Divine mediations: pentecostalism, politics and mass media in a favela in Rio de Janeiro
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2. **Samba Gospel.**

Sound, Space and Social Boundaries

The first nights in my small apartment in the morro, five floors up in the brick and concrete house of José and his wife, I could hardly sleep at all. It was very hot and humid but what kept me awake mostly those nights were the loud music and the noises coming from the festivities in the morro. I had moved to the morro somewhere during the week and the first Friday evening I saw and heard the many different celebrations that mark the beginning of the weekend. The different churches of the Assembléia de Deus, whose services had all started between eight and ten, had their doors open and I could hear their music and songs clearly. The little shop on the *estrada* had been playing *pagode* music since the afternoon, while in the *avenida de pavão* the bars were playing mostly *forró*. That Friday night I could hear the sounds of dance music all night long. Tired as I was that Saturday I was also quite excited: it appeared to me that life in the morro never stopped for one moment and that people celebrated the end of the work week together.

I was soon disabused about the togetherness. The different music and sounds not only came from different groups, people from these groups often demonstrated their distinct social positions through the music they played. *Forró* was commonly thought to belong to the *nordestinos* - immigrants from the Northeast of Brazil who had recently migrated -, *pagode* to the 'authentic' inhabitants. *Funk* belonged to the youth and was mostly associated with the *tráfico*, while *gospel* belonged to the *evangélicos*. Most people from the Pentecostal churches were very keen to stay away from the little bar where the *pagode* music was playing, let alone dance to that or other kinds of music in public. Conversely, the open doors of the Assembléia de Deus did not signify the great love of gospel music of a large proportion of the non-Pentecostal inhabitants. In the months thereafter I learned that even among the people from the different Pentecostal churches, boundaries between groups were drawn quite sharply at times in the morro and one of the ways to accomplish this was along the lines of musical preference. Many people from the *Igreja Universal*, for example, said they preferred to play music from their own

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98 *Pagode* is a type of popular music I will describe in greater detail later in this chapter.
99 The main street cutting through *Pavão-Pavãozinho*.
100 *Forró* is a type of popular music associated with people from the Northeast of Brazil.
101 The funk that I refer to here differs from the style commonly referred to this way in the West. The funk I refer to here is like electronic dance music and hip-hop music. I will describe the music in more detail later in this chapter.
gospel-singing pastors than from pastors of other churches\textsuperscript{102} and the music that was coming from little shops or houses in the morro often signified the religious preference of one of their inhabitants. In other words, while the inhabitants of the favela initially had appeared to me to be a homogeneous group, in fact they formed quite a heterogeneous collection of people who identified with different social and religious categories.

In this chapter I will argue that sound and music are essential to the constitution of identities in the morro. In the density of the favela, different groups try to exercise a politics of presence through the sounds they produce. After having discussed the specific qualities of sound in the next section, I will introduce several of the groups and institutions in the morro by way of the sound and music they produce and describe their presence in the soundscape of the morro. This description of the soundscape should clarify why Pentecostal sound and music is deemed so important by the people who attend Pentecostal churches. For them the music is a confirmation of their own identity to themselves but also to other inhabitants. In general they pitch their ‘Godly’ sound and music against the worldly sounds of their neighbors and try to transmit the Holy Spirit to the other inhabitants in order to convert them to their faith.

2.1 Sound, Place and the Politics of Presence

Within anthropology and history, sound is often assigned a secondary place in relation to vision, that is, places are often brought to life by means of a description of what is seen rather than what is heard (Feld 1996; Baily 1996; Bijsterveld 2001). ‘Ethnographic and cultural-geographic work on senses of place has been dominated by the visualism deeply rooted in the European concept of landscape (Feld 1996: 94).’ This one-sided dimension of the representation of place is remarkable because, ‘the overwhelmingly multisensory character of perceptual experience of place should lead to some expectation for a multisensory conceptualization of place (Feld 1996: 94).’ There are several arguments for me to begin my representation of the morro by a description of the soundscape (Schäfer 1994). First, it is through sound that people experience and know a particular place (Feld 1995). As Feld argues, ‘sound, hearing, and voice mark a special bodily nexus for

\textsuperscript{102} This is confirmed by the quantitative research of Alexandre Fonseca (1997), who showed that the people from the Igreja Universal mostly tuned in to the radio channel owned by their church instead of those of others (pp.90)
sensation and emotion because of their coordination of brain, nervous system, head, ear, chest muscles, respiration and breathing (ibid: 97).’ Though emotion may be predicated on discourse, sound should not be uncoupled from the discursive practice. ‘Emotions maybe created in discourse, but this social creation is contingent on performance, which is always emergent through embodied voices (ibid: 97).’ Therefore, Feld adds the term ‘acoustemology’ to the vocabulary of the social sciences: ‘Acoustemology means an exploration of sonic sensibilities, specifically of ways in which sound is central to making sense, to knowing, to experiential truth… Acoustemology means that as a sensual space-time, the experience of place potentially can always be grounded in an acoustic dimension (ibid).’

Most people in the morro made sense of who, what and where by recognizing the sounds and knowing what they represented. For example, one of the repeated questions inhabitants asked me when I first met them was if I had heard gunshots and if so if I was scared? After some time I began to understand the question as an introduction to the place. Living in the morro means being confronted with the sound of shootings, understanding the background and coping with the danger involved. These are important experiences in the environment that inhabitants share. I had heard gunshots often and I had witnessed some emotional reactions. I saw, for example, how one of my informants immediately began to search for her grandchildren who were playing somewhere in the morro. She ran outside to find them, shouting out the names calling them to come home quickly. On another occasion, a mother told me that the worst thing that could happen to her was hearing the sound of gunshots up the morro while down in Copacabana, knowing that her children were playing somewhere in the caminho (the alleys in the morro). Recognizing the sound of gunshots is not all too easy. Sometimes I thought I heard gunshots but when I asked other people they would assure me that what I had heard were fireworks. Fireworks also meant something distinctive, as they were often used by olheiros (watchers) to alarm other traficantes that policemen were entering particular parts of the morro. The sound of fireworks also alarmed the other inhabitants of activity somewhere in the vicinity and told them it was wise to be cautious.

The description of the soundscape of the morro should not be seen as a replacement of a description of the cityscape, but rather as complementary to it. In other words, my focus on the ear is meant to accompany the eye, not to replace it. In line with Steven Feld’s urging that acoustemology be used in the description of place, we might follow authors such as Veit Erlmann (2004), Steven Connor (2004) and Charles
Hirschkind (2001), who all strive to pay more attention to sound and the faculty of hearing/listening in the constitution of modern subjectivity (Erlmann 2004). Instead of focusing on hearing as a discrete sense, all authors maintain a synaesthetic approach to sound in which hearing, seeing, touching, and feeling, influence each other. According to Steven Connor:

The senses communicate with each other in cooperations and conjugations that are complex irregular, and multilateral. This complexification of the sense knits itself together with each new configuration. We cannot merely reflect on the operations of sense without performing active sensory operations or enacting sensory apprehensions. Writers seeking to account for the demotion of the sense of hearing and to redeem it from that demotion may nowadays often evoke the idea of a cultural sensorium, or a mansion of the senses. But what a culture offers is not just a static consortium of the senses, disposed like a molecular structure in a particular configuration, but rather a field of possibility, a repertoire of forms, images and dreams whereby reflection on the senses can take place. Intersensoriality is the means by which this is enacted. Cultures are sense traps that bottle and make sense of sensory responses, but they are also sense multipliers (Connor 2004: 156).

My focus on the ear in this chapter is strongly related to the landscape of the morro. The morro is made up of small houses built on top of each other, narrow alleys and small flights of concrete stairs. The houses are poorly insulated and often inhabited by many people. Social life in the morro is ineluctably characterized by proximity. This proximity has several consequences for the formation and consolidation of social groups at particular moments in time. Social life in the morro could well be characterized by the tension between proximity and the need for (dis)ociation. Inescapably people live close to each other, are related or know each other’s families well and are dependent on the solidarity of neighbors. Despite this, people take great care with whom they are involved or seen with in public. Many social categories were employed to pass moral judgments on certain people and it therefore mattered enormously with what groups one could be identified.

Sound is an important instrument of identification of social categories, especially in a place characterized by proximity. People are very much aware of what they and others listen to because they are often confronted with the sounds of others. Though by no means can the significance of sound be taken at face value, the particular boundary-crossing capabilities of sound, its capability to traverse space does indicate its unique capability to designate and identify the presence of certain groups and activities. The
soundscape is a site of power and conflict. One can, for example, also literally ‘defend’ oneself by erecting a wall of sound in response. Jacques Attali highlights the dialectical relation between sound and power:

More than colors and forms, it is sounds and their arrangements that fashion societies. With noise is born disorder and its opposite: the world. With music is born power and its opposite subversion. In noise can be read the codes of life, the relations among men...All music, any organization of sounds is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality, It is what links a power center to its subjects, and thus, more generally, it is an attribute of power in all its forms. Therefore any theory of power must include a theory of the localization of noise and its endowment with form. Among birds a toll for marking territorial boundaries, noise is inscribed from the start within the panoply of power (Jacques Attali 1985: 6).

By this focus on power Attali is indicating the fact that sound can create temporal order and hence structure experience. Though Attali often equates sound with noise in order to stress the violence of sound and hence the unique capabilities of sound to ‘interrupt a transmission, to disconnect, to kill (ibid: 26)’, I would like to maintain distinctions between sound, noise and music. Noise, I understand as ‘sound out of place’, following Bailey’s reformulation of Mary Douglas’ statement (Bailey 1996: 50). Sound is to my mind not endowed with an intrinsic value and defining something as noise is therefore a socio-political act. When Attali defines music as ‘noise given form according to a code (ibid: 24)’, I can only agree as long as noise stands for sound in general. The important point that is brought forward here is that music is a special type of sound, which demonstrates a particular structure as well as special structuring capabilities. Therefore ‘music is a means of understanding peoples and behavior and as such is a valuable tool in the analysis of culture and society’, as Alan Merriam stated some time ago (Merriam 1964: 13). Yet, as the ethnomusicologist John Blacking has argued: ‘The musical performance is only able to communicate to the participants because they have learned to make links between different kinds of knowledge and experience...[But] no music has power in itself. Music has no consequences for social action unless it can be related to a coherent set of ideas about self and other bodily feelings (Blacking 1987: 35).’

In this chapter I am mostly concerned with the ability of music to communicate group identity and to reproduce boundaries between different groups. Among scholars it

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103 In this chapter I will not be able to do justice to the literature on ethnomusicology or to give very detailed technological description on the different musical genres and performances that I have encountered in the morro.
is widely recognized that preferences for certain musical styles can be crucial to identity politics and the creation and maintenance of boundaries between groups (Keil and Feld 1994; Stokes 1997). Identification in the morro was often framed along the lines of musical preferences. People described each other as *sambista*, *pagodeiro* and *funketro* depending on their preference and affiliation (see also Sansone 2001). Likewise, *crentes* and *nordestinos* were often recognized by the music they played and listened to. In general style can be defined as ‘the forming form’ (Maffesoli 1996: 5) or as Keil and Feld argue, ‘a deeply satisfying distillation of the way a very well integrated human group likes to do things’ (Keil and Feld 1994: 202). Keil and Feld argue that ‘the presence of [music] style indicates a strong community, an intense sociability that has been given shape through time, an assertion of control over collective feelings so powerful that that any expressive innovator in the community will necessarily put his or her content in that shaping continuum and no other’ (ibid).

Because music styles so often constitute strong feelings of communality and can express the uniqueness of a particular social group, they are often described as authentic to such a group. Yet, to avoid essentialism, people’s presentations of so-called ‘authentic styles’ might be better described as performances that seek to create boundaries between groups, instead of authentic styles. According to Stokes, music ‘allows us to turn from questions directed towards defining the essential and “authentic” traces of identity “in” music (a question with which much nationalist and essentially racist folklore and ethnography is explicitly concerned) to the question of how music is used by social actors in specific local situations to erect boundaries, to maintain distinctions between us and them, and how terms such as “authenticity” are used to justify these boundaries’ (Stokes 1997: 6). Despite the fact that we must observe caution in describing this or that music style as authentic to a particular group, the fact that people experience a particular style as deeply authentic to themselves should remind us that sound and music have the ability to touch us profoundly (Connor 2004).

Following the approaches to sound and identity outlined above, I would like to argue that sound and music are more than reflections of identity. Keil and Feld state the following about listening to music:

Each listening act is not just the juxtaposition of a musical object and a listener. It is a juxtaposition – in fact an entangling – of a dialectical object and a situated interlocutor. “Dialectical object” reflects the fact that a sound object or event can only be engaged through recognition of a simultaneous musical and extramusical reality: the experience is mental and
Hearing music therefore both reflects and constitutes identity. It resonates with a sense of self and of others. As such, sound can touch us and evoke a sense of social boundaries that are not merely symbolic but also physical. This accords with the work of Daniel Putman (1985). Dissatisfied with the visualist language on knowledge and learning, Putman argues that touch, rather than sight, gives us insight into the specific way the musical experience teaches us something.

The way that music refers to something is the same way that touch refers to something - immediate, nonconceptual, frequently imprecise, often emotionally powerful, definitively informative. Two lovers who are sensitive to each other can learn something about each other's disposition simply by touching. The phraseology for reference is best stated by the phrase "expressive of." Experience in life teaches us that tactile sensations are expressive of certain meanings (Putman 1985: 60).

Such a notion of music sheds light on the question of why music is often experienced as such a powerful expression of group identity. Playing music constitutes identity both for oneself as for the other in a direct, immediate and emotional manner. It also offers clues on why it is such a powerful tool in the politics of presence. In the morro, the performance of identity through musical styles was not confined to the private space of the home, on the contrary, people continuously asserted their presence as a community through particular sounds and musical styles that were audible in the public domain at large. Such politics of presence is often dependent on the existence of electro-acoustic technology that can amplify sound and music beyond the confines of the domestic sphere. The use of electro-acoustic technology to exercise a politics of presence in the morro indicates two important features of the relationship between sound and space. First, it indicates the attempt to control space through sound or, as Michael Bull has stated, it indicates 'a powerful motivation to use sound to reorganize users' relation to space and place' (Bull 2004: 181). Second, it indicates a conflation of public and private space and complicates neat divisions between urban (public) spaces and domestic (private) spaces. Especially given the architecture of the morro, characterized by proximity, amplified sounds quickly become public. This has several consequences for the description of the morro, as we will see below.
2.2 Local Territories and Trans-local Sounds

In the morro amplified sounds mediate between the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the inhabitants. The heterogeneity of the inhabitants of the morro is partly reflected in the territorial divisions inside the favela. While the morro is often described as the complexo Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho, inhabitants also make distinctions between many different smaller areas: Quebra Braço, Buraco Quente, Nova Brasilia or Igrejinha, to name but a few. This is not uncommon in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro. In much of the literature on these favelas, scholars stress the tensions between the internal and external boundaries of the favelas (Zaluar 1985; Alvito 2001). Though on the outside, the favelas are often represented as one bounded space, on the inside there are many very important divisions. Marcos Alvito describes the favela Acari in terms of a continuum of micro-areas to supra-local institutions (Alvito 2001: 73). Likewise, Alba Zaluar, who did research in the favela Cidade de Deus in Rio de Janeiro, writes: 'The representation of locality is one of the most important in the ideology of the poor urban [subject] in this city. And this locality has territorial divisions and sub-divisions, and the more there are of these, the more there have to be organizations that unite, mobilize and create the identity of the local people' (Zaluar 1985: 175).

Locality is often defined by the relations people maintain with other inhabitants. As both authors acknowledge, the proximity between the inhabitants calls for an understanding of the importance of 'neighborliness' (vizinhância). Neighbors who occupy the same little space (pedaço) in the morro often form solidarity networks that strengthen their sense of locality, for example, their sense of territory. In the morro I often witnessed the interdependence of and care of neighbors. People would share food or lend each other certain appliances and as such maintain a minimum of internal solidarity. Yet, simultaneously inhabitants identified themselves with supra-territorial institutions that speak in the name of a larger collective in the morro, such as the associação de moradores, the escola de samba (the samba school), the Igreja Universal or even the comando vermelho. In some cases internal divisions and external unity are not considered problematic. People in the morro could easily identify themselves with certain local and supra-local identities, for example, when they simultaneously put forward their identity as morador (inhabitant) and carioca. However, in many instances there was great tension between different identities and solidarities. Take for example the case of my friend Maria. Maria always maintained good relations with her neighbor and was often
invited to join in the festivities when there was a churasco (barbecue). Yet when her neighbor had converted to the Assembléia de Deus and invited her friends for a barbecue, Maria did not want to set one foot across the threshold of the house of her neighbor. She felt the people of the church would look down upon her as an unfaithful and criticize her behavior. When her son married in a local church of the Assembléia de Deus, she stood in the porch and refused to enter for the same reason: ‘I don’t want all those people looking at me and gossiping about me, no’, she said to me. Similarly people who attended Pentecostal churches often expressed the tension with non-converted neighbors or with non-evangelical institutions and few of them would be seen inside the escola de samba.

This example demonstrates that the neighborhood is not the sole determinant of identity in the morro nor is ‘neighborliness’ (vizinhando) the sole determinant of sociability. Inhabitants also identify and are identified with certain institutions in the morro: the churches, the escolas de samba or the tráfico for instance. Logically, this also means that the inhabitants have to cope with the presence of members of the institutions with whom they do not identify personally. A description of the favela as a site of both local and trans-local sources of identification is in accordance with Alvito’s description of the favela as a space that is constantly invaded by supra-local institutions and supra-local structures (Alvito 1998; Alvito 2001). Alvito introduces the terms locality and supra-local institutions for the favela to distance himself from those who take ‘community’ as the objective unit of analysis. ‘Community’, according to Alvito presupposes a boundedness that is in fact not present (Alvito 2001: 52). While I agree with Alvito, his description of the favela as a locality characterized by a multitude of territories (the micro) on the one hand and a multitude of supra-local institutions (the macro) on the other also has its disadvantages.

Alvito’s conceptualization of locality is based upon a definition of Anthony Leeds who defines locality mostly in terms of visual characteristics (Leeds 1978: 33 in Alvito 2001: 52). As such, Alvito’s analytical framework of the different networks in which the inhabitants participate favors a geographical understanding of the favela with a strong visual and spatial bias. The micro level is defined mostly in terms of space and territory and the macro level as structures that are linked to that space, for example: the state, the media or the churches. Supra-local institutions, such as the churches or the state, are described as institutions that somehow stand above locality. In my opinion, such a description downplays the importance of sounds in the movement between micro-area
and trans-local institutions. I would like to describe these institutions as trans-local instead of supra-local in order to focus on the ability of the institutions to do exactly the opposite of what supra-locality suggests, namely to create a sense of place for people in the favela.

Since space is scarce and valuable in the morro, there are but a few large public spaces where people gather for social events. There is the *quadra de pavão*, the *quadra de escola* the *samba de Cantagal*o and a recently finished *quadra de futebol* in Cantagal on the Ipanema side. Since these spaces were by definition public there was not one group in particular that could claim the space permanently. Community meetings, evangelical events, *baile funk* parties and other social events were held alternately in these spaces. Through these social events, certain groups established their presence in the morro. Yet, their presence was not marked exclusively by the geographical space they occupied, but even more so by the sound they produced. In the architecture of the morro amplified sounds easily overflow the *pedacos* (micro-areas) in the morro. As people loudly amplified their own music, they temporarily seized hold of the soundscape of the entire community. Such a seizure of the soundscape demonstrates how electro-acoustic technology can be used to privatize public space in an urban context like that of a favela. In addition, it also demonstrates that there is a constant movement between the private and the public.

In the context of the morro many sounds represent groups that form part of larger imagined collectivities that transcend the limits of the morro. Take, for instance, the local Assembléia de Deus or the local traficantes. Both represent trans-local communities since they form part of factions with branches in other morros. During evangelical events, the loudspeakers amplified the voice of the pastors and the gospel music while during the *baile funk* parties, the funk music thundered through the night. While the sound of these groups marked their place in the favela, the sounds themselves often had trans-local sources. They came from a disc or a cassette that was produced and distributed as well as played in other places. Besides creating a sense of place, the groups also exercised a politics of presence through their sound and music. With their effort to

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104 There is one other *quadra* high up the morro in Pavão-Pavãozinho, but there were not many gatherings since it was pretty far removed from the communities.
105 *Baile* literally means 'dance'.
106 While Bull’s discussion on mobile privatization (Bull 2004: 181) focuses on the privatization of space through ‘private’ electro-acoustic technology such as the walkman, sound in the geography of the favela shows a different kind of transgression, namely the privatization of public space through public electro-acoustic technology, namely a sound system with loudspeakers.
control the soundscape by means of music, they enforced a claim on public space and hence demonstrated power or status. In this way inhabitants claimed their permanent political space in the density of the morro. Let me describe some of the sounds and groups in detail.

2.3 The Sound of the Alto Falante

Throughout the day there was distinct sound we could hear from every corner of the morro: The *alto falante* (community loudspeaker) of the associação de moradores. The inhabitants often referred to the *som* (sound) of the associação de moradores, when speaking of the loudspeakers. From my apartment I could hear two community loudspeakers, that from Cantagalo and that from Pavão-Pavãozinho. This sound of the community loudspeaker was instantly recognizable; at first it reminded me most of the sound of the megaphones that are used in political demonstrations. The community loudspeakers were used to inform the inhabitants of the morro of important social events. The loudspeakers were placed on the roof of the associação de moradores and at several other spots in the morro. Often during my conversations with inhabitants, our discussions would pause in order to hear what was being said on the alto falante. In the morro de Cantagalo, the sound of the alto falante often reverberated against the tall flats that stand in Ipanema and that sometimes made it difficult to understand what was being said. Mostly it could be heard a couple of times in the day, for example, to inform the inhabitants of an event that was to be held in one of the public spaces in the morro. Slowly, as I began to know the leaders at work in both of the associations, I could also recognize the people who were talking.

Apart from the content of the amplified messages, the sounds of the alto falante communicated more. The sound reflected and constituted the authority of the associação de moradores as the institution that should represent all the inhabitants of the separate communities. The associação de moradores is a very important institution in almost all the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. They are the recognized administrative and political representations of favelas in Rio de Janeiro. One of the important functions of the

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107 Such a claim is facilitated by the political structures in the morro. The local leaders of some groups can potentially participate in local governance when they are recognized as mediators between the members of the group and other authorities such as the political representatives of the city council. In the next chapter I will return to this political dynamic.
associação de moradores in the communities is the registration of ownership of land/house. It is the only place where ownership of a house or a piece of land can be registered semi-legally (semi-since many morros are still considered 'squatted' and the question of ownership is therefore complicated.) Inside the morro the authority of the associação de moradores in the matter of this registration is accepted. The house can be transferred from the old to the new owner for a small fee. In the morro there were hardly places left where a person could build new houses. The highest places on top were not yet occupied, but building directly on the rocks is very difficult.

The distinct sounds of the two alto falantes also reflected the separation between the communities Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho. Because they had been formed as distinct communities in the past (both in 1961), the communities had their own associação de moradores and were therefore in some cases recognized as separate administrative units (see also Chapter Four). The local leaders were trying to unite the two associações de moradores but the objections of some inhabitants obstructed unification.

2.4 Forró, Community and Migration

The distinct sounds of the two community loudspeakers that marked their separation often paired with the music that was played in the morro. For instance, at the entrance of Pavão-Pavãozinho, along the avenida de Pavão, loud forró music often emanated from the bars. Forró is a popular type of music and dance from the Northeast of Brazil. In the morro the sound of forró is mostly associated with nordestinos, immigrants from the that region who had migrated to Rio de Janeiro during the last few decades. Forró music is an important element in the symbolic construction of the imagined community of migrants from the Northeast and provides people with a shared sense of origin. In Rio de Janeiro it plays a prominent part in the São Christóvão fair, a fair that offers northeastern goods and music like forró and has been traditionally attended by northeastern migrants. The fair has a permanent place in Rio de Janeiro since 1945 in the neighborhood São Christóvão.108 The popular version of the origin of the name forró insists that it was derived from the English words “for all”, written on the doors of the dancing clubs that

108 Nowadays approximately 70,000 people visit the fair each weekend, among them many young people from the middle class who have no Northeastern background. See Elzário Júnior & Elizabeth Porto. Feira de São Christóvão: Patrimônio Cultural, Histórico e Artístico, in O Caderno Virtual de Turismo
were opened during the railroad constructions in the Northeast at the beginning of the twentieth century.109

The forró that could be heard day and night in the morro echoed the ongoing flow of immigration from the Northeast to the morros of Rio de Janeiro. This region of Brazil is extremely poor and its recent history is characterized by authoritarian landowners, drought, hunger and disease (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 31). Not surprisingly the Northeast region of Brazil has the highest number of inter-regional migrants that migrate to other regions and 70 percent of the population of the Northeast who migrated, headed towards the Southeast of Brazil.110 Forró also tells of the often forgotten discrimination between people of different descent and color in the context of the morros of Rio de Janeiro.

The Nordestinos... do not escape the stigma of simply being reduced to a single term: Nordestino. They are prone to social and economic immobility due to their discriminatory status in the Southeast regions merely by nature of being ethnically Nordestino. They have left the serro searching for employment opportunities in Brazil's industrial hubs such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, where they are subsequently and overtly mocked and informally segregated because of their accent, their food, their music and their culture. In the above-cited cities, the Nordestinos become naïve targets of pejorative slurs such as "Baianos" (from the state of Bahia), "Cabeça-chata" ("Flat-head") or "Paraíba" (from the state of Paraíba). The Nordeste ("Northeast") and the serro ("backlands") hold a prime sense of place, identity and significance to the Nordestino. When the Nordestino migrates to the big cities, he or she is brutally reduced to being a Nordestino (or a matuto, "hillbilly"). The identity of place transcends the identity of ancestry; and hence also transcends the "black-white" paradigm, albeit not completely excluding it, but simply adds another complex dimension to Brazilian social, political and cultural dynamics.111

In the morro de Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho narratives of origin and descent intermingled with popular views on the immigrants from the Northeast to provide explanations for poverty, inequality and insecurity. During my research, several people claimed that the people from Cantagalo were born and raised in the morro while people

109 Another version has it that forró comes from an African word forró-bódú, which means feast. Evolução Histórica do Forró, Fernando Monterrey
111 Alan Marcus 2003 www.brazil.com
from Pavão-Pavãozinho were mostly nordestinos.\textsuperscript{112} In my conversations with people who lived in Cantagalo, they often talked about "those paraibas"\textsuperscript{113} from Pavão-Pavãozinho. Many inhabitants of the morro considered the recent immigrants from the Northeast a separate group, even though the people came from many different places and regions in the Northeast. The term nordestinos or paraibas was often employed to lump together a quite heterogeneous group of immigrants who rented apartments in the morro. The discrimination of immigrants was enforced and legitimized by the suspicion of discrimination on the part of the immigrants. One of my friends in Cantagalo claimed that some nordestinos discriminated the 'autochthonous' population on the basis of their color: 'There are some that don't like people who have our color',\textsuperscript{114} she said as she pointed to her dark skin. Despite such claims of autochthony on the basis of descent and color, both the autochthonous people in the morro and the nordestinos are in fact made up of a heterogeneous group of immigrants, which cannot be neatly categorized. Discrimination and conflict signify that descent and color are important elements in the discourses on identity rather than the characteristics of a fixed identity. Likewise, music offers an important experience of identity. Despite my efforts to deconstruct the natural inclination of the archetype nordestino to listen to forró, the people I knew who could be considered nordestinos did in fact love to play forró and experienced the music as their own compared to the samba or pagode that was felt to be distinctively carioca.

\section{2.5 The Sound of Samba and Pagode}

On many occasions I woke up early on a Sunday morning because someone was still drumming the pandeiro, the tambourine that is used in samba and pagode music. Obviously he or she could not get enough of it after the long Saturday night festivities at the quadra de escola de samba. Live music was played mostly in the weekends but there would often be rehearsals during the week. Besides live music, people played samba music on their stereo during celebrations, parties or simply for their own enjoyment.

One of the widely recognized institutions of practically every morro in Rio de Janeiro is the escola de samba. The samba schools of Rio de Janeiro are powerful

\textsuperscript{112}This is confirmed by Livio Sansone (2001: 159), who states that many of the parents and grandparents of the people he interviewed in Cantagalo came from the interior of the state of Rio de Janeiro or Minas Gerais.

\textsuperscript{113}Paraíba is a state in the northeast of Brazil.

\textsuperscript{114}Literally "tem algumas que não gostam gente da nossa cor"
institutions that have become synonymous with an image of what Brazil is both inside and outside the country. Especially in Rio de Janeiro, where the famous annual desfile (parade) in the sambódrome takes place during carnival, some escolas like Beija-Flor, Portela or Mangueira, to name but a few, have become big organizations that manage to generate plenty of money to finance their extravagant and expensive parades. Their names are known worldwide and many tourists, officials and celebrities come to Rio de Janeiro each year to witness and partake in the parades in the sambódrome.

Samba is commonly represented in-and outside Brazil as the ‘authentic’ Brazilian music-style that originated and flourished in the favelas. Many accounts of the birth of the samba as the national music style par excellence claim that it was repressed by the government because it was seen as an undesirable Afro-Brazilian expression, until the government could no longer withstand its popular appeal. However, following the work of Hermano Vianna (1999), who studied the genezeses of samba as the music that represents authentic Brazilian culture, ‘the notion of samba’s authenticity was itself invented and cultivated.’ His attempt to free the history of samba from the misconception that this so-called authentic music style was repressed until it suddenly became the most celebrated Brazilian music style, introduces a much more complex and hybrid idea of popular culture. Vianna does not deny the repression of elements of popular culture, but he does argue that repression coexisted with other types of social interaction occasionally contrary to repression.

In the past, many schools were dependent on the infamous bankers of the gambling game jogo do bicho who financially supported them. Later, the samba of Rio de Janeiro became a million-dollar business and the biggest schools developed into enterprises firmly entrenched in the popular entertainment industry (Sepúlveda dos Santos 1998). Not all escolas de samba have grown so big. There are several competitions on different days during carnival. The big, famous schools compete in the grupo especial but there are also grupo A and grupo B, and so forth, in which the smaller escolas compete. Members of the smaller escolas all hope to be promoted to the grupo especial one day. The escola de samba Alegria da Zona Sul (Happiness of Zona Sul), the samba school of the morro after a couple of years in grupos C and D had been promoted from grupo B to grupo A after their parade in 2003. With a sixth place in 2004, they can go for the championship of grupo A again in 2005. The full name is of the samba school of the morro is Grêmio Recreativo Escola de Samba Alegria da Zona Sul. The samba school was formed in 1992 after uniting the separate blocos (carnavalesque groups) of the two
communities Cantagalo and Pavão-Pavãozinho. The hall where they practice is generally known as the *quadra* de Cantagalo (square of Cantagalo) and besides the samba school practice, it is used for festivities, baile funk parties, pagode performances, 'community'- and other mass gatherings, for example, Protestant/Pentecostal services and other events.

During my research I lived very close to the quadra de Cantagalo, that is located on the *estrada*, directly opposite to the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo. The 'square' is in fact more of a hall that can be closed if necessary. Especially in the months leading up to the carnival, the people of the escola de samba *Alegria da Zona Sul* practiced regularly for the *desfile* (parade) in the *sambódrome*. Before and during carnival these rehearsals (*ensaios*) were held in the streets of Copacabana and in large clubs so that in practice there were several big events at which the escola demonstrated its qualities. Many people from the morro participated in the samba school and many more identified *Alegria da Zona Sul* as a representation of the morro in the competitions with others schools of other morros and as a representation to the world 'outside'. Take, for example, these words from the president of the *Alegria da Zona Sul*, Sérgio Eduardo, who composed a *samba de terreiro* inspired on an offensive remark made by a student of his: 'I was giving class when she started to talk badly about people who live in the morro dripping with much prejudice, without knowing that I also lived there. I said she should not say these sorts of things without knowing what it is like and, furthermore, that I was very proud to live in the favela.' From this event originated the samba *Lição de Vida* (life lesson) in which Sérgio Eduardo praises the favela he loves so much. 'From up here you can almost grab the moon with your hands', according to him.115

The samba schools have been and still are important socio-political institutions of the morros in Rio de Janeiro, although here as well the traffic in drugs has changed their relationship with the communities significantly (Sepúlveda dos Santos 1998). Alba Zaluar notes that the *blocos de carnaval* (carnival bands) often competed with the associações de moradores of Cidade de Deus about the representation of the favela to the state and the society at large often. The important position of the school in the morro de Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho was exemplified by the members of the escola de samba, who attained public status and who were considered part of the local governance of the morro (*liderança*). Carlos Dionisio, who represented the escola de

samba *Alegria da Zona Sul* in the association of samba schools of Rio de Janeiro,\textsuperscript{116} was one of the respected members of the *conselho de liderança* (council of leaders of the morro).\textsuperscript{117} As one of the well-respected members of the samba school he was very much aware of the specific social problems of the community and was also willing to participate in improving the situation in the morro. The relation between the escola de samba and the associação de moradores of Cantagalo was quite good, since one of the associates of the escola de samba was also working in the associação de moradores of Cantagalo. Yet, the socio-political status of the members ultimately depended upon the musicians and composers and the quality of their performances. If inhabitants had not loved their samba, recognized the pleasure that it gave them, such a status would have been hard to achieve. People dressed up, danced, courted and sang during the festivities. It was their participation that made the school so important.

Given this love of samba, the sound of the samba coming from the quadra de Cantagalo was perceived as a welcome part of the soundscape by many inhabitants of the morro. Not all inhabitants identified with the sound, however. Precisely because it is generally associated with Afro-Brazilian history and tradition, samba has become one of the popular cultural expressions that are demonized by the Pentecostal churches in Brazil. Following this demonization, the style itself had consequently become an expression of an identity that not all of the inhabitants in the morro shared. Evangélicos who lived in the morro preferred to play their own Gospel music. We will return to this topic later on in this chapter.

Besides the rehearsals of the school, there were many other festivities at the quadra de escola the samba de Cantagalo or in the other spaces of the morro. In the weekends there were often big festivities, mostly pagode and baile funk. Historically pagode was the name of the festivities that slaves held in the slave houses (*sertões*). In Rio de Janeiro in the 1970s people in the morros gave the name pagode to the festivities that involved eating, drinking and samba. From there, pagode also became a type of music that quickly gained popularity. Pagodes were often held in the quadra but, they could also be made up out of a smaller band that played at the small bars in the morro. Yet the parties were very popular and the different pagodes in the morro during the week were thronged.

\textsuperscript{116} A.E.S.C.R.J. - Associação das Escolas da Cidade do RJ
\textsuperscript{117} In Chapter Four I will explain these institutions.
Besides the sound of samba and pagode there were other sounds that echoed through the night and took control of the soundscape. Funk definitively won every contest in terms of loudness. The music of the baile funk, a very popular music perhaps best described as dance music with ‘fat beats’ and hip-hop influences, was played so loudly that no one could hide from it, literally. Mostly on Fridays the trucks of the ‘Big Mix’, organizer of baile funk parties, would arrive to set up the equipment. Two walls of approximately eight by four meters of professional loudspeakers were unloaded and placed on the quadra in Cantagalo. Around midnight the first sounds would thunder through the community. To me, the electric sound effects enhanced the experience of being taken over by a force from another dimension. When I asked the older inhabitants many of them just sighed, ‘estamos acostumado’ (we are accustomed to it). In general, people showed diverse reactions to the parties, some complained, damned or accepted, while others simply enjoyed the parties very much. However by and large everyone acknowledged the powerful presence of the sound of the funk music and the acknowledgement that they were accustomed to it was generally not meant to express they could not do without it. On the contrary, there were people living opposite to the quadra de pavião.

Yet, for most of the inhabitants the idea that they could do anything to stop or tame the baile funk parties did not even occur. The fact that these bailes were organized and supported by the traficantes meant the music had to be accepted. During the parties, armed men would patrol the vicinity of the baile in order to protect it against invasions of the police or other gangs. As such the sound of the baile reflected the power relations in the morro. The baile funk parties in the morro are typified as ‘baile de comunitidade’ (community baile) in contrast to ‘baile de corredor’ (gallery baile) at which gangs meet each other in semi-organized fights (Cecchetto 1998). As Cecchetto also confirms, in the morro these bailes were generally ‘protected’ against invasions by the police and gangs by armed traficantes of the leading faction, in my case the comando vermelho. I agree with Sansone who warns us about ‘an a priori direct link between rage, revolt, violence, gangs and funk (Sansone 2001:143)’, because many young people he interviewed in Cantagalo

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118 This is not a recent phenomenon Livio Sansone, who has done research in Cantagalo in 1991 writes: "In this community it seemed that funk music had, as it were, saturated the soundscape, and that musical genres other than funk had a hard time finding their way into public spaces (Sansone 2001:140)". During my research more than ten years later funk still was very present, however pagode, samba and gospel did also find their way in the public spaces quite easily.
loved funk and did not identify themselves as *funkeiro* or were associated with the tráfico. Yet, during my research I witnessed that most of the bailes were directly associated with the tráfico.

The sound they produced was not entirely uncontested, however. It was not only the community that experienced the music, the baile funk parties in Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho could be heard in the neighborhood of the morro as well. As such it transcended not only the micro-area within the favela but also the geographical distinction between morro and asfalto. One informant told me that inhabitants of Copacabana and Ipanema had pressured the municipal governments to end their burden and, as a result, the police had forbidden the bailes in the past. The informant also told me that during my research, the president of the associação de moradores was called by traficantes in the middle of the night to convince the police that the baile could continue. Apparently the police had climbed the morro to stop the baile because no permission had been given to have one.

In Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho the bailes were held either in the quadra de Pavão or the quadra de Cantagalo. The festivities were not confined to these spaces however, even if this was what had been wanted, it would have been physically impossible, given the size and structure of the morro. Around the squares, in the alleys leading to them people were chatting, drinking, smoking and kissing. From what I have seen there were mostly adolescents taking part in the festivities. Nevertheless, I have also frequently seen young children and older inhabitants who were going to the bailes. Inside, on the ‘dance floor’ people were dancing, courting or simply checking out the scenery and looking at each other. The loud music made it hard to speak, but that was not what most people had come for.

For me the parties were a thrilling experience, particularly because during the festivities armed men mounted the dance floor and moved through the dancing mass with their firearms in full view. Songs that praised the power of the comando vermelho enforced the feeling that they were parading. These songs, that accompanied their entrance, were met with cheers and people sang along. In general, the lyrics of these songs talk about the status of the singers as *bandidos*, life in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro and the power of the traficantes. Take, for example, these lyrics that come from a the tape with funk recordings I copied from Carla, a girl in the morro:
These lyrics celebrate the warrior status of the traficantes of the comando vermelho. Many of the funk lyrics are a reflection of the violent living conditions experienced by the young people who are involved in the tráfico in the favelas, as well as a demonstration of the territorial power of the tráfico. Take for example the lyrics below that were a parody of a very popular song performed by the Brazilian singer/celebrity Ivete Sangolo. The original text was:

Avisou, Avisou, Avisou, Avisou
Que vai rolar a festa
Vai rolar
O povo do gueto
Mandou avisar

They have warned (3X)
The party will begin
It will begin
The people of the ghetto
They have called for a warning

Instead of an upcoming party, the version of the tráfico warns of the war that it is about to commence. This version I heard often during the bailes in the morro, and also on other occasions, for example, when people played the tapes at home. The song starts with the sound of shots from an automatic rifle. The following texts are sung:

É uniao todas (que) mandam estavam la
É Comando é Comando
nao podemos estranhar
O pt do Vidigal, da Jacare, da Mangueira etc.

It is union, everyone who rules was there
It's Comando it's Comando (Vermelho)
We cannot estrange ourselves
It is the pt from Vidigal, of Jacaré etc
(all gangs of the Comando Vermelho in various favelas in Rio de Janeiro)

esse bonde faz amor e fé
Avisou, Avisou, Avisou, Avisou
Que vai rolar a guerra
O bonde do B mandou avisar

This gang brings love and faith
They have warned (3X)
War will come
The gang of B has called for a warning¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ These lyrics appear in different versions. See also “Uma viagem ao inferno” by Luiz Eduardo Soares who analyzed several forbidden funk recordings. One told of the murder on Tim Lopes (see Chapter Three) on the same popular rhythm/melody: ‘Vai pro latão/Mas certamente vai só os pedaço/Vai sem cabeça, sem perna e sem braço/Mister M vacilão/O que tu fez pra merecer esse castigo?/Certamente cagouetou os amigo/Não adianta tu pedir perdão/Olha o que o Tchaca faz/Vai te deixar em pedacinho/ Mas, se vacilar, tu vai virar um frango a passarinho’ ‘Vai ver o gerente de HK/ O patrão de G-3/O bonde pronto para detonar/Avisou, avisou, avisou, avisou/Que vai rolar a guerra, vai rolar’ (No ritmo de Festa). Accessed on 11-12-2005: http://www.luizeduardosouares.com.br/docs/uma_viagem_ao_inferno.doc
Carla, the girl from whom I copied the tape with baile funk tracks, warned me that if they would find the tapes at customs I would be sentenced and imprisoned. She often sang along with these lyrics in her house. She frequently attended the bailes with her girlfriends and on many Friday nights she would spend hours preparing to go to a baile in the morro. She was the one who took me to my first baile at the quadra de pavão. Her mother, Maria, was worried that she was dating (enamorando) a bandido and repeatedly told her in front of her brothers and sisters (and me) that she would give her the beating of her life if she should catch her with a bandido. Of her seven daughters, three had dated bandidos in the past and she knew what kind of trouble it could bring. Her niece, the daughter of her oldest sister who also lived in Cantagalo, was expelled from the morro by a gang of traficantes. She had a relationship with a bandido but, when the young man had fallen into disgrace with the other gang-members, she was considered a liability. The traficantes told her never to come to the morro again, unless she were to ask permission for an exception. During my stay, I met this young woman twice in the house of the family. On both occasions she had neglected the warning and ascended the morro without permission. Her sister warned her not to stay too long, knowing the kind of trouble it could bring. Heedless of such warnings, Carla was not intimidated by her mother and went to the bailes anyhow.

The bailes were quite popular among the young people in the morro. Most of them had little to no money to go to a boate (disco) in Ipanema or Copacabana. When I asked if they minded the fact that armed boys were parading around, most people replied that for them it was simply the way it was: 'We are accustomed to it', they would say. This is also not to lose sight of the fact that many people enjoyed these bailes very much. Young male friends of mine cleaned their Nike 'tenis' shoes; put on their hippest clothes and set out to watch the girls dancing. The girls who were generally scantily clad in tank tops - showing their bellies ('barriga para fora') - and hotpants, likewise were looking at the boys. Inside, or rather on the dance floor the 'fat' beats were truly intoxicating and I had no trouble understanding the power of persuasion of this music exerted on young people. The bailes were not merely fun. As the lyrics also demonstrate, they were also a means of communicating that the morro Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho was in the hands of the comando vermelho. The enormously loud music could be heard well beyond the confines of the morro and demonstrated that the traficantes had the power to defy the police and the other drug gangs in Rio de Janeiro. Quite apart from entertainment value, the parties also implied business. On many Friday nights the police was suspiciously
absent from the vicinity of the squares were the *bailes* were held and many people suspected they were paid to stay away from these events. Since I lived so close to the quadra de Cantagalo, I could witness what was going on around it quite well. The consumption of marihuana and cocaine was considerably more visible on those nights than during a night of pagode or samba.

Even though many young people said they were 'accustomed' to the rifles and guns, my (evangelical) friends did not often go to the bailes in the morro and people also warned me of the dangers involved. Roberto, a young man who had recently converted to a local Assembléia de Deus, told me he had been in a baile in the quadra de Cantagalo once when the police came and started shooting. He claimed several people continued dancing while the police was shooting at the traficantes and *vice versa*. Another friend of mine tried to prevent me going to a baile. Her best friend had been shot when she was in the line of fire and the father of one of her children had been killed near a baile during a confrontation between traficantes and the police. Both warnings remained ambivalent, a couple of months after her warning she was dancing at the bailes as she had done in the past and so was Roberto. This ambivalence indicates that perhaps young people feel attracted by these bailes not despite but because of the dangers involved. Participating in the celebration of the tráfico, claiming the territory of the morro by means of the sound creates a powerful sense of belonging for young inhabitants of a favela in Zona Sul.

2.7 Sound, Space and Religion in the Morro

On most nights of the week, from my little apartment I could hear the loud amplified voice of Pastor Francisco during the cultos. In the first weeks when I heard him shout the word 'satanas' (Satan) with enthusiasm, I was surprised and impressed by the shouting and often looked out the window to see what was happening. Later, I got used to the screams and the shouting coming from the church during the cultos. From my window I could see the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo where Pastor Francisco (and later Pastor Luiz) worked. It was built strategically at the corner of the main road (*estrada*) and the alley that enters Cantagalo, opposite to the quadra de escola de samba (fig. 16). Because of its central location the church was very visible and extremely audible to many people living in that part of the morro. Everyone who walked from Copacabana to the *Brizolão* on the estrada passed the church. On the opposite side of the road there were several
biroshkas (little shops) where people did shopping throughout the day. The combi (van) that brought people up the morro stopped right in front of it. Just like the other Pentecostal churches in the morro, the doors of the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo stayed open during the culto, exemplifying their outreach to the non-converted inhabitants or other visitors. Besides such a strategic location, the amplified sounds were also essential to the outreach of the churches of the Assembléia de Deus in the morro. In one of my interviews, one of the elder congregants, Linda (a woman of sixty years) remembered what it was like when the church had been recently established, approximately forty years ago.

I was not a crente I was of the escola de samba, a sambista [her daughter laughs loudly]...when we passed the church on our way to the samba practice, Jão, the doorman of the church stood in the threshold and said to us “Jesus loves you and calls for you” and invited us to come in. I replied: “Jão, one of these days I will enter and see this shouting of yours.” The Pentecostals in these days were “Gloria, Gloria” [imitates the sound of high pitched screaming people], that noise, it was louder than today. It was a kind of shouting so different from us Catholics, us Catholics [she starts whispering] we would sit in church, in that silence, that reverence, even when we prayed. In the Pentecostal church it was “Senhor Jesus, my Father, bless, do this...[she speaks out loud]”. So it was that noise, everyone praying out loud, we in the morro had never seen before. So I said “Jão, one of these days I will enter and see what this shouting inside is about”. He replied: “Come and see.” We had this concept that when these crentes began to shout, that screaming, the praying, everything, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, us who were not crente we said: “That is when the men are grabbing the women” [her daughter laughs], that is why they are screaming...One day, I said I will go in and you [her friends] have to remain outside and wait for me. If they start to grab me or if I see the men grab the women, I will call you and you will come and we will get him off.

As we see, the emotional shouting and praying formed part of the attraction for Linda to enter the church. Interestingly, Linda describes herself as a sambista before her conversion to the Assembléia de Deus and associates Catholicism with silence. Her transformation from sambista to crente demonstrates the importance of music in the formation of identities. As with the other churches of the Assembléia de Deus in the morro the music and praying were loudly amplified so participants inside were firmly surrounded by the wall of sound.120 However, the amplification of sound carries the Pentecostal presence well beyond the church walls. While the amplified religious sounds

120 In Chapter Six I will return to the importance that people ascribe to Pentecostal music and sound for their individual sacred experiences.
mostly emanated from the churches of the Assembléia de Deus, on Sundays there was
the sonic competition between the bells of the Roman Catholic parish in Cantagalo and
the prayers of the pastor in the Assembléia de Deus.

The Pentecostal presence in the soundscape of the morro prompts us to evaluate
the relationship between religion and territoriality in the age of electronic mass media.
Danièle Hervieu-Léger argues one can distinguish three registers of religious territoriality
in modernity: the territorial modalities of the communalization of religion; the
geopolitics of the religious; and religious symbolizations of space. Although Hervieu-
Léger recognizes an in-built tension between the territorialization of religion – its
embeddedness in local communities and its claims to universal significance - she argues
that modernity has brought a significant shift in the relationship between religion and
territoriality. She says that the 'dismantling of traditional bonds of belief and belonging to
a local community', reinforced by the 'intensive moving around of individuals and the
explosion of various means of worldwide communication - is leading to the emergence,
through novel forms of sociability, of new configurations of this tension' between the
deterritorialization and reterritorialization of religion (ibid: 103).

Hervieu-Léger mentions three important dynamics in the relationship between
religion and territoriality, which are fundamental to what I think is happening in the
morros of Rio de Janeiro at present. Firstly, she mentions the particularity of a situation
of denominational pluralism. In a situation of denominational pluralism different
religious institutions attempt to sacralize space in order to attract and retain believers,
however none of them can claim a territory exclusively. In the morro this is exemplified
by the multiplicity of different church buildings of different religions and denominations.
Secondly, she mentions the competition for presence in space in situations in which
pluralism is no longer merely religious, but also ideological.

The confrontation between the Roman Catholic Church and the republic
in nineteenth-century France was not played out solely on the stage of
politics and education. It was also revealed at the scale of local
communities, in a competition for symbolic control of spaces; Alain
Corbin's analysis of the 'battle of the bells'(2000), admirably illustrates
these struggles for mastery of the 'soundscape', which typify all rivalries for
control of spaces (ibid: 101).

In the morro, the struggle for the control of space is exemplified by the ideological
oppositions between the sambista or the funkeiro ranged against the crente. Thirdly, she
mentions the importance of the mobilization of the 'most modern communication
technologies..., which is weaving new patterns of religion in space (ibid: 104).’ In the morro this exemplified by the amplified sounds that churches and individuals produce.\footnote{These sounds are in many ways related to global forms of technology and mass media, or what Appadurai calls technoscape and mediascape (Appadurai 1996).}

While each of these three dynamics of religion and spatiality provides insights in the current spatialization of religion, much more could be said about their interrelations. Particularly the recognition of the importance of sound in relation to religion and territory is important when discussing the morro. It seems to me that a ‘battle of the bells’ not merely reflects a ‘symbolic’ struggle over spaces. As I have argued above, the struggle over the control over the morro and its inhabitants is played out both in the landscape and the soundscape. Sound not only reflects (symbolizes) power, it also constitutes power. In other words, only by taking these three dynamics together is it possible to understand that in the morro territorial struggles involve both denominational and ideological institutions that manipulate communication technologies in their politics of presence. This is exemplified by the competition between the church bells and the amplified prayers but perhaps even more so between the gospel music and the sound of pagode and funk music.

2.8 *Musica do Mundo vs Musica Evangélica*

Beside the numerous doctrines and practices, music is a very important aspect of Brazilian Pentecostalism. Most, if not all, of the church services start with music. The hymns (*louvores*)\footnote{*Louvor* could best be translated as musical laudation of the Lord.} are accompanied by music that may range from a recorded tape or a single synthesizer to a large band of (semi)professional musicians. Gospel music has become an important segment of the Brazilian music industry and it comes as no surprise that the Igreja Universal has had its own record label, *Line Records*, since 1991. Other record labels that primarily produce gospel music, for example *MK Publicita*, have also expanded substantially in the last few decades as a result of the popularity of Christian music. *MK Publicita* and *Line Records* together produce the majority of gospel music on the Brazilian market.

Music is also an important aspect of Pentecostalism in the morro. Most members of the Assembléia de Deus carry a small book called the *Harpa Christã*, which contains texts of hymns (*louvores*) that are sung at the beginning of each culto. Generally speaking
Brazilian gospel music is influenced by North American gospel and pop music. The popular songs are often low tempo ballads that express great emotion. In and outside church, people listen to the songs of popular Pentecostal artists such as Kleber Lucas, Marquinhos Gomes and not forgetting Cassiane, a very popular female singer. Many young men who attended churches of the Assembléia de Deus in the morro play an instrument and were having or wanted to follow lessons, eager to be a member of the church band of musicians. Electric guitar, bass, synthesizer and drums were the most popular instruments among the young men in the morro. Women were often asked to sing, either solo or in a choir.

My own entrance into church communities was greatly aided by my abilities to play drums. During one of my first encounters with the pastor of the Assembléia de Deus Caminhando pela Fé, he showed me the musical instruments belonging to the church. When I saw the drum-kit standing at the back, I asked him if I could play a little. He picked up his electric guitar and we jammed for a while. He was quite enthusiastic and told me I should come and participate in one of the cultos. The next culto I attended he asked me to play with him. Up to then his seven-year-old son had been playing in the cultos, but he had much to learn according to his father. After that first time, I was allowed to play regularly at the cultos of his and another church of the Assembléia de Deus in the morro.

In the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo I was not allowed to play drums. Apart from the fact that they had their own very skilled drummer, the pastor (and members) objected to the fact that I had not accepted Jesus as my Savior and was not baptized. In the other churches the pastors and members were less rigid in their views and generally saw my interest as a step towards my conversion. The fact that they would not let me play the drums in the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo must be understood against the background of the strict (discursive) separation between música do mundo (music of the world) and música evangélica (evangelical music) many people in the churches try to safeguard. By and large people criticized popular Brazilian music on the basis of its lyrics. People were wont to say that if the lyrics contained non-Biblical, blasphemous or heretical content, the songs should not be listened to, let alone be played. It was, for example, very clear to people that you should not listen to ordinary funk music voluntarily because it was so narrowly bounded up with moral transgressions and violence.
Fig. 16. Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo on the estrada, facing the escola de samba
Fig. 17. Culto in the Assembléia de Deus Caminhando pela Fé

Fig. 18. Culto in the Assembléia de Deus Caminhando pela Fé
In the other two churches, playing the drums gave me the benefit of participating in a unique manner: I was appreciated for my work by the members and I could sit beside the pulpit, so I could observe the participants during the culto; but most importantly I experienced the importance of music in the cultos. Not unlike other Brazilian religions it is the music that inspires people and sets in motion the emotional participation that leads to the reception of the Holy Spirit demonstrated by people who start shaking, dancing and speaking in Tongues. Many a time I witnessed how the interaction between musicians and other members would lead to an exalted state of being. The repetition of chords and lyrics, the increased tempo and loudness would set the tone and environment for the Word of God to be preached with the right fervor to move the people in the church. When the pastor began preaching in the right emotional style that characterizes most Pentecostal sermons, people would reply with 'Hallelujah' or 'Jesus'. Were these different performances to combine and reinforce each other properly, most people would be satisfied with the culto. If the music was good, the culto would 'pegafogo' (be set on fire), they said.

The people who attended Pentecostal churches strongly disapproved of the baile funk parties, not least because the lyrics of the music contained *palavrão* – 'bad words' about sex, drugs and violence. For most of them going to a *baile* was generally associated with the *caminho errado* – literally the 'wrong way' that leads one astray from God. This does not necessarily mean people never went before or after their conversion. Many of the young people who later converted to either Assembléia de Deus or Igreja Universal had been to the *bailes*, including one pastor.\(^{123}\) The first time I went to take a look at a baile at the quadra de Pavão, I went directly against the advice of one of my friends of the Assembléia de Deus. The women warned me that if I attended the baile funk, people of the church would begin to doubt my spiritual state of mind and would no longer let me participate in the cultos without some kind of an explanation.

Some people who had accepted Jesus or converted stopped going to church (*se afastou*) and started attending bailes again. Once, when I went to a baile funk, I encountered a young man from a small congregation I often attended. He had told me that a policeman had shot him in his leg in a direct confrontation where they had been shooting at each other. After his spell in the hospital, he started attending the small church in order to come closer to God, fearful of the dangers involved in the life of crime and grateful that he had not died. He did not 'convert' however and nor did he

\(^{123}\) See Chapter Six for a discussion of individual experience of music in relation to Pentecostalism.
break with many of the habits of his past life, as many people do when they join a church. During his short attendance in the small congregation of the Assembléia de Deus, he told me that he was trying to reconcile going to the baile with his efforts to encounter God and that, instead of breaking with everything he had done in the past, he would take it slowly, as if to say that God had to be patient with him and should not pressure him to change everything at once. Later, he confided to me that when he and his friends who were associated to the tráfico saw me at the baile, he told them I was 'okay', meaning I was not a threat or a police spy.

Like the funk parties, the pagodes and samba parties were spoken of with contempt by many of the people attending Pentecostal churches. Many people would not like to have been seen near such a party. By and large, people who went to the pagode in the morro loved to party, dance, sing and drink. Often the festivities would go on for hours into the night and more than once I woke up at five or six in the morning with the sound of people still singing and drumming or clapping after the band had gone home. Many people of the Pentecostal churches disapproved of such a life-style and advised me not to attend the pagodes. Early one Sunday morning, I was descending to get my bread at the biroshka on the estrada when I encountered a local pagode musician with his *cavaquinho* in his hands. He was smiling euphorically and shouted out loudly to me: ‘Gringo, I am descending for my second pagode!’ I smiled at him while simultaneously he crossed an obreiro of the Igreja Universal who was ascending the morro. I knew both of them and when the young man had shouted I nodded at the obreiro who had obviously also heard it. He shook his head wearily and said: ‘Only the Lord of the Light’ (‘Só o Senhor das Luzes’), so as to exemplify both his contempt and his hope for a spiritual transformation.

The oppositions between evangélicos and funkeiros or pagodeiros that play themselves out in the daily life of the morro should be seen as attempts to demarcate clear lines between moral and immoral behavior from the perspective of the people who attend Pentecostal churches. The opposition against certain popular Brazilian practices is a recurring phenomenon in evangelical circles. In the media of the Assembléia de Deus and the Igreja Universal, the life-style of the pagodeiros is presented as irreconcilable with an evangelical life-style. In these media, samba and pagode were almost invariably associated with the forbidden fruits of carnal pleasure. One of the most famous sambistas in all Brazil, Bezerra da Silva, lived in Cantagalo for a long time and he

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124 A string instrument.
composed many songs about *os malandros* (the crooks) and *bandidos* (bandits) of the morros. His style was also named ‘sambandido’, because in his music he sang about the violent life in the morros of Rio de Janeiro. After many years of practising *Candomblé*, Bezerra da Silva was converted to the Igreja Universal in 2001. This conversion was broadly publicized to demonstrate the power of Pentecostalism. Understandably the conversion of Bezerra da Silva was portrayed as a victory for the Lord. On the cover of the magazine Enfoque Gospel no. 9, his photo was printed with the text: ‘Bezerra da Silva with thirst for the Bible.’ In the article in the magazine it was said: ‘Bezerra makes clear that although he has lived among sambistas, he was never a lover of the night. He also did not like to drink or to use drugs.’

Despite these discursive oppositions, the distinctions between all these groups are constantly negotiated. As Sansone writes on the basis of his research among young people in the morro in 1991:

No stable youth sub-cultures form around the consumption of a single type of music, as we know them from the Anglo-Saxon literature. Rather there is a circumstantial use of music as divider and, occasionally, ethnic marker in particular moments. The informants show what one might call a cash-and-carry attitude toward musical genres and youth styles; they know how to move very well across different styles and genres (Sansone 2001: 150).

While I agree with Sansone, the successful attempts to demonize life-styles associated with pagode and funk by members of the Pentecostal churches – especially by the elders – made certain movements between styles and genres easier than others. In other words, the constraints on certain behavior exercised by the evangelical communities in the morro made it easier to incorporate samba rhythms in gospel music, than to have adopted those of funk.

Unquestionably, it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate evangelical music on the basis of the musical style and genre alone. This process is aided by a steady incorporation of musical styles and genres that traditionally divided musica gospel from musica do mundo. Marcia Pinheiro has demonstrated that the opposition between funk and gospel music has also triggered an appropriation of the funk music by young evangélicos. Several groups of young men in Rio de Janeiro have started to compose *gospel-funk* with relative success. Not only do the artists use the popularity of the genre to

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125 See Enfoque Gospel no. 9, 2002 pp. 58
reach people they would otherwise not have done, simultaneously, and perhaps more importantly, they demonstrate a symbolic conquest of the world.

That which is perceived as negative and that represents the world is, in the material of Grupo Yehoshua, below heaven, the domain of Yehoshua [Jesus] whose power neutralizes it. People's movements between distinct spheres favors a different type of religious production. This exercise of dissociation and reappearance is the result of a perception of the world that indicates a type of proselytism and evidently innovates the image of the one who evangelizes (Pinheiro 1998:66).

While I fully agree that such movements resignify religious practices, I think that the 'exercise of dissociation and reappearance' deserves more attention. The attraction of the 'funk do bem' - good funk -(ibid: 62) is dependent upon the funk associated with drugs, violence and such. If funk did not have had such a diabolical status, its incorporation by evangelicals would not be so spectacular. In other words, the incorporation of funk does not completely resolve the tension between the musical genres because the powerful symbolic message thrives partly upon their opposition. We will return to this tension between signifiers of good and evil in later chapters. First let me describe the presence of evangelical sounds in the morro.

2.9 Transmitting the Holy Spirit

The battle of the sounds was often fought with live music or linked to a collective manifestation that took place in a church, a bar, a hall or a public square. Yet, as I have argued above, the use of electro-acoustic technologies radically alters the spatialization of religion in the morro. For example, even though there was no church building of the Igreja Universal in the morro, I would like to argue that it was physically present in the morro by means of the amplified sound coming from the houses and the biroshkas. Surely its members who live in the morro are physically present and partly constitute the physical presence of the church. However, the radios that were receiving and amplifying Pentecostal music from the biroshkas and houses were also integral to a physical constitution of the different churches. In other words, they too claim space through sound.

In contrast to the Pentecostal churches of the Assembléia de Deus, the Igreja Universal music has a different place and function. It commences its cultos with songs
accompanied by live synthesizer music. Besides accompanying these songs, the synthesizer is often used to provide dramatic music as background to the sermons and the collective rituals. There are no other musicians involved in the cultos of the Igreja Universal. The Igreja Universal has Line Records and it has its own evangelical radio station, Rede Akimia (105 FM) on which it plays the gospel singers contracted by the company. The radio station plays mostly sensitive gospel ballads. This radio station was very popular among many evangélicos in the morro and, besides the many people who listened to it in their homes, there were several bars and biroshkas owned by evangélicos who tuned their radios to this station. Therefore, even when I went to buy bread or visit people in the morro I could hear the voice of Bispo Macedo, the leader of the Igreja Universal at noon, when he gave his daily talk on Rede Akimia. These biroshkas that transmitted gospel music and evangelical prayers occupy an important position in the public space of the morro. For obvious reasons, they are often located where many people pass by and consequently many people were confronted with the evangelical presence. In the case of the favela Acari, Christina Cunha (2002) has noted an increase in the number of local shops and biroshkas owned by evangélicos. Cunha argues that with the growth of the evangelical templos after the police occupation of Acari in 1997, there was also a significant increase in evangelical owners of shops and biroshkas. This increase in churches and shops has led to what she calls ‘the evangelical occupation of space’ in the favela:

The social space is permeated with their ever-growing presence. There are many “crentes” who circulate in the streets and alleys with their distinctive clothes and their Bibles in their hands. They are easily identified in public by their clothing (above all the believers of the conservative churches such as the Assembléia de Deus) and they move around in groups. They hold their feasts and cultos throughout the day and invite their neighbors to participate, not sparing them or passers-by from the religious proselytism which is so characteristic for believers of this religion, pronounced loud and clear. Some of these encounters rely on speakers, microphones and musical instruments like the guitar and tambourine to encourage the cânticos. Concluding, the evangélicos have infiltrated distinct spheres of “life” in Acari and in this context, the “occupation” of physical and social space is just one of the many facets of this phenomenon (Cunha 2002: 92).

This vivid description of the evangelical occupation of space in Acari is very similar to the situation in the morro during my research. Yet, while Cunha recognizes that evangélicos claim public space in the favela both through their physical presence and the sounds they produce, she does not link the growing presence of evangélicos and their
shops to the increased mass mediatization of sounds, transmitted from shops, houses and churches. Nor does she investigate the particular Pentecostal experiences of the relationship between sound and space. In the case of many of my informants in the morro especially when talking about music transmitted by singing, radio or CDs, the analogy of the movement of sound and the movement of the Holy Spirit became apparent. Take for example what the locally famous gospel singer/musician Alexandre told me during an interview:

What matters to me is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit for me, I love it. I love it when God talks with us and the Holy Spirit is transmitted to the people. For me, this is what the Holy Spirit is. I feel the Holy Spirit in my life and I can transmit the Holy Spirit to the people who are listening. It is my heart’s wish. I don’t want it just for me, I want the people to feel the good things that I feel.

Are you saying that the Holy Spirit uses music?

Music, that is it. Louvor is the instrument - in the church we call it louvor - sing and everybody sings. Louvor is something that flows, so when people louvor the Lord Jesus the Holy Spirit comes automatically, you feel that joy and you transmit that to other people. And the people become glorified, become sane, and even people who are ill, physically ill, spiritually ill, feel cured through the louvor, people are cured through the louvor. For example, those that are on the verge of doing something stupid, who want to commit suicide, who want to leave their family, who want to leave everything behind or do bad things. Normally when those people listen to louvor that is dedicated to Lord Jesus, that louvor makes them feel different, the opposite to what they felt. Those people open their heart and let it flow, and nothing bad happens.

Not only does he attribute spiritual power to music dedicated to Jesus, the imagination and experience of the Holy Spirit that reaches people through space by means of louvor also allows the idea of the spiritual occupation of space by means of gospel music. People can become mediators of the Holy Spirit through the louvor they produce and amplify. This agency for reaching people through evangelical mass media is perhaps best described by the tactics of one of my friends from the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo, Gilberto. Apart from his never-ending invitations to visit a culto of his church, his loud gospel music and his plans to revive the local gospel radio program, he showed me another evangelization trick he said he often performed. While passing by the shops in Ipanema at the foot of the morro, he dragged me into a record shop where he asked for specific gospel CD. When they had found one he liked, he asked if he could hear it out
loud in the shop so as to decide if he wanted to buy it or not. When they had replaced the background music in the shop with his gospel CD, he pretended to be dubious about whether he should buy it or not and he asked the girls behind the counter to increase the volume. When they increased the volume, he stayed to listen only briefly until the attention of the personnel shifted to another customer after which he dragged me outside. As we left the shop behind us I could hear the sound of gospel music coming from the shop. It was loud enough to be audible from a distance of hundred meters down the street and then I understood how he attempted to reach the people who were shopping in Ipanema. ‘Iouvor muda o coração, Martijn’, (Iouvor changes the heart, Martijn), he said while he smiled at me.

2.10 Samba Gospel

In order to understand the appeal of Pentecostalism in the morro, I will describe in which context its sounds reverberate. Obviously, the sound of the baile funk was so intrusive that any other music or sound was marginalized. The Pentecostal churches had an enormous fight on their hands if they were to win the battle in the morro. Yet the Pentecostal churches could compete with other sounds, for instance, the sound of the pagodes. On many Friday nights there would be pagodes right beside most of the churches of the Assembléia de Deus. While gospel music would be played in the church, the band members next door would set in a samba beat that gradually penetrated the walls of the church and forced the musicians in church to turn up the volume of the amplifier. Such a mixture of sounds exemplified the struggles that took place in the morro. Despite these oppositions to unwanted music-styles, in practice it was quite hard to demarcate popular music neatly. Brazilian gospel has incorporated many styles ranging from samba and forró to rock and hip-hop. The incorporation of different genres of music in gospel indicates the fluidity of mass culture. People pick up sounds from everywhere, from their environment, their radio or television and incorporate popular music into their own repertoire. Yet, these incorporations are not always applauded or do not always escape conflict.

While the different churches of the Assembléia de Deus in the morro would generally all start with gospel music that appeared to have North American rather than South American roots, there were considerable differences between the music in the
churches of the morro. In the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo that was directly linked to a large network of churches with a mother church in Leblon, there was little or no typical ‘Brazilian’ musical influences audible in their gospel. One of their musicians who played the electric guitar explained that originally they would play only balada (4/4) rhythms in the church but gradually Brazilian gospel musicians integrated various genres like samba, jazz and rock. He loved to play jazz, reggae, funk and even samba music, but he also admitted that the older members who congregated in his church did not like these other rhythms, they would rather hear the old fashioned balada. Despite his confession of his love for samba, I never heard them play the kind of samba or pagode music that was to be heard in the bars only ten meters farther down the road. This observation is reinforced by the fact that I never saw or heard typical pagode instruments like a cavaquinho, a pandeiro or a tam-tam in the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo.

While many evangélicos opposed gospel music to ‘music of the world’, such distinctions are very hard to uphold in practice. Samba and pagode are an integral part of Brazilian culture and most people in the morro were brought up with them. In one of my discussions with Roberto, a congregant of the Baptist church and Pastor Abrahão of the Assembléia de Deus Caminhando pela Fé, Roberto raised the question how strange it was that some people of the Assembléia de Deus felt they could not play samba in church because it was considered ‘of the world’. He saw samba as part of the Brazilian culture, which should be integrated in church life. He felt that ‘doctrine’ and ‘culture’ should be separated and we should acknowledge the particularities of Brazilian Christianity. Roberto argued samba should not be demonized simply because North American music had influenced the songs of the Assembléia de Deus in the past and were now considered doctrine. Abrahão agreed with Roberto and remarked that the pastor of the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo was simply too stiff.

In the two churches where I played, my fellow musicians, including the pastors, had a life in music before conversion. Fernando, who had been playing pagode all his life before his conversion, mostly played his cavaquinho in church and Pastor Abrahão had bought a pandeiro and a tam-tam, both typical pagode instruments, so that all members could participate. What often happened during the cultos was that even when I would set in my straightforward 4/4 beat that accompanied a gospel song, the other musicians and participants slowly transformed the song into a samba gospel that would swing the church into motion. I often imagined how the sounds of the pagode next door would slowly penetrate the walls of the church and, rather than clashing with the gospel music in the
church, would start to infiltrate and transform the music. The freedom of the participants to grab a *pandeiro* or *tam-tam* clearly raised the level of participation and collective spiritual experience. However, it also meant that they would play those rhythms with those instruments that could produce an exalted state of mind. Likewise, in the Assembléia de Deus *Jardim 25 de Agosto* of Pastor Denilson I witnessed the most vibrant culto when the pastor himself was beating the *pandeiro* like a true sambista. In the Assembléia de Deus de Cantagalo, where I was not allowed to play, such a transformation would not have been possible. Music could become a bit more ‘funky’ as the culto progressed, but it would never evolve into a straightforward samba the way it did in other churches.

2.11 Conclusion

The appeal of Pentecostalism cannot be understood exclusively on the basis of its doctrines and practices. People are attracted to its message in relation to the environment of the morro where forró, samba, pagode and funk echo day and night. The cacophony of sounds and music reflects the power struggles that are going on in the morro and the position that Pentecostalism occupies in it. Language, music and noise are important tools in the formation of identity and the creation and maintenance of boundaries between groups. It is primarily through sounds that people exercise a politics of presence in the landscape of the morro. Sound and music not only reflect the presence of different groups, they are also essential to the constitution of the identities.

Pentecostal music acquires its meaning against the background of the music that is defined as ‘worldly’ instead of Godly. Furthermore the religious meaning and experience of louvor that defines gospel music as vehicle of the Holy Spirit marks the specific power of Pentecostal sound in the soundscape of the morro. A focus on the soundscape of the morro also highlights the fact that electronic media are woven in the fabric of its social life. Almost all the sounds that one hears in the morro are technically mediated in one way or another. The sounds are picked up by microphone, recorded, transmitted, bought and amplified. Mass mediated sounds employed to mark space and identity also demonstrate that identity is not produced either locally or supra-locally, but rather in relation to one another.
While most evangélicos wanted to maintain the boundaries between worldly and godly music, the music that was actually played in the churches and brought out on the market demonstrated the permeability of these boundaries. Incontrovertibly Pentecostalism is often discursively presented in opposition to samba and pagode, but people, consciously or unconsciously, incorporate different popular styles and genres in the gospel music they produce. The blurring of musical boundaries therefore also reflects that, despite attempts to keep them apart, Pentecostalism can incorporate different popular cultural forms that appeal to many different people. Such hybridism is not only common to Pentecostalism in general, it also exemplifies a Brazilian tradition. The occurrence of *samba gospel* in the morro reminds us of the people of the Tropicália movement who have described the Brazilian aptitude for incorporation of styles as *antropofagia* or 'cultural cannibalism' (Perrone and Dunn 2001: 20, 72-95).