally and globally. It is by continuing to call out these structures and engage in this dialogue of resistance this research finds its place.

### *Research Ethics*

Before I engaged in this research it was imperative to recognize that it would not be a sterile process of data collection, and that working with people to understand their lives will never be such a process. The people with whom I interacted in this study are sought out for exactly that which many researchers have historically negated, and continue to negate--the story of their lives. The perceived right to tell the story of others, subsequently defining their identity, and culture is historically rooted in colonialism, and as noted above, in the 20th Century development of the social sciences--particularly the field of Anthropology. The people in Salvador who have agreed to participate in this research process will be directly impacted by my momentary appearance. While I will be living in Salvador for a four-week period to learn about the lives and experiences of local activists I will ultimately leave Salvador with a document containing the information produced during the research process. As such, protecting, respecting, and promoting the rights of the people involved in the research process have trumped any other goals and objectives that I had while engaged in this research process. To ensure that I travelled down the road marked ethical research I held myself accountable for the safeguarding of those who choose to participate by protecting the privacy of participants and, if desired, providing anonymity. It is important to note here that Valdecir Nascimento (Valdecir), Carla Cristina dos Santos de Jesus (Carla), Antonio Cosme Lima da Silva (Professor Cosme), and Gilcinei Lázaro Castro da Silva (Lázaro) all agreed willingly to participate in this research, have given both written and verbal consent, and decided that they do not want to remain anonymous for the purposes of this monograph. Before conducting any research I engaged with my Academic Director, Bill Calhoun, and my Project Advisor,

Carla, to identify adults (persons over the age of 18) who were able and willing to give their consent to participate in the research process. Once these individuals were identified I made sure to communicate clearly and honestly my social location and academic objectives. Additionally, I spoke with research participants in an attempt identify the scope of this project and it's potentiality to contribute the continued exposure of institutionalized anti-black racism--however the potential impact of this research process and the subsequent production of this monograph remain unknown. The model for this Independent Study Project (ISP) as set forth by SIT is limited due to the duration of the research period, however, this leaves plenty of room for future research.

### *Research Methods*

Over the course of the Independent Study period I sought to understand the impact and historical rootedness of state violence against Black Brazilian peoples through a combination of conversations, interviews and participant observation. I spent four weeks in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil living in the home of Valdecir Nascimento, Black feminist activist, and Executive Coordinator of *Odara Instituto da Mulher Negra* (Odara Institute of Black Women). Valdecir has been involved in the *Movimento Negro* (Black Movement) for thirty years and was one of the organizing members of the *Movimento de Mulheres Negras* (Black Women's Movement). Over the four week period Valdecir and I had many informal conversations about the way in which heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism influence Brazil's social, political, and economic institutions. We talked about what it means to be involved in activism and potentials for liberatory struggles in both local and transnational contexts. Over the breakfasts, lunches, and dinners that we shared together we often engaged in dialogues of resistance, cultivating understanding and solidarity. Sharing time with Valdecir has been an invaluable experience which extends beyond her direct contributions to this research.

As noted in a previous section, Carla Cristina dos Santos de Jesus acted as my Project Advisor during this period. In addition to being a part of the *Movimento Negro* (Black Movement) *Movimento de Mulheres Negras* (Black Women's Movement), *movimento hip hop* (Hip Hop Movement), *Movimento das Mulheres do Hip Hop* (Movement of Women in Hip Hop), and the local student movement, Carla, works full-

time as a *professora de educação básica* (early childhood educator) and the *coordinadora pedagógica* (pedagogical coordinator) at the *Escola Municipal Eduardo Campos* (Municipal School Eduardo Campos) in the *bairro* (neighborhood) of Aguas Claras in Salvador. Like Valdecir, Carla's activism extends from her personal life, through her academic and professional careers. While Carla's time was limited because she was preparing to complete her Master's in Education at the *Universidade do Estado do Bahia (UNEB)* (State University of Bahia), we met three times throughout the four-week period to discuss logistical aspect of my research, and conduct an interview. Throughout my time in Salvador, Carla and I remained in contact via e-mail and WhatsApp through which she informed me of local events related to my research, and contact information for study participant Gilcinei Lázaro Castro da Silva (Lázaro).

Lázaro has been involved in the Hip-Hop Movement in Salvador for the past twenty years and is a founding member of the hip-hop group, *OPANIJÉ (Organização Popular Africana Negros Invertendo o Jogo Excludente)* [African People's Organization, Black People Reversing the Game of Exclusion]. Graduate of the *Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA)* and primary school art teacher. Lázaro's participation in this study has increased the depth to which I have been able to understand how violence is experienced by black youth who have been marginalized. Lázaro's perspective has added dimension to the ways in which it is possible to understand the impacts of violence and how cultural production in the form of music constructs a space for the cultivation of identity and resistance. To understand the way in which cultural production functions as a form of resistance I created questions specifically for Lázaro to tease out this information. In addition unlike Carla, Valdecir, and Professor Cosme, Lázaro and I met for the first time when we conducted our interview, this also influenced the creation of the interview questions as you will see in the following *Framework for Interviews*.

To attempt understand the discourse around genocide and the work of local Black activists in Salvador, I utilized participant observation and conducted a combination of formal and informal interviews. To attempt to achieve a gender balance in the research process and resulting monograph I interviewed two black women, Carla and Valdecir, and two black men, Professor Cosme and Lázaro. Antonio Cosme Lima da Silva (Professor Cosme) is a historian who specializes in Afro-brazilian and African history,

and the study of racial inequality. Professor Cosme has been involved in the *Movimento Negro* (Black Movement) here in Salvador, like Valdecir, for approximately thirty years. As a part of the SIT Race, Gender, and Sustainability seminar, Professor Cosme gave a lecture about Afro-Brazilian history in Brazil, after which we talked, and I mentioned that I would like to interview him for my project. Once the ISP period began, I contacted Professor Cosme, sending him a copy of the translated section of my ISP proposal and potential interview questions, and we marked a date to meet. Professor Cosme's academic specialization in history, particularly the study of racial equality, coupled with his experiences in the Black Movement have provided deep insight into the historical continuities of Brazil's racialized powerstructure.

#### *Framework for Interviews*

While the course of each conversation varied the framework for the interviews remained the same for all four interview participants. However, because of Lázaro's involvement with the hip-hop movement I developed additional questions that focused specifically on his participation in OPANIJÉ and the functionality of hip-hop culture, these questions will be identified with an asterisk. The interview questions were designed to facilitate a conversation with the study participants about their perspectives on the historicity of contemporary manifestations of state violence and the disproportional rate at which black people experience that violence in Brazil with a focus on Salvador. The questions I developed each fell under the category of one of the four educational objectives I hoped to complete and are indicated in the section below by a capital letter. These learning objectives were developed with the following questions in mind: How do black brazilian activists in Salvador resist and challenge state violence, specifically in the context of genocide? What technologies are local activists using to confront and respond to state violence? How is this violence, executed by the state upon members of black brazilian community in Salvador, reflective of a history of colonial violence?

*A. Aprender como ativistas perceber o assassinato desproporcional de negros por policiais em Salvador e nos Estados Unidos.*

(To understand how activists perceive the disproportionate murder of black people by law enforcement officers in Salvador and in the United States.)

1. *Você pode falar um pouco sobre por que você acha que pessoas negras tem mais probabilidades de ser morto pela polícia do que os brasileiros brancos no Brasil?*

(Can you talk about why you think that black brazilians are three times more likely to be killed by police than white brazilians in Brazil?)

2. *Você acha que é significativo que em os dois país, Brasil e nos Estados Unidos, os policias estão assassinado pessoas negras sistematicamente? Você acha isso é uma indicação de uma sistema de oppresão mais amplo?*

(Do you think it is significant that in both Brazil and the United States the police are systematically killing black people? Do you think this is an indication of a larger system of oppression?)

B. *Aprender os perspectivas de cada ativistas sobre o uso histórico de violência contra os negros no Brasil e Salvador, e explorar as conexões que eles percebem entre os usos atuais e históricos de violência do Estado.*

(To understand each activist's perspectives on the historical use of violence against black people in Brazil and Salvador, and explore what links they perceive between current and historical uses of state violence)

1. *Com o conhecimento que isso não é uma problema novo, como você entende os altas taxas de homicídio de negros por policiais dentro da história da colonização do Brasil?*

[Given that this is not a new problem here in Brazil, how do you situate the alarmingly high rates of murder of black people by police officers within the history of the colonization of Brazil?]

C. *Aprender como ativistas entender e articular genocídio anti-negro em Salvador e no Brasil.*

[To learn how activists understand and articulate anti-black genocide in Salvador and Brazil.]

1. *Você acha que as matanzas das pessoas negras, especialmente da juventude, pela polícia são uma indicação que um genocídio anti-negro esta acontecendo?*

[Do you think that the murder of black people, particularly youth, by police indicates that an anti-black genocide is happening?]

D. *Aprender como ativistas brasileiros negros em Salvador resistem e desafiam violência estadual, especificamente no contexto do genocídio.*

[To understand how black brazilian activists in Salvador resist and challenge state violence, specifically in the context of genocide.]

1. *Quais tecnologias ou estrategias você usam em sua vida e em seu trabalho para resistem e desafiam violência estadual, especificamente no contexto de genocídio?*

[What technologies or strategies do you use in your life and in your work to resist and challenge state violence, specifically in the context of genocide?]

2. *Você acha que as conexões entre ativistas na diaspora Africana é útil?*



[Do you think that connections between activists in the African diaspora are useful?]

3. *Se sim, como, ou se não, porque?*

[If so, how, or if not, why?]

\* *Você pode me dizer um pouco sobre você?*

[Can you tell me a little about yourself?]

\* *E Opanijé (Organização Popular Africana Negros Invertendo o Jogo Excludente), você pode falar sobre o grupo e suas motivações para a criação dela?*

[And Opanijé (African Peoples Organization for Reversing the Exclusive Game), can you talk about the group and your motivations for creating it?]

\* *Você acha que o hip-hop é uma forma de resistência contra violência estadual?*

[Do you see hip-hop as a form of resistance against state violence?]

\* *Você pode falar um pouco sobre por que você acha isso?*

[Can you talk a little about why you think this?]

\* *O que você acha do papel do hip-hop é no contexto deste genocídio?*

[What do you think the role of hip hop is in the context of this genocide?]

\* *Você acha que houveram tentativas por parte do estado para reduzir o poder de hip-hop?*

[Do you think there have been attempts by the state to reduce the power of hip-hop?]

Transcriptions of the interviews with Carla, Valdecir, Professor Cosme, and Lázaro can be found in my Field Journal (to see specific variations of the following framework for the interviews please consult this document).

### *Participant Observation*

In addition to the interviews that I conducted with Carla, Valdecir, Professor Cosme, and Lázaro I participated in two events that have contributed to my understanding of the ways in which local activists are articulating their experiences and organizing within the context of genocide. The first event I attended was the opening of an art exhibit at the *Universidade Federal da Bahia's (UFBA) Museo Afro-brasileiro* [Federal University of Bahia's, Afro-brazilian Museum] which is located in the *Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia* [College of Medicine of Bahia]. The exhibit was entitled "O MAFRO Pela Vida Contra o "Genocídio" da Juventude Negra". The second event was the *Marcha de Mulheres Negras Contra o Racismo, a Violência e Pelo Bem Viver* [Black Women's March Against Racism, Violence, and for Good Livin]). We will return to these events in the discussion of my findings to flesh out an understanding of

some of the ways that Black activists in Salvador understand, articulate, and denounce the genocide of Black people in Brazil.

## **Discussion**

I came to this research not only as a student but more importantly as a Black American woman. Using the critical paradigm I have developed based in my knowledge of the historical rootedness of the present day exploitation and murder of Black Americans in the United States, I hoped to develop an understanding of the way in which Black Brazilians experience manifestations of colonialism. With the goal of learning the ways in which this global system of oppression founded in colonialism functions in mind, I set out to learn how, Black activists understand the historical rootedness of the use of state violence against Black people; articulate, and challenge the use of direct violence, in the country with the second largest population of Black people in the world. It is undeniable that the colonization of the Americas has had a drastic impact on the populations who were colonized during this period. We have seen how the racialized pyramid of power erected during the colonial period has endured into the present day and become hegemonic. The social, economic, and political systems that are contained within the culture of the nation state are founded in the same colonial logic that justified the exploitation and murder of indigenous, African, and people of African descent for the accumulation of wealth and power.

One of the many legacies of colonization that manifests itself in Brazil is the use of violence by law enforcement. The use of direct violence during slavery was explicit. It was used as a technology of social control through the on the terrorization, torture, and murder of enslaved African people. Today in Brazil, violence is still used by the state to control the Afro-Brazilian population but this use violence by the state has been obscured through the institutionalization of racism that has resulted in the criminalization of Black people. To better understand this use of violence against the Black population I asked

each interview participant to explain why they thought that Black people in Brazil were more likely to be killed by police than white people in Brazil. When I asked Professor Cosme he responded:

*Porque no Brasil nos construímos historicamente a imagen do negro como imagen do delinquente. A imagen do criminoso nato (born criminal). Ser melhor checar os teorias do final do século dez e nove, aqueles teorias Lombrosiano da pseudociência, que viu negros sempre como um perigo. Em virtude (because) do escravismo no Brasil, em virtude das perseguições que essas populações negras soferm no Brasil. Em virtude de que no codigo que regulamentava (regulated) tortura, nas ordinações Phillipinais, Manuelinas, Alfonsinas, o seja na legislação Portuguesa que prevalacia no Brasil colonial, negros ser a similar de uma coisa, aquela noção de escravo coisa do direito humano. Por tanto isso ficou praticamente atávico na cultura Brasileira –o negro como sempre um perigroso. Em na ponto de vista contemporâneo, a imagem, a representação do negro associado a que tudo que é negativo no Brasil.*

[A. Cosme Lima da Silva, Interview, 15/5/2015]

[Because in Brazil we have constructed, historically, the image of the black person as delinquent. The image of the born criminal. It would be best to check the theories of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, those Lombrosian theories of pseudoscience, that always viewed black people as a danger. Because of slavery in Brazil—because of these persecutions black people suffer in Brazil. Given the code that regulated torture in the Phillipine, Manueline, and Alfonsian ordinaces, there is Portuguese legislation in colonial Brazil that prevails [in which] black people are [related] to a thing, that notion of the slave as a thing without human rights. Therefore this stays practically atavistic in Brazilian culture –the black person as a danger. In the contemporary point of view, the image, the representation of the black person associated with all that is negative in Brazil].

During interviews with Carla, Valdecir, Professor Cosme, and Lázaro all explained that one of the legacies of colonial ideology was the criminalization of Black people. This

criminalization of Black people, as Professor Cosme explained, was rooted in ideologies of white supremacy that were the foundation of the racialized hierarchy of power on which colonial Brazil was constructed. These were then used as the basis for the construction of eugenics movement that followed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In both Brazil and the United States the transatlantic slave trade was justified through the dehumanization and commodification of African people. The construction of African peoples as “slaves” accompanied the criminalization of Afro-descendant peoples that continues today. This criminalization of Black people is a product of institutional racism that has become part of dominant cultural paradigm in Brazil.

*A gente tem os instituições, penso muito com mentalidade da escravidão, na verdade é uma colonização mental. A gente ainda continua com pensamento colonizado, então a gente precisa descolonizar ao pensamento, então a gente ainda lá de 1500s, de todo esta escravidão, a gente quando falo estado, estrutura, escola, a segurança pública, continua acreditar que negro é inferior. Ali a gente pega a historia de Capitão do Mata no época da ecravidão. Capitão do Mata é aquele pessoa que apreende ao negro fugão. Ele é uma segurança do senhor então ele cuidava da propiedade, dos escravos. Então Capitão do Mata ir a atras da escravo que fugia, e muitas vezes o Capitão do Mato tambem era negro, entende? Mas ele corre atras e apreende o negro e esse esquema de segurança, de proteger, ne, então isso percorrer, ne? [C. C. dos Santos de Jesus, Interview, 11/5/2015]*

[We have the institutions that think with the mentality of slavery, in truth it is a mental colonization. We still continue with [our] thoughts colonized, so we need to decolonize thought. So we are still there in the 1500s, all this slavery, when we speak of the state, structure, public safety, we continue to believe that Black is inferior. There we pick up the story of the Captain of the Kill in the time of slavery. Captain of the Kill is that person that apprehends the black fugitive. He is the security of the slave/land owner (“Planter” in the context of the American South), he took care of the property, of the slaves. So the Captain of the Kill would follow the fugitive slaves and many times the Captain of the Kill was black understand? But he ran behind and

apprehended the black person and this scheme of security, of protection, so this travels, right?]

I understood that Carla's question was rhetorical during the interview and did not respond but I will explain what it is that I understood Carla to be saying. She is describing the parallel between the *Capitão do Mata*, who was responsible for the physical control of enslaved African and Afro-brazilian people on the plantation, and today's law enforcement officers who are tasked by the state with enforcing the law as defined by the state. In this analogy the *Capitão do Mata*, or law enforcement officer, protects the interests of the *senhor*, today's ruling elite, by controlling the *escravo* or "property" which can be seen as the contemporary labor force (inside and outside of the formal economy). Just as the *Capitão do Mata* was responsible for securing the enslaved population so are today's law enforcement officers. In the logic of colonialism enslaved people became fugitives when they challenge the colonial power structure by seeking their freedom which contributed to the construction of Afro-brazilian people as criminals. The criminalization of Black people in Brazil, a product of the institutionalization of racism, results in the disproportional use of police violence against Black people in Brazil. When I asked Carla if she thought that Black brazilians had a higher likelihood of being killed by police than white brazilians she responded affirmatively:

*Sim, é não so minha opinião, mas os dados e estatísticas mostram isso que as pessoas negras no Brasil são mais assassinados pela polícia, pela segurança pública. Então segurança pública no Brasil tem uma estrutura ainda é racista. Onde a polícia...por comando do superior, ne, ainda eles são treinados para achar, para acreditar, que pessoas negras são marginais. Então eles acham que pessoas negras tem menos direito, e eles no momento de abordagem, eles já não leva pessoa para responder na justiça, no prende, não leva pessoa para a delegacia. Eles alí da uma sentença que pena de morte, então no Brasil, no existe pena de morte, oficialmente, mas existe penas de mortes para as pessoas negras, homens negros no Brasil, então, e de uma forma velada (veiled), escondida (hidden), e assim, como é o racismo aqui no Brasil. Então as pessoas negras*

*morrem mais, eles não tem o direito de se defender, no seguindo as normas da justiça do país. [C. C. dos Santos de Jesus, Interview, 11/5/2015]*

[Yes, it is not only my opinion, but the data e statistics show that black people in Brazil are murdered more by the police, by public safety. So public safety in Brazil has a structure that is still racist. Where the police...by the command of the superior, are still trained to think, to believe that black people are marginal. Then they think that black people have less rights and they, in the moment of the approach, they do not take the person to respond to the judge, in the arrest they do not take the person to the station. There in the moment they give the death sentence, but in Brazil the death penalty does not exist, officially, but death penalties exist for the black people, Black men in Brazil, in a veiled form, hidden, so that is how racism is here in Brazil. So the Black people die more, they do not have the right to defend themselves according to the norms of justice of the state.]

When we look at the statistics that have been recorded, we can see the racist ideology of the Brazilian state manifesting in the disproportional rates of murder for Black Brazilian by police officers. In 2012 police officers killed approximately 2,000 people in Brazil (npr.org) or an average of five to six people per day. Black Brazilians are three times more likely to be killed by the police than any other subset of the population. It is important to note here that this murder rate is based on the recorded number of police killings which are often unrecorded, and that it does not include murders by death squads that operate covertly throughout the country (W. Calhoun, Fleicheiras, Brazil, 31/5/15). When applying the framework of structural violence police violence can be understand as a direct manifestation of the genocidal practices of the Brazilian state. In each interview I asked the participant whether or not they believed that there is a genocide occurring here in Brazil and they all responded affirmatively, explaining that this genocide is historically rooted, and that it manifests itself in many forms, police violence only being one of the many facets of this genocide against Black people in Brazil.

*Olhe, esse genocídio nos já denunciar vamos desde o final da década 1980. Eu fui militante do Movimento Negro, e tenho diversos documentos, pamphlets da época no meus arquivos que nos já denunciavamos essa genocídio contra população negra. Fosse genocídio quando na época eram esterelizada (sterilize) as*

*mulheres negras. Teve um periodo muito forte aqui no Brasil do esterilizar as mulheres negras como tambem com a violência do estado. [A. Cosme Lima da Silva, Interview, 15/5/2015]*

[Look, this genocide, we already began to denounce at the end of 1980. I was a militant of the Black movement, I have diverse documents, pamphlets from the time in my archives in which we already denounced this genocide against the Black population. It was genocide when at the time they were sterilizing black women. There was a very strong period here in Brazil of sterilizing Black women also with the violence of the state].

Police violence is only one way in which the genocide of Black people in Brazil can be made visible. Valdecir explained that:

*Existe um genocídio anti-negro no Brasil. Então porque você precisa entender por que que a gente afirma existe que um genocidio? É porque ele tem uma permanencia na historia. A diferencia é que em cada momento do historia, o estado uso um argumento do justificava o assassinado dos negros. Em cada momento da historia ele foi crescendo, ele foi ampleando, e as instituições públicas como eles são racistas tambem, elas nunca interviram.*

[V. Nascimento, Interview, 14/5/2015]

[An anti-black genocide exists in Brazil. Then because you need to understand: why is it that the people assert that a genocide exists? It is because it has a permanence in the history [of Brazil]. The difference is that is each moment of the history, the state uses an argument to justify the murder of the black people. In each moment of history it is growing, it is growing, and the public institutions, because they are racist too, never intervene].

Part of what has been used to justify this extermination of Black people in Brazil is a “war on drugs” in which, much like in the United States, poor Black communities are identified as the center of the production and distribution of drugs.

*Porque o Brasil todo ele trata os jovens negros na mesma forma. Eles tratam a população negro na mesma forma. Então o Rio de Janeiro inventou as unidades pacificadores nos morros para atuar a controle do trafico do drogas. A Bahia fez a mesma coisa. Eles instalaram unidades que eles chamam de Pacto Pela Vida, o*

*Pacto Pela Vida, que são as unidades, é policidades nos bairros de maioria negro, nos bairros onde existe, segundo eles, o maior conflict [V. Nascimento, Interview, 14/5/2015].*

[Because all of Brazil treats black youth the same way. They [the police] treat the black population in the same way. So Rio de Janeiro invented the pacification units in the hill to realize the control of drug trafficking. Bahia did the same thing. They installed units called Pacto Pela Vida, Pact for Life, the Pact for Life, they are the units, the police in the neighborhoods where the majority of residents are black, in the neighborhoods where exists, according to them, they greates conflict].

And like in the United States the criminalization of Black people through the dissemination of the image of the Black person as a thief, robber, drug user—dangerous—has lead to the intensification of policing and surveillance in communities *perifericos* (in the periphery). This process in which Black Brazilians are criminalized facilitates the justification of the murder of massive numbers of Black people in the periphery, these murders are seen as just within the dominant cultural paradigm, they have been normalized [A. Cosme Lima da Silva, Interview, 15/5/2015], [C. C. dos Santos de Jesus, Interview, 11/5/2015], [V. Nascimento, Interview, 14/5/2015].

Quando aparece no media, morte do joven nos Estados Unidos, é aparece muito comunidade se mobilizando. A comunidade negra de lá vai para rua, faz protesto. Existe uma mobilização muito grande, mas aqui, não existe tanto, tanto isso, porque a população normal, acha que foi certo aquele joven morrer. Entende, a população aqui, a maioria esta muito acostomado com racism, e acha que aquele policial foi certo em matar aquele joven, ou aquele homem negro, então aqui, é característica de racismo aqui no Brasil, que as pessoas não vão identificar que foi racismo, mas eles vão achar, a maioria das familias, das comunidades vão achar que aqui é normal. Que porque aquele joven ta involvida no crime ou porque era trafficante e ele morreu por isso. Então existe muito comodismo (self-indulgence) aqui no Brasil da população. Vitima desse racism acredita que é normal a morte daquele joven negro, então quando aparece no jornal, por ejemplo: assassinado de 12 homens no Cabula, em quando aparece no jornal dos 12 negros assassinadoas, as pessoas não vão, muitos pessoas, por a rua para gritar foi racism, não, porque eles assiste o jornal, e como a media



passa, a reportagem passa, é duma forma para a gente acreditar que aqueles jovens esta errados, que aqueles jovens merecem o morrer. [C. C. dos Santos de Jesus, Interview, 11/5/2015].

[When it appears in the media, the death of a youth in the United States, it appears that much of the community mobilizes. The black community there goes to the street and protests. There exists a very large mobilization, but here, much of that does not exists because the normal population thinks that it was right for that youth to die. Understand, he population here, the majority are very accustomed with racism, and think that those police were right to kill that youth, or that black man, so here, it is characteristic of the racism here in Brazil, that people will not identify that it was racism, but they will think, the majority of the families, of the communities will think that here it is normal. That because that youth is involved in crime or because he was a drug trafficker and he died because of this. The victim of this racism because that it is normal, the death of that black youth, then when it appears in the newspaper, for example: 12 men murdered in Cabula (a neighborhood on the periphery of Salvador), when it appears that 12 black men were murder, the people will not, many people, go to the street to scream that it was racism, no, because they watch the news, and like the media reports, the media reports in a way so the people believe that those youth were wrong, that they deserved to die].

Here Carla explains how the media is mobilized in the service of the state to reinforce the criminalization of Black people in the cultural knowledge of Brazil, here another dimension of the institutionalization is removed from the shadow as the media is exposed as an institution complicit in the genocide of Black people in Brazil. Using the information I have gathered through background research in combination with the oral data collected through interviews and participant observation it becomes clear that police violence is a manifestation of the genocidal practices of the Brazilian state, and when coupled with the criminalization of Black people and the discourse of drug trafficking, this violence not only becomes normalized, but justified in the minds of many Brazilians—even those who are the fuel for this violent machine. The disproportionate murder of Black people by Brazilian law enforcement officers reflects the institutionalization of racism that is historically rooted in the colonial period. Once we are

able to understand the construction of the racialized system of power that is Brazilian society we are able to begin to deconstruct the structurally violent state apparatus that has engaged in the exploitation, oppression, and murder of Black people since the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

*Resistência:*

Much of the background research that I had done before the three-week research period was focused on the construction of the genocidal apparatus of the Brazilian state and the various manifestations of violence that affect Black people living in Salvador and Brazil in general. Once I entered the research period and began the interview process I started to learn the of the ways in which Black activists are continuing a history of resistance that begun during the colonial period.

*A estratégia que nos utilizamos enquanto ativistas do movimento negro porque essa luta não é individual, isso é colectiva. No primeiro momento, quando a conjuntura era politica era desfavoravel, sobre tudo no momento em que a ditadura militar estava instalada no Brasil, entre 1964-1985, a nossa estratégia foi denunciar ao racismo no Brasil. Há já vista que a imagem internacional que se passava do Brasil era que existe o verdadeiro democracia racial... Essa propaganda ela foi implemente advogada a ponto desse tem seu quase como uma verdade absoluta, e estratégia naquele momento nossa, foi denunciar o racismo...Só que nos anos 80, nos mudamos de estratégia. Depois que o estado brasileiro, nos fizemos com que o estado brasileiro oficialmente reconhecesse o racismo no sociedade brasileria. A presença do racismo nas estruturas do estado brasileiro. Nos, a partir da decada 80 passamos a cunhar e utilizar a estratégia a denunciar o racismo institucional. O seja, o racismo saí de uma perspectiva individual, como um manifestação de pessoas, para estar na estrutura do estado. Era propia estado que é responsavel para racismo. Então a partir que nos absorvemos planamente essa teoria do racismo institucional, inclusivel com a colaboração dos Norte Americanos... que cunhara o terma “Black Power”, Stokely Carmichal e Charlie Hamilton...Nos absorvemos a teoria racismo institucional e passamos a denunciar aquele estado. E esse estratégia foi imporante, e ela ganhou muito mais visibilidade quanto da ponto da vista da politica geral, nos*

*conseguimos em 2003, elege um presidente da república, um dos movimentos. Isso possibilitou que uma series de demandas historicas, bandeiras historicas dos movimentos sociais, fosse institucionalizadas. Dentre delas nos passamos até um ação dentro do proprio governo com a criação de uma secretaria, um ministerio votado para a questão racial no Brasil...uma lei nivel nacional que tornava obrigatorio historia e cultura Afro-brasileira, historia Africana e cultura Afro-brasileira, no curriculo dos estabelecimentos particular e estadual. Isso foi importante. Há já vista que educação tambem sempre foi um instrumento utilizado pelo estado brasileiro para disseminar desigualdades, para disseminar o racismo, e para disseminar essa imagem do negro como coisa, como inferior. Ao tempo tambem que existi no estado uma construção de estruturas voltadas para promoção da igualdades racial...Um estrategia que nos estamos usando, a lei, de esta denunciando por dentro das esferas do governo o genocídio cometido contra população negra, continuamos, tambem, com as atividades dos movimento sociais, tambem, denunciando essa violência [A. Cosme Lima da Silva, Interview, 15/5/2015].*

[The strategy that we used while activist of the black movement, because this fight is not individual, it is collective. In the first moment, when the situation was unfavorably politically, especially during the time that the military dictatorship was installed in Brail, between 1964-1985, our strategy was to denounce racism in Brazil. We have seen the international image, that what was happening in Brazil was that the true racial democracy existed...This propaganda was implemented advocating this as an absolute truth, and our strategy in that moment was to denounce racism...only in the 80s, we changed the strategy. After that, it was to make the Brazilian state officially *recognize* the racism in Brazilian society, the present of the racism in the structures of the Brazilian state. We, from the 80s onward, began to coin and use a strategy to denounce institutional racism. This is racism out of the individual perspective, as a manifestation of people, but in the structure of the state. It was our own state that is responsible for racism. Then from that we flatly absorbed this theory of institutional racism, inclusive with the collaboration of the North Americans...who coined the term “Black Power”, Stokely Carmichael and Charlie Hamilton, who

spoke of the question of institutional racism. We absorbed the theory of institutional racism and began to denounce the state... And this strategy was important, it gained much more visibility in general politics and in 2003 we got to elect a President of the Republic (Lula), one of the social movements. This made possible a series of historic demands, historic flags of the social movements, were institutionalized. Among them [the demands] was the creation of a secretariat within our own government, a ministry devoted to the racial question in Brazil... a national law that made Afro-brazilian history and culture, African history and culture Afro-brazilian, obligatory in the curriculum of private and public schools. This was important. We have already seen how education, too, was always a tool, an instrument used by the Brazilian state to disseminate inequalities, to disseminate racism, and to disseminate this image of the black person as a thing, as inferior... At that time there existed in the state the construction of structures for the promotion of racial equality... A strategy that we are using, the law, is to denounce within the spheres of the government, the genocide committed against the Black population, we continue, as well, with the activities of the social movements, also denouncing this violence]

During the research period I had the opportunity to speak with people who have been actively engaged in anti-racist activism for the majority of their lives. Just as I have begun to see how the power of the hegemonic Brazilian states operates, I have both seen and heard the mobilization of Black people against this system of power in the realm of cultural production and direct action. The first event that I went to during the research period was the opening of the art exhibit O MAFRO Pela Vida Contra o “Genocídio” da Juventude Negra at the Museu Afro-Brasileiro at the Terreiro de Jesus site in the historic center of Pelorinho. This exhibit acted as a space of resistance to challenge the manifestation of genocide that is the mass extermination of black youth in Brazil. The purpose of the event was to:

*Denunciar, alertar, defender direitos e tomar posição contra ações violenta que ceifam vidas é também função social do Museu. Nesta perspectiva, o Museu Afro-Brasileiro da Universidade Federal da Bahia realiza esta exposição com o objetivo de não permanecer alheio ao morticínio de jovens negros na Bahia e no*

*Brasil, abrindo seu espaço para discutir a questão da violência no âmbito da Universidade junto a sociedade civil, em consonância com a Campanha de Reaja e a Anistia Internacional/Brasil.*

*O conteúdo da exposição busca sensibilizar as pessoas que ainda não foram tocadas por esta problemática, pois grande parte da sociedade ainda percebe a violência como algo muito distante de si e dos seus. Assim, o MAFRO conclama a sociedade de para refletir sobre a cor da perda de um (a) filho (a) na mais tenra idade. A dor da perda não tem cor, classe, nem conta bancária. A Dor, é dor que rasga o curacao e dilacera a alma de mães, pais, irmãs e amigos, causando danos irreparáveis.*

*“Eu tenho um sonho. O sonho de ver meus filhos julgados por sua personalidade, não pela cor de sua pele.” Tal como Martin Luther King, o MAFRO acredita no sonho de que isto é possível, por isso implementa ações que contribuem para a construção de um futuro onde todas as pessoas possam ter seus direitos respeitados, sobretudo, o direito de **VIVER**. [MAFRO/UFBA 2015]*

[To denounce, to alert, to defend a take a position against violent actions that reap lives which is the social function of the Museum. In this perspective, the Afro-Brazilian Museum of the Federal University of Bahia realizes this exhibit so that people do not remain oblivious to the killing of black youth in Bahia and in Brazil, opening our space for discussion of the question of violence in the University with civil society in like with the Campaign React (or You Will Be Dead), and Amnesty International/Brazil.

The content of the exhibition looks to sensitize the people that still are not touched by this problem, because a large part of society perceives this violence as something very distant from itself and it's own. So, MAFRO calls society to reflect on the color of the loss of a son or daughter at an early age. The pain of the los does not have color, class, nor bank account. The Pain, it is a pain that rips the

heart and tears at the soul of the mothers, fathers, sisters, and friends, causing irreparable damage.

“I have a dream. The dream to see my children judged for their personality not by the color of their skin. Like Martin Luther King, MAFRO believes that this dream is possible, therefore we implement actions that contribute to the construction of a future when all people may have their rights respected, especially, the right to **LIVE.**]

The physical space of the exhibit was powerful. It had the ability to hold people within a specific location and time while evoking and shaping the construction of the present moment. The exposition itself forced confrontation with our current social context and seeks to facilitate a dialogue about what may or may not be considered, by some, to be the genocide of black youth. It reveals the ability of the visual arts to create a space for the construction of language around complex social issues through their ability to embody the experiences of artists and viewers. Because art does not necessarily require the viewer to be literate to receive the intended message of the piece, this form of communication, through the visual language, opens access to information and the sharing of experience.

Like the visual arts, music also acts as a form of cultural resistance. Having grown up listening to hip-hop I have become aware of the ways in which hip-hop as cultural production has the potential to serve as a tool for consciousness raising. Lázaro and I talked at great length about this, when I asked him if he believed that hip-hop is a form of resistance against state violence he told me that he believed it was a significant and strong source of resistance.

O hip-hop, ele pode ser uma arma muito mais eficaz do que qualquer livro. O rap chegar em lugares onde educação não chega. E é isso que a gente busca quando a gente começa fazer música. Que se a gente vai falar, se a gente põe uma mensagem, se lá, uma mensagem de resistência em um livro é boa, ela é importante e mais ela não vai chegar em muitos lugares. O rap, ele chega em qualquer lugar, dependente do assunto que você, da temática que você busque,

aquilo quando se transforma música ela ganha uma linguagem universal [Lázaro, Interview, 19/5/15].

[Hip-hop, it can be a weapon much more effective than any book. Rap arrives in places when education does not. And it is this that we found when we started to make music. That if we spoke, we could include a message of resistance, it is important to have this message in a book but this message is not going to arrive in many places. Rap, it arrives in whichever place, depending on the subject, the theme that you seek, the message when it becomes a song becomes a universal language].

The way that activists are challenging the direct use of racialized violence by the state, vary throughout Brazil, and they are far too numerous to discuss in-depth here. Instead I will try to provide a window into another strategy of activism—direct action. While living in Salvador I had the honor of staying with Valdecir, who I have previously described as a veteran civil rights activist here in Salvador, I participated in an action planned by Black women throughout the state of Bahia. The *Marcha das Mulheres Negras Contra o Racismo, a Violência e Pelo Bem Viver* [March of Black Women Against Racism, Violence, and for Good Living] was organized by the *Rede de Mulheres Negras da Bahia* [Network of Black Women of Bahia] which represent organizations of black women throughout the state of Bahia. The 423 organizations of the *Rede* are varied, and reflect movements of the youth, domestic workers, the LGBT community, “*movimento sem teto*” [movement for decent and affordable housing], a “*população em situação da rua*” [populations on the street], *mulheres “de santo”* [women from various African religious and spiritual traditions, Candomblé in particular, and “*marisqueiras*” [women that collect mollusks on the beaches and in the mangroves]. The march took place in the Administrative District of Bahia and ended at the Governor’s Office where a group of women, including Valdecir, were able to deliver their manifesto listing the demands of the women represented by the organization.

The goal was to hand the list of demands to the governor himself, but we (the participants of the march) were denied entry into the building, and the governor refused to meet with the group. In spite of this a small group of women that included Valdecir,

were able to speak with a coordinator for the *Secretaria de Relações Institucionais* [Secretary of Institutional Relations] who was sent outside to act as a liaison between the governor and the protestors. Although unable to speak directly with the governor, Valdecir described the march as a success because it was the first *Marcha das Mulheres Negras Contra o Racismo, a Violência e Pelo Bem Viver*, and the first time that these women organized to make demands for the state of Bahia to recognize and address the oppression of Black women throughout the state of Bahia. After the march Valdecir and I reflected on the march and I asked her if she thought marches or direct action were an effective strategy for challenging the violence of the state.

*Na realidade eu acho que esse é o melhor estratégia...Quando você ocupa o espaço publico, quando você vai as ruas...você chamam a atenção da sociedade todo...as pessoas querem saber o que esta aconteceu, que esta acontecendo. E quando você para o transito quando você para a cidade, o seu poder de força politica, ele é mais reconhecido... nos estamos aqui, e as pessoas precisam ver a gente, as nossas caras, as nossas formas de estar no mundo...Então acho que essa é a melhor estratégia ainda pra fazer enfrentamento a desigualdade, a invisibilidade, ao descaso [V. Nascimento, 14/5/2015].*

[In reality I think that this is the best strategy... When you occupy a public space, when you go to the streets, you call the attention of the whole society...the people want to know what happened, what is happening. And when you stop transit, when you stop the city, your political power is recognized...we are here, and the people need to see us. Our faces, our ways of being in the world...So I think that this is still the best strategy to confront inequality, invisibility, and the neglect].

As we continued to talk about the march the question of the utility of transnational alliances to combat a global system of white supremacy to achieve local liberation emerged. We discussed how the impact of the march would multiply if marches were carried out in each state of Brazil, throughout the Americas, and the Caribbean—throughout the Diaspora. Since I have reflected on the power that the unification of Afro-descendent worldwide to deconstruct the racialized pyramid of power that has continued its global expansion that begun with the transatlantic slave trade and the colonial world market system, how Pan-Africanist philosophy can be utilized as a framework in



combination with culturally specific strategies developed by activists engaged local struggles. It seems to me that in our increasingly globalized landscape transnational alliances throughout the African Diaspora and beyond will be required to deconstruct the hetero-patriarchal white supremacist system of power under which genocide against Black people continues.

## **Conclusion**

By the 16th Century the colonization of Brazil by Portugal was well under way. The intensive extraction of natural resources for use in Europe were the products of slave labor. While the Portuguese exploited the labor of both Native Brazilian and African slaves, the spread of disease throughout the colony decimated populations of indigenous peoples. This led to the increased use of African peoples as slave laborers. The establishment of the plantation economy in the late 16th Century was facilitated by the institutionalization of slavery, and this mode of production was maintained using violent technologies of social control. The use of direct and indirect forms of violence to subordinate enslaved populations was a necessity in the colonial system, and this historical foundation upon which contemporary Brazilian society rests. This legacy of violence has informed the construction of contemporary social, economic, and political systems, and manifests itself in the state violence employed to maintain a racialized pyramid of power. I have found that police violence is a direct manifestation of the violence used to control enslaved African people during the colonial period. The dehumanization and criminalization of Black people was the product of institutionalized racism that has endured into our present time. The disproportionately high rate of murder of Black Brazilian people by police officers is a direct reflection of the genocide of Black people carried out by the Brazilian state. Through my research I have come to understand that police violence is but one of the many ways in which the ongoing anti-Black genocide manifests in Brazil. I have come to learn that just as genocide is multi-faceted so are the ways in which Afro-Brazilian people resist and challenge the structurally violent state apparatus. As such, more research is needed to understand the impacts of the various manifestations of violence against Black people in Brazil to provide facilitate the

deconstruction of this system of oppression. Future considerations for research would consider a community based research approach in which scholar activists would work with community members who have identified a need for the development of social projects that are decolonizing and liberatory.

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## *Appendix*

1. Could you have done this project in the USA? What data or sources were unique to the culture in which you did the project?

I do not believe that this project could have been done in the USA but I think some version of it could have been done. That said, the experience that I had living with Valdecir Nascimento was invaluable for the construction of this project and instrumental in forming the conclusions that I have drawn in my monograph. The people with whom I conducted interviews (Carla, Valdecir, Professor Cosme, and Lázaro) provided a source of information that was completely unique to Brazil. In addition the Marcha das Mulheres Negras Contra o Racismo, a Violência e Pelo Bem Viver, and the opening of the MAFRO exhibit, O MAFRO Pela Vida Contra o “Genocídio” da Juventude Negra, were two events that, through my participation, acted as sources of information that I would not have had access to outside of Brazil.

2. Could you have done any part of it in the USA? Would the result have been different? How?

I could have done the background research I conducted in the United States. All of the textual, online news sources, studies and reports could have been accessed online. Because of this I believe I could have conducted a critical textual analysis of relevant statistics and text based sources to support the hypothesis that I formulated. However, without access to the Brazilian people that taught me about the historical rootedness of violence, and participation in the events organized to denounce anti-Black racism in Brazil, the paper would have been purely based in theory instead of the lived experiences of Black people in Salvador. I think that this is particularly important because if we are to deconstruct the global system of white supremacy that continues to exploit Black people worldwide we must deconstruct Euro-centric systems of knowledge production that devalue the lived experience of the groups that we are focused on understanding.

3. Did the process of doing the ISP modify your learning style? How was this different from your previous style and approaches to learning?

Engaging in the ISP process did modify my learning style. Before the ISP I had never had experience in conducting formal interviews so the ISP introduced this as a new format for learning. Although I had not conducted formal interviews, I am familiar with synthesizing information gathered from conversation to produce ideas or substantiate existing ideas.

4. How much of the final monograph is primary data? How much is from secondary sources?

The majority of my monograph is primary data but I do draw on secondary sources to help explain my theoretical framework, provide data on the study area, and support the information collected from primary sources.

5. What criteria did you use to evaluate your data for inclusion in the final monograph? Or how did you decide to exclude certain data?

I decided which information to include in the final monograph by identifying the most salient points in the discussions with the project participants and using this data to expose the historical legacies of violence in Brazil, the implications of this violence for Black people today in Salvador, how activists challenge the structurally violent state apparatus, and understand genocide in the current cultural context. I decided to exclude data that did not directly relate to the aforementioned inquiries.

6. How did the “drop-off’s” or field exercises contribute to the process and completion of the ISP?

The field exercises helped me to realize how my level of proficiency in Portuguese would impact my ability to complete the ISP. These exercises made me realize that I would need

to spend time carefully developing and translating questions for the interviews and conduct formal interviews (in addition to informal) to procure information. In addition they helped me to realize that the possibility of having an organic conversation about some of these issues would be difficult because of their complexity.

7. What part of the RME most significantly influenced the ISP process?

The readings that were assigned for RME along with the two lectures given on the practical use of research methods were most useful.

8. What were the principal problems you encountered while doing the ISP? Were you able to resolve these and how?

The principal problems I perceived while doing my ISP were that while my project advisor did her best to help with my project, her area of study and expertise was not related to my study topic (police violence). She was not the advisor I was intended to have during the ISP period (she was too busy to take on the role as my project advisor) but recommended by the woman who was initially meant to act as my advisor. When meeting with my advisor she told me that when asked by the other woman if she could act as my project advisor she explained that she was too busy to take on the role. My advisor works full time as both an early childhood educator and the pedagogical coordinator at a school in the periphery of Salvador, in addition to working 40 hours a week she was working on her completing her masters (her final paper and defense were due during the project period). We were able to make time to meet but I think this work load, in addition to the fact that her area of expertise (education) was not directly related, made it difficult for her to be as effective as someone who had more time available, or whose direct academic or professional focus was more directly related to my research subject. I attempted to resolve this issue by having conversations with Valdecir about my research project, and in about violence in Salvador, however, it was not possible to resolve this issue.

9. Did you experience any time constraints? How could these have been resolved?

I believe that I could have produced a monograph of higher quality if the ISP period were longer than 3 weeks and was structured in a way that allowed me to spend more of the program period engaging in research or work around the research subject.

10. Did your original topic change and evolve as you discovered or did not discover new and different resources? Did the resources available modify or determine the topic?

My original topic did not change but the resources available did modify the topic. Because I was not living in the type of community where state violence manifests most frequently I was not immersed in the environment that I was studying so my experiential sources were limited to the knowledge of my interviewees, and my analysis of the events in which I participated. Because I lived in an apartment building in a middle to upper-middle class area of the city I was not immersed in the way that most people, specifically Black people, in Salvador live, I was not able to include a textural description of the ways in which state violence manifests on *my own* lived experience.

11. How did you go about finding resources: institutions, interviewees, publications, etc.?

My Academic Director, Bill Calhoun, facilitated my introduction to majority of the resources I used before the ISP period. In addition to sending various news articles during leading up to the research period, Bill recommended a Brazilian website which I used as a source for news throughout the research period. I used my home university's online library to search for resources related to my study area.

After the organization and project advisor I was initially meant to work with changed for the first time (while I was still in Fortaleza), I was told that I would be living with Valdecir. I met Valdecir and Professor Cosme prior to the research period during the 2-week, Race, Gender, and Sustainability seminar in Salvador, and after the lectures decided that both professors could provide valuable insight related to my research subject. After meeting with the woman who was supposed to act as my project advisor for the first time during my first two weeks in Salvador she informed me that she could

not act as my project advisor and recommended another woman. SIT Program Coordinator Oélito contacted this woman and arranged for me to meet with her. During the first week of the ISP period I met with my new project advisor, Carla, and we set up an interview for the following meeting. She told me about the art opening at MAFRO and put me in contact with Lázaro. Although I had been previously introduced to Valdecir and the Instituto Odara during the Race, Gender, and Sustainability Seminar, I came to know more about the organization through conversation with Valdecir as a result of her position of leadership in the organization. Valdecir invited me to the Marcha das Mulheres Negras that I was able to participate in during the research period.

12. Comment on your relations with your advisor:

My relationship with my project advisor was project although I think it would have been more useful to work with someone whose field of study or professional career was directly related to police violence in Brazil. My level of fluency greatly influenced the amount I relied on my advisor for support because I often found that working through issues during the research period would be complicated and more time consuming by having to explain them in Portuguese.

13. Did you reach any dead ends? Hypotheses which turned out to be not useful?

Interviews or visits that had no application?

I did not reach any dead ends or hypotheses that were not useful, nor did I conduct any interviews or participate in visits that had no application.

14. What insights did you gain into the culture as a result of doing the ISP, which you might have not otherwise gained?

I do not think I would have begun to understand the complexities of the process of racial formation in Brazil and thus the discourse surrounding issues of race in Brazil without doing this project.

15. Did the ISP process assist your adjustment to the culture? Integration?

I feel as though the ISP process did not greatly assist in my adjustment and integration to the culture because it occurred during the final weeks of the program.

16. What were the principal lessons you learned from the ISP process?

I learned that 4-weeks is not enough time to engage in meaningful research and produce an equally meaningful document that carefully synthesizes the three-week research experience.

I learned about how the historical processes of racial formation influence society today in Brazil and some of what that means for the Black residents of Salvador and Black Brazilians in general.

17. If you met a future student who wanted to do this same project, what would be your recommendations to her/him?

I would suggest that she/he first read my project and attempt to contact Valdecir or one of the women at the Instituto Odara to find out how s/he could develop a project that would provide a service to this organization or another organization working to deconstruct the system of oppression that results in the ongoing genocide of Black people in Salvador and Brazil.

18. Given what you know would you undertake this, or a similar project again?

I would plan for a significantly longer time period for being in the field, and use a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) (Atalay 2010) approach to developing a project with a community that had identified the need for a researcher.



