



UNIVERSIDADE DE BRASÍLIA  
INSTITUTO DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS  
DEPARTAMENTO DE ANTROPOLOGIA  
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM ANTROPOLOGIA SOCIAL

***“Cuidado!”* in urban Brazil:  
An auto-ethnographic discussion of fear and safety in public space**

Han Hui Tseng

**Brasilia 2019**

Han Hui Tseng

***“Cuidado!”* in urban Brazil:**

**An auto-ethnographic discussion of fear and safety in public space**

Dissertação de mestrado apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social da Universidade de Brasília, como parte dos requisitos para a obtenção do título de Mestre em Antropologia.

Orientadora: Cristina Patriota de Moura

**Brasilia 2019**

Han Hui Tseng

***"Cuidado!"* in urban Brazil:**

**An auto-ethnographic discussion of fear and safety in public space**

Dissertação de mestrado apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social da Universidade de Brasília, como parte dos requisitos para a obtenção do título de Mestre em Antropologia.

Orientadora: Cristina Patriota de Moura

Avaliado em: 27/08/2019

Aprovado em: 27/08/2019

**BANCA EXAMINADORA**

---

Cristina Patriota de Moura (DAN/UnB – Presidenta da Banca)

---

Bianca Stella Pinheiro de Freire Medeiros (DS/FFLCH/USP)

---

Maria Fernanda Derntl (FAU/UnB)

---

Soraya Resende Fleischer (DAN/UnB – Suplente)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **AGRADECIMENTOS**

#### **致謝**

First of all, I would like to express my great appreciation to my advising professor Cristiana Patriota de Moura for the valuable suggestions, encouragements, and patience during the planning and development of the research. Without your guidance, it would not be possible to complete this dissertation.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Bianca Freire-Medeiros and Professor Maria Fernanda Derntl for participating in the committee of my dissertation defense and providing their professional advice.

And thank Filipe, to be my motivation and my inspiration, to be by my side and encourage me to complete what I have to do. Thanks for your love and support for me to be who I truly am. Wǒ ài nǐ.

Agradeço à minha família brasileira: papai João Bosco, mamãe Sara, Bianca, Thauany, João Guilherme e Mel. Foram vocês quem me ensinaram como viver em Brasília, falar português, curtir a vida brasileira. Obrigada por ser minha família!

Agradeço às todas amigas e amigos pelo tanto amor e carinho e que nunca me deixaram me sentir sozinha: Raissa, Bruno, Cida, Alice, Ludmila, Jéssica, Sandra, Dana, Aruan, Fernanda, Lego-lego, Maristela, Ana Paula, Edinaide, Luciana, Hiroshi, Aline, Lee, Huiping, Catarina, a família do Peter, e a embaixada de Taiwan no Brasil.

Agradeço à minha família da capoeira, o grupo do Mestre Mancha e Mestranda Benguela. Que vocês continuem essa alegria e energia da cultura brasileira num caminho cheio de axé. Salve!

Agradeço aos meus amigos e amigas na Rocinha que me permitiram entrar na suas casas e a comunidade; compartilharam comigo as histórias, os sentimentos, as filosofias da vida. Em especial, agradeço à creche ASPA, aos meus bebês e às todas colegas, à Favela Phoenix English school e aos estudantes, ao projeto Refúgio e Fortaleza e às crianças.

Agradeço aos colegas da turma de PPGAS/DAN de ano 2017 pela amizade e companhia no meio acadêmico, aqueles sorrisos e abraços sempre que nos encontrávamos na UnB ou na rua de Brasília. Vocês são muito melhores do que eu poderia imaginar.

謝謝我在巴西利亞的好夥伴 **Woody**。謝謝你總堅毅地向我展現在前方的路，並把你家變成我的小小避風港，有你和 **Brownie** 的陪伴，讓沙漠生活不那麼難挨，也不讓人後悔。

感謝我在台灣的朋友們，尤其是怡蓁、維屏、乙臻、義凱、百岑。定時的跨洋訊息與通話，為在異鄉冒險的我帶來滿滿的關心與鼓勵，也因為有你們的聆聽與建議，協助我一一排解生活與生命上的難題。

最後，感謝我最親愛的家人們：爸爸炳華、媽媽恒旭、弟弟柏學、阿姨恒妃、表弟杰鑫、表弟奕德、外婆沈玉。謝謝你們比我更加勇敢，給予我無條件的愛與信任、支持我在地球另一端求學闖蕩；我愛你們！

*“You have never felt afraid, right?”*

*“You are not afraid of anything, right?”*

*To understand how I managed to travel to Brazil  
and live in Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro,  
many people supposed that I don't have fear.*

*(Han Hui Tseng)*

## ABSTRACT

*“Cuidado! (Be careful)”* is one of the most frequent sayings I received along my urban life in Brazil. This dissertation focuses on analyzing the safety advice and warnings that I received in two urban places: the middle-class neighborhood in the South Wing of Brasilia and the favela Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro, where I stayed most of the time. Putting myself as the method and as the subject, auto-ethnography is applied in this work to narrate my life experience. From my position as a foreigner in Brazil, I make a comparison regarding safety and violence in two distinct urban places and discuss the urban space, public security and violence in Brazil as well as my own sentiments towards danger and fear. Throughout the exploration, different elements in Brazilian society are involved and elaborated on, including gender, age, ethnicity, class, status, place-based identity, social standing, and family life.

Keywords: Urban anthropology, Brasilia, Rocinha, favela

## RESUMO

“Cuidado!” é um dos ditos mais frequentes que recebi ao longo da minha vida urbana no Brasil. Esta dissertação se centra em analisar os conselhos e avisos de segurança que recebi nos dois lugares urbanos onde passei a maior parte do tempo: o bairro de classe média na Ala Sul de Brasília e a favela Rocinha no Rio de Janeiro. Ao me colocar como o método e como o sujeito, a auto-etnografia é aplicada neste trabalho para narrar a experiênciavivida. Partindo de minha posição como uma estrangeira no Brasil, faço uma comparação sobre segurança e violência dos dois lugares urbanos distintos e falo sobre o espaço urbano, a segurança e violência pública do Brasil, assim como meus sentimentos em relação ao perigo e ao medo. Ao longo da dissertação, os elementos diferentes da sociedade brasileira são envolvidos e elaborados, incluindo gênero, idade, etnia, classe, status, identidade baseada no lugar, posição social e vida familiar.

Palavras-chaves: Antropologia urbana, Brasília, Rocinha, favela



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Image 1 – The residential sector 703 South.....	37
Image 2 – The schools at the surroundings.....	38
Image 3 – The alleys are perpendicular to the streets.....	45
Image 4 - Six blocks for discussion of tree pruning.....	49
Image 5 – Locations and routes of the homeless.....	52
Image 6 – The pavilion on the square occupied by the homeless.....	54
Image 7 - Rocinha. The tall apartments in the beachfront belongs to São Conrado.....	67
Image 8 – The tourists attended a favela tour walking along the main street, Estrada de Gávea..	69
Image 9 – The lower part entrance of Rocinha.....	72
Image 10 – Even in the night, Rocinha is still bustling and shining with business activities.....	74
Image 11 – The map of Rocinha with names of main areas.....	84
Image 12– One of the alleys. Each alley could lead to hundreds or even thousands of houses.....	89

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Agefis	<i>Agência de Fiscalização do Distrito Federal</i> Federal District Agency for Territorial Surveillance
ASPA	<i>Creche Ação Social Padre Anchieta</i>
Centro POP	<i>Centro de Referência Especializado para Pessoas em Situação de Rua,</i> Specialized Reference Center for Street People
CUFA	<i>Central Única das Favelas</i>
GDF	<i>Governo do Distrito Federal</i> Government of Federal District
SAE/PR	<i>Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos da Presidência da República</i> Secretaty of Strategic Affairs of Republic Presidency
SHIGS	<i>Setor Habitacional Individual Geminada Sul</i> Attached Individual Residential Sector of South Wing
Terracap	<i>A Companhia Imobiliária de Brasília</i> Agency of Development of Federal District
UDF	<i>UDF Centro Universitário</i> Federal District University Center
UPP	<i>Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora</i> Pacifying Police Unit

## GLOSSARY OF PORTUGUESE TERMS

<i>abadá</i>	white capoeira pants
<i>açaí</i>	Brazilian berry smoothie
<i>adolescentes Bin Laden</i>	Bin Laden adolescents
<i>aquele domingo</i>	that Sunday
<i>balão</i>	traffic circle
<i>bandido</i>	bandit
<i>beco</i>	alley
<i>bloco</i>	block, cluster of houses
<i>caminho</i>	path, way
<i>canaleta</i>	water channel
<i>capoeirista</i>	capoeira player
<i>casa</i>	home, house
<i>classe perigosa</i>	dangerous class
<i>coletivos de confiança</i>	trust groups
<i>cuidado</i>	be careful
<i>dono; dono de morro</i>	the owner of the hill, the leader of drug trafficking group
<i>eixo</i>	axis
<i>escadarias</i>	staircases
<i>favela</i>	slum
<i>favelado</i>	favela resident
<i>filha do coração</i>	daughter of the heart
<i>filho/a do sangue</i>	son/daughter of the blood
<i>flanelinhas</i>	irregular car guardians

<i>gente boa</i>	nice guy
<i>gringo</i>	foreigner, often a white person
<i>guerra</i>	war
<i>ladrão</i>	thief
<i>laje</i>	rooftop
<i>lei do silêncio</i>	the silence law
<i>livre-circulação</i>	free circulation
<i>mandamentos da favela</i>	commandments of the favela
<i>mata</i>	forest
<i>menina</i>	girl
<i>meu filho</i>	my son
<i>minha filha</i>	my daughter
<i>moça</i>	miss, younger lady
<i>olheiro</i>	watchman
<i>pamonha</i>	sweetcorn dumpling
<i>pastel</i>	fried pastry
<i>paz</i>	peace
<i>permissão para matar</i>	permission to kill
<i>povo</i>	people
<i>praça</i>	square
<i>prefeito de quadra</i>	superblock mayor
<i>quadra</i>	block
<i>rodoviária</i>	central bus station
<i>rua</i>	street
<i>senhora</i>	miss

<i>sociabilidade violenta</i>	violent sociability
<i>superquadra</i>	super-block
<i>tirroteio</i>	shooting
<i>trabalhador</i>	worker
<i>traficante</i>	drug trafficker
<i>tranquilidade</i>	peace
<i>transgressões</i>	transgressions
<i>velha guarda</i>	old guard
<i>via</i>	way

## SUMMARY

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
From Taiwan to Brazil.....	2
Public Space in Brazil.....	3
Methodology: Auto-ethnography.....	4
Summary of chapters.....	5
<b>CHAPTER 1 – Into two places: Brasilia and Rocinha</b> .....	7
1.1 – Into Brasilia and the Brazilian family.....	7
1.1.1 – Arriving and the first impression.....	7
1.1.2 – Meeting my Brazilian family.....	9
1.1.3 – From tenant to daughter.....	12
1.2 – Into the biggest favela – Rocinha.....	16
1.2.1 – Favela tour.....	16
1.2.2 – From tourist to volunteer.....	17
1.2.3 – Living in another world.....	20
1.3 – Surviving as a single girl.....	22
<b>CHAPTER 2 – Walking in Brasilia</b> .....	31
2.1 – Brasilia and its undefined streets.....	32
2.2 – Insecurity in the neighborhood.....	36
2.3 – “Don’t go out!” – Fear towards public space.....	40
2.4 – “Don’t walk through the alleys!”.....	44
2.5 – “Avoid weird people!”.....	51
2.6 – The disappearance of the police.....	59

2.7 – Conclusion.....	63
<b>CHAPTER 3 – Being lucky in Rocinha.....</b>	<b>66</b>
3.1 – Rocinha and Favela Tour.....	67
3.2 – Unspoken Rules – No Robbery, No Theft.....	71
3.3 – “Don’t Get Lost!” .....	83
3.4 – Unspoken Tragedy – Shootings.....	89
3.5 – Conclusion.....	94
<b>CHAPTER 4 – Behind the fear and between urban places.....</b>	<b>97</b>
4.1 – Comparison of the two urban places.....	98
4.2 – The talk of crime and fear mongering.....	108
4.3 – Trips between Places.....	116
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>122</b>

*I do have fear of things and I am always cautious.  
In my perspective, bravery is not that I don't feel afraid,  
but that I decide to travel onwards with the fear.*

*就算害怕，也要帶著懼怕、勇敢前行。*

*(Han Hui Tseng 曾瀚慧)*



## **INTRODUCTION**

*There is a phenomenon which I found very interesting.*

*Due to "danger",*

*When I was in Taiwan, people told me not to go to Brazil.*

*When I was in Brasilia, they warned me not to travel to Rio de Janeiro.*

*Once I arrived at Rio, they threatened me not to enter any favelas.*

*While I stayed at the lower part of Rocinha, they advised me not to climb up the hill.*

*If people couldn't convince and stop me, they helplessly declared "you are just too brave!"*

*I smiled; I insisted that I must depart to where I want, where I need to go.*

*I laughed at them; I laughed because they didn't understand, if I had not been brave, I would never have come such a long way, and made friends with each of those who warned me against danger now.*

One day in May 2018, I posted the above words on Facebook to share what I figured out in relation to my experience traveling to and within Brazil. I found it interesting that traveling from place to place, wherever I stayed, I had always been the one to provoke people's concerns. My decisions, coming out of an adventurous and curious mind, were considered "too brave" so people would give me safety advice and warnings along the way.

"*Cuidado!* (Be careful)" could be one of the most frequent sayings that people told me wherever I went in Brazil. When some crimes had occurred around the house in the sector 703 South of Brasilia, my Brazilian mom would emphasize it after saying goodbye. When more shootings occurred in Rocinha, my friends also repeated it to me. People reminded me to avoid particular places and hours, sometimes with clear explanations, sometimes without. It is important to analyze their concerns to disclose the urban life and the public space in Brazil, and moreover, it is also important to analyze my own feelings towards danger and fear. This dissertation will be a comparison regarding fear and safety in two very different urban places: the South Wing of Brasilia and the favela Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro, from a point of view of an outsider and a foreigner. Throughout this exploration, I

will elaborate on different elements in Brazilian society, including gender, age, ethnicity, class, status, place-based identity, social standing, and family life.

To start with an interesting point, in general, I found Rocinha safer than the South Wing of Brasilia. I suppose there was a built-in alert system to help me stay careful in the public space. While staying in Rocinha, the system had almost no need to be turned on because petty crimes like robbery and theft happened less. However, there are many aspects which need to be elaborated and analyzed in order to explain this sentiment.

### **From Taiwan to Brazil**

The journey first started in February 2014, through an undergraduate student's exchange program from Taiwan to the other side of the earth, Brazil. My hometown Taipei (Taiwan) is considered as one of the safest places on earth. Its public space is not directly associated with violence. Wandering on the street, playing at the park, or hanging out at night are not dangerous in people's minds. Petty crimes do not happen often and people are not aware of them. Shootings, as I can recall, had never occurred. On the contrary, Brazil is notorious for its violence and crimes. Before February 2014, when I decided to choose Brazil and the University of Brasilia as the destination for my exchange program, both I and my parents were criticized. The impression of Brazil among Taiwanese includes soccer, bikinis and beaches, the statue of Christ the Redeemer, carnivals, slums, gangsters, and danger. Most Taiwanese get to know Brazil by mass media which reports about deaths, robberies, protests, and shootings. Famous movies from Brazil often portray slums and gangsters, shootings between drug traffickers and police. In general, Taiwanese people consider Brazil to be a beautiful country but with a very notorious name.

However, I often found the advice and warnings unreasonable and even absurd. Most of the time, very few of them come from personal experience. There could be many

misunderstandings regarding danger. Without a personal approach, people tend to spread fear globally, which constitutes a part of the “culture of fear” (Glassner, 2010).

### **Public Space in Brazil**

When Brazil is criticized by Taiwanese people as a very dangerous country, they actually mean that the “public space” in Brazil is dangerous. Lots of robbery cases, the existence of slums, bloody shootings and violent protests in urban places are what scare Taiwanese as well as Brazilians. To discuss public space in Brazil, it must be associated with fear and safety and in Brazilian Portuguese, it is often related to “*rua* (street)”.

Fraya Frehse (2013) sorted some major definitions of “street” in Brazilian social science researches. Roberto DaMatta (1997) conceived that the street is a “social domain” that synthesizes the “public, uncontrolled aspect” of the “urban world”, which is opposed against “*casa* (house)”, the “private, ordered aspect”. The street is also seen as where social life takes place: the space of work (Rizzini & Rizzini, 1996); where homeless people survive and live (Vieira et al., 1994); where non-institutionalized social activities coexist in conflicts (Frugoli, 1995); and the location of the excluded groups (Silva & Milito, 1995; Bursztyn, 2000)

Moving along various urban places in Brazil, I repeatedly crossed the boundaries between the public and private, faced different definitions of the street where some social groups set their territories while the pedestrians only pass by daily. The public space and the street are treated differently according to each person’s social standing and identity.

### **Methodology: Auto-ethnography**

My relations with these two urban places are a little special. I didn’t enter into the family in Brasilia and Rocinha through the role of an anthropology researcher. When I first

met the Brazilian family and the residents in Rocinha, my intention was not for academic work. However, as a foreign outsider in both places, I had always been an observer in order to build relationships with people as well as survive from violence and danger. The topic of my dissertation came after I had already built the bonds with the family, friends and the places. I chose to begin with the word I heard very often, "*Cuidado!*", and from it, I have numerous examples of receiving safety advice and warnings. On one hand, I analyze why people chose to advise me about specific things and show the different types of violence and concerns in two different urban places. On the other hand, I also dig into how my sentiments are influenced by the safety advice and discuss the fear of myself as well as that of other urban residents in Brazil. This research appeared after my journey and stimulated me to rethink and reflect from my memories and sentiments.

My roles in the two urban places are quite special too. In Brasilia I am treated as a daughter by a local family and in Rocinha I am a solo Asian volunteer. My unique positions could be hard to represent a certain group since I believed the two roles are very rare. However, by speaking for myself, from small details in my life experience, it can still reflect urban life in Brazil. Furthermore, my position as a researcher has its ambiguity because basically my fields were my "homes", the places I stayed and had a life in. Alternating between "I, Native" and "I, Ethnographer", the hybridity of the native ethnographer itself blurs the subject and object distinction on which ethnography is conventionally founded. (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997) Sometimes, I spoke for myself and sometimes, I also spoke for "us", the residents in the urban places. I was part of the family but I am not a Brazilian. I may often use "we" for all Rocinha residents but in the end I am still an outsider. I always wondered to which level I would be counted as a local resident, as part of the neighborhood or favela. I did experience the life these residents were having. Half of the time, I was learning to imitate local behaviors, practice the language and attitudes and

trying my best to integrate into the social environment. The other half of the time, I still kept a distance to observe, tell the difference between their culture and mine. I was staying at the same place with them, but even not for academic research, I was not only living in the way they did but had my own strategies to deal with different aspects of life.

Putting myself as the method and as the subject, it is my way of doing auto-ethnography. Paying attention to the physical feelings, thoughts and emotions, the systematic sociological introspection and emotional recall were used to understand the experiences I have lived through. (Ellis and Bochner, 2000) From concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, to self-consciousness, I explored and dissected multiple layers of my consciousness, found the connection between my personal stories, the culture and the preceding researches.

### **Summary of chapters**

There are four chapters in this dissertation. In chapter 1 “Into two places: Brasilia and Rocinha”, I narrate the stories of how I built my life in Brazil and got engaged with these two urban places. Staying with a local family in Brasilia as a tenant, I became their *filha do coração* (daughter of the heart). In the biggest favela, Rocinha, I was able to work as a volunteer and be a temporary resident instead of only a tourist. Moreover in this chapter, I also talk about how my gendered position as a single girl influenced my experiences on the issue of fear and safety.

In chapter 2 and 3, I respectively discuss my observations in the South Wing of Brasilia and in Rocinha. In the former, “Walking in Brasilia”, I focus on the change of security and crimes around my neighborhood in the sector 703 South, recording the daily routine of my Brazilian family, and analyzing neighbors’ relations among the middle-class residents. I refer back to the city plan for this area of attached houses and perceive the

general contemporary fear against the public space which has become occupied by the homeless, drug users and unpredictability. In the latter chapter, “Being lucky in Rocinha”, mainly due to the control from the *traficante* (drug trafficker), the type of violence in the favela and the safety advice I received were very different. There were unspoken rules and tragedies for which I could not obtain answers directly from the residents and needed some extra works to confirm my observations, including more ambiguous conversations with the locals and previous researches from social scientists. Without verbal messages, I was actually imitating and learning through my body in order to survive in the environment.

In the last chapter, “Behind the fear and between urban places”, I begin the chapter by comparing various aspects between the two urban places, including gender, family life, social classes and distance between public and private spaces; and then I question and analyze the source of the safety advice and warnings, as well as the intention of the talk of crime and the cause of fear. Finally, I try to capture a broader imagination so that the issue of safety and fear is not limited within certain boundaries of the two urban places. The trip by public transportation to different areas in the cities also has its significance to be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Into two places: Brasilia and Rocinha**

In 2014, I arrived in Brazil for an exchange program between my university in Taiwan where I pursued a bachelor's degree in Sociology and the University of Brasilia. During the six months in Brasilia, I rented a suite from a local family's house, had intensive interaction with them. The relation between us had surpassed the lease. I called the parents Dad and Mom and they said I was their daughter. They accepted and cared about me as part of the family. I also traveled to Rio de Janeiro, participated in a "favela tour" and was deeply touched in Rocinha.

In 2017, I returned to the University of Brasilia for a Master's degree. With the eagerness to go back to my second home on earth, I chose to stay with the same local family again. During my first vacation in July 2017, I stepped into Rocinha for a whole month's volunteer work. I stayed in a hostel at the lower part commercial area and tried to live a life in the favela.

In this chapter, I am going to tell the stories of how I engaged with these two places: Brasilia with a local family and Rocinha as a volunteer. And I am going to indicate my roles in these two places and how they may influence my positions towards fear and safety in the public urban space.

#### **1.1 – Into Brasilia and the Brazilian family**

##### **1.1.1 – Arriving and the first impression**

In February 2014, I arrived in Brazil for the first time. The airplane landed in Brasilia late at night. Two Brazilian friends who I made friendships with during their exchange in Taiwan, came to pick me up and drive me to the rental suite. During the drive, what I saw

was strange to me and constructed my strong first impression of Brasilia.

Before arriving, I had less knowledge of Brasilia. I had read one thin book in Mandarin, introducing that it is a planned capital city in the shape of an airplane. The aerial view of Brasilia is emphasized in the book, yet there were fewer views of its streets, houses and citizen life.

From the airport, my friends decided to pass by the Congress first in order to impress me. The ultramodern building was lighted in the night - one pair of chopsticks and two bowls, as to how my friends teased. I found the city strange, or to be more precise, I couldn't find the city. The airport seemed to be located in the middle of nowhere, and so did the Congress. Along the way, I saw endless greeneries and darkness. I wondered where downtown is and where people are. When we headed to the house at South Wing 703, they drove approaching some houses which seemed dilapidated in my eyes. These houses were arranged in rows. Their exteriors were out of repair and full of graffiti which looked ugly to me. The passageway between two rows of houses was narrow and the road lamps were dim.

My friends in the front seats started to discuss in numbers and alphabets. "703... D, 74..." they repeated. They had contact with my landlord and the exact address. From the window, I thought all the houses looked equal, equally abandoned. I had no idea how my friends recognized which one I was going to stay in. Finally, we stopped in front of one. "D... 74..." "But it is not this one!" "How come?" They began to argue and after a few seconds, they laughed and turned to me, "Sorry, we drove you to a wrong block. It must be the next one. We are at 704 and it is at 703." They started to drive again, but all of this didn't make sense to me. The roads looked the same, the houses looked the same... I am normally proud of my strong sense of directions. However, here I was totally lost in the dark. There was nothing I could recognize and use to orientate myself. My two friends



were residents of Brasilia but at some moments, they seemed very confused as well. We were like in a maze until they stopped the car in front of a two-floored white house.

### **1.1.2 - Meeting my Brazilian family**

The entrance to the house is the garage door. From where I was, I could see two cars in the garage and there were TV sounds and movements behind the garage. The doorbell was loud and after a few seconds, the opening of the garage door was even louder. I saw a chubby teenage girl in her pajamas, yelling something I didn't understand to her family in the house. She grinned at me with her big eyes. The woman, who I supposed was her mother, came out and welcomed us. Two more kids were showing up, one skinny girl and one chubby boy. They were also smiling happily and following me during the orientation of the house. The woman's name is Sara. She asked my friends to translate the house rules to me while she was pointing to different places from the kitchen until the suite.

Sara emphasized she provided the accommodation, excluding meals. I could use the kitchen whenever I wanted to cook my own food. I would have my own bathroom inside the bedroom and the key of the house to enter and leave whenever I wanted. Inside the house, garage, kitchen and living room are on the first floor while the second floor includes four bedrooms. Since the two youngest kids, the chubby girl and the chubby boy, were still sharing the same room, they had one extra suite to rent. They planned to rent it to either a college student or a young office worker, but didn't expect that they would receive a foreign student. However, they thought it is fun to have cultural interaction although none of them were able to speak English. Back at that time, though I had taken Portuguese classes for one year, it didn't help a lot in real-life conversations. Once my friends left, I started to have difficulty in communication with the family.

The white nuclear family had 5 members: the lawyer father Bosco, the housewife

mother Sara, 16-year-old Bianca, 13-year-old Thauany, and 11-year-old João Guilherme. And, there is the female pet dog Mel. Bosco was born in Paraná, a state in the south of Brazil. His family moved to Brasilia in the 1960s, when he was a teenager. He then completed a bachelor's degree in Law in UDF<sup>1</sup>, passed a civil service exam and became a lawyer working for Terracap<sup>2</sup>. Sara is originally from a small town nearby, Formosa in the state Goiás. It is located in about one-hour driving distance from Brasilia. She moved into Brasilia after knowing Bosco while most of her family members are still living in her hometown until today.

On the following day, the three kids still kept grinning at me. They invited me to browse the family albums and introduce each family member.

I asked, "How do you call your parents? You call them by name or what?"

The kids replied me, "We call them Daddy and Mommy."

I hesitated for a while, having a small conflict in my mind. Then I requested, "Is it possible that I also call them Daddy and Mommy too, just like how you do?"

The parents at the side nodded their heads and happily accepted.

I have heard that in some western countries, kids may call parents' names directly which is not possible in my culture. For me, the only way to mention and call the parents is the title of father and mother. I consider saying their names directly is disrespectful behavior. The rule to use titles instead of names is not only applicable to parents but also to all elders and betters. As I observed my own culture, in order to show respect, to call elders by names is sensitively avoided and replaced by relative titles or professional titles. In a family, we call grandparents, uncles, aunts, older-siblings by relative titles while the elders can call the younger ones by their names. In school, for students, teachers are called as

---

<sup>1</sup> UDF (*UDF Centro Universitário*, Federal District University Center), founded in 1967, is a private university located in the sector 704/904 at South Wing of Brasilia. Law is one of its best courses.

<sup>2</sup> Terracap (*Agência de Desenvolvimento do Distrito Federal*) is a state-owned company, responsible for the development of Federal District.

teachers and the principal is called as the principal.

It is important to mention how the relative titles are further applied to other occasions. For a kid, he or she should call all elders with the titles of uncle and aunt even though they are not his or her biological relatives. In office, younger employees call the superiors by professional titles or by relative titles of older siblings. For instance, when I was working at the most established tourism agency in Taiwan, I used to call my manager “Big sister Tina” since directly calling her “Tina” could be considered impolite and calling her “Manager Tina” would be too strange as we were distant. In return, sometimes she might call me “Little sister” or mention me in a conversation as “The little sister of our house...” The extended application of relative titles can be seen as an extended concept of family. For Tina, she regarded her team as a house, a family; herself as an older sister who was responsible to lead her younger siblings. By such an act, I believe that the relative titles have the effects to bring people closer and united.

To explain the use of titles, it is necessary to trace back to Confucianism. Taiwanese culture is influenced deeply by Confucianism in both ethical and philosophical system. Rigorous seniority and family hierarchy are stressed. Calling elders by relative titles is regarded as good conduct of “*xiao*” and “*li*” in Confucianism. Filial piety, known as “*xiao*” in Mandarin, is a virtue of respect for one's parents, elders, and ancestors. And there is also “*li*”, a system of norms and propriety that determines how a person should properly act within a community, including respecting the elders. Nowadays, “*xiao*” and “*li*” still carry weight in society to normalize the interaction between people. The system of norms is followed by people unconsciously and also actively applied to construct closer relations.

When I requested to call the Brazilian parents as Daddy and Mommy, one reason was to prevent my inner conflicts towards ethics and culture while another reason was to hope to shorten the distance between me as a foreigner and the local family. In Taiwan, there

are some exchange programs for high school students. In the program, they not only experience different school life in another country but also stay with a selected family for homestay accommodation and further cultural interaction. Normally, those students call the family members as “home-daddy”, “home-mommy” and “home-siblings”. My exchange program was processed by universities, without accommodation. A Brazilian friend who was an exchange student in Taiwan helped me find the local family’s house through newspaper ads and arranged the lease. As mentioned above, the family didn’t mean to be a homestay, yet starting from the parental titles, we developed a close relation beyond the rental lease, possibly even more than a homestay accommodation.

### **1.1.3 – From tenant to daughter**

My intuition wondered, does living under the same house roof mean that we are a family? Would we gradually become a family? Besides the parental titles, our attitudes and treatments towards each other also strengthened the relationship. The boundary of being a tenant became obscure when I was always invited to eat together whenever the mother Sara cooked for the family. I felt conflicted since she had emphasized that the rent did not include meals. Yet they never allowed me to reject the invitations. Soon after, I decided to share part of housework as an act of reciprocation. I did the dishes after meals and then I began to wash whatever was in the sink. I thought, if I am categorized into the family, sharing part of housework is a duty.

During the exchange program, I spent more time with the family than in school or with friends. The family also introduced members from their extended families to me. I met various cousins, uncles, aunts, and grandparents. Metaphorically speaking, part of me was reborn to be a Brazilian within the family. They taught me how to speak the language, how to act and react appropriately in society.

Rapidly, both sides of us often ignored extra explanation. Our special family relation confused many people. When I mentioned the family, people might mistake that I migrated with my whole Taiwanese family, or that I was adopted by a Brazilian family, or I am a half Taiwanese and half Brazilian. When the parents introduced me to their friends, they also liked to firstly say, “This is my daughter.” then added a following, “She is from Taiwan and now living with us.” On social networks, the mother Sara once described me as her “*filha do coração* (daughter of the heart)” which could be compared with biological kids – “*filho/a do sangue* (son/daughter of the blood)”.

This kind of extended mother-daughter relation had happened in Sara’s life already though there are subtle differences. First, she called her grandmother “mom”. Because her own mother passed away when she was little, she was raised by her grandmother. In this regard, she had personally explained to me, she recognizes her grandmother as her mother. Second, she had taken care of various kids from her two sisters and a best friend who lives in Formosa, Goiás. These kids regard her as a second mom. Since she is the only one who lives in the city, when there are some activities or the kids are on vacation, the house is opened for them to stay in order to get closer to the city. In everyday life, they call Sara “aunt”. At some special occasions like mother’s day or Sara’s birthday, these kids might refer to her as a second mom and express their gratitude. And, in direct conversations with them, she also referred to them as her sons and daughters. When introducing them to others, she would specifically indicate that they are nephews, nieces, and friend’s kids. I have observed, in Brazilian Portuguese conversations, calling the youngers “*meu filho* (my son)”, “*minha filha* (my daughter)”, can be a term of endearment, equal to my dear, my flower, my love and so on, which are commonly used when an elder talks to a younger person and wants to address the affection. I would categorize Sara calling them sons and daughters only in conversations into endearment and regard my

mother-daughter relation with Sara as rather another special type – fictive kin relationship. (Carsten, 2000)

When my exchange program was done, we had a very saddened farewell at the house and at the airport. We held a family farewell dinner at the house. Besides the core family members, we also invited most affinitive three cousins with their spouses, respectively two from the mother's side and one from the father's side. By the help of a cousin and his girlfriend, I expressed my gratitude to each family member in English and they translated every word into Portuguese. Everyone cried sadly around the dinner table even including male members. The oldest female cousin mentioned, she began to know and feel that I am part of this family at the night when the pet dog went lost. She saw that I was worried as much as them, tried to make efforts and find solutions even more than them and that touched her a lot. It was a moment when she realized that I was no longer an outsider but truly shared a family bond with all of them. My mom described her feeling towards my leaving, "I feel like, there is a part of my heart going, a very important part going to vanish and my heart would never be whole again after she leaves." To comfort their emotions, I submitted a silly hypothesis. "Pretend and imagine that your biggest daughter is leaving for a degree or a job abroad. In a few years, two or three years, I would finish that and come back, very soon."

I spent three years in Taiwan working and could never forget the family, the city and the country. Eventually, as I had hypothesized, I made my way back to Brasilia in February 2017 to get a Master's degree at the University of Brasilia and stay with them again. This time, with my better Portuguese, we had much more verbal communication. They liked to listen to what happened to me every day and reminded me about crimes from the city news or in the neighborhood. I had the house key but I couldn't go out whenever and wherever I wanted easily. They cared about where I went, when I would return and whom

I would meet, so I would inform them ahead in details. They didn't like me to go drinking or to parties, so I often rejected such invitations. Sometimes, they might joke that I was not allowed to go out at late night, with some specific dressing, or to some places they regarded dangerous. But they had never strictly forbidden me from going out or going to any places. They seldom showed their anger towards me. Nagging was the maximum and jokes were the most common expressions of their concerns. For instance, they think Ceilândia, a periphery of Brasilia, is very dangerous but it is where I had capoeira class on Friday night. On Friday afternoon, I would always receive endless nagging after informing them of my intention to go to the class.

I felt that the paternalistic protection on me was strong. The rising control made the boundary between tenant and daughter more obscure. It seemed that the Brazilian parents did not realize how old I was. I was 22 years old when I was an exchange student in 2014 and I was 25 years old when I returned in 2017. Back in 2014, due to the language barriers and unfamiliarity with the environment, I seldom went out by myself. Since 2017, my life routine became very different. I made trips by bus to the university almost every day and participated in diverse activities. To cope with the Master degree course, I spent most of my time studying at libraries and seldom staying at home. With better language skill and knowledge of Brazilian social system, I was able to handle most things by myself and did not need to rely on the Brazilian family as much as in the past. I put the focus more on the school and personal life instead of family life. However, in my Brazilian parents' eyes, they seemed to still see me as a teenager who still needed much protection and assistance. At most daily cases, I chose to compromise with the parents because I didn't want to cause any potential disputes. And also, as the oldest kid of the family, I found myself responsible to be a good model for the three teenage siblings, who were 19, 16, and 12 years old in 2017 respectively.

There were still some cases when I chose not to inform them or to lie, like participating in political manifestations and going to work in Rocinha. I knew these acts would be considered extremely dangerous by them and made them worry too much. Yet these things signify a lot to me so I would still go, post some photos and videos at my social networks. After I returned home and they found out what I had done, the nagging and judgments would continue for a few days or even indefinitely. The latter, I meant once in a while, they might mention my craziness to others again related to my participation in manifestations and favela volunteer work.

## **1.2 - Into the biggest favela - Rocinha**

### **1.2.1 - Favela tour**

In February 2014, before my trip to Rio de Janeiro, my Brazilian family was very worried. A single girl traveling to one of the most dangerous cities as they regarded. My Brazilian father repeated the warning, “Don’t approach those favelas (slums in Brazilian Portuguese).” I gave him my promise, guiltily. In fact, I would not “approach” the favelas; I had planned to “enter” the favelas by joining a favela tour.

When talking about the favela, people imagine a miserable area full of drugs, gangsters, criminals and it is better to stay away from it. However, as far as I can recall, I have always wondered about the other perspective of the favela. Besides its notorious surface, I see people and homes; I see lots of people living there no matter how dangerous others picture it and criticize. It raised my curiosity to take a look personally in order to find out what a favela really is.

On the day of the tour, the guide and the van driver picked me up from downtown with other tourists and we headed to the biggest favela, Rocinha, in the South Zone of Rio. The van climbed up from Gávea, reached to the top and declined a bit to the other side of



the hill. Numerous red brick houses appeared with crowds on the street. The atmosphere at the entrance was bustling. Many residents rushed around while others sat along the road drinking beer. Among it, one unusual scene caught my attention and provoked my fear: there were policemen on guard holding rifles. In my eyes, the residents looked normal and hence I wondered the necessity of heavy weapons.

The tour guide led us to wander through alleys for about 3 hours. We visited a house of local residents, enjoyed the panoramic view from its roof, danced samba with kids at a street corner, and took a rest at a grocery shop. I was able to interact with many kids on the street and they asked me to take pictures for them and show them how the camera works. Along the way, my preconception was strengthened by what I saw. A favela is a place where people build their lives and found their families. It is not, or, it is not only a notorious area of crimes, but it is a place of homes. Unfortunately, this neighborhood also has police on guard, drug trafficking gangsters, and unpredictable shootings.

At the end of the tour, the tour guide mentioned to us that there are a few opportunities to do volunteer jobs in Rocinha and it motivated me to put it on my dream list. If possible, I wanted to live inside the favela and know the place deeper and better. This dream was postponed until my second time in Brazil.

### **1.2.2 - From tourist to volunteer**

Favela tours, also known as slum tourism, is a controversial topic and kept being discussed. (Further discussion, see chapter 3) When participating in the favela tour, I had the concerns as well yet my curiosity urged me to join a tour and supposed that the tour fee would be a community development resource. Later, the dream of being a volunteer was a decision of mixed feelings. On one hand, it is again to satisfy my own curiosity to take a deeper look on local life; on the other hand, I was trying to give feedback and prove

that a tourist could do something more than a half-day tour. There is a possibility that a tourist could stay, transform her status for the community.

The idea occurred to me in the middle of the first semester of the Master's program in Anthropology when I realized there would be a one-month winter vacation in July 2017. I entered in contact with a tour guide who demonstrated on his blog that he would like to assist whoever is interested in volunteering. He then arranged a few jobs and the accommodation for me and charged less than another official volunteer project in Rocinha.

Before departing, I lied to my Brazilian family since I knew their unshakable fear of favelas. I told them I would work for a daycare somewhere in Rio de Janeiro but didn't mention the exact location.

In July 2017, I carried a huge backpack and walked into Rocinha again. This time, I arrived from São Conrado, the lower side which allowed me to take a look from bottom to top and feel amazed by the limitless houses occupying the valley. The lower side, known as the commercial area, is very lively. Shops and restaurants are open 24 hours. Motorbike taxis climb and decline through the valley fast. There are so many passersby on streets which don't exist in the planned city of Brasilia. I was stunned by what I saw at the lower side entrance of Rocinha and I liked it. I liked the vivid atmosphere. I stayed at a newly-opened hostel at the commercial area and my jobs were located nearby, which include being baby caretaker at daycare ASPA and teaching assistant at a free English school by Favela Phoenix.

The daycare was located within a short distance of 5 minutes walking. I worked full day there to take care of young babies from 6 months to 1 year old. ASPA is considered as the best daycare in Rocinha. It received around 200 children from 6 months to 6 years old. Located in the lower part, most children live in nearby areas. With sponsorship both from

government and a Catholic organization, it only charges R\$80 per month and provides free quotas for families who cannot afford the payment. While other daycares usually charge around R\$200 to R\$400, the cheaper fee and free quotas make ASPA popular in the neighborhood.

Favela Phoenix is established by a British guy named Jody King, also known as *Gringo Favelado*<sup>3</sup> at the community. He works as a favela tour guide and part of the profits are distributed to run the free English school. I assisted the intermediate class twice a week at night. The class had around 15 students from 17 years old to 70 years old. Unlike other language projects, Jody hired and paid the English teachers in order to guarantee the quality and he also set a rule to maintain the attendance rate of students: when registering, a deposit was required and it would only be refunded if one had attended enough classes during one session. Moreover, I took over the advanced class for the absent teacher twice. At the advanced class, it was basically conversation practice and had fewer students.

In July, it was winter vacation for daycares as well. So besides ASPA, I also worked for two other daycares, each for one week only while ASPA was on vacation. The first one “Centro Educacional União Faz a Força” is located at Rua Um (road one), on the upper part of the favela. During that week, I had to take a motorbike taxi to reach the entrance of Rua Um and walked quickly for 10 minutes to arrive there. The other daycare, “Creche Escola Arco Iris”, is in the lower part but in a dangerous area called Valão (sewage ditch). These two areas have a very different atmosphere compared to the commercial area. I was warned strictly not to walk around alone by the tour guide and local friends. Therefore most of the time I only wandered inside the commercial area for my jobs, accommodation, meals, and shopping.

---

<sup>3</sup> Among Latin Americans, *gringo* is a term for a “foreigner,” often a white person. *Favelado* signifies a person who lives in a favela.

### 1.2.3 - Living in another world

Rocinha is big enough to have everything in it. There are banks, post offices, gyms, beauty salons, pharmacies, restaurants, supermarkets, shops, bars, nightclubs and much more. For a resident who works inside the community like me, it is possible that there is no need to go out and visit other parts of Rio de Janeiro. Some say that Rocinha is a city inside the city Rio de Janeiro.

In my eyes, the community seems to have its own culture, lifestyle, and extrajudicial law. It is very different from other places in Rio de Janeiro. Coincidentally, many characteristics of Rocinha remind me of my hometown Taipei, the capital city of Taiwan. Motorcycles run through the streets and make noises. Residents crowd the public space and are friendly to greet each other. Apartments stand one by one tightly. 24-hour shops provide convenience and reasonable prices. Farmer's markets on weekends occupy a long street and sell fresh vegetables and meats. Its vivid atmosphere, shorter distance between people and friendliness kept giving me the familiar feelings, provoking and easing my homesickness at the same time.

Unlike most foreign volunteers, I didn't belong to a project<sup>4</sup> and often moved alone from work to work and from work to hostel. The residents might feel curious about my intention in Rocinha. When I started to show up alone frequently, they could assume I was not a daily tourist and I didn't belong to any Chinese families.<sup>5</sup> There are only few Chinese families living in Rocinha. Most of them work within the community to sell *pastel* (fried

---

<sup>4</sup> More about social projects in the favelas, see Lia Rocha's article "O Repertório dos Projetos Sociais: política, mercado e controle social nas favelas." (2014)

<sup>5</sup> Taiwanese people are easy to be confused with Chinese people. Politically, the two countries have complicated relation and continuous conflicts. The independence of Taiwan is not internationally recognized and some countries may consider Taiwan as a part of China, including the Brazilian government. Ethnically, Taiwanese people speak Mandarin Chinese, follow the traditional Chinese culture and customs. Over 95% of the population consists of Han Chinese which was migrants from China since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

pastry, a common Brazilian street food) and yakisoba. And among foreign tourists and volunteers, it is rare to see Asians. My solo existence seemed like a mystery. Furthermore, it could be hard to tell where I am from by the appearance. Some of the residents guessed that I was from Japan, from Asia due to my eyes while others felt confused because my darker skin didn't seem to conform to Asian girls' light untanned skin in their impression. Peruvian, Bolivian, and Indigenous Brazilian were guesses which I received from the residents.

After one month's stay, I made many friendships. My friends are mostly local, living in the lower part of the favela, with brown or white skin. They are colleagues and parents of babies at the daycare, and students from the English class. There are some random people who were introduced by friends or I knew from the street. Most of them are local residents and didn't have much experience in dealing with a foreigner. They were very interested in interacting with me. Some invited me to their houses to meet their families and spend a whole day or night with them.

In contrast, I didn't make many friends with foreign travelers who stayed in the hostel. Most hostel guests also had the curiosity to know more about favela so they chose to stay inside it for a few nights. Yet I often found them with misconceptions towards Brazilian people and favela residents. They know too little about the culture and the place but already like to make conclusions and judgments. For example, I often heard them judging that Brazilians are lazy, residents are unhygienic and making fun of it. These statements made me uncomfortable because I had a Brazilian family bond and also good friends in the favela. Some would even make fun in front of local people in English since very few residents would understand it. In the hostel, although guests came and left, there was a foreigner social circle. Most of them are white-skinned, light-eyed, from Europe and North America, coming to Brazil for a grand tour. They would gather to go out together;

visiting tourist spots in Rio and enjoying parties at night. Besides the difficulty to share the same topics and humor with them, my position as a full-time volunteer was also very different from them. To handle the heavy work every day, I followed a regular routine to eat well and rest enough. Sometimes I was even too exhausted to chat with any of them when I arrived at the hostel after work. Moreover, I had already visited most tourist spots during my first trip to Rio in 2014. Hence on the weekend, instead of going out with hostel guests, I rather found visiting local friends' homes more novel and interesting.

I believe I had a rather special experience in comparison with other foreign volunteers who belong to projects. I made many local friends who never had communicated with a foreigner and cherished our friendship a lot. With them, I had a chance to have some glimpses at the family life and to hear their life stories and thoughts towards life in the favela. I created strong connections with babies in my job which motivated me to return and see how much they have grown. I admired my one-month life inside Rocinha and regarded it as my second home in Brazil. After July 2017, whenever I had holidays, I flew there to reunite with friends and work for the daycare, again and again.

### **1.3- Surviving as a single girl**

“But you are a single girl...” This sentence often appeared in conversations against my travel plan. By this “but”, people draw a limit line and put a label for a specific gender - female. There is no more explanation but when the fact of being female is indicated, it seems I shall stop traveling forwards. The label is a mix of their concern, pity, and control desire. To associate genders with travel security, it is supposed that: “Single girl” is bad. “A group of girls” seems a little bit better. “Boy or man” is the best or only option to ensure security.

To face such a statement, I myself have no excuses to argue back. Instead, I accept that

I am a single girl traveler and I admit that being a girl is not easy to survive through the journey. It is noteworthy here to explain a little more about my position as a girl. In Brazilian Portuguese, the main female titles include “*senhora*”, “*moça*”, and “*menina*”. The former two titles mean miss, lady. “*Senhora*” is more formal while “*moça*” is for a younger lady, more casual and commonly used. The last one “*menina*” means girl, specifically for kids and teenagers. Although I am 26 years old now, my Asian face and curiosity towards the world often allow people to mistake me for being much younger. Their average guess is around 20 years old. For some, I look even younger than 18 years old, especially when I couldn’t get an alcoholic drink with ease. The mistaken age brought me some advantages as well as disadvantages. For instance, at the daycare, lots of teachers presumed that I was at the age as their young daughter and hence took care of me very well. Yet in fact, my age of 26-year-old is older than most parents of babies, who are expected to shoulder the responsibility and provide for a family. The subtle difference determined my position, a girl to be taken care of or a lady to provide care. Most of the time, I preferred to be seen as a girl and use the innocence to ask questions, satisfy my curiosity during exploration in new places. However, the disadvantage is that my family and friends in Brazil tended to protect and worry about me too much. They would either forget or question my rich experience and skills in traveling alone.

Back to the topic of traveling alone, besides common travel advice, there are more warnings specifically for female travelers. When it comes to the danger against females, sexual harassment and assault are what females may worry to be victims more than males. Even for petty crimes such as robbery, females are also considered as a weaker target to be attacked. There are two factors I would like to bring up: one, the reality is dangerous for girls which I would justify by some statistics; the other, people want girls to believe that the world is too dangerous, which is related to my experience with the Brazilian

family males.

When one searches for "girl travel alone" online, there are many blogs and articles regarding solo female travel and all of them are talking about safety tips, female-friendly destinations, and uncomfortable truths. While searching for "man travel alone", there are diverse topics including tips, myths, and best destinations. Very few of them emphasize danger and crimes towards man. An interesting and common topic is to discuss whether male solo travel is weird, boring and makes a man undateable. There are also a number of popular articles to compare why there are more female solo travelers than male. So far I was not able to locate academic researches or statistics regarding this topic. Some bloggers related the reasons to individualism, second-wave feminism<sup>6</sup>, interest in personal growth, self-actualization<sup>7</sup>, etc. To sum up the search results, the tips for male travelers are to seek fun while the tips for female travelers are mostly to seek safety.

In the USA, A survey by "Quick Take on Travel"<sup>8</sup> reveals that overall women feel uncomfortable or unsafe traveling solo. A full 80% of women have considered personal safety issues related to potential harassment or assault when planning a trip, with a quarter considering safety often or always. By experiences, two in five women report they have experienced sexual harassment or unwelcome interactions when traveling, with those interactions most often occurring in a bar (21%). Approximately 10% of women recall harassment while sightseeing, on an airplane, or in their hotel.

In Brazil, sexual harassment happens often in daily life including on streets, at work

---

<sup>6</sup> Janice Waugh, Solo Female Travel: Why Do Women Travel Alone More than Men?  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/comment/whats-behind-the-rise-in-solo-travel/>

<sup>7</sup> Aditi Shrikant, Women travel alone more than men. Here's why.  
<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/1/18/18188581/women-travel-alone-men>

<sup>8</sup> The survey was conducted in 2018 by independent marketing communications agency Eric Mower + Associates. It interviewed 400 US women about their perceptions about safety when traveling alone.  
[https://www.mower.com/travel-and-tourism/insights/fly-metoo-two-out-of-five-women-report-sexual-harassment-when-traveling-solo/?utm\\_source=outreach&utm\\_medium=pressrelease&utm\\_campaign=Tourism&utm\\_content=research](https://www.mower.com/travel-and-tourism/insights/fly-metoo-two-out-of-five-women-report-sexual-harassment-when-traveling-solo/?utm_source=outreach&utm_medium=pressrelease&utm_campaign=Tourism&utm_content=research)



or even at home. A survey by Datafolha<sup>9</sup> indicates that 42% of Brazilian women have suffered from sexual harassment. One in three Brazilian women (29%) have encountered sexual harassment on streets while 25 % is verbal harassment and 3% is physical harassment. Among different environments, harassment in public transportation reaches 22%, while at work has 15%, in school has 10% and 6% inside the house.

Personally, I do not feel safe either traveling alone or staying in Brazil. It is adventurous and risky in everyday life. I have been trained and developed many strategies to handle as well as avoid diverse conditions. Taking challenges on the road, putting myself in a strange environment and learning survival skills are what I like and what I chose to accomplish, both for my exchange program in 2014 and my Master's course since 2017. However, what I have found harder to ward off is the comments from acquaintances. It is difficult to reject and ignore their worry, doubt, and control desire. I often found their reminders meaningful and nonsense at the same time. For example, my Brazilian parents were against my capoeira class in Ceilândia and my volunteer work in Rocinha. They had thousands of words to describe how dangerous it is, how people are robbed, shot and died there, but they had never been to these places themselves. On one hand, I doubted their words as well as their sources and thought they were exaggerated; on the other hand, I comprehended their concerns that they were shouldering the responsibility of my safety. They didn't want to risk that anything bad would happen to me, their tenant as well as daughter. In general, no matter the family or my friends, once knowing me, they would start to be concerned for my safety in Brazil. There were lots of reminders and warnings given to ensure that I understood how bad things could happen. Brazilians do know that it is not easy to survive in their country. Most people themselves had experiences of being

---

<sup>9</sup> The survey is conducted by Datafolha, on November 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.  
<https://datafolha.folha.uol.com.br/opiniaopublica/2018/01/1949701-42-das-mulheres-ja-sofreram-assedio-sexual.shtml>

robbed, mugged, and so on and they didn't want me to undergo such scare and crimes in their homeland. The level of warnings varies with the degree of relations. The closer we are, the more exaggerated, detailed, nagging safety advice could be given. For me, it is difficult to reject and ignore it because I realized that all concerns are from their care, all worries and control desires are from their love. How to react to these safety warnings, how to show my survival skills and earn their trust was another strategy I had to develop.

Living with the Brazilian family, I have been reminded and restricted by warnings. There were two specific basic conditions that I encountered often and are related to gender. First, it is about the clothes I wear. Back in Taiwan, my parents have never commented upon my clothes. And under the social atmosphere of Taiwan, the street is not related to danger like it is associated in Brazil. There, the worry of revealing clothes is not about the fear of sexual harassment, but about the rumor of inappropriate dressing which may influence reputation. However, in Brazil, the dressing can be a sign to attract trouble and danger. For many times, my Brazilian father stared at my clothes, shook his head and asked my mom to have a conversation with me. When he was not around to do this job, it would be my younger brother to substitute the job and complain loudly that he is not happy with what I wear. The so-called conversation between my Brazilian mother and me was easy. She would come to walk with me to the garage door, told me not to mind their words and just be careful when going out. I had carefully asked whether she also agrees that my clothes are inappropriate, and she denied. She found the clothes normal but she would not go argue with the two males in the house.

The second condition is about hanging out. I had the habit to inform my Brazilian mom where I went, when I would return and whom I would meet automatically and actively so that she would not worry a lot. On the way out of the house, I was often blocked either by my dad or by my brother. They would ask in detail although they did not know

my friends and would not remember anything later. Sometimes, they would tease that the hangout was not permitted and I had to get back and stay in my room. It happened also when I arrived home. My brother liked to joke and accuse that I seemed drunk and I must have kissed some boys. I never liked his accusations and sometimes I showed anger regarding the absurdity. Yet again, my mom never commented on anything nor tried to stop their behavior.

The males at the house never successfully restricted me but their words did have some effects. Although it was packaged as a joke, I perceived the threat. To be more precise, it is not the threat directly from the males, but the fear caused by their words. In the beginning, I didn't want to hear, follow and believe what they were saying; yet gradually, these repeated reminders made me doubt and be aware. "Perhaps this kind of clothes is not appropriate?" "Perhaps something would happen when going out in the night? At the bar? On the Uber?" It caused fear in me to be more aware of my own clothes and behavior.

In Brazilian traditional families, gender roles are firmly established. Male hegemony is still common which promotes men's dominance and women's subordination. In my Brazilian family, I perceived that who would comment and complain about my clothes and behaviors are only the males, the father and the younger brother while my mother and sisters didn't care. I would argue that nowadays men still want to show their dominance but women's attitude has been changing. It is too complicated to say for all. What I saw in my family was that women didn't follow the orders from men when they disagreed with their opinions. However, women in my house chose to hide their disagreements, avoid to talk back and cause conflicts. When my mom was told to have a conversation with me, her movement to accompany me to the garage door was not only to seek a further space and secretly tell me it was okay, but also to comfort my feelings and ensure that I wouldn't snap

back.

Anthropologist Cristina Patriota de Moura (2009) has discussed her own “gender shock” in her field in a gated community in Goiania. She indicates men’s attitudes toward women that men make efforts to protect women in their family including wives, daughters or sisters staying in the domestic sphere of women and from the male public domain. Fathering in Brazil is complex and diverse, varying widely with the father’s socioeconomic condition and educational level. A Brazilian father can be caring and close to his children, but he also can be absent or violent. A legacy of patriarchy, father absence, and social class divisions with historical antecedents in slavery and colonialism still have a strong impact on definitions of Brazilian manhood and fatherhood. It is not possible to identify one pattern of Brazilian fathering. (Shwalb & Shwalb, 2014)

Bastos et al. (2013) described three diverse and competing models of Brazilian fatherhood. They called the first model the “father-as-worker,” whereby men taught their children skills and values related to work. The second model of “father-as-provider” was said to be more common in lower socioeconomic status groups. The third model was labeled “father-as-guardian-and-protector.” When a family has a strict division of labor between fathers and mothers was said to reflect the legacy of patriarchy in that many fathers are rigid and strict, befitting their role as representatives of the harsh outside world. I find the last model “father-as-guardian-and-protector” is suitable to explain the position of my middle-class Brazilian father. He presumed it was his duty to present the danger of the outside world to his knowledge. Therefore I, as his daughter, belonged under his protection. However, he let the mother conduct the communication and seldom inquired into the result. On one hand, he tried to show how dominant and strict he was when complaining about my behaviors and having the mother reeducate me; on the other hand, his dominance and strictness had limits. He probably also knew the limit. His duty

was not restraining me totally but at least to remind and inform.

In the meantime, my experience as a female was very different in Rocinha. Most safety advice I obtained was not specifically for a girl, but more generally for an outsider, a newcomer, a foreigner. With an Asian face, I was a rare race among foreign tourists and volunteer hence I always received extra attention from local residents. Being a girl might receive more attentions such as teases. While walking on the street and taking a motorbike taxi, I might hear some statements to judge my appearance or request for phone numbers and dating chances. So far, none of them had been so serious to be categorized as sexual harassment. I felt less restricted by my female position in Rocinha because I was staying in the hostel alone instead of living with a family. I took care of my own life and didn't need to report my whereabouts to anyone. My friendships in Rocinha seemed seldom related to gender issues. I met most friends in the volunteer jobs and among the safety advice I received from these local friends, I did not perceive any of them were given specifically because I am a girl. The restriction for my female position must exist in the favela as well. However, through my personal experience, I did not feel it as strong and obvious as I felt at the Brazilian family.

My different positions in these two places have to be seen and treated very carefully. In Brasilia, I am a daughter in the family, while in Rocinha, the role people recognized me is a solo volunteer and I didn't belong to any group and any family. The best relation I could obtain was friendship which cannot be compared to the deep bond I developed with the Brazilian family.

Besides the facts of danger and safety in these two urban places, my initial way to engage with two places and its people would have effects on how I perceive the danger and cause fear. Caring for someone as a daughter must be very distinct from caring for someone as a friend. Without the family bond, my view towards danger and safety is

possibly different. With the extra fear for my position as a girl, the journey of exploring two urban places' danger is respectively thought-provoking in my eyes.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Walking in Brasilia**

“York knows how to walk! She knows how to walk on the street.” After more than one year staying in Brazil, my Brazilian mom started repeating it. At my first time hearing it, I hesitated and did not understand what she meant. Everyone is supposed to know how to walk; we have all learned walking when we are 1 year old. Later, I dug into the meaning of “walk on the street”. My first thought was still, everyone knows how to walk on the street; my family members are even local Brazilians, born and raised here. Yet quickly my thought changed. To think of it profoundly, I had to admit that they did not know how to handle the outside world. I was a special one in the middle-class family relying on my own feet and public transportation. In contrast, the family owns two cars and highly depends on car driving. One car was for the father to work while the other was for the mother to do grocery shopping, pick up and drop off the kids at school. The family members seldom walked on the street, except walking the pet dog within the residential sector.

I could be the only one who “knows how to walk” and survive on the streets. The compliment from my Brazilian mom showed her trust and recognition in my survival skills. Since then, she began to assign me for more help by walking to the nearby supermarket, or bringing my siblings to destinations in walking distance. I am also a frequent user of bus and metro going to the university. Gradually I have learned, in order to keep myself safe, I should avoid suspicious people who seemed homeless or drug users, avoid alleys and desolated green areas between the attached houses, avoid arriving home late in the dark and so on. So far, my strategies are working well so that I have not experienced anything bad in Brasilia.

## **2.1 – Brasilia and its undefined streets**

Brasilia became the capital city of Brazil in 1960. It was planned and developed by the urban planner Lucio Costa and the architect Oscar Niemeyer in 1956 to move the capital from Rio de Janeiro to a central interior location. The city is composed of the airplane shaped center and various satellite cities. The former, called “Pilot Plan (*Plano Piloto*)”, is the main administrative area and often seen as the city Brasilia. The design divides it into numbered blocks as well as sectors for specified activities. Its two wings, North Wing (*Asa Norte*) and South Wing (*Asa Sul*) include the commercial sectors and residential sectors while the main body of the airplane includes the administrative departments, TV tower and museums.

Regarding the security issue in Brasilia, my biggest concern is its streets. Being one of the few pedestrians on the street, I felt that I was a sole target exposed to any kinds of crimes. If anything happens, there would be nobody to give a hand and nowhere to seek help. When I first arrived in Brasilia, I found the city strangely different and it was hard to describe and interpret the difference. As narrated in Chapter 1, in the night of my arrival, I found the city strange, or to be more precise, I couldn't find the city. For me, lots of landmarks, such as the airport and the Congress, seemed located in the middle of nowhere. There seems to be no center or gathering point for the crowd. I couldn't see people on the street, but, there are cars and people are in these automobiles. The movement of citizens is constantly fluid and the fluidity relies on car use. Without possessing a car, I became one of the few pedestrians walking on the street. I observed that the infrastructure of sidewalks is underdeveloped, or in other words, unplanned. I often needed to either step on the grass or share the edge of the driving road. The streets in Brasilia, in my simple insight, are mostly for car driving.

The anthropologist James Holston (1989) used a severe word to describe it. He



affirmed that the streets in Brasilia are dead. Most city residents would agree that the city lacks crowds as well as movement. When I discussed it with friends from other Brazilian cities who have visited Brasilia, they chose to use the word “soulless” because it looks all the same artificially, without diverse and spontaneous development.

There are several factors to cause this lack of street life: the enormous distance separating buildings, the segregation of activities, the high dependence on car driving, and the most profound explanation, the lack of street corners.

According to Holston (1989), the absence includes not only corners, but also curbs, sidewalks edged with facades of shops and residences, squares and streets themselves. The absence of streets is even one indication of a distinctive and radical feature of Brasilia’s modernity. To realize the modern architecture’s fundamental planning object and redefine the urban function of traffic, the city design eliminated the corridor-street, replaced the street corner by traffic circle (*balão*) and excluded the passage of pedestrians. There is a number of reasons why the modern urban organization attacks the streets and proposes the eliminations: on the surface, it derives from public health concerns, which consider the street an impediment to progress, a cesspool of disease. More profoundly, it constitutes an architectural organization of the public and private domains of social life that modernism seeks to overturn. The modernism attacks the indistinct barrier between public space and private building in the preindustrial city and aims to create a contrast. In Brasilia, to sustain this contrast, the street embodies the concept of the public defined in relation to the private.

My own perception and most people’s impressions towards Brasilia, would agree with Holston’s opinion, regarding that the city was designed exclusively for cars. Vinicius Prado Januzzi (2018) argued in his article discussing if the streets in Brasilia are killed and exploring the possible definition of streets. He submitted his ethnography

experiences in Unidade de Vizinhança Nº 1 and Setor Noroeste to indicate that this configuration was not "foreseen" in the original plan.

For example, Unidade de Vizinhança Nº 1, *known as* the first built neighborhood in the Pilot Plan, comprises 4 super-blocks (*superquadras*) of 107, 108, 307 and 308 South to represent an innovative concept from Lucio Costa's urban development plan. Thought in terms of the garden city, it aimed to construct collective sociability by bringing together many aspects, including the presence of cinema, club, schools, playground, churches and commercial activities. The plan supposed, everything for daily life would be in a short walking distance, just below the apartments. Without specific boundaries of the pedestrian route, "free circulation (*livre-circulação*)" would occur within the 4 super-blocks.

The original purpose of Lucio Costa was to build a new way of sociality to provide more proximity between neighbors and less movement for daily tasks. However, the development of sociability among the city residents didn't follow the plan. Along the time, with political, economic and social problems, the modernist urban planning has been influenced and altered. The sociability in Brasilia is rather more individualistic than collective. Car driving is preferred for most movements. The "free circulation" below the apartments as well as in the whole city rarely occurred.

However, because there is not as much movement as we expect, does it mean in Brasilia the streets are killed or do not exist? Before affirming its death, it is necessary to clarify the definition of the street. In dictionaries, the meaning of the street is the space between the houses and the towns where one walks. Roberto DaMatta (1997) elaborated, in an anthropological way, that the street in Brazil is not only space. More than space, it is a sociological category of social order, in contrast to the house. Indeed, although in Lucio Costa's plan, the word "street (*rua*)" has never appeared, the plan couldn't eliminate the

word from the daily conversation among the city residents to indicate the public space.

The urbanist carefully chose the terms and consistently avoided any reference to “street”. It can be assumed that the absence of street in Brasilia is deliberate and corresponds to the elimination of both the concept and the physical fact. To replace the word “street”, Costa designed super-speedways called “axis (*eixo*)” and “ways (*vias*)”. Yet in daily conversation, Brasilia residents still use the word “street” often. For instance, in the intro of this chapter, my Brazilian mom complimented me for knowing how to walk on the street. In such contexts, the term street signifies not only a road, but broadly means the world outside of the private “house” territory. Street is the opposite of house, which is considered as the universe of control, order and harmony. Street then is a public space often comprehended as the semantic key of danger.

In people’s daily conversation, the street in Brasilia is not killed. Furthermore, Vinicius Prado Januzzi (2018) argued that street life in Brasilia is not killed. By his ethnographic observation, he proposed that the street life in Brasilia needs more attention to be seen in its daily uses, for example with the domestic worker walking the dog, the resident jogging along the road, etc. The “free-movement (*livre-circulação*)” exists within “block (*bloco* or *quadra*)” and “super-block”. These spaces are categorized and practiced according to the functions of the street in a multiple sense.

There are various kinds of arguments and explanations towards the street in Brasilia as listed above. On one hand, the street is seen as dead in Brasilia; on the other hand, the street is not killed but changes its shape and form. No matter which one is more precise, one thing needed to emphasize here is that the street in Brasilia is not common. The character of the crowd, the movement and the sociability of the city have broken my existing cognition. In the end, allow me to quote from the book “A Alma Encantadora das Ruas (The Enchanting Soul of the Streets)”. The journalist and author João do Rio (1908)

narrated his passion towards the street in this way: “The street is a factor of life of the cities. The street has a soul!” My personal perception is that the street in Brasilia may not be dead, but it is living without a soul. It exists, along with the rising fear towards the safety issues, to signify the danger and the risk of crimes.

## **2.2 – Insecurity in the neighborhood**

I had been staying with my Brazilian family in the residential sector 703 South for two years. Along that time, I perceived the atmosphere of the neighborhood changing as the security was threatened by numerous robbery and theft cases. It worried me a lot that even though I was around the home and in the neighborhood, safety was not guaranteed.

The address of our house “SHIGS 703” is the abbreviation of Attached Individual Residential Sector of South Wing (*Setor Habitacional Individual Geminada Sul*). Although the establishment of the concept of neighborhood is not a formal organization, I regarded the sector 703 South as a neighborhood based on the sentiments which were shared by neighborly contact, especially common experience among nearby residents in the sector to undergo danger and threat of petty crimes. The sociologist Robert Park (1915) indicated that neighborhood is a locality with sentiments, traditions and a history of its own. It plays the basic unit for governmental participation and of social and political system. The proximity has residents in a limited area to undergo the happenings and similar inhabitation experience. In the sector 703 South, the definition of the limited area as a neighborhood could have been strengthened when the crime rate was rising, the neighbors gathered more to discuss and gossip.

Within the sector, it is further divided to 18 clusters of houses (*bloco*) in alphabetical order from A to R. My house is located at block D. For daily trips, I walk through the “way (*via*)” between block D, E, J, K, P, Q, which is a road for cars. Its entrance as well as the exit

is at the side of Don Bosco Sanctuary (*Santuário Dom Bosco*). And at its dead end, there is a parking lot by the side of the Commitment Square (*Praça do Compromisso*).

There are two different sides between rows of attached houses. In front of garage gates of houses is the paved side of “way” while the other side without garage gates is the green gardens. I personally regard the “way” side as a “street” between two rows of houses. It is important to emphasize again that in Costa’s city plan, the word “street” is avoided. Instead, he chose to use the term “axis” and “way”. (Hosilton, 1989)



Image 1 – The residential sector 703 South

Access: Google Map on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The streets between houses are often lacking in movement. Despite the fact that there are various schools around the neighborhood which brings the vitality of movements at specific times of day, the students only move at the edges of the sector. The perpendicular

directions to W3 and W4 are often used by students. (See Image 2, red arrows) Very few of them would enter the streets between houses. (See Image 2, orange arrows.) People who pass through the streets between the houses mainly include residents, the homeless, street cleaners and merchants. Within the residents, pedestrians are the minority while car drivers and passengers are in the majority due to the middle class' high dependence on cars. A detailed observation towards movements on the street will be submitted in the later paragraph. For now, I would like to indicate the specialty of attached house sector which I consider as its congenital insecurity.

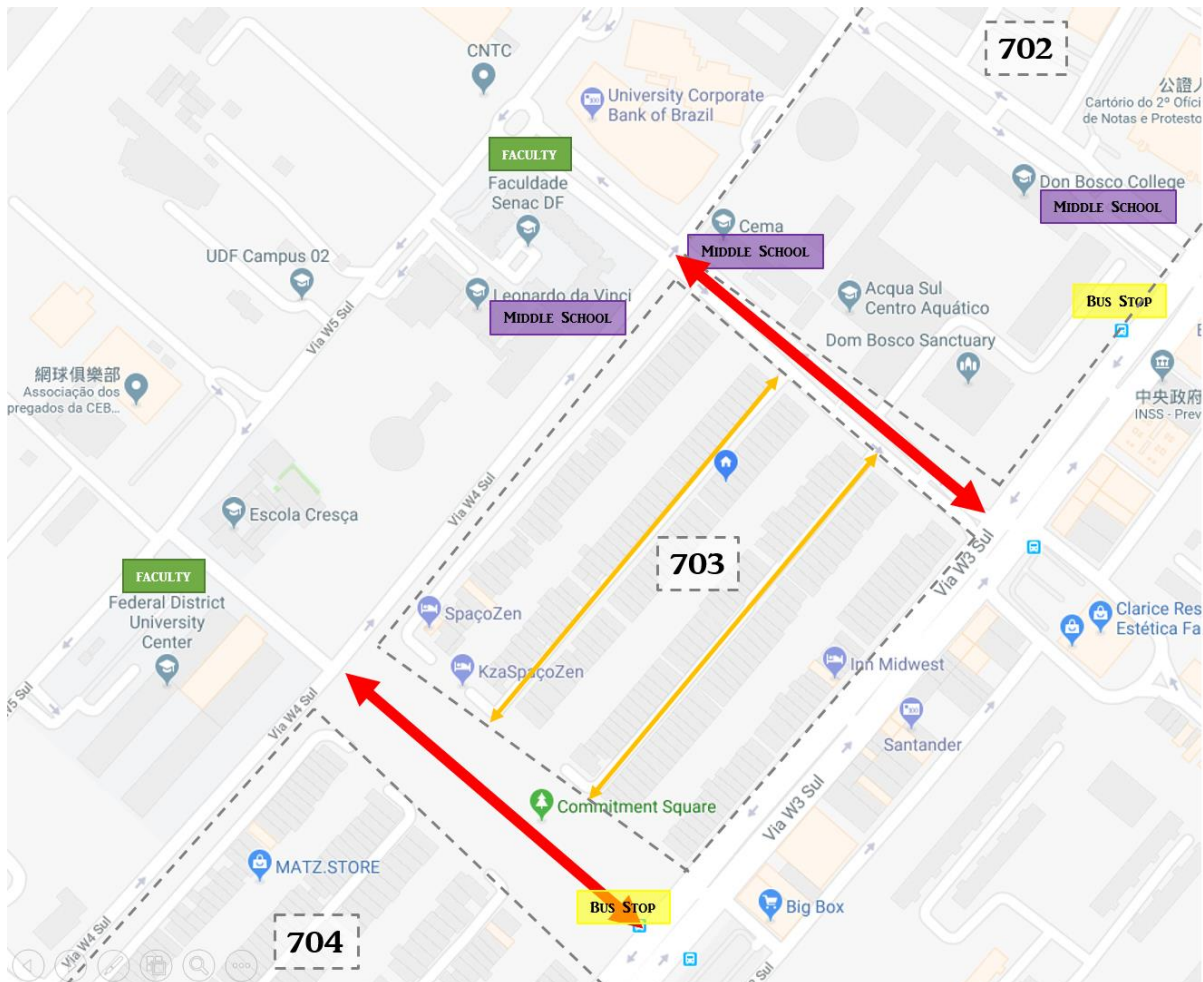


Image 2 – The Schools at the surroundings

Access: Google Map on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

There are basically three kinds of residences in the First Administrative Region of Brasilia: apartments, mansions and attached houses. The first, apartments occupy the most areas at North Wing and South Wing. The second, mansions are located at North Lake (*Lago Norte*) and South Lake (*Lago Sul*). And the last, attached houses, where I lived, is a ribbon area marked from the sector 701 to 715 at both Wings. These houses are attached side by side, arrayed in rows with one side of street and the other of garden. Below, I would like to submit a comparison on security and argue that attached houses are lacking in security protection in both material protection measures and neighbor relations.

In general, an apartment building is watched by one security guard or one janitor. They stay on the ground floor and supervise the gate. Alarm systems and monitors are also common to be seen in order to maintain protection. The mansions at North Lake and South Lake cover wider areas and are walled or fenced. Their protection measures are more sophisticated, including alarm system, cement wall with the addition of barbed wire and various monitors. In contrast, most attached houses have neither security personnel nor a technological system to ensure the security. For example, I took a slow walk on the street between six blocks (block D, E, J, K, P, Q) and observed protection measures of the neighbors. Among a total 83 houses, there are only 12 houses setting monitors at the garage door, 4 houses putting barbed wire around the roof and 1 house sticking a sign to state that it is under security service.

Besides the material part of security measures, the design of attached house residential sectors also causes a different phenomenon in regard to neighbor relations. Besides the garden having been transformed into a wasteland and even a crime hotbed, the sector has less public space in which to occur random encounters. Compared to apartments, there are no elevators, ground floors, security offices and collective parking

lot. The only way to start a conversation with neighbors is to knock on their door actively on purpose. With the mode of space organization in Brasilia, the middle-class residents in attached houses might create a different urban sociality. Although they live wall by wall, each family in each house is seeking to be independent and segregated.

### **2.3 - "Don't go out!" - Fear towards public space**

Among safety advice that my Brazilian family would give, I believe there is an extreme answer, theoretically effective but not practical advice, which is, simply not to go out, not to leave the house and be on the street. As references, the street does not only mean the road, but has an extension to signify the outside world in opposition to the private area of control and harmony. From my experience, I think the middle class in Brasilia has a general fear towards it.

A story of why my Brazilian mother chose to drive in short distance can be an example to illustrate the fear. She surprised me when she drove to the nearby supermarket in the sector 503 South which is only 500 meters away, taking 5 minutes by foot. Out of curiosity, I accompanied and asked her why she would waste gasoline and more time to take turns and park the car. She replied that it might not save time, but she thinks it is more comfortable and safer not to expose herself under the risk of walking on the streets. Additionally, another short driving example is to watch a neighbor driving from next door to the farmer's market in 200 meters. I suspected his behavior when seeing the neighbor leaving home but driving towards the dead-end of the street. I kept observing until he parked the car to visit the farmer's market which is regularly held on the square on Saturdays.

These short driving examples could indicate three facts of the urban sociality in Brasilia: the high dependence on the car, the desolate street, and the fear towards public



space. The correlation between these three facts is complicated. It is hard to distinguish which is the cause and which is the effect. Although transiting between house and work, between house and recreation done by automobile is already a common phenomenon for the middle class in other cities of Brazil and around the world, in Brasilia the dependence on car is further enlarged and examined. Due to the city design, car driving is encouraged while public transportation does not function well. Private automobile including self-driving, riding taxi or Uber is the preference for the middle class and allows them to directly go from starting point to the destination. Privately owned cars establish personal space for the driver and passengers on the road, in contrast to public space as the street. (DaMatta, 2010) The process of transiting in an automobile between places creates a fluid private space. The continuous extension of private space becomes a strategy to avoid unpredictable risks and ensure security. To take refuge in vehicles is one of the few modes of development to live with insecurity. (Jacobs, 1961)

Therefore, with the rising crime rates throughout the whole country<sup>10</sup>, the streets in Brasilia stay more desolate, lack pedestrian movements and arouse the fear to keep people away from them. Montoya Uriate (2017) indicated that city life has changed by the progress of Capitalism. From the nineteenth century, the outer walls were overthrown, trams made possible the expansion of the city, and then the automobile promoted its unlimited growth. With the physical separation between people, the public domain became morally inferior and the encounter with others became a dangerous aberration. Bauman (2009) said, "We suspect others and their intentions, we refuse to trust (or fail to do) the constancy and regularity of human solidarity" According to him, much of our current fear in urban life emerges from the inability to live with the other. In Brasilia, the

---

<sup>10</sup> In 2016, Brazil had a record 61,819 murders or on average 198 murders per day, giving a yearly homicide rate of 29.9 per 100,000 population. In 2017, Brazil had a record number of murders, with homicides rising 3.7 percent with 63,880 homicides.

rising fear against public space encourages more dependence on car driving. When the residents, including my mom and the neighbor, chose to drive for a rather short distance, it shows that they give up walking on the street and they are concerned about the security in the public space of the neighborhood. The three facts, the high dependence on the car, the desolate street, and the fear towards public space, construct a vicious circle to deepen the frontier between public and private spaces.

In the book “The Death and Life of Great American Cities”, Jane Jacobs (1961) submitted a theory to analyze urban security based on “eyes on the street”. She supposed that the safety of a city highly relates to the safety of its streets and sidewalks. The public peace is not only kept by the police but an unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among residents, as known as a number of effective eyes to watch the street. I tried to apply her concept in Brasilia, specifically on the street in front of my house. Below, I recorded the daily schedule of the movements on the street.

In the daytime on weekdays, who pass through the street are regularly the garbage truck at 10 am, then the gas peddler at 10:30 am and the postman at 11 am; then in the afternoon, merchant trucks selling eggs and fruits might randomly appear from day to day. The only merchant car showing up in the night is the one selling *pamonha* (sweet corn dumpling) which passes through around 18 pm to 19 pm after dusk.

At the residents’ side, as I observed, very few of them use public transportations and most of them possess cars to drive directly from the garage to their destinations, pacing up and down fast without paying attention to watch the street. Besides public transportation users, residents who walk are for walking dogs. In the daytime, in order to avoid the sun, they stroll on the walkways at sides of the garden which trees provide shadows. When the sky gets dark, the place to walk dogs switches to the paved side which is lightened by streetlamps. At the same time, instead of a relaxing slow stroll, residents

prefer rapid movement in the night, having the dog pee soon and returning home.

On weekends, the street is quieter due to the lack of pedestrians, public service and merchant trucks. On Saturday mornings, there is a farmer's market held on the square. Many residents nearby enjoy visiting it to buy fresh vegetables and fruits. It is one of the few activities which attracts people to gather together. Nevertheless, when the square is lively with customers, the streets between attached houses still stay vacant since residents, as mentioned like my next-door neighbor, would drive for this short distance.

Jane Jacobs (1961) submitted three requirements to review the street functional surveillance: First, there shall be a number of stores and public places along the sidewalks to give people reasons for using the sidewalks as well as passing by. Second, if there are shops, the shopkeepers shall be strong proponents of peace and order. Third, the sight of the crowd would attract more people and due to it, the street may be able to keep the routine vitality.

Based on the condition of the street in front of my house, these three requirements are difficult to reach in my neighborhood. However, there are still some details worthy to compare and discuss. The sector 703 South is categorized as a purely residential area so there are no shops along the sidewalks. The reasons for people to come out from their house and stay on the streets mostly can be the merchant trucks which sells eggs, fruits, vegetables and food. The interaction, which is the trade between the residents and merchants, provides the possibility to attract more people and bring vitality to the street. As for the proponents of peace and order, I perceived that in my neighborhood their positions are not shopkeepers but the residents themselves, including my Brazilian parents. More discussion will be brought up at the following section regarding neighbor relations.

Furthermore, I would like to argue the opposite condition of the third requirement.

Jacobs (1961) supposed, the sight of the crowd would keep the routine vitality. I would like to submit my observation and another possibility, at those moments when the street lacks a crowd, especially when it is dark or on the weekends, it discourages people to stay outside and its routine inactivity continues

#### **2.4 – “Don’t Walk through the Alleys!” – The plan of attached houses**

In a row of attached houses, there are three blocks and then between blocks, there are two narrow passageways which the residents often call “*caminho* (path, way)” and I refer to them as “alleys” in English. These alleys are perpendicular to the streets and link the paved side and the garden side within the residential sector. On the first day I moved in, one of the first safety advice given by my Brazilian father was not to walk through these alleys alone. Since the gardens lack trimming, the garden side is considered as a hotbed of crime by the residents. Jointly, these alleys were considered dangerous and needed to be avoided.

On the basis of the city plan, the design of attached house residential sectors has its aim to encourage the interaction between residents and construct a harmonious atmosphere among the public area. Two sides of houses have specific utilities. In the original plan, the garden side was considered as the front while the paved side was regarded as the backdoor. At the paved side, the houses have garages for the car’s entrance and exit, linking residents’ life from home to work, school or recreation, areas out of the neighborhood. At the garden side, it links to the patios and living room. The design blends private property and public use, aiming to create a new sociality atmosphere. The garden was supposed to be a bucolic space for family leisure activities, passages within the sector, and communication between neighbors. The space was an insistence in the city plan to stay green as well as to build relations among neighbors. (Panerai, 2010)



Image 3 – The alleys are perpendicular to the streets

Access: Google Map on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

However, nowadays the purpose of design hasn't been attained well. The "front-bottom" orientation no longer exists. The public gardens are uncultivated, underutilized and semi-privatized, almost seen as a wasteland. The pedestrians seldom use the garden side for passages but share the paved side with vehicles. For most families, they regard the garage gate as the front door and cover the patios with building materials. Instead of semi-open patios, they have been transformed into closed terraces. (Panerai, 2010; Meira, 2014) For example, at my house, we considered the terrace as a second living room as well as a storage room. The door at the garden side is constantly locked. Only my Brazilian father would open it once every new season to hoe up the garden. From what I heard from my Brazilian family and nearby neighbors, they regard the garden side is often the entrance for burglary and the gardens would be randomly occupied by suspicious people,

including thieves, robbers, the homeless and drug users. The transformation of the patios and the gardens defines a clear barrier of private space and a low possibility to associate with the public. Today, the configuration of the garden side is opposed to the original city plan. The planned social space is eliminated in the gardens and moved to the paved side.

The conversation between neighbors is often intended and happens by a doorbell ringing and chatting by the door. I noticed that among numerous nearby houses, my Brazilian family and our house seems like a center of information exchange. Many neighbors like to come to knock on the door and ask to speak with my parents. They often discuss a new crime and narrate how terrible it was. To find out why neighbors like to come chatting at our house, I asked my parents for their respective opinions. My Brazilian mother assumed that she and the father have more liberty, compared to other residents. The occupations of my Brazilian parents allow them to spend much time at home. The mother has always worked as a housewife while the father just retired in late 2017. When he used to work, He was a lawyer for Terracap<sup>11</sup> with shorter working hours. My Brazilian father is a person who liked to greet the neighbors on the street and have conversations around. Hence he got to know most neighbors as well as make them know about him and his family. At the same time, my Brazilian father mentioned that he chose to move into that house 15 years earlier because many of his friends and coworkers were living there. Hence when moving in, he had already known a number of neighbors. During his leisure time, he used to enjoy wandering in the neighborhood, visiting his friends, chatting and knowing more others. In recent years, with the age increasing, some of his friends had passed away or moved away to apartments with more security and elevator service. If not necessary like dog walking, the residents would not pass and stay on the street. The activities which

---

<sup>11</sup> Terracap (*Agência de Desenvolvimento do Distrito Federal*) is a state-owned company, responsible for the development of Federal District.

used to have people to walk on feet, including go shopping at the nearby supermarket and bringing kids to the playground, had decreased. For my father, he also gradually lost the chance and interest to go out and chat around as much as in the past.

For many years, the sector 703 South did not have a superblock mayor (*prefeito de quadra*). Being a superblock mayor in Brasilia is a volunteer job with salary but does not possess any political power. When someone gets elected once, he or she will probably need to serve for many years because very few others would have the interest to join the election and take the job. (Vasconcelos, 2014) Nobody in the sector 703 South is willing to volunteer hence the position stays absent. The absence of a superblock mayor has caused some inconvenience, especially on maintenance and renovation of the public area. Without a superblock mayor, any operations regarding organizing the public area require more efforts, including to consolidate different ideas from residents and to open a negotiation with the GDF<sup>12</sup>. Compared to the neighbor sector 704 South, there is a big difference in the appearance of public area. In the sector 704 South, their trees are properly pruned, the lawns are sheared stylishly and the street lamps shine much brighter. The sector remains organized all the time. The accomplishment of the superblock mayor in the sector 704 South is obvious which makes residents in the sector 703 South discuss and compare their own sector with it a lot.

Without a superblock mayor for many years, some works for the public area have been done as well by volunteer individuals. My Brazilian father, for example, made efforts to complete one task at the end of 2017. Due to the concerns of worsening security, he and another neighbor raised the issue of tree pruning. They believed that with proper and regular tree pruning, a cultivated garden would eliminate the possible hideouts, eradicate the invaders and in the end, improve the safety of the neighborhood. The residents believe

---

<sup>12</sup> GDF (*Governo do Distrito Federal*), the government of Federal District

that the abandoned garden has become a crime hotbed. Fewer movements and overgrown plants provide a great location for criminals to hide, wait and observe their targets. Personally I have noticed that there were more and more unknown people wandering over the garden area. Once by chance I was at our closed terrace and detected a guy sneaking around. He put his backpack under a tree then moved forward and backward staring at nearby houses. His movement caught my attention because it is unusual that somebody would spend a period of time there alone and leave the bag behind.

During these years, I have been told that most criminals come from peripheries. In the Pilot Plan, residential burglaries pose a constant concern. According to local police, much of this crime is carried out by mobile street gangs, which target residential areas of Brasilia. Other perpetrators are from the surrounding informal housing areas, commonly referred to as satellite cities, and travel by metro train, bus, or car into the neighborhoods looking for targets of opportunity. (OSAC Brazil Crime & Safety Report: Brasilia, 2018)<sup>13</sup>

Without the existence and assistance of a superbloc mayor, my father and the other neighbor decided to organize the work by themselves. To start it, they created a group conversation at Whatsapp. They visited the neighbors who share the same garden side which includes block C, D, I, J, S, P of the sector 703 South. From door to door, they explained their consideration, collected phone numbers of all house hosts, organized opinions from residents of six blocks and then submitted a request to GDF. By the professional knowledge and experience of a lawyer, my Brazilian father was able to obtain a permanent permit for tree pruning. Since then, each house contributes R\$30 per month and GDF will assign gardeners to take care of tall trees.

---

<sup>13</sup> Brazil 2018 Crime & Safety Report: Brasilia by The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), USA <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=23560>





Image 4 - Six blocks for discussion of tree pruning

Access: Google Map on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The work of tree pruning was done at the end of 2017, but the conversation group kept existing. It followed its initiative and turned into a communication channel to share information about new crimes in the neighborhood. My Brazilian mother indicated that besides neighbors who come to knock on the door and gossip, the conversation group is also a resource where she gets to know what is happening in the neighborhood. She also disclosed, whenever there is a new crime discussed in the group, the intention to gossip about it is extended to provide substantial suggestions.

The above story shows some facts about the neighbor relations in my neighborhood.

My Brazilian father's greetings to others are easy and simple. Yet in the sector, this friendly attitude is rare and special, often leaving a good impression on others, making my parents be the preference among the neighbors to chat with and the house become the center of information. It could prove the cold and distant treatment from other residents. Moreover, once the conversation group was created for tree pruning, it quickly became a communication channel. It indicated that there was no similar platform existed before for the neighbors to share the information of the neighborhood. However, as my Brazilian mother disclosed, there seemed to be no helpful suggestions but only gossips for fun. The neighbors do care about the security of the neighborhood since they liked to share and chat about it. Yet when it came to taking actions, they stayed quiet and had no will to get involved. After the tree pruning task, so far there are no other tasks being initiated regarding maintenance and renovation of the public area.

In Baumgartner's book "The Moral Order of a Suburb" (1988), she presented a theory called "Moral Minimalism" based on the conflict management of suburbanites. She observed, rather than settlement and aggression, avoidance as the curtailment of interaction is commonly used in suburbs in the USA. Although the sector 703 South is located near the center of the Pilot Plan, the environment created by attached houses shares some main characteristics with American suburbs: independency, privacy, transiency, atomization and autonomy. Most homeowners in two areas are also: the middle class, be married, have children, professional jobs, extensive education and higher incomes compared to most of the population in the Federal District. More importantly, the suburban residents studied by Baumgartner in the USA share some similar characteristics on neighbor relations with the middle-class attached house residents in the South Wing of Brasilia.

Besides distinctive social morphology, Baumgartner (1988) suggested, if residents

cannot be bothered to take action and engage in conflicts, neither can they be bothered to help others in need. Thereby, positive obligations to assist others to stay minimal as well. At the case of my neighborhood, the long vacancy of formal management is an example. I once asked my Brazilian father if he ever had the will to be the superbloc mayor. Since he is an active character among the residents and even once organized the tree pruning work, it could be easy and interesting for what he has already done. He didn't hesitate to reply to me a big no. He stated that after obtaining the authoritative permit, he chose to leave the conversation group, in case that some residents may come up with a new idea and have him negotiate with the government again. My Brazilian father is enthusiastic to lead a specific task, but in order to avoid trouble and responsibility, even he would refuse to get involved more and choose to step backward at some points. Then related to other residents, it is not hard to imagine how reserved they would possibly behave.

### **2.5 - "Avoid weird people!" - Imputation towards outsiders**

Another very important survival skill is to distinguish strangers between the good and the bad. By my social science study background, I have tried my best not to fall in the trap of prejudices. However, to survive in Brazil, walking on the street every day relies on judgments by appearance, dressing and behavior of passersby. My eyes and brain need to cooperate to be a scanner, give quick judgment as well as put labels on strangers. If the passerby is judged as risky, unpredictable, and bad, I need to react quickly and calmly. Corresponding measures are mainly to avoid the person, including changing the route, finding a shelter, altering the walking speed.

There are two specific types categorized as risky: the homeless and drug user. By researches, rationally I know there is no direct proof to relate them to crimes. Yet in general, these two groups of people are often the scapegoat of city security. Since my house

is near the central bus station (*rodoviária*) and the Commercial Sectors, there is an amount of the homeless and drug users at the sector 703 South. Their increasing appearance has caused a panic in the neighborhood.



Image 5 – Locations and routes of the homeless

Access: Google Map on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The former one, the homeless, has some reasons to stay around the neighborhood. I have observed and made an image to analyze their spots and movements. On image 5, the red triangles signify the location of their camps or sleeping places while yellow triangles signify places where they appear frequently in the daytime. There are four red triangles respectively located at the side of Don Bosco Sanctuary, the pavilion on the Commitment

Square, behind the stores at the commercial sector 303 South, under a building at the commercial residential sector 504 South. Among them, the last one which is built at the backside of a commercial building at the sector 504 South is the most established as well as the longest one. There are a couple of camps to accommodate around 8 to 10 people. Other three locations are rather fluid because the police may come and send them away. At this moment when I am writing this report<sup>14</sup>, the location beside Don Bosco Sanctuary was just cleared three weeks ago and the pavilion on the square has been occupied by the same group of three homeless for two weeks. Before the removal of police sub-station<sup>15</sup>, there was no chance to occupy the pavilion for more than two days. After it, the pavilion became a perfect place for the homeless to sleep because the construction is higher than the floor with a roof. Covered with cardboards and plastic bags, it is easy to build a semi-private space in the pavilion.

In addition, I marked two orange triangles where I saw the homeless gathering to wait frequently in the daytime. One is at the bus stop 502/503 at rush hour in the morning. Some of them stay there for soliciting coins. The other is in front of the supermarket Bigbox in the late afternoon. It is the time when people get off work and go shopping. A number of homeless people would wait at the supermarket gate to ask for needed materials.

I, my Brazilian family and other residents all felt that the number of the homeless around the neighborhood was rising. Besides the removal of police sub-station, a nearby NGO center “Centro POP”<sup>16</sup> is another particular reason. Centro POP is specialized for the homeless to provide free breakfast and shower. It also receives all kinds of donations and

---

<sup>14</sup> The date was July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

<sup>15</sup> The police office was located in the middle area between the sector 703 and 704 South and removed in March 2017. (Further discussion of the removal is stated in the below paragraph)

<sup>16</sup> Centro POP: *Centro de Referência Especializado para Pessoas em Situação de Rua*, meaning “Specialized Reference Center for Street People”

distributes them to the homeless. According to the talks with my Brazilian mother and some neighbors, the center has already set for 3 years but only until recently, it started to be known and attract more and more people coming to seek help. On the way to come and leave, the homeless begin to pass through the streets between attached houses and try to find more resources for the next meal. On the image 5, I marked 4 orange lines as the frequent routes of the homeless.



Image 6 - The pavilion on the square occupied by the homeless

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2018

The rising number of the homeless and their behavior had changed residents' attitude towards them. For instance, my Brazilian family used to be generous to help

anyone who came to our door. Bit by bit, our doorbell rang more and more frequently until it almost rang every day, which became annoying, tiresome and even troublesome. In the neighborhood, there started a rumor about the beggar trap. The beggar would ring the bell of a number of houses at once and then wait in the middle to see which host came to answer. He or she would wait with hands in the pockets holding a weapon. Whoever answers the door could be threatened to open the door and be robbed. Ever since my family heard about the trap and also personally spied the kind of beggars knocking on our door, we stopped offering free materials to all. We only interacted with those who we had already known and trusted and rejected others. Sometimes, our rejection led to further harassments like they might get angry, curse, stay more time in front of the house and punch the gate. Personally I became highly aware of whoever knocked on the door. Instead of heading directly to face the guests, we needed to inspect secretly first to ensure the safety of answering the door.

I perceived the negative attitude against the homeless from my Brazilian family as well. They used to offer free food and materials to whoever knocking on the door without further comments. But with the rising sense of insecurity, they began to show disgust at them. When we passed by the locations of the homeless camps and the NGO center, the family aggressively stated that these places must be removed soon, insisted that it is the only solution to have the peace back at the neighborhood.

In an ethnography done by Alex Cordeiro (2018), he narrated the stories of various homeless people in the South Wing of Brasilia. His dissertation shows the daily life of the homeless mixing their mobility, works, food collection, family relations... etc. Between the words and lines, the homeless overruled the negative social labels which blame them for drug use, robbery and theft. In fact, most of them have never done such things in life. Yet in reality, the middle-class residents couldn't help but impose an unwarranted charge

against the homeless who appear in their neighborhood.

The second risky type, drug users, is what I am not familiar with. Before arriving in Brazil, I had never seen any drug users in person. Meeting drug users, specifically crack users, on the street was something shocking for me. Without experience, I don't have the ability to distinguish them and speculate on their potential behaviors. Until today, I still have difficulty to recognize the drug users. Yet I have been reminded often about their existence in my living circle.

There are some specific areas where my Brazilian family and friends would remind me to be careful to go or forbid me to go alone. The reason behind the reminder, when I inquired into it, is often related to drug use. It helped me to create one of the mental maps of the city which guide differential use. The places where drug users gather and appear frequently are categorized as prohibited zones and the mental maps can further vary for daytime or nighttime use, for me alone or with friends. (Caldeira, 2000)

For instance, the South Commercial Sector is one prohibited zone for nighttime. Located at the beginning of the South Wing of Brasilia, the sector is buzzing and lively during the daytime. Yet there are all kinds of people in and out of the sector. The high and low, the office workers and street beggars are mixed together. In Pedro de Lemos Macdowell's dissertation (2010), he named the sector as "The Degenerate Space" and analyzed the cause of the degeneration. From the architecture and urban perspective, the sector design provides terms for the occupation of chaos, degradation and decadence: the great number of car parking along lanes attracts irregular car guardians (*flanelinhas*); the marquees and arcades from buildings offer shelter for the homeless; the popular movement during the day also attracts the homeless to stay around and earn some money and food. In the night, transvestites and women prostitution, the homeless, illicit drug trafficking which are the extreme social and sexual marginalization of our society occupy



the sector, creating the status of the degenerate space. To conclude, there are two main characteristics: an aspect of carelessness, with sparse lighting, dirty streets, rat and cockroaches, worn facades, etc.; and the presence of marginalized groups, especially the homeless, consumers, drug traffickers, prostitutes, and transvestites.

Selling marijuana, cocaine, and more recently crack happens in late nights in the sector. Some vendors may remain at the same place during the day, but because of the greater movement, they stay unnoticed by the mass. In a few years of field research, Macdowell (2010) himself witnessed how crack invaded and influenced those transvestites and the sector. Most transvestites used to possess renting apartments to live daily life and only come out to work during the night. However, to satisfy the drug addiction, many of them lost everything and had to migrate to the street, prostitute only to buy more crack. For other transvestites who have no drug addiction, they complained that the current condition at the sector reduced their interest to prostitute there anymore because the street, the space where used to be managed by themselves, had been expropriated by drug traffickers.

Around the sector 703 South, especially at the garden side between attached houses and in the late afternoon until the night, these so-called weird people often wandered and stayed there. In Taniele Rui's (2012) research, she gave crack users a name "abject bodies". Through her ethnography respectively in Campinas and São Paulo during 2008 and 2010, she affirmed that the body of the crack users radicalizes the otherness, because it creates a social type that is founded from the exclusion – that produces corporeal, social, spatial and symbolic borders. These borders make the crack users weird in others' eyes, always be outsiders from the society as well as the neighborhood. In the wake of insecurity, the fear and imputation against the outsiders had grown. Although according to the police, the residents rationally know that the criminals for robbery and burglary are mostly from

peripheries. (OSAC Brazil Crime & Safety Report: Brasilia, 2018) However, when more and more crimes and outsiders invading the neighborhood, the residents started to impute the crimes to different groups. On one hand, they still told me that criminals come from peripheries. On the other hand, they blamed the rising number of the homeless and drug users.

It is noteworthy here to bring up the controversy of informal guesthouses in the residential sectors 700s. Many attached houses are used for guesthouse and hostel business. Although there is no specific law prohibiting the commercial use, the community councils complain that the rotation disrupts the residential character of the region. The decree number 166 of 2016<sup>17</sup> which reviewed Brasilia as a heritage site stated a standard for attached houses along 700s in South Wing and North Wing. Article 49 says that the sectors of attached houses should have “predominantly” residential use. Yet it does not talk about “exclusiveness” for residential use. Also, Lucio Costa himself never declared any sector for exclusive use. According to the Federal District Agency for Territorial Surveillance (Agefis), guesthouse commerce is prohibited in the listed heritage area, which includes the Pilot Plan, Cruzeiro and Vila Planalto. However, the agency can only control the commerce “on-site”, which does not include trade through the online platform such as “Airbnb”. Renting rooms by applications is tolerated as well as renting for a period of time. The latter case is what I did with my Brazilian family.

In these attached house sectors, many residents are opposed to the commercial use and insist that the sector shall retain its original character, not for rental and commerce, but for the family and the neighborhood. The complaints against informal guesthouses have relevance to privacy and security.<sup>18</sup> The existence of informal guesthouses allows

---

<sup>17</sup> Ministério da Cultura, Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional - Portaria Nº 166, de 11 de maio de 2016

[http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/legislacao/portaria\\_166\\_consolidada\\_2018\\_com\\_mapas.pdf](http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/legislacao/portaria_166_consolidada_2018_com_mapas.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Correio Brasiliense, January 24th, 2018, “Pousadas ilegais usam internet para continuar a oferecer

tourists to stay for a day or a short period. In such a way, they could be seen as outsiders of the neighborhood as well.

The tourists and tenants were not imputed for the crimes as much as the homeless and drug users. However, some residents might still complain about and report to the government. Every year, there is always news that the agency (Agefis) found and closed more informal guesthouses along the sector 700s.<sup>19</sup> Instead of crimes like robbery and theft, the residents might worry more about the drug trade and use. In April 2016, an informal guesthouse in North Wing was detected.<sup>20</sup> It was transformed into a crack trade center as well as a shelter for drug users. The formal residents insist that maintaining the residential character in the sectors is a necessity. Otherwise, any kind of unfamiliarity would invade their privacy and security.

## **2.6 – The disappearance of the police – Security and segregation**

To have a deeper perspective regarding the security of my neighborhood, I made two interviews respectively with my Brazilian parents, while my Brazilian siblings accompanied by the side to share some comments. The family has lived in the sector 703 South for 16 years. The father regarded sector 703 South as an excellent location which is near to churches, schools, supermarkets, the city center and everything. I asked them if they also noticed the security in the neighborhood changing and worsening. They agreed

---

serviços”

[https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2018/01/24/interna\\_cidadesdf,655228/pousadas-ilegais-usam-internet-para-continuarem-a-oferecer-servicos.shtml](https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2018/01/24/interna_cidadesdf,655228/pousadas-ilegais-usam-internet-para-continuarem-a-oferecer-servicos.shtml)

<sup>19</sup> Globo, March 31st, 2017, “Agefis fecha três pousadas irregulares na Asa Sul, em Brasília”

<https://g1.globo.com/distrito-federal/noticia/agefis-fecha-tres-pousadas-irregulares-na-asa-sul-em-brasilia.ghtml>

Correio Brasiliense, April 13th, 2018, “Agefis faz apreensão em pousadas que funcionam ilegalmente na 703 Sul”

[https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2018/04/13/interna\\_cidadesdf,673428/agefis-faz-apreensao-em-pousadas-que-funcionam-ilegalmente-na-703-sul.shtml](https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2018/04/13/interna_cidadesdf,673428/agefis-faz-apreensao-em-pousadas-que-funcionam-ilegalmente-na-703-sul.shtml)

<sup>20</sup> Metropoles, April 13th, 2016, “Pousadas na 704 Norte viram ponto de tráfico de crack. Veja vídeo”

<https://www.metropoles.com/distrito-federal/seguranca-df/pousadas-na-704-norte-viram-ponto-de-traffic-de-crack-veja-video>

and related it to the removal of the police sub-station.<sup>21</sup>

The police substation was located in the middle area between the sector 703 and 704 South and was removed in March 2017. When the residents of both sectors acknowledged the removal policy from the city government, they organized a protest at the location of the police sub-station to express their dissents. Around 30 residents were present to hang banners on the station, invite journalists to do interviews and cover the news.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the protest didn't change the government's mind nor the policy. The building in which the station stood was then abandoned there without follow-up processing. And later in August, it was burned with an unclear cause.<sup>23</sup> The afterward investigation did not announce the arsonist and motivation. Ashes after the fire had been left for a long while, until someday it was eventually cleaned. Afterwards, two scorched platforms remain at the site.

According to my Brazilian mother, the security was okay after the police sub-station was withdrawn and began to worsen since the police sub-station was burned. She presumed, when the police sub-station building was still standing, despite no officers inside, its deterring effect was maintained. If outsiders didn't take a close look, they wouldn't know that the office was already removed. But when it was burned into ashes, the remaining scorched platforms are a public announcement: this neighborhood is no longer under the protection of the police.

How was the atmosphere in the neighborhood when the police sub-station was nearby? My siblings recalled their memories and shared some stories.

---

<sup>21</sup> The interview was operated on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

<sup>22</sup> Metropoles, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, "Moradores da 703/704 Sul pedem reativação de posto policial": <https://www.metropoles.com/pelas-cidades/plano-piloto/moradores-da-703704-sul-pedem-reativacao-de-posto-policial>

<sup>23</sup> Correio Braziliense, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, "Posto policial desativado na quadra 703 Sul é incendiado; ninguém se fere": [https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2017/08/20/interna\\_cidadesdf,619191/posto-policial-desativado-na-703-sul-e-incendiado-nenhum-ferido.shtml](https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2017/08/20/interna_cidadesdf,619191/posto-policial-desativado-na-703-sul-e-incendiado-nenhum-ferido.shtml)

“I remembered there was once a guy stealing tomatoes from the supermarket and the clerk chased him all the way to the square and shouted to the policemen. It was funny!”

“We used to spend time playing on the square and for so many times there were people running to the police sub-station to report cases.”

“Including us, in fact! Whatever happened, we just ran there!”

Back at the time, if any crimes were committed in the neighborhood, the family didn't dial '190'<sup>24</sup>, instead, they preferred to send someone to run fast to the police sub-station and bring the policemen to the site directly. However after the removal, to report the crime by a phone call, the policemen would only come for inspection at least one day after, despite the fact that there were more and more crimes happening.

Longer ago, besides the existence of police substation to deter outsiders and manage emergencies, there was also the police on patrol, including police bike patrol and mounted patrol. By horses or bicycles, they patrolled through the streets between houses day by day to ensure the security. Due to the governmental budget reduction, they never showed up again in these years.

The interviews with my Brazilian family represented the voice of local residents. According to them, the removal of police substation caused a change in their livelihood. It changed the way of reporting cases and the arrival time of police inspection. The building of the police sub-station itself used to have a deterring effect and after its destruction, the outsiders may invade the neighborhood more at will. The residents not only had to get accustomed to the new livelihood without the police nearby, but also began to confront their own rising fear and the sense of insecurity.

In one article collected in the book “A Cidade e o Medo”, Cristina Patriota de Moura

---

<sup>24</sup> The emergency phone number of police in Brazil.

(2014) discussed the fact of violence and the sentiment of fear. She analyzed that the reflection over the issue of security is not to focus on the fact of violence itself but the perception of violence which generates a kind of fear. In my neighborhood, the common crimes are robbery and theft. Without precise statistics of the rising number of crimes, most of the time, it was the information within chatting and gossiping which produced a panic among the residents. Few of us had witnessed a crime being committed by criminals, but we saw more and more strange faces and presumed them as invaders and suspects. The disgust against the homeless and drug users was thereby correlated with the increase of crime stories as well as the insecurity of the neighborhood.

And moreover, when I and most residents conceptualized the “neighborhood”, we think it is “our” neighborhood versus the outsiders. The usage and the definition of outsiders reveal the division of two sides in our minds. One side is ours, house owners and residents while the other side belongs to anonymous invaders. We accidentally fall into automatic thoughts to suppose that nobody is allowed to enter our neighborhood except residents themselves. In addition, regular street cleaners and merchant trucks are allowed to enter because they serve and bring benefits to the neighborhood. The automatic thought of the middle class mirrors the fear, fantasy and desire as well as present insecurity in the planned space of Brasilia.

The design for the residential areas of 700s is a combination of private and public spaces instead of gated communities. But when the alarm of danger whoops, the middle class in Brasilia also want the construction which clearly separates the two worlds by walls, alarm systems and armed guards, like gated communities in the USA, horizontal condominiums in Goiânia and other Brazilian cities. (Patriota de Moura, 2014) Consequently what the residents desire for is further segregation, between insiders and outsiders, between residents and invaders, between house owners and the homeless and

the drug users, between so-called peace and danger.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

My neighborhood is one sector of residential attached houses. To create the concept of neighborhood, I referred to Robert Park (1915) that a neighborhood is a locality to share the same sentiments and history among the residents. What happened in my neighborhood made the residents experience the threat of danger, the sentiment of fear, and the sense of insecurity altogether. Some of them chose to take actions and organized tasks regarding public area maintenance to improve the safety while most of them shared the information of the new crime and gossiped about it which might generate more panic and fear.

When there is the perception of danger invading the area, it strengthens the concept of a neighborhood. The imputation of criminality to the outsiders including people from peripheries, the homeless, the drug users and even the informal guesthouses tenants divides the area into two sides. One side is for residents to identify the territory of the neighborhood while the other side is for unwelcomed invaders. When my neighbors started to have a negative attitude against the outsiders, it mirrors not only their fear but also the desire for walls to separate two sides. Their desire makes me relate to the currently popular form of residence – gated communities, which seems efficient in security protection.

However, in the trace of Costa's plan, the design of sectors of 700s was meant to be a harmonious combination of the public and the private. The design has its specialty, different than apartments and mansions. Nowadays, to compare with the other two kinds of residences, the gradual development makes attached houses seem more dangerous. It is not only the lack of security protection including security personnel and systems, but

also the lack of public space for random encounters which can help build neighbor relations.

In this chapter, I have mentioned two kinds of segregation between the public and the private. They are both triggered by danger. The first one is within the neighborhood, house as the private versus garden and street as the public. The middle-class families living in the sector chose to stay away from the gardens, cover the patio and depend on car driving. The second one is extending to the whole city, the neighborhood as the private versus whoever from the outside as the public. At this point, the neighbors gather together because they see themselves as victims to suffer from the sense of insecurity. They held a protest for the police sub-station, cosigned for tree pruning, gossip about crimes and strengthen the definition of us and them.

By interviews with my Brazilian family, they represented the voice of local residents and they considered that the existence of police sub-station is the main reason to switch between security and insecurity. For the residents, the social order of the neighborhood highly relies on the police force which was unilaterally managed by the policy and budget of the government. After the station got burned and lost its deterring effect, there were consequently more and more criminals committing assault, robbery and theft which terrified people; more and more homeless occupying space and begging which disturb residents.

At this point, it is important to think profoundly where the fear is from, who invaders are and what they do to cause fear among residents. Yet the residents fell into automatic thought and to guarantee the safety, they tend to divide more clearly and be more isolated. As Caldeira put,

Since it is difficult to impose order through existing institutions which are unable to control evil and therefore unable to build a better society,



people feel that they are constantly exposed to the natural forces of evil and to the abuse of those who place themselves beyond the law. To protect themselves, they have to rely on their own means of isolation, control, separation and distancing. In order to feel safe, that is, they have to build walls. (2000, p.111)

The space of the planned city as well as the habitual behavior of the middle class is matched with weak social ties between the residents and it generates weak social control. Strong patterns of mutual aid were not observed. When the danger is sensed in the neighborhood and the residents are frightened, we see the inherent disorder as well as an acquired imbalance of Brasilia over the issue of security.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **Being Lucky in Rocinha**

“No shootings when you are here with us.” I have always been lucky, or been the symbol of luck. My friends in Rocinha were proud to joke about my presence against shootings. We gradually perceived this coincidence. For almost ten times I have stayed in Rocinha from 2017 to 2019, the shootings never happened fiercely during my stay, yet often took place once I left Rocinha. Sincerely praying for peace, they begged me, “Why don’t you stay longer?”

My first longest stay in Rocinha was in July 2017. I spent one month doing various volunteer jobs including babysitting in daycares and assisting free English class. Back then, I found Rocinha the safest place I could find in South America, compared with the cities I had traveled to, like Santiago in Chile, Lima in Peru, Bogota in Colombia, Buenos Aires in Argentina, etc. My friends in Rocinha also agreed and told me so. Some said, unlike other favelas, Rocinha had been in such stable status for almost ten years.<sup>25</sup> What we didn’t know was that we were near the end of the peaceful period.

On September 17<sup>th</sup> 2017, Sunday, a massive shooting occupied most areas in the community. The “war” in the favela started. In the following days, the government assigned the military to try to take control; in months, another gang managed to invade and take over the power. Ever since, the shootings and the number of deaths never stopped.

---

<sup>25</sup> According to local residents, the peaceful period for almost ten years was counted since the police occupation (UPP) in 2012.



Image 7 – Rocinha. The tall apartments in the beachfront belongs to São Conrado

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2017

### **3.1 – Rocinha and favela tour**

Rocinha is considered the largest favela in Brazil<sup>26</sup>, located in Rio de Janeiro's South Zone (*Zona Sul*), on a steep hillside between two rich districts São Conrado and Gávea. By the state government's census<sup>27</sup>, there are 100,000 residents who have built their houses and occupied the hillside, making it one of the most populous favelas in Brazil.

The favelas in Brazil hold their origins in racial and socioeconomic inequality. The

---

<sup>26</sup> To compare the current population, Rocinha is probably no longer the largest favela in Brazil. Populosas (SP) and Sol Nascente (DF) have both surpassed Rocinha and been called the largest. However, Rocinha still holds its fame around the world.

<https://exame.abril.com.br/brasil/as-10-maiores-e-mais-impressionantes-favelas-do-brasil/>

<sup>27</sup> The population of Rocinha varies a lot by different statistics. The most recent census by IBGE conducted in 2010 revealed that there are 100,000 habitants and 38,000 properties.

<https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/rocinha-maior-favela-do-pais-21834104>

favelas are clusters of informal housing communities originally settled by the poorest of urban dwellers, and these favelas emerged as a phenomenon in Brazil in the late 1800s. Rocinha emerged in the 1920s as rural workers migrated toward the cities in search of urban prosperity. It became an area of crop production, supplying the wealthier surrounding areas. Growth continued in the following years, and Rocinha saw an exponential leap in population during the 1950s and 1960s as surrounding favelas were destroyed and the upper-class neighborhoods nearby grew rapidly. The residents continued to be primarily of low-income, low-social classes, and found work as service-sector employees for the nearby upper-class neighborhoods. Growth in the 1960s was also accelerated as two tunnels were built, Reboucas and Dois Irmãos, connecting Rocinha to the wealthier neighborhoods to increase employment opportunities. As growth continued, Rocinha began to receive basic public services and government recognition, including schools, post office, and health clinic. By 1993, Rocinha was officially declared a neighborhood by the Rio city government.<sup>28</sup>

Compared to simple shanty towns or slums, Rocinha has a better-developed infrastructure and hundreds of businesses such as banks, medicine stores, bus routes, cable television and so on. Its early development in infrastructure and business made it one of the first favelas that started selling favela tours and has developed very well in the tourism industry.

---

<sup>28</sup> History – Rocinha: <https://rocinhaspeaks.wordpress.com/history/>  
Timeline – Rocinha’s transformation: <http://memoriarocinha.com.br/en/linha-do-tempo/>



Image 8 - The tourists attended a favela tour walking along the main street, Estrada de Gávea

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2017

Favela tours had existed since the 1990s. In the 2000s, Rocinha itself could receive 3,500 tourists per month on average. In 2006, even Rio city government made it one official tourist spot of a legislative project which recognized its existence and importance in Rio tourism. Nowadays, the favela tour has become a must-do for many tourists visiting Rio de Janeiro.

However, the controversy of “slum tourism” is always being discussed. It firstly began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in London and Manhattan. The Oxford English Dictionary dates the first use of the word “slumming” to 1884, which means “Spend time at a lower social level than one's own through curiosity or for charitable purposes.” Many have argued that

favela tour is a kind of urban safari, to view the community and those houses as a zoo and stare at the residents like animals, and that the privileged people pay for watching the misery of the unprivileged. Others may argue that the reality tour can raise awareness, benefit the residents and help the community development. The controversy brings up both ethical and economic questions. The mentality to visit the poor is being doubted and also, whether or not the benefits from tourism will return to the residents and the community is also opened to suspicion. Many tourists aim to visit the favela for charitable purposes but it is still a big question mark how much that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction.

Anthropologist Appadurai (1988) provides two perspectives to explain the question. The first concern is the way which we attribute values to goods. He argues that consumption is not something individual or passive, but necessarily social and active. The connection between the exchange and the value of the good is created by politics. Goods are bearers of meanings, in the network of social relations and cultural contexts. They create identities of social and symbolic distinction. The consumption of poverty is also of social distinction that creates new and complex hierarchies. When tourists consume the objects and practices associated with the poor, they do not want to be like them but intend to identify the socio-economic difference through the symbols associated with poverty. The other perspective offered by Appadurai (1988) is related to globalization. Under globalization, economic, social and cultural systems are integrated into an increasing process, including tourism. In other words, tourism becomes one of the flows in which economic, social exchanges and cultural changes occur, and the growing scope of these exchanges, in turn, becomes a stimulus to tourism. Tourist destinations seek to discover its vocation and its identity, to be exotic and stand out in the midst of the market. Slum tourism capitalized on the wave of transnational flows of capital.

In her book “Gringo na Laje”, sociologist Bianca Freire-Medeiros (2009) indicates that “fixation on authenticity” which gains new impetus in the 1960s and 1970s has effects on slum tourism development. From the struggle against repression and the characteristic discrimination, the political discourse emphasizes the expression of feelings as the place of the truth. Everything has to be said in the name of authenticity. Through a favela tour, tourists are promised authentic encounters with exotic, artisanal communities, supposedly alien to the modern temporality.

A purchase of a favela tour signifies heterogeneous experiences with complicated joints between money and emotions, between interests and feelings, between leisure and misery. In return, favela tour to the community and its residents, there are also two formulations of values: the values of the economic world includes development and distribution of profits and the value of emotion world which includes self-esteem and awareness. (Freire-Medeiros, 2009)

The successful growth in tourism has been attracting more and more tourists and making Rocinha well-known around the world. Nowadays in Rocinha, there are not only foreigners as daily tourists and short term volunteers, but there are also numerous foreigners settling as residents. Some of them work as tour guides and establish social projects to support the community; some of them chose to live there for the cheaper rent and convenient environment. The community and its local residents are accustomed to seeing foreign faces on the street and are usually friendly as well as patient to interact with foreigners.

### **3.2 – Unspoken Rules – No Robbery, No Theft**

On the first day arriving at Rocinha in July 2017, I was excited, nervous and afraid at the same time. Although I had participated in a favela tour once in 2014, it was still a new

environment for me to adapt and explore, not to mention that I wasn't coming just to take a look but to settle myself down for at least one month. The street in the lower part entrance was bustling. When I was worried that any passersby could rob me at any time, the guide who accompanied me was chilled, walking slowly, holding his cellphone on hand and taking many pictures for me. To comfort my nerve, he kept repeating that it is all safe in the favela. I tried to listen and understand him, but all in my mind was the warning from my Brazilian family and friends: "Favela is a place full of bandits. All bad people gather there."



Image 9 – The lower part entrance of Rocinha

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2017



On the second day, the tour guide gave me a favela tour with other tourists he received. During the tour, he indicated the unspoken rules by *traficantes*<sup>29</sup> to control the community. According to him, there are 5 top rules: no robbing, no stealing, no beating and raping women, no abusing children and no snitching. The corresponding punishments include shaving the head bald, chopping a hand and death. Severe extrajudicial punishments are believed to frighten and hinder committing crimes.

I wasn't sure about the rules and their effects so it took me some time to observe and confirm. First of all, I found residents' behaviors inside the territory of Rocinha were distinct from the outside. They seemed to feel at ease to show the cellphone, money and valuable objects. On the street, the space between people was closer than I was used to in Brasilia. Light body collisions happen often and are tolerated since the street is always crowded and alleys are very narrow. Most importantly, such collision would not be linked to the theft. Pausing to greet and chat by the road is also allowed and not normally considered to be an exposure to risk. In restaurants, many would leave valuable objects on the table when chatting and even temporarily leaving. At night, the public area keeps being very bustling, as they seem not to worry that there is more potential for committing the crime in the dark. I realized, residents' sentiments towards public space in Rocinha was different from my other urban experiences in Brazil, including my life in Brasilia and other districts in Rio such as Botafogo. The residents didn't seem to stay fully cautious, instead, they seemed to be free to walk, stop and stay on the street. The public area was

---

<sup>29</sup> In Brazilian Portuguese, there are various ways to indicate the gang. In Claudia Fonseca's book "Família, Fofoca e Honra" (2000), her ethnography is about two poor communities in Porto Alegre in the 1980s to 1990s. When talking about the local gang and criminals, the residents declared their distinction between *bandidos* (bandit), *marginal*, *ladrão* (thief) and *traficante* (trafficker). When talking about the two legendary gang leaders, the residents declared "They were not *bandidos*.", "He is not a *ladrão*; he is a *traficante*.", "He is not a *marginal*, because robbing a bank doesn't hurt anyone", and even "The real *bandido* is those who take money from workers' pockets."

As I observed in Rocinha, *traficante* is a more neutral word, more like describing a kind of job and indicating the criminal organization. It is a word that I have heard the residents in Rocinha using. At the same time, *bandido* is a rather negative word, often used to blame robbers, theft, and criminals. Hence, I would use *traficante* in the following context.

not necessarily associated with danger and risk. (Further discussion about the public area to favela residents, see Chapter 4)



Image 10 – Even in the night, Rocinha is still bustling and shining with business activities

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2017

As a second way to confirm the existence of extrajudicial rules, I tried to bring up related topics when chatting with local friends. For instance, Maria is a white woman in her late 30s. She runs a beauty salon herself in Valão, a relatively dangerous area in the lower part of Rocinha. She is very talkative and likes to share her life story. During my waxing session, she disclosed to me that she owns the building of three floors, the first floor for the salon, second and third floor for the family which includes her white

*trabalhador* (worker)<sup>30</sup> husband, her 8-year-old daughter Ana and herself. She said she is satisfied with the current life. With a property and sufficient income, she is able to provide quality education to Ana.

“But sometimes I would wonder if we should move out from Rocinha to seek a better habitat. However, it costs a lot outside...”

“And it is more dangerous? You won’t be able to let Ana go out alone and play on the street?” After school and finishing homework, Ana is free to hang out in the area Valão and Maria would focus on her job. In Rocinha, children playing in public area by themselves make up one of the significant scenes as I observed by myself as well as heard from the guide. I was expecting to hear Maria’s perspective regarding the security between the inside and the outside world. She agreed with my opinion.

“Yes, that’s something I need to be concerned with as well. In the outside world, people rob, steal... too much to worry on the street.”

In some local residents’ perceptions, staying inside the favela is linked to security while going outside is risky. At the daycare, the three teachers working with me in the same classroom in ASPA asked me if I would go out. The three teachers are two white females respectively at the age of 24 and 47 and one brown female at the age of 36. They all live in the lower part of Rocinha.

“Yes, I just went to Botafogo last night to have some drinks.”

“Wow, you are so brave. How dare you to go out at night?”

“It was fine. See, I am still here.” They were always surprised by my hangouts in the city Rio, like drinking at Lapa, watching a soccer game in Maracanã, passing New Year’s Eve in Copacabana and ...etc. According to them, I was too brave to do such things. They

---

<sup>30</sup> For the favela residents, there is a specific distinction between *bandidos* (bandits) and *trabalhadores* (workers). While the former one is related to working at illegal drug trafficking and criminal organization, the latter term is to emphasize the legality of jobs and incomes.

admitted that their daily life highly depended on the community. They could manage everything inside Rocinha so there is no necessity to leave the territory.

“But it is fun. We are in the magnificent city to experience lots of things!”

“Nah... too dangerous!”

“You have never done (one of the things I just mentioned)? Never been to (the place)?”

Most of the teachers in the daycare would shake heads and reject. I presumed that one reason was probably the limit by financial condition, and the other was the fear. When they showed the fear towards the outside world, it reminded me how outside Brazilians showed their fear towards this world inside - the favela. In my eyes, these expressions from residents of two sides seem quite similar. They do not understand and do not want to understand. If possible, they have no interest and would not cross the border to see and seek proof. Furthermore, the mutual fear from the favela residents towards the outside world can be a little more complicated. Besides being afraid of petty crimes, there are many more concerns, for example, the social label. With darker skin color and favela dressing code, it is possible that the residents would be treated differently and even discriminated.<sup>31</sup>

From the side of the favela, some teachers had crossed a few times and they concluded it was a bad decision.

“I was born in the favela and have lived here all my life. I had never been robbed in the favela. But outside, I have been robbed three times on the bus!” Francisca is the head-teacher of the baby class I was working with. She has brown skin and was 36 years old when we first met in 2017. She was about to attain her bachelor’s degree in special

---

<sup>31</sup> About different treatment towards the underprivileged class in Brazil, see Rosana Pinheiro-Machado and Lucia Scalco’s article “*Rolezinhos: marcas, consumo e segregação no Brasil.*” (2014) which discussed the phenomenon known as rolezinho in the beginning of 2014. Teenagers from peripheries gathered in large numbers to walk and had fun in the shopping center but the event provoked costumers’ apprehension and some malls gained the right to prohibit the entrance of the teenagers. It emerged a broad debate about segregation in Brazilian society.

education. With the curiosity and fondness of learning, she enjoyed chatting with me, regarding diverse topics from international news, Brazilian politics, favela situation, to our personal lives.

“Three times! That’s too many times Francisca. How could it happen?”

“I don’t know. It just happened. I am unlucky whenever I took the bus outside so I just don’t like going out. You need to be very careful as well!”

“How should I avoid it? Anything I should be aware of?”

The three teachers in the classroom were enthusiastic to give me tips and share their experience. I perceived, at the daycare, I received a lot of safety advice against the outside world in the city Rio, more than reminders aimed at surviving in the favela. Later, I would realize that people also gave me reminders for the favela life. Instead of verbal messages, they expressed by body languages as well as actively took care of me by themselves.

Among my local friends, the extrajudicial law of no robbery and no theft seems effective. It is able to construct an environment without petty crimes. After sufficient observation and confirmation, I also believed that the security inside the favela was possible and felt safer when I was within the territory. It was free to wander on the street at any time, no matter during the day or at night. I could turn off my build-in alert system and release the fear of encountering bad guys from nowhere.

According to favela related researches, the extrajudicial laws, called as *mandamentos da favela* (commandments of the favela) by the residents, have existed for a long time. Robbery, using weapons, abusing women are basic rules, commonly prohibited in most favelas. For those who don’t comply with the commandments, known as “*transgressões* (transgressions)”, punishments like death, beating, expulsion from the favela would be conducted. Moreover, there are extra rules related to the specific characteristics of each *traficante* and the distinct punishments for new rules are also enumerated by the

residents. (Farias, 2008)

From my personal experience, I perceived that there are still loopholes in the extrajudicial law. One day in July 2017, my friend Fernanda's cellphone was stolen by a client who visited her shop in the popular market. I was angry and couldn't believe what happened, so I questioned closely the matter and tried to probe into the extrajudicial system behind it. She described the matter that the client is an acquaintance and asked to borrow the phone to make a call. When she was busy to serve another customer, the thief left quickly with the phone.

I asked her, "What would you do?" I read from some books that when there are crimes happening in the favela, instead of reporting to the police, the residents tend to report to the *traficante* and have them to deal with the criminal. I wondered if Fernanda was going to report to the *traficante* and if she would let me know her decision.

"I will do nothing. There is basically no way to get back my phone though I know exactly where he lives." Her answer disappointed me.

"But, you can report to the *traficante* and they will manage it, right?" She didn't answer my question directly. Instead, she said something else.

"I just hope that I will never meet him on the street."

"What? You are not planning to do anything about your stolen phone?" Back at the time, I didn't know that mentioning and talking about the *traficante* in the public is sensitive and should be avoided. I couldn't understand Fernanda's cold reaction and didn't realize I should shut my mouth in the restaurant where we were having dinner. I just felt it was very unfair that my friend was a victim but all she worried about is not to meet the guy again, as she felt ashamed to confront him.

"Yes, I am not going to do anything and hope I won't meet him."

"But isn't there the rule of no theft?"

“He is kind of a friend, so forget it!” She insisted to let it go, but I didn’t want to lose the opportunity to know more about the rules.

“Fine. But if, you didn’t want to let it go, what would you do?”

She didn’t answer. I wasn’t able to tell her unwillingness on this topic, so I pushed a little bit more. “In the favela, when there are crimes, you don’t report to the police, but to the *traficante*, is it right?”

She stayed silent but slightly nodded her head.

“So, every resident knows someone working in the *traficante*? Otherwise how do they know where to report? The five rules indicated by the tour guide are still conducted strictly? The thief would be chopped hand?”

“That’s why I don’t plan to do anything but hope not to meet the guy. Forget it!”

“I am very curious about such things. The tour guide only mentioned the five rules and didn’t want to tell me more...” I kept chattering by myself.

“I can’t tell you either.” Fernanda said it quickly in a low voice and left her seat to smoke outside the restaurant. By her leaving, I eventually realized I was insisting too much and that she did not want to talk.

In the book “Vida Sob Cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro”, one of the research methods was to constitute “*coletivos de confiança* (trust groups)”, comprising 150 residents from 45 different favelas to talk about their daily life in the favela. There were 15 meetings, each for 3 hours of duration and also extra meetings requested by numerous participants which lasted for 7 hours. Fridman (2008) says that the commandments in the favela consist of a kind of domination through which the *traficante* gives the word of what is allowed and prohibited in daily attitudes and relations. According to Fridman and the residents he interviewed in the “*coletivos de confiança*”, currently the commandments have erratic traces. At the time of this research, there is not

exactly a pattern defined and understandable for the residents. The commandments were being rumored between truth and falseness and could be changed suddenly which brought the feeling of uncertainty and risk to the residents. In residents' words, they attributed the uncertainty to the power transfer from the "*velha guarda* (old guard)" to "*adolescentes Bin Laden* (Bin Laden adolescents)". The former, *velha guarda*, is the bandit components of an earlier generation, whose domain was in a certain order considered by the population, including commandments and actions. The latter, *adolescentes Bin Laden*, won the name from the residents because of their courage and boldness on criminal practice. They dare to descend from the hill, approach districts of the middle and high class to sell drugs, cross the community with weapons in their hands and put everyone's life at risk. They radicalize the experience of the world as an object collection to be appropriated, including other human beings. Many interviewed residents compared and complained about the difference between the two generations. For example, in the past, it was rare to see weapons in public and to have deaths. "The old guard had respect and the adolescents do not respect anybody."

The comparison between two bandit generations cause many echoes among the residents in different favelas, also including what I observed from Rocinha residents. There are a few Facebook Fanpages<sup>32</sup> to broadcast the news of the community. To follow them, the residents would know the first-hand information about shootings, disasters, public service, lost and found, and store promotions. They also broadcast about robbery and theft cases. Under the posts of robbery and theft, mostly happened on the bus passing Estrada de Gávea, there are many comments urging the *traficante* to take actions. Those comments suggested, if the *traficante* acts like what they used to do, which infers to the

---

<sup>32</sup> There are a few Fanpages I personally followed, listed below.  
Rocinha Alerta: <https://www.facebook.com/rocinhaalerta/>  
FavelaDaRocinha.com: <https://www.facebook.com/faveladarocinha/>  
Rocinha depressão: <https://www.facebook.com/RocinhaDepressao/>



severe extrajudicial punishments, these petty crimes would not occur. On the other hand, from the comments and complaints, I could suppose that the extrajudicial laws are not as strict as in the past. The constant happenings of petty crimes, including what occurred to my friend Fernanda, evoke residents' memory of *velha guarda*, which had more control and orders.

On another day, I annoyed Fernanda for another time when she was mentioning that the spouse of the drug lord is working in the popular market.

"How do you guys normally call him? How do you mention him?"

"*Dono, dono de morro* (the owner of the hill)."

"How is he like? Have you ever seen him?"

"He is a *gente boa* (nice guy) and helps the community a lot." Fernanda's answer was quick and in a low voice again. I perceived that she was feeling uncomfortable and tried to finish the conversation soon. After these two times of disturbing her, I gradually realized and learned by myself that *traficante* is not a topic to talk publicly with the residents.

Among the extrajudicial laws, there is a very important one - "*lei do silêncio* (the silence law)". From the book "Vida Sob Cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro", it indicated that a myth towards the residents in the favela is to accuse them conniving with *traficante*. It is essential to emphasize here that the residents are mandatory to share the same territory with *traficante*. The coexistence between them is forced. And because of sharing the same territory, the control from *traficante*, compared to the government and the police, can be more personalized. *Traficante* is capable of knowing what is broadcast. To comment on the *traficante* publicly is risky because no one knows who can be the whistleblower.

Machado da Silva and Leite (2007) talked about the violence in favelas from both sides of *traficante* and the police. According to the interviewed residents in the *coletivos*

*de confiança*, they referred to the power of *traficante* which is arbitrary and almost unlimited in the favela. The residents have no resources to counteract the power even though it provokes intense malaise. Many residents mentioned they could talk freely in the trust groups because nobody would be identified. But in the favela, many admitted, "The traffickers know everything I do." "Gossip makes victims." It depends on who and how one gossips; in certain circumstances in the favelas, gossip can lead to death. This undetermined fear may relate to what other residents have identified as "neurosis" or "paranoia". At the same time, such an individual and defensive reaction to the extent of the submission imposed by the traffickers may be exaggerated as well.

Leeds (1998) discussed the relation between *traficante* and the favela residents in her article which analyzed the parallel powers in Brazilian urban periphery. She affirmed that how *traficante* treats the residents is determined by the personality, the leadership style and the personal philosophy of the *dono de morro*. Farias (2008) indicated, the above three elements disclose that the character of the dominion is discretionary, arbitrary, and non-bureaucratic. She suggested, referring to Manchado da Silva (2004), to consider the criminal violence nowadays as a pattern of sociability that consists the transformation of the use of force and possible means to obtain the interest in the principle of regulation of social relations. She further pointed out the term "neurosis" to describe that the compulsory submission to *traficante* has turned into a native status. For many residents, there is a mechanism in their emotional states for self-criticism and self-censorship. Especially for young people, they believe every detail such as abbreviations, slangs, colors, and clothing brands must be dealt with carefully. Knowing the meaning of such details can reduce the danger that surrounds each corner. The "neurosis" is hence sustained by the fear conjugated between extreme abstract generalization and reification of the supposed laws from the *traficante*.

### **3.3 – “Don’t Get Lost!”**

Knowing that the extrajudicial rules maintain the favela a safer place from petty crimes, the first and most important concern from my local friends is me getting lost. Countless alleys construct an arduous maze in the favela. Although I stated that I have an excellent sense of direction, they all have a habit to confirm and reconfirm the location and direction with me. I figured out later that the problem of getting lost in the alleys is not only getting lost itself, but related to more risks, including encountering drug trade, weapons, *traficante* and shootings. Although in Rocinha it is walking free from robbery, theft, and rape, it doesn't mean it is a playground for me to explore wherever I want. I only walked within the places I had known, basically in the scope of the lower part commercial area where it is widely regarded as safer and more stable.

Two main roads, Via Apia and Boiadeiro, and several alleys linking these two roads comprise the commercial area. Most legal business activities happen here and the main bus stops and metro exits are also here. The hostel and my two jobs are all located within the commercial area. In comparison, the lower part of Rocinha is considered safer than the upper part. Though Rocinha is seen as a whole in the eyes of outsiders, yet inside it, it is divided into many territories and each one has different characteristics, lifestyles, and social-economic status. To be brief, the lower part, including Via Apia, Boiadeiro, Roupa Suja and Valão, has all the convenience of transportation and business activities and hence is considered as a richer area. The construction of houses is more completed hence the price as well as the rent values are relatively higher. The upper part, where most *traficante* members would occupy and hide, has more risk of shootings and is least developed and poor in infrastructure. The houses there could still lack doors or windows, stable hot water and electricity.

The differences between the lower part and the upper part can be big in terms of

house constructions, infrastructure, residents' socioeconomic status and skin colors. I visited a friend's house in Rua Dois regularly and also worked at a daycare in Rua Um for a week. From what I observed, besides being poorer, the residents in the upper part generally have darker skin. It is especially obvious if I compare the babies and the teachers in the two daycares. In the lower part, at the daycare ASPA, among 24 babies in my class, there were only three black babies and the rest were white or light-brown. Among 30 teachers of the daycare, there were only three black women and one black man. In the upper part, the percentage of black, brown and white was the opposite. I don't remember the exact numbers but there were approximately three white or brown people among 30 black people.



Image 11 – The map of Rocinha with names of main areas

Access: Google Map on October 2nd, 2018

Besides favela tours, I had few experiences walking into alleys. These experiences happened with friends' invitation to visit their houses. Normally, they would wait for me in the entrance of the alley which links to the main road Estrada de Gávea.<sup>33</sup> Once we entered the alley, it could be too narrow to walk shoulder by shoulder. I perceived, the atmosphere during the walk changes quickly and subtly. At some parts, we would chat happily and walk with ease and suddenly the friend would alter to a lower voice or respond less. At those moments, I felt the nerve and followed to pass quickly and quietly. The interesting thing is that none of my friends explicitly noticed and explained to me about these silent moments. Instead, they used body languages and set themselves as examples to take the lead. I supposed, we were approaching some sensitive areas like *olheiro* (watchman)<sup>34</sup> and drug trade. Sometimes, I did witness some illegal spots, drugs, weapons, walkie-talkie, and a bunch of youngsters. Passersby would speed up the pace and stay totally quiet.

I had fewer experiences of walking into alleys alone, when I was working at the other two daycares, one in Rua Um and the other in Valão. Both areas are considered dangerous. Before the first day to these two daycares, the tour guide strictly repeated to me that I must wait in the entrances of alleys, ensure my location and have the teachers come to lead me; must not enter alleys alone. On the one hand, he only said he worries if I get lost; on the other hand, it sounded like entering into alleys requires authorization. To work in Centro Educacional União Faz a Força in Rua Um, the principal came to meet me in the entrance and it took almost ten minutes walking in the complicated alleys to arrive at the

---

<sup>33</sup> Estrada de Gávea is the main road for car driving. It starts from the other side of the hill, the district Gávea, to this side of Rocinha and extends until the district São Conrado. Inside Rocinha, it is the main road for public transportation bus and van, connecting all the way from the upper part to the lower part.

<sup>34</sup> *Olheiro* or *Fogueteiro* is the terms for the watchman working for the *traficante* in the favela. They stay in strategic locations to monitor the activity of the police and the enemy. In case of any threat, they would use walkie-talkie or fireworks to alert. The job of watchmen is often occupied by young boys, as the early position in the career in drug trafficking.

daycare. Along the way, she kept ensuring that I would remember the direction and be able to walk by myself in the following days. “If you ever get a little lost, stop right away, ask people. Do not risk keeping going and finding.” My trip to this daycare was all fine. Sometimes I encountered some *olheiros*. Passing quickly without further stares is what I learned and imitated from other residents. I supposed doing as what locals do is the smartest way to ensure security. But, going to the other daycare, Creche Escola Arco Iris in Valão, was not that smooth. The tour guide informed me to wait in front of an *açaí* (Brazilian berry smoothie) shop where the principle would meet me. When I arrived, the street was lively with people coming and going. I waited for a while and nobody from the daycare showed up. Instead, a strange guy came to talk to me in an urgent voice.

“You can’t stay here. It is not a place for you to stay!”

“I am waiting for people from the daycare. I am going to work there.”

“But you can’t stay here. Go, go, go!”

“They are going to find me right here. I can’t leave!”

He physically pushed me a little bit. I walked away for a short distance first but saw he was still staring at me and urged me to leave for longer. Against my will, I hid into a grocery store and contacted the tour guide to inform that I changed the waiting spot. I was scared, trying to understand what just happened at a sudden as well as imagine what could happen next. I tried to analyze if the reason that I couldn’t be there was because I am an outsider and a foreigner or because something violent was about to occur, like a shooting. I dismissed the latter option by the situation of surroundings which was still lively. The residents walked around, interacted with each other, stopped and stayed on the street at ease. Why couldn’t I be there? Is the guy working for *traficante* or an ordinary resident who was too eager to remind me? In the end, the principal didn’t come to meet me herself. She sent the handyman of the daycare to find me. When the handyman led me

into alleys, I told him what happened earlier and complained that I didn't know what to do. He smiled without answering me and changed to a topic that he was willing to chat. On the next day, I began to walk by myself and was able to approach the same area and enter the alleys without any interference.

In such conditions, I obviously perceived that there are things that residents couldn't and didn't want to explain to me even though it was highly associated with my safety. I was not able to inquire into the system controlling the neighborhood but only peeped by experiencing some cases personally that confused me. As an outsider, I learned to shut my mouth up as well and stopped being that curious. "Don't get lost!", "Don't enter the alleys by yourself!" are superficial safety advice. Extending from these reminders, there are much more potential dangers which the residents can't state and describe too clearly due to the "silence law". Therefore, to ensure my safety, most of them came up with the solution to accompany me along the way, avoid direct verbal discussion, show the survival skills physically and presume maybe I would figure it out by myself.

Furthermore, I wish to discuss the bustling streets and alleys in the favela as a safer public area. When I first arrived and started the life in Rocinha, I identified the crowd on the street as a sign of safety. Without the concern of petty crimes, the residents seemed friendly and enthusiastic to greet and help other people. In my eyes, although the population in the community is large, they share a connection to live in the same territory, to make it a neighborhood of warm hospitality. Applied by the theory of Jane Jacobs (1961), there are a number of effective eyes on the street in Rocinha. These eyes belong to storekeepers and passersby standing at the corners. They are strong proponents of peace and order, equipping the street to handle the strangers and ensure the safety of both residents and strangers. Furthermore, the streets and alleys are full of activities which may attract people in the sidewalks and buildings to watch it for entertainment. I thought

the bustling streets and alleys could be a good example to put Jacob's theory into practice and match the requirements of a well-used safe street. However, I omitted that there is an extra kind of surveillance in Rocinha. Besides voluntary sidewalk guardians, there may be *olheiros* who work for the *traficante*. I suspect it with my own experiences. For example, the guy who urged me to leave in Valão on the first day could be an *olheiro*. Coincidentally, nobody stopped me since the following day, as if my entrance had been authorized.

Another story also showed that I could be under surveillance. I knew a motorbike taxi rider Matheus at the station of Rua Um, the upper part of Rocinha. Whenever I needed a ride from there, I would demand to take his ride. There was one day that he didn't work. A colleague of Matheus, who I have met before once, provided to take me and asked my destination. Before I opened my mouth, another colleague who I had never met and talked to, answered the location of the hostel, saying I stayed at an alley in the commercial area. I was surprised and speculated that my Asian face in Rocinha could be impressively rare and easily recognized. Yet, a motorbike taxi rider whose station is in the upper part knowing my life mainly in the lower part, still seemed strange. As said, I was not able to inquire into the system behind the community. Some coincidences and surprises I have experienced personally had me to suspect and argue that the eyes on the street in Rocinha are not totally natural and voluntary, but also mandatory and on purpose to control both residents and strangers.





Image 12 – One of the alleys. Each alley could lead to hundreds or even thousands of houses

Picture taken by Han Hui Tseng, 2018

### **3.4 – Unspoken Tragedy – Shootings**

After July 2017, I was satisfied and proud to know such a safe place where I could stay in public whenever I wanted. I didn't need to be fully cautious and judge passersby to categorize them between the good and the bad. Turning off the built-in alert system brought peace and clam to my mind. However, there was still danger in the favela. Its

existence was obvious and fatal but was ignored and didn't worry me much – the shootings.

During the month of July 2017, I had heard shootings which mostly occurred in the upper part of Rocinha. The shootings could be caused by conflicts between the police and *traficante*, between different *traficante* groups or within the same *traficante* group. The sound of the shootings was very loud by the echo of the valley and easy to be confused with the sound of fireworks. Firework is another significant scene of Rocinha as I observed and the residents adore it. They use it often for celebrating birthdays, football games and parties. The shootings, according to what I heard and what friends told me, almost occur every day in particular places, like Rua Um, Rua Dois, and Valão. I was scared by the sudden rumble but they didn't worry me a lot, since I didn't meet any situations in which I should run and escape. Moreover, I also believe that the shootings didn't bother me because nobody around me was discussing them.

A life-threatening danger exists there, causing noises every day but is ignored. In general, the rumble would not stop the residents' movement. They don't even pause a little, or express a wow, or sigh, or guess where it is happening. It caused a strange scene that the residents seemed collectively deaf, or immune from being scared by the rumble of shootings. Unless I asked actively, none of my friends had warned or reminded me about the shootings. I conclude two inferences regarding ignorance. First, the shootings are related to *traficante* and the police so it belongs to the category of avoided topics. Some specific words like "shooting (*tiroteio*)", "war (*guerra*)" are sensitive to be mentioned. The residents would not comment on them publicly. Second, the shootings are unpredictable. There are no specific tips to take precautions against it. To protect oneself from it, the safety advice would be like the one of "Don't go out!" in Brasilia. The extreme advice here in Rocinha to avoid the shootings would be "Don't live in the favela!" Most residents I know,

they didn't choose to live in the favela but the conditions of their life chose for them. Living in the favela, under two powers of the police and *traficante*, the fact of shootings is brutal and unacceptable, yet gradually the residents are tolerating and accustomed to it. It became a significant scene of the favelas and an inevitable cost to live in the favela. Moreover, the cost is too tragic and heavy to manage, narrate and talk. I have a close friend whose son-in-law was shot on October 2017. I will elaborate on the story below and discuss it more.

Since I started to know Rocinha at the position of a semi-local resident, the community had a great change regarding safety and danger. At dawn on September 17<sup>th</sup> 2017, the favela war began.<sup>35</sup> The armed conflicts on the day even covered the lower part of Rocinha and forced all residents to hide in their houses. In the following days, it drew an army operation and occupation. The infighting within one *traficante* group evolved into a conflict between *traficante* and the military and the police. Later, another *traficante* group got involved in the war as well. Ever since then, the conflicts have never stopped and the community is always at risk.

When the war started, I was in Brasilia, feeling shocked and worried. The shootings no longer occurred in the upper part of Rocinha only. The gunshots and deaths were everywhere in different areas. I was closely following some Facebook Fanpages of the community news to receive the quickest information about new shootings and anxious to send messages and ensure the safety of my friends. In the last week of October, although the situation was still at risk, I was too eager to see Rocinha and meet friends in person. I returned to the hostel and the job at the daycare for a whole week. During the week, there were some more deaths, including a controversial case when a Spanish female tourist was

---

<sup>35</sup> There is an article in Wikipedia, recorded as "*Conflito armado na Rocinha em 2017* (Armed Conflict in Rocinha in 2017)". It indicated the conflict is a result of a dispute for the control of drug trafficking between Antônio Bonfim Lopes, Nem da Rocinha, and Rogério Avelino da Silva, the Rogério 157. [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflito\\_armado\\_na\\_Rocinha\\_em\\_2017](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflito_armado_na_Rocinha_em_2017)

killed by the police.<sup>36</sup> But I myself was lucky not to witness and meet any near me. At that time, my friends were little more willing to discuss the matter of *traficante* since the war was going on. It is noteworthy that the conversations happened mostly in the private space including the daycare classroom, someone's house, and a restaurant outside of the community. The most used word to refer to the war was "*aquele domingo* (that Sunday)". They narrated their fear and concerns, reminding not to stay on the street as often as in the past. According to them, the situation had all changed and no one could predict the end of the fearful days.

On November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017, the son-in-law of a friend was killed by the police on the way to buy bread.<sup>37</sup> I didn't know the victim Caio in person but his mother-in-law Eloa is a close friend of mine who cooperates in a children charity project with me. Caio's death left his girlfriend alone with a son of less than one year old, who I am also familiar with. The tragedy loss occupied my Facebook wall on the day. I paid my tribute by sending messages respectively to Eloa and her daughter Evora. At the end of December 2017, I returned to Rocinha once again and visited Eloa's house to play with the kids of our project and also expected to listen to a bit about the tragedy. However, nobody in the family mentioned it. Eloa and I discussed the situation after "that Sunday" but she didn't mention the loss. Also, I would like to note here that the shootings cannot be compared with petty crimes. The loss of life is not easy to be discussed. Regarding robbery and theft, people are willing to spread the news and safety advice, even want to gossip about it, which makes a big difference.

---

<sup>36</sup> The Guardian, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, "Brazil police shoot dead Spanish tourist in Rio de Janeiro favela"  
- Woman, 67, was in car police said failed to stop at a roadblock in Rocinha  
- Death highlights the crumbling of pacification efforts in poor Rio neighborhoods  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/23/brazil-police-shoot-dead-spanish-tourist-rio-de-janeiro-favela>

<sup>37</sup> O Globo, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, "Ele saiu de casa para comprar pão, diz mãe de jovem morto durante ação de PMs na Rocinha" <https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/ele-saiu-de-casa-para-comprar-pao-diz-mae-de-jovem-morto-durante-acao-de-pms-na-rocinha-22100407>

In the current society, especially the city Rio de Janeiro, daily terror caused by urban violence, the war within *traficantes* as well as between *traficante* and the police, has segregated people apart. The stereotypes against favela residents have lasted for decades. The famous slogan “*Bandido bom é bandido morto* (good bandit is dead bandit)” plus another one “*Se nem todos são bandidos, são quase bandidos*. (if not all are bandits, they are almost bandits)” provide and support the “*permissão para matar* (permission to kill)”. The dream of a safe city is transformed into a lenient mentality with the “*permissão para matar*” for the police to repress the crimes. Death of a favela resident is then taken for granted and even celebrated. In fact, every life in the city is suffering from the unpredictable violence, but there is an inequality in the protection from the government. The forms of conscience that accept that the criminalization is from the poor result more sacrifice of the lives of those who already have little to live. The acts of repression involve the annihilation of the armed members of drug trafficking, and due to the inescapable territorial contiguity, the repression is aimed at the residents in the favelas as well. (Fridman, 2008)

Ever since that Sunday, the greetings between friends and me changed a little bit. When I asked “*Tudo bem?* (Everything is good?)”, besides replying me the usual “*Tudo bem*. (Everything is good.)”, most of them would add one more sentence to inform me of the recent situation in Rocinha, mainly referred to the frequency of shootings. For example, in July 2018, Eloa told me “*Graça de Deus! Já fez um mês que não aconteceu nada* (Blessing from God! It has already been a month and nothing has happened.)” Here, the “thing” infers shootings.

The favela residents in Rio de Janeiro live under at least three sieges: first, from *traficantes* who dominate their habitats; second, from the permission to kill by the government and the police; third, from the mentality against them, to detach, derecognize

and exclude them from the society and the dream of a safe city. (Machado da Silva, 2008)

I myself in the favela was also under sieges. Compared to my life in Brasilia which my Brazilian mom complimented “York knows how to walk”, in Rocinha, I did not know how to walk and was not able to learn how to walk. As an outsider, there were many confusing happenings which were not verbally explained by my local friends. Instead of giving me clear verbal safety advice, they showed those unspoken rules by their bodies and actively made me under their protection. There were no naggings to complain about what I should or shouldn’t do. My body followed and imitate their body languages. The local residents pushed me around physically, waited for me and accompanied me along the road to the destinations out of the commercial area. My survivorship in Rocinha was not by skills and strategies to actively confront the public space, but by carefully following the commandments, avoiding the curiosity, and stay in the certain territory of the siege. In Brasilia, I was able to obtain the knowledge of walking on the streets and practice it day by day; in Rocinha, what I had is the continuous luck, not meeting the shootings, not getting lost in the alleys, not talking and asking too much.

### **3.5 - Conclusion**

In the book “Vida Sob Cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro”, Machado da Silva (2008) submitted a concept called “violent sociability (*sociabilidade violenta*)”. In the last decades, *traficante* has been more powerful to occupy most favelas and poor communities used as their base. They constitute a form of autonomous life, different from common residents in the city and also create a kind of social order which is obeyed by the residents within their territory. Under “violent sociability”, the actions are coordinated almost exclusively by reference to physical force, like weapons, etc. The actors do not share common values that could regulate the use of violence in the fulfillment of their common

desires. Who has more force and power uses the others. To impose one's desire, it is possible to omit ethical principles, moral duties, esteem and effects, etc.

As a result, the lifestyle, the safety and danger in the favela is very distinct. I don't intend to compare the level of danger, but prefer to indicate the different kinds of danger. Although the dominion is discretionary and arbitrary, and the power transfer between two generations of bandits might cause the commandments to be unstable, petty crimes like robbery and theft are still rather less within the territory. The residents densely use the public area, stop and stay on the street at ease. The dominion from *traficante* provides a form of protection while it also creates and induces life-threatening danger. Having no resources to counteract the power of *traficante*, the coexistence as well as extrajudicial laws are forced for the residents in the favela. The residents' daily life involves the direct submission imposed by *traficante* or the activities from the police, which possibly include legal and illegal repression, corruption, omission, etc.

The residents in the favelas are doubly dominated. On the one hand, there is common social order, making them the lowest class in the social structure; on the other hand, the "violent sociability", making them mandatory to submit to *traficante*. The latter includes the extrajudicial commandments and orders, the silence law, physical force like weapons, etc. From the surface, the residents may seem enthusiastic and connected to each other. Yet due to the surveillance, their attitude, behaviors and relations are limited and controlled, or even self-critic and self-censor in the cases of "neurosis" and "paranoia". The distrust among the residents themselves has weakened the social bond and communication based on neighbor relations and impeded any possibility to take any collective and organized actions for their own rights and homeland.

Some call Rocinha "a city inside the magnificent city (*A cidade dentro da cidade maravilhosa*)", basically for its large population, sufficient infrastructures, and

independence. When I first entered, it was what I saw as well that Rocinha is equipped with almost all kinds of business and service. I found the life within the territory happy and peaceful. Yet since the favela war began, and along the time I tried to question and disclose my own joy from life there, I gradually realized there are various profound meanings below superficial facts. The commandments are able to be maintained because there are corresponding severe punishments. The residents may adore the orders as well as feel afraid of them. The shootings didn't bother me because there were no discussion and no safety advice regarding it. The residents avoid these specific topics does not mean carelessness but probably they dare not to gossip. Some safety advice sounds simple, like "Don't get lost", but implies to further concerns. Once I dug into these profound meanings, I started to suspect how strong the control is, even aiming at an outsider like me. Hence, I chose better to think the worst, imitated the local residents and learned to follow the silence law. In my personal experience, "neurosis" had become a solution to ensure safety. To live in a favela is to live life by two mental statuses at the same time. On one side, residents seem optimistic to face the low social class environment, interact and communicate a lot to maintain their shared territory. On the other side, behind their smiles, there are countless concerns and towards unpredictable, life-threatening danger, the powerlessness to control their own life. And more helplessly, they do not and cannot show the desperate side publicly. The desperation is that the residents live under a fear which even orders them to disguise the fear. Here, I argue that Rocinha can be seen as a city not only because of its physical equipment, but also because of the specific sociability, shaping the residents differently from lifestyle, interaction to mental status.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Behind the fear and between urban places**

In the 17th century, Rio de Janeiro became a far more practical export port than the previous national capital Salvador, and the colonial administration was moved in 1763. In 1808 the Portuguese royal family and most of the aristocracy in the Portuguese capital Lisbon fled Portugal ahead of Napoleon's invasion. The Portuguese capital was temporarily transferred from Europe to Rio de Janeiro. The city remained the capital after the independence of Brazil in 1822 and after the abolition of the monarchy in 1889.

In the 1950s plans were considered for moving the federal capital from the east coast to the interior. Being the capital for ages, Rio de Janeiro was crowded and its traffic was heavy; while the interior was sparsely populated and it was hoped that moving the capital to the region would help populate the area. After four years of toil by architects, engineers and city planners, the new capital, Brasília, was inaugurated as the federal capital on 21 April 1960.

The two urban places where I have spent a long time living at, Brasilia and Rocinha of Rio de Janeiro, are widely different. The former one is the capital city planned by a pioneering urban and architecture project and I lived in a middle-class neighborhood of attached houses neatly in rows. The latter one is a famous favela, a collective of unregulated and illegal houses densely settled across a large hillside in the South Zone of the city Rio de Janeiro. To start this chapter, I would like to compare some facts of the two urban places, and then I would discuss the talk of crime and fear-mongering and the implications of this kind of talk for the establishment and maintenance of social boundaries which include gender, age, ethnicity, class, status, place-based identities, and family life. And, I would talk about the trips between urban places and their significance.

#### **4.1 – Comparison of the two urban places**

When I first arrived in Brazil for my exchange program in 2014, I stayed with a local family. Thus, I could say that my view on Brasilia and Brazil was cultivated firstly by my Brazilian parents and siblings, especially the mother Sara. She was the one who had most interactions with me, teaching and practicing Portuguese with me as well as discussing the reality that we saw respectively at the Brazilian society. Actually, no matter where I was, “mothers” are the ones who feel most concerned about me. Here I don’t only mean my Brazilian mother Sara, but also the mothers of my Brazilian friends and my Brazilian friends who are mothers themselves. Women between their 30s and 60s were the group which I easily made friends with. As mothers themselves, I believed that they often saw me from a perspective of parents towards a daughter and worried about me as they might worry about their own kids. As women, I think it has a concept of inheritance that they also comprehended how difficult to stay safe at a female position and they might find it was their responsibility to remind and warn me. In a comparison of gender, there were more females than males who gave me safety advice. Although there could be a bias that I as a female may easily make more female friends, I still think it is noteworthy to point out that “mothers” is the key group along my journey in the cities.

Furthermore, family life between two urban places is different. In Brasilia, besides my own Brazilian family, most families I know in the neighborhood and my circle of social interactions are two-parent families. Some of them may be like mine which is a blended family. Both of my parents had previous marriages before meeting each other. But very few of them stayed in the status of the single-parent family. In Rocinha, what I observed in this respect was very different. There are many single moms and most families are “matrifocal”. In chapter 3, I have mentioned a couple of my close friends in Rocinha. As I know, most teachers in ASPA are single moms, including Francisca and the other two

teachers at my class, while only a few of them are in a marriage relationship with the father of their children. Fernanda, who works at the popular market, is also a single mom with a son of 15 years old. She is a white woman in her 30s and became a lesbian after the separation from the father of her son. In the beginning, I often assumed that all of these women were single moms because they seldom mentioned their husbands over our daily chats. Even when mentioning about the kids, their talks gave the impression that they were raising the kids all by themselves. Eloa, who cooperated in the charity project with me, especially confused me for a long while.

Eloa, a black woman in her 40s, has in fact been living with the same man for more than 20 years and they have four children together. Her house is located at Rua Dois and her family is probably the one I visited most in Rocinha due to our cooperation. I often thought she was a single mom, receiving and babysitting others' kids in her house. In our conversations, we talked about that her four teenage children also gave hands to babysit and pick up the kids from school. She seemed the one in charge, who made both money and decisions for her family. Only after a few months did I notice that her husband was always at home, responsible for preparing food for the kids. When I didn't see him, he either went out to buy ingredients or hid at the kitchen cooking. He seldom joined our conversation about house construction, project promotion, donation distribution, and so on.

The family in low-income groups have very different characteristics from the middle-class family: "matrifocal", "female-headed". The term is used to designate domestic units of women without a husband, or where there are husbands but either the number of matrilineal kin, the woman's income, or simply the feminine influence in the affective networks of mutual aid is larger. (Fonseca, 2000) Furthermore, the anthropologist who initiated the concept "matrifocal family", Raymond Smith (1973), indicated that while the

woman was the axis of the affective bonds, with the advancement of time she would become the center of a decision-making coalition together with her children. In female-headed families, the women, their daughters and the children of their daughters seem to provide a basis of continuity and security.

Furthermore, I would like to discuss the social classes in the two urban places: the middle class in Brasilia and the “dangerous class” in Rocinha. Nowadays, Rocinha is not necessarily a low-class neighborhood from an economic perspective. Research<sup>38</sup> by Data Popular cooperated with CUFA (*Central Única das Favelas*) in 2013 indicated that 65% of favela residents in Brazil can be categorized in the middle class. Earlier in 2012, SAE/PR (*Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos da Presidência da República*) announced a new criterion of the middle class.<sup>39</sup> It defined that the middle class belongs to those families with a low probability of becoming poor in the near future, with per capita income between R\$291 and R\$1,019 per month. In total, it is estimated that Brazil has 104 million people in the middle class, which represents 53% of the population. For this matter, some residents in Rocinha were interviewed to express their opinions. In Rocinha, part of the residents could develop a quality life: possessing a car, TV, cable package, smartphone, plane trip, and college kids. For part of the residents, these are the reality that they are living with. However, they refused to belong to the middle class.<sup>40</sup> Most interviewed residents expressed the same idea, “The middle class is rich. The rich don’t live in the favela.” Some said, the rich should live in those luxurious apartments in front of Rocinha, like São Conrado, or like Botafogo or Leblon beach.

---

<sup>38</sup> EXAME, October 31st, 2013, “65% dos moradores de favelas no Brasil são de classe média”  
<https://exame.abril.com.br/economia/65-dos-moradores-de-favela-sao-de-classe-media/>

<sup>39</sup> Globo, May 30th, 2012, “Classe média tem renda per capita entre R\$ 291 e R\$ 1.019, diz governo”  
<http://g1.globo.com/economia/noticia/2012/05/classe-media-tem-renda-entre-r-291-e-r-1019-diz-governo.html>

<sup>40</sup> Golobo, October 1st, 2012, “Com carro e estudo, família da favela da Rocinha nega ser da classe média”  
<http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2012/10/com-carro-e-estudo-familia-da-favela-da-rocinha-nega-ser-da-classe-media.html>

It shows that although from the economic perspective, the residents in Rocinha are obtaining enough salaries to reach the criterion of the middle class, from the social-cultural perspective as well as from the viewpoints of the favela residents themselves and other urban citizens, Rocinha is still a favela belonging to the poverty and the marginality. The residents in Rocinha are being seen as “dangerous class (*classe perigosa*)”.

Since its inception, the favela has been perceived and treated as a problem of the city. Journalists, agents of state institutions, medical personnel and others have produced and disseminated a negative image of the favela as a location of poverty and marginality, as well as moral and sanitary degradation. (Valladares, 2005) Before the 1980s, the image of the favela was balanced by both positive valorizations and negative representations. Being a place of poverty and marginality, it was also the cradle of cultural assets including samba, carnival and popular culture. Yet after the 1980s, the favela began to be related almost exclusively with violence and insecurity. Currently, when talking about Rio de Janeiro, one of the city symbols would be the favela which covers many hills. The housing complexes, irregular allotments, peripheral districts are all elements which constitute the term “favela”, not to mention the precariousness which concerns other urban citizens most. The precariousness of the favela would affect the urban equipment and the status of land and housing ownership. The stigmas of marginality, disorder and violence, have transformed the *favelados* (favela residents) into the archetype of a “dangerous class”. (Leite, 2008)

On the other hand, in Brasilia, the urban space in Plano Piloto is increasingly classified and occupied by the middle class. The situation of the middle class in Brazil is very different from the case of Europe and the United States. The middle class in Europe and the United States is a term to portray the average and even the majority of their population. The middle class there could also be related to the conceptions of equality and democracy. However, in Brazil, with the extreme disparity between the poor and the rich,

the majority of the population stays below the middle class. The identity of the middle class is linked to a contour of elite and also distinguishes itself from the majority of the population as well as the “*povo*” (people). (Patriota de Moura and Januzzi, 2019)

The airplane shaped center, the “Pilot Plan” of the city used to be marked more by “status” and less by “class” in the first decades. From time to time, with the population growth and the major employment in the civil service, the housings in Pilot Plan and its surroundings became an inflated real estate market. In the article “Brasília classificada: novos espaços de classe média na capital federal”, Cristina and Vinicius (2019) stated their main argument that Brasilia has been increasingly crossed by the social class perspective, mainly in its economic sense as well as in its symbolic aspects. The two wings, North Wing and South Wing of Brasilia are not only increasingly occupied by the members of the bureaucracy, but also by the educated citizens, who are able to have relatively high incomes and qualified positions, with their children studying in most private schools. The attached house I stayed with my Brazilian family is located at the beginning of the South Wing, at sector 703. Although working as a public servant in Terracap, the house was bought by my Brazilian father instead of assigned. As I know, part of our neighbors in the sector are or were also public servants such as judges and lawyers in the state institutions while the other part of them run their own private business. The bureaucrats are not the majority in our sector. The common point among these house owners is their economic conditions which are able to afford the housing on the wings. They chose to buy and live on the South Wing in Pilot Plan because of its convenience for their families as well as the proximity to the habitants similar to their socioeconomic status.

In the book “In Search of Paradise: Middle-Class Living in a Chinese Metropolis”, Chinese anthropologist Li Zhang (2012) had her research towards the new middle class in Kunming. She proposed the concept of “class spatialization”. China has a similar

condition of the middle class to Brazil. The majority of its population is also below the middle class which makes the middle class distinct from the larger part of the people. Luigi Tomba (2004), in his study of new residential communities in Beijing, sees the rise of the middle class partly as a result of intentional social engineering involving various public policies, while Li Zhang (2012) argues that it is a self-making process among social actors. She emphasizes the dual cultural process of space-making and class-making by examining how self-conscious middle-class subjects and a “class milieu” are being created. And in the meantime, socioeconomic differences get specialized and materialized through the remaking of urban space.

In Brazil, I have also seen the distinct differences between the social classes, including its styles of dress, lifestyles, territories, etc. Furthermore, for the middle-class families, the linkage of the housing is not only the environment and class status, but also the future success. “To choose a house means to choose a lifestyle.” (Fleischer, 2007) The housing space is not simply a place to live, it provides the “cultural milieu” for sustaining a distinct social group and the success of their future generations. I would argue that the idea can apply both to the Brasilia attached house residents and the Rocinha favela residents, although the favela residents are mostly compelled to set their families on the hillside. In both urban communities, the meaning of being in the middle class or the dangerous class is constantly defined and redefined by a variety of social actors including real estate market agents, advertisers, state institutions, media, homeowners themselves and those who are excluded from such spaces. The exclusions, no matter whether the physical and practical constructions such as walls and fences or the mindset against strangers and outsiders and the control from *traficante*, demarcate the territories of the middle-class neighborhood as well as the favela. The spatial demarcation is more and more visible and externalizes previously less pronounced socioeconomic differences. Communities are

thus deployed as an active element in structuring class differences. (Zhang, 2012)

Following the issue of the social class, the distance between the public and private spaces is regarded very differently by the middle-class residents and the favela residents. The distance between the public and private can also be seen as between the house and the street.

For the past decades, the middle class has been actively moving into apartment buildings and closed condominiums. Although they don't have the necessity and habit to interact often with the neighbors, the movement is associated to privilege, exclusivity and possibility of living among selected people as well as away from undesired interactions, movement, danger and the unpredictability of open streets. For people who can afford it, they would prefer to live in homogeneous and protected universes and avoid public life in the city as much as possible (Caldeira, 2000).

Brasilia as a modernist space was a utopic with the attempt to erase the differences and homogenize spaces. It tried to do that through the inversion of architectural conventions, the elimination of streets, the redistribution of functions in the city space, and the creation of new forms of both commercial and residential organizations. However, gradually through a few decades, it is not appreciated by Brasilia's residents. The instruments of modernist planning, with little adaptation, become perfect instruments of social differentiation, not of equalization. They failed to produce equality, but are very effective in creating segregation. Holston (1989) in his book "The modernist city: An anthropological critique of Brasília" showed how the egalitarian purposes of the plan were subverted by the way the city was occupied on the basis of occupational and status differentiation. Telles (1992) even affirmed that Brasilia had become the most segregated Brazilian city instead of the most egalitarian.



As stated in Chapter 2, with the rising fear towards crimes and violence which occurred in the city and around the neighborhood, the residents in the sector 703 in Brasilia started to set a clearer boundary between the public and private areas. They closed the patios with building materials and abandoned the original intention to connect the public garden with semiprivate patios. Claiming to protect themselves, the middle-class families tended to rely on their own means of isolation, control, separation, and distancing (Caldeira, 2000). Furthermore, I have also proposed to apply the concept of “moral minimalism” (Baumgartner, 1988) and explained the distance between the neighbors. Independency, privacy, transiency, atomization and autonomy are the main characteristics of the middle class, not only in Brazil but also in the United States and other countries. In a larger scale within a city, the middle class chases to set their housing near their homogenous group and live in a protected universe. Then in a smaller scale within the neighborhood, they look for building the private space at a unit of a house and for a family only. Although the houses at 700s on both wings of Brasilia are attached, the residents in these attached houses barely have the expectation and necessity to have the attachment with each other in personal relation level.

On the contrary, the favela residents hold a very different view towards relations with neighbors as well as the lines between public and private spaces. In the favelas, the two spatial categories present a constant mutual complementarity. The ambiguity between the public and the private produces a mediation space. The boundaries between the kinds of the spaces, including the public, private and mediation, can be vacillating during the day due to the use and the meaning of residents’ activities. The physical boundaries could be ambiguous for those who do not live in the favela, but the symbolic boundary is still demarcated and understood by the internal coexistence codes (Coelho et al. 2013).

The intimate life of the house is often moved to the street. One of the reasons is the

limited space inside the house. I sometimes had dinner with my colleague Joana from the daycare. She is a white woman in her 40s, who had moved to Rocinha alone two years earlier from the northeastern state Ceará. She also lived in the lower part of the favela and near my hostel. Since she was living alone, she was very generous to invite me over and eat dinner together. Her home was approximately the size of a bedroom, with a bunk bed, a closet, a TV, a small fridge, a stove and a dining table altogether. The bathroom is outside of the bedroom, staying at the end of the corridor while the size of it is only a little bigger to contain the toilet vase. After dinner, we normally sat on the edge of the bed and watched TV for a short while, then one of us would suggest going sit at the bar of her friend. At my first time having dinner at Joana's house, I quickly realized why there were so many residents staying on the street. I saw residents sitting either along the street side, corners or at the bars, chatting with people or just relaxing. I wondered why they did not relax at home or how come they had the money to spend at the bar so often. After I started to hang out with Joana, I perceived that for some residents, their indoor space is too limited to receive a guest as well as to chill out by themselves. The bars or street corners could be an extended private space and play a role as their living room. Joana and I would order the cheapest soda or juice, sit on the plastic chairs which are put on the sidewalk and spend the rest of night until bedtime. Sometimes we watched the TV in the bar showing a football game or the news. The bar owner who is Joana's friend would come to sit and chat with us. And most of the time, we did not have many conversations but only stayed quiet and looked around. The main point to go to the bar is not for a special reunion. We just stayed there to chill out and felt that space was much wider and better than being trapped inside the narrow and small indoor space.

Coelho, Duarte and Vasconcellos (2013) made their research in Rocinha to understand the identity of the lived space of the favela through local children's eyes. By

analyzing the places where the children played, they disclosed how the children in the favela established their affective relations with the places. *Becos* (alleys), *lajes* (rooftops), *escadarias* (staircases), and *praças* (squares), all these semi-public and public spaces were their playgrounds. Furthermore, in children's identity, they also include some specific places outside of the favela as part of the territory of Rocinha, including the *canaleta* (the water channel), the *mata* (the forest) and the beach. Instead of calling it the beach of São Conrado, they regarded it as the beach of Rocinha. Besides the reason of limited indoor space, the public leisure areas in Rocinha are in fact very few (Coelho, 2004). While some squares could be used by *traficantes*, the most common places where local children played were *becos* and *lajes*. They found that marking the territory of playgrounds transformed the public environment into an intimate space which gave the children the feeling of belonging and security (Coelho et al. 2013).

In a dialogue with the works cited above, I try to argue that the residents in Brasilia's Pilot Plan and Rocinha have different understandings of participation in public life and establishing their private space. In the former case, with the middle class as the majority, has the economic condition to afford the housing in their preferred locations and consider both their public and private life. As far as public life is concerned due to the danger, they deny many of the basic elements which were supposed to constitute the modern city experience: the primacy of the streets and their openness; the presence of crowds, the mixture of classes and social groups; the impersonal and anonymous encounters of the pedestrian; and unprogrammed public enjoyment and congregation in streets and squares (Caldeira, 2000). As a result, the middle class is currently setting higher walls, closing the gate tighter, and retreating behind the walls and gates. On the other hand, the residents in the favela have the social relations of a quite different kind. The users, whether adults or children, of the public space negotiate the nature of appropriation in

accordance with their daily activities. The street politics exist, as long as the use complies with the limits established by the daily negotiation of the rules which are shared and flexible (Santos and Vogel, 1985).

#### **4.2 - The talk of crime and fear mongering**

“Have you heard of what happened?” After greetings, this question often came out and led the chatting topic about a new crime. My Brazilian family and friends might share the new crime story that they heard from social media, TV news and programs, neighbors and friends. We would discuss where and when it occurred, how horrible the process was, the reason and the motivation of the perpetrator as well as the background of the victim.

In another scene, when visiting or passing new places in Brazil, “Do you know what happened in this place?” is what I often heard from local friends who accompanied me. Besides the historical background, the location introduction often associated with some crime stories or matters regarding danger. For example, my Brazilian father warned me not to walk in the alleys alone in our neighborhood because a number of neighbors were robbed there. My friends in Brasilia told me not to approach the South Commercial Sector because there are drug users and trade.

When I stopped and reflecting on my life in Brazil, I realized that violence could occupy a big part of it. Not only that people around the world regard Brazil as a dangerous country, but also for the urban residents in Brazil, the violence, danger and fear take up a large part of life. They, or we, live with the violence, talk about the crimes, deal with its variety and develop various corresponding measures day by day. Receiving safety advice is not my exclusive treatment. In fact, residents in Brazil are always sharing information with each other about crimes and violence. Violence has become a common chatting topic in daily conversation: the happening of a new crime, the place and the time, the story

behind it, etc.

According to Caldeira (2000), the talk of crime has its function to reorganize the world symbolically which were disorganized by the experience of crime. In her book “City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo” to study about fear, danger and security in São Paulo in the late 1980s and early 1990s, she indicated,

Discussion about fear of crime reveals the anguish produced by a situation of instability in which social relations cannot be decoded and controlled anymore according to old criteria. Although there are certainly many positive aspects to the disintegration of old relationships of authority in Brazil, the current social concerns of the population are disturbing. Framed in the context of the talk of crime, they lead to attempts to enforce new forms of social discrimination, spatial segregation, prejudice and authoritarianism. (2000, p.40)

As I stated in Chapter 2 about the security in my neighborhood in South Wing of Brasilia, when there is the perception of danger invading the area, it stimulated the residents in the neighborhood to identify their territory, distinguish the insiders and outsiders, and build their own isolation. Since the government and existing institutions cannot maintain public order well, the middle-class residents rely on their own means to protect themselves and their families.

In the middle-class neighborhood in Brasilia, the talk of crime is public and common. The neighbors felt free to knock on the door and gossip with my Brazilian parents at the door about the crimes and suspicious circumstances. In the meantime, the talk of crime in the favela seems few and restricted. Due to the “*lei do silêncio* (the silence law)”, to comment on a *traficante* can be risky. (Machado da Silva and Leite, 2007) In this regard,

any matters towards *traficantes*, weapons, shootings, and drug trade are avoided most of the time. But, I would like to argue that it does not mean that the residents in Rocinha abandon the talk of crime and choose “the silence of crime”. In their restricted conditions, alternatives are found in private and obscure conversations. To remind me of the danger in the alleys of Rocinha, the residents didn’t clearly indicate that there were drug trafficking and traffickers. Instead, they found an alternative way to say that it was easy to get lost in the alleys, which is also true but not the first concern. After the favela war started in September 2017, the shootings occurred more and more frequently. We used some obscure words to talk about the condition. Instead of the word “*tiroteio*” (shooting), the residents asked whether the peace (*paz* or *tranquilidade*) is returning or not. The talk of crime in Rocinha might be under control yet it still exists.

Gossip is a constant obsession in all neighborhoods. It fosters group-binding, boundary-maintaining and information-communication. (Gluckman, 1963; Paine, 1967) To consider the talk of crime as a kind of gossip, the triadic set on the basis of “gossiper” should be mentioned and compared here. David Gilmore (1978) had his ethnography in a rural community in Spain to research into the varieties of gossip. He provided a triadic set on the basis of “gossiper” (subject): collective gossip, small group gossip, and dyadic gossip. I want to focus on the former two types to compare with the residents’ gossip between Brasilia and Rocinha. “Collective gossip” is that in which the actor is perceived by the people as collective that is, the community as a whole. The most commonly associated subjects can be like everybody, the people, or the whole neighborhood. In this kind of gossip, a communicative ingredient is minimal and lacking, for the event is already known or assumed by the entire community to be true. “Small group gossip” is exchanged by a few individuals within small bounded social groupings. It is within a network phenomenon which is encapsulated by either the street or the neighborhood context.

Among the triadic set, the communicative and informative element is significant only in “small group gossip”.

I consider that the talk of crime in my neighborhood in Brasilia is more similar to “collective gossip” while the talk of crime in Rocinha could resemble more “small group gossip”. In the neighborhood in Brasilia, the chat by the door as well as the Whatsapp group are open. Anyone who feels interested to join the conversation would be welcome as long as one is living in one of the attached houses. Those crimes and suspicious circumstances are not exclusive resources between small groups but shared publicly among residents who have the interest to know. Moreover, according to my Brazilian mother who is still involved in the Whatsapp group conversation, she indicated that there were seldom substantial suggestions to deal with the violence and enhance the security in the neighborhood, that is, the communicative element barely exists in their gossip. On the other hand, the talks of crime in Rocinha are hard to be heard and noticed. The talk would only happen under certain and private environments, such as in the classroom of the daycare and inside my friends’ house. I have also perceived that gradually, when I had known these local friends longer, they were more willing to give me safety advice in more details.

One night in July 2018, I was at a bar chatting out with a coworker Joana from the daycare. She has two daughters and one son around my age but currently lives alone in Rocinha while her kids stay in Ceará. She often acted like a mom to me. On that night, when it was time for me to go, I hugged her and said goodbye. She whispered near my ear, “Be careful, okay? Rocinha can be invaded at any moment.” I didn’t pay much attention at the moment yet on the way home, I rethought her reminder and found it suspicious. I read from the book “Nemesis: One Man and the Battle for Rio” (2015) that before a massive shooting or conflict, residents have their communicative network and might already get a

hint and know to stay home. I wonder if Joana was giving me the hint. I tried to text her, “I kept thinking about your reminder, are you warning me especially for now, as something would happen; or it was like a reminder in general?”

She replied, “It can happen at any moment or not occur. The bandit from other favelas can invade Rocinha to take command. And due to it, the war may start in the favela.” “There are rumors that other bandits already talked about. It can be a truth, or lie. Anyway, we shouldn’t risk it, okay? Because it already happened before...” Luckily, nothing happened in the following week but the military set many temporary camps at both entrances of Rocinha in another week. The Facebook Fanpages of the community were reporting that military trucks were entering Rocinha yet there were no shootings. Afterwards, both news media and Facebook Fanpages didn’t follow up when the military left. The rumor from my friend and the intention of military camps remained unsolved.

The above example shows that the talk of crime in Rocinha spreads in limited groups. Besides Facebook Fanpages which broadcast community news online, I know all my local friends receive news and information about the community quicker by their Whatsapp groups. As far as I know, these Whatsapp groups can be formed for family, work, class or social project in the community. As a new arrival and temporary tenant in Rocinha, I did not have the chance to enter any groups of Rocinha residents. However, the night receiving Joana’s obscure reminder was a time that I got included to know some rumors and also proved that the gossip in Rocinha is divided within small groups instead of being openly and widely collective.

Furthermore, I would like to discuss the influence of the talk of crime. Besides a reorganization of the world which has been disorganized by the crime experience, I argue that the talk itself causes fear and insecurity. Sometimes, without specific statistics and researches, people feel that the crime rates are rising by watching TV news and programs,



by hearing the gossip between neighbors and friends. It may be that the talk selects and emphasizes the types of danger. The specific types of danger get selected either because they offend the basic moral principles of the society or because they enable criticism of disliked groups and institutions. (Douglas and Wildavsky, 1983) In Brazil, I often see the latter element on TV news and special programs talking about crimes. For example, my Brazilian parents are big fans of the TV program “DF Alerta”. On its website introduction<sup>41</sup>, it says it offers the best and broadest coverage on urban violence and public safety in the Federal District and surrounding areas. The program provides more news, stories and details about the crimes that occurred in and around Brasilia, including those crimes which might not be reported in regular news. When my Brazilian mother informed me new horrible crime news of the city, I asked how she knew it and why I didn’t hear from other resources like TV news or my friends, she always told me her source was from the program “DF Alerta”. I have watched it with them sometimes but I barely tolerated it. I have joked that, if I watched this kind of program every day to tell me how violent the city is, not even in a week I would lock myself in the room and feel too afraid to go out. In my perspective, the storytelling style of the program and also some TV news are based on scares. According to George Gerbner (1976), television and other forms of mass media create a view that is reflective of “recurrent media messages”, rather than one that is based on reality. The founder of cultivation theory George Gerbner (1976) coined the phrase “mean world syndrome”, indicating a phenomenon in which people who watch large amounts of TV are more likely to believe that the world is an unforgiving and frightening place as well as feel oneself more vulnerable and insecure. People who watch a lot of TV

---

<sup>41</sup> DF Alerta (Federal District alert) is a program on Brasilia TV, from every Monday to Friday, starting from 11:45 am until 14:00 pm.

<https://www.tvbrasil.com.br/programas/programa-df-alerta/>

Besides it, there is also “Cidade Alerta DF” (City Alert Federal District) which also plays from every Monday to Friday with similar contents.

are exposed to violence and are more likely than others to believe their neighborhoods are unsafe, to assume that the crime rates are rising and to overestimate their own odds of becoming a victim.

In the book “The Culture of Fear: : Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things: Crime, Drugs, Minorities, Teen Moms, Killer Kids, Mutant Microbes, Plane”, American sociologist Barry Glassner (2010) proposed the concept that people may incite fear in the general public in order to achieve political or workplace goals through emotional bias. His hypothesis is that that “pseudodangers” represent further opportunities to avoid problems people do not want to confront. “Pseudodangers” receive much attention because they provide opportunities to discuss and gossip. I am not going to discuss the motive to cause fear under the scale of Brazilian social structure. What I want to emphasize here is that fear can be produced and “mongered”. And moreover, the fear-mongering is not only from the mass media to its audience, but it can also influence from people to people.

The safety advice I have received along the journey in the two urban places, Brasilia and Rocinha, could also be constructed on the base of “pseudodangers” and fear-mongering. In Chapter 2 about my life in Brasilia, I received many safety advice from my Brazilian parents who might have “mean world syndrome” by their large TV consumption. Some of their advice and warnings are exaggerated in my perspective. Regarding the danger of favela and peripheries, they said, once you approached these areas of danger, you would be robbed in a sudden and even not return alive. Most of my Brazilian friends as well as my Brazilian parents hold a large prejudice towards the favelas. They have lots of exaggerated opinions to criticize it even though they have never known and visited any communities personally. The prejudice could be a kind of common sense which directly associates poverty with the crimes. In their eyes, all poor people are symbolically close to

the image of the criminal. In various ways the poor are targeted as the bottom edge of the society and always kept close to criminals (Caldeira, 2000). Hence, prejudices come from everywhere and are enforced even when some people try to relativize available stereotypes. After my stay in Rocinha, I realized that life in the favela is much diverse and different from the negative image which most Brazilians describe and believe. However, I seldom have the chance to introduce and explain what I have seen and experienced to them. Their prejudices are too strong and deep while the fear towards favelas is still keeping mongered in this society.

Ironically, I have admitted in Chapter 3 that I felt safer in Rocinha than in other cities including Brasilia. To look into my sentiment of fear towards these two urban places, I think the talk of crime has a big influence in making the difference. Although being free from concerns about petty crimes, the daily life in Rocinha under potential shootings can be fatal. I was not concerned about it and even accustomed to the happenings of shootings in the upper part of the favela because there was almost no talk about the shootings, drug trade and *traficante*. When there was no talk, it could give me an illusion that they can be ignored and do not occupy a big part of life.

As a result, I would like to emphasize here, the fear, danger and security that I experienced in these two urban places are not only related to their substantial facts regarding social classes, environments and atmospheres, but also associated to the talk between the residents and me.

### **4.3 - Trips between places**

I have thought more deeply and broadly about danger and fear in the two urban places and I believe there is one more thing which is worthy of discussion: the movements between places. In Brasilia, I needed to make trips between the South Wing to a periphery, Ceilândia, to have my capoeira training. In Rio de Janeiro, since 2019, I started to stay in an apartment in Botafogo frequently and needed to make trips between it and the favela Rocinha. In both cities, I was transferring from generally acknowledged middle-class districts to the relatively poor and marginal neighborhoods. The trips were mostly done by public transportations like bus and metro and by myself alone.

Ceilândia, named as the biggest city in the Federal District, is located 26 km from the Pilot Plan. Officially launched in 1971, it was created by the government to keep people from moving into the Pilot Plan and setting up shantytowns. The root of its name "CEI" is from the word "Invasions Eradication Campaign (*Campanha de Erradicação de Invasões*)". Currently it has 400 thousand inhabitants and is considered a district with greater northeastern influence by the domestic migrants. Its economy is based mainly on commerce and industry. The Sector of Industries of Ceilândia (*O Setor de Indústrias de Ceilândia*) has the largest factories of precast, food and furniture. It also has the largest number of traders in the Federal District, approximately 100 thousand private business. In the meantime, it is also considered a cultural and sports barn, due to its rich artistic diversity.

Next to Ceilândia, there is one of the largest favelas of Brazil called "Sol Nascente". Some people see it as part of Ceilândia while most Ceilândia residents see it as another town next to them. The house of my capoeira Master as well as our training space is at the edge of North Ceilândia, a few blocks from the entrance of Sol Nascente. My capoeira

Master once drove me into it in order to take a look at the horizontal favela.<sup>42</sup> He told me that the previous condition of Ceilândia used to be like the current Sol Nascente because the government didn't provide sufficient infrastructure. There are few paved roads, street lamps, bus stops and schools. We drove on the main road of Sol Nascente. I asked my Master if this favela was very dangerous. He replied, "When it gets dark, it gets dangerous. There are drug traffickers and kids here are easy to get addicted to drugs or used by the drug trade. Many murders happen day by day..."

In the eyes of Brasilia residents, Ceilândia is seen as a dangerous district inside the Federal District. When my Brazilian parents watched the TV program "DF Alerta", the crime cases often occurred in Ceilândia including murders, rapes, robberies and drug trades. In most Brasilia residents' mindset, Ceilândia is somehow like the favela where outsiders shall not approach and enter by themselves. My training was on every Friday night at 8 pm. I always took the metro from the South Wing to North Ceilândia, for around 40 minutes. In the beginning when I started to go there, my Master used to pick me up by car at the metro station Ceilândia Norte. After a few times, he saw my *abadá* (white capoeira pants) and promised me, "If you are wearing *abadá*, you can walk from the station to the house by yourself at ease. People here see you are a *capoeirista* (capoeira player), and they wouldn't mess with you!" Ever since then, although I still doubted my master's promising words, I walked alone for 20 minutes at nightfall and had never met anything bad.

In the other city, Rio de Janeiro, since 2019, I started to experience urban life outside of the favela and frequently stayed in Botafogo. Sitting in the beachfront, Botafogo is a mostly upper-middle class and small commerce district. It is also one of the most

---

<sup>42</sup> Compared to the favelas in Rio de Janeiro which occupy the hillside, Sol Nascente is famous as a favela "*plana* (flat)" or favela "*horizontal* (horizontal)". The housings in the community develop in a flat direction.

important service centers in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro, mainly for its neighboring districts like Humaitá and Urca which are more residential. Its main commercial center is located around the metro station, with many shops, restaurants, bars, bank branches, office buildings of major companies including NET, Claro, Coca-Cola, IBM and so on. Moreover, there are three shopping malls in Botafogo. The district has been the scene of countless real estate launches in recent years.

To make trips from Botafogo to Rocinha, there are many options to combine different public transportations. Taking a direct bus for 50-90 minutes is my preference due to the cheapest fare. This can avoid the inconvenience of transferring lines, although during rush hour it may take an exhaustingly long time. Metro plus motorbike taxi or van is the quickest way but during rush hour the metro cart could be uncomfortably crowded. From the conversation with my coworkers at the daycare in Rocinha, they told me of many robbery and theft cases on the bus. I always stay aware on the bus and try to sit in the front near the bus driver and most passengers. Once entering the territory of the favela, I might feel more at ease to walk inside the community to visit the children of my charity project.

I have realized that staying in the four urban places does not frighten me as much as making the trips between them. On the South Wing of Brasilia, most of the time I stayed inside the Brazilian family's house. On my training Fridays, once arriving in Ceilândia around dusk, I walked directly and fast to the house of capoeira. Generally in Brasilia, I avoided staying on the street and tried to make the trips as quick as possible between two private places. While in Rio de Janeiro, there are a few more chances to hang around in public areas. As told, Rocinha has many businesses which are open for 24 hours. Its commercial area doesn't rest at night and it is safe from petty crimes so that people may walk on the street at ease. In Botafogo, its commercial center is also bustling from morning till night. Numerous bars and restaurants attract office workers and students to gather

along the streets until late at night. However, during the trips in Rio de Janeiro, I would also hope to make it as soon as possible.

The South Wing of Brasilia, Ceilândia, Rocinha and Botafogo, these are places which belong to different social classes. At each isolated urban place I stayed, I received safety advice from the local residents and examined the danger and the security; I observed the lifestyle of residents by myself and imitated their behavior so as to ensure my safety; I had some conclusions about my fear and survival skills. To some extent, staying in the isolated places is more stable (although I have stated the change of security both in the South Wing and Rocinha), while making the trips is unstable and precarious. Taking public transportation and walking on the street are risky because the moving space is mixed by different kinds of people and intentions. To explain this in another way, these four areas where I stayed can be seen as a larger private area which makes me feel familiar and relatively at ease. The trips between places can be seen as not only public but ever changeful space in which I must stay aware and cautious and have less ability to predict what would happen.

Furthermore, after experiencing life in different urban places, the unequal society and the social contrast are obvious in my eyes. By a simple question to ask the residential location, the reaction from the other side has always stimulated my curiosity as well as struggle. The significance of residential location in identifying one's socioeconomic location is reflected in the question people commonly ask while meeting another unfamiliar person. (Zhang, 2012) I myself have become accustomed to transiting between two distinct social classes but never got used to answering questions and doubts from others. In Brasilia, when people asked me where I was staying, I could proudly state "the South Wing" and the attached house at 700s would even make them assume that I have a good socioeconomic status. When I replied Botafogo as my temporary residential location,

I also received similar positive reactions in Rio. While asking where I go to train my capoeira, Ceilândia is a name that surprised as well as disgusted people. They might increase their volume and tone of voice to warn me how dangerous it was. In my eyes, they seemed to have an urge to check if I am too dumb to risk my life. In Rio de Janeiro, when I used to stay and work in Rocinha, I received many negative reactions. On one hand, I don't look like a favela resident and people found me out of my mind. They might judge and nag a lot as well as criticize and express the violent image of the favela in their eyes. On the other hand, although it happened less, I would be seen as a favela resident and be treated differently. I perceived that people might ignore me and distance themselves from me. All these negative reactions when I indicated my destination as Ceilândia and place of residence as Rocinha, made me think twice before saying these two places out loud. I even went through a period when I felt ashamed to mention that my home was in Rocinha.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter about social classes, space is a linkage to living environment, class status and even future of next generations. In Li Zhang's (2012) study in Kunming about the new middle-class community, she also pointed out the two sides of social classes, the domestic workers and the house owners. According to the urban residents, they said the workers are easily identified by the clothes they wore and the activities they engaged in. One of the reasons supposed that poor people's taste is a function of their necessity. They might not have aesthetic perception because they are too close to the necessity. (Bourdieu, 1984; Caldeira, 2000) In Brazil, the favela has its own laws and cultural codes. (Duarte et al. 1996) For example, flip-flops, hot pants, funk music and dance parties are all characteristics of the favela. In the meanwhile, the middle class has their daily act of dressing as a way of marking the social difference, in order to maintain status and assert authority. (Zhang, 2012) For example, I perceived that in Brasilia, the middle class almost only use flip-flops at home. People with flip-flops in public



areas would be seen as the low class, or even the homeless. When going to the shopping malls and restaurants, people make efforts on their dressing to show their status in order to be treated well.

Mike Davis (2006) describes this kind of spatial politics and conflict as a new class war at the level of the built environment. It is a global trend toward the privatization of space, security and lifestyle. In this era, behind gates, walls, security guards and surveillance cameras, spatial segregation and social exclusion are intensified.

To summarize my journey along urban Brazil, the analysis and exploration into the safety advice and warnings disclosed various aspects of people and society. People gave me different advice in different ways depending on their gender, age, ethnicity, class, status, location and social standing. Their concerns about my safety vary with their life experience and background. Also, because of my position as a female, single, young and foreign, I received these specific warnings. Fear, I discovered, also defines who we are, how we identify ourselves and how others identify us in this society of violence. The seeking for new experiences and knowledge with possible safety and freedom is an endless challenging journey in and between the urban places, "*cuidado!* (be careful)"

## Bibliography

- Appadurai, A. (Ed.). (1988). *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bastos, A. D. S., Volkmer-Pontes, V., Brasileiro, P. G., & Serra, H. M. (2013). Fathering in Brazil: A diverse and unknown reality. *Fathers in cultural context*, 228-249.
- Bauman, Z. (2009). *Confiança e medo na cidade*. Zahar.
- Baumgartner, M. P. (1989). *The moral order of a suburb*. Oxford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). A social critique of the judgement of taste. *Traducido del francés por R. Nice*. Londres, Routledge.
- Caldeira, T. P. (2000). *City of walls: crime, segregation, and citizenship in São Paulo*. Univ of California Press.
- Carsten, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Cultures of relatedness: New approaches to the study of kinship*. Cambridge University Press.
- Coelho, G. (2004). *Espaço vivido favela: Brincadeiras infantis nos espaços livres da Rocinha* (Doctoral dissertation, Dissertação de mestrado. Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ).
- Coelho, G., Duarte, C. R., & de Vasconcelos, V. M. (2013). A criança e o espaço vivido favela: a complexidade do espaço nas interações da infância. *Oculum Ensaios*, (6), 74-87.
- Cordeiro, A. S. L. (2018). *Fazer família e cidade na habitação da rua: Brasília em suas múltiplas habitabilidades* (Master's thesis, PPGAS/DAN/UnB). Retrieved from [http://repositorio.unb.br/bitstream/10482/32373/1/2018\\_AlexSandroLopesCordeiro.pdf](http://repositorio.unb.br/bitstream/10482/32373/1/2018_AlexSandroLopesCordeiro.pdf)
- DaMatta, R. (1997). A casa e a rua. *Rio de janeiro: Rocco*, 5.
- DaMatta, R. (2012). *Fé em Deus e pé na tábua: ou como e por que o trânsito enlouquece no Brasil*. Editora Rocco.

- Davis, M. (2006). *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New Edition). Verso Books.
- Douglas, M., & Wildavsky, A. (1983). *Risk and culture: An essay on the selection of technological and environmental dangers*. Univ of California Press.
- Duarte, C. R., Silva, O. L., & Brasileiro, A. (1996). *Favela, um bairro: propostas metodológicas para intervenção pública em favelas do Rio de Janeiro*. Grupo de Pesquisas Habitat.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject.
- Farias, J. (2008). Da asfixia: reflexões sobre a atuação do tráfico de drogas nas favelas cariocas. *Vida sob cerco—violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*.
- Fleischer, F. (2007). "To Choose a House Means to Choose a Lifestyle." The Consumption of Housing and Class-Structuration in Urban China. *City & Society*, 19(2), 287-311.
- Fonseca, C. (2000). *Família, fofoca e honra: etnografia de relações de gênero e violência em grupos populares*. Editora da Universidade, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.
- Frehse, F. (2013). A rua no Brasil em questão (etnográfica). *Anuário Antropológico*, (II), 99-129.
- Freire-Medeiros, B. (2009). *Gringo na laje: produção, circulação e consumo da favela turística*. Editora FGV.
- Fridman, L. C. (2008). Morte e vida favelada. *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira*, 77-98.
- Gerbner, G., & Gross, L. (1976). Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of communication*, 26(2), 172-199.
- Gilmore, D. (1978). Varieties of gossip in a Spanish rural community. *Ethnology*, 17(1), 89-99.
- Glassner, B. (2010). *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things: Crime, Drugs, Minorities, Teen Moms, Killer Kids, Muta*. Basic books.
- Gluckman, M. (1963). Papers in honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Gossip and scandal. *Current anthropology*, 4(3), 307-316.

- Gupta, A., & Ferguson, J. (1997). Discipline and practice: "The field" as site, method, and location in anthropology. *Anthropological locations: Boundaries and grounds of a field science*, 100, 1-47.
- Holston, J. (1989). *The modernist city: An anthropological critique of Brasília*. University of Chicago Press.
- Jacobs, J. (1961). The death and life of great American cities. *New York: Vintage*.
- Januzzi, V. P. (2018). Em Brasília, mataram a rua? Considerações etnográficas sobre sentidos possíveis de "rua" (?) no Plano Piloto da capital federal.
- Leeds, E. (1998). Cocaína e poderes paralelos na periferia urbana brasileira. *Um século de favela*. FGV ed., Rio de Janeiro.
- Leite, M. P. (2008). Violência, risco e sociabilidade nas margens da cidade: percepções e formas de ação de moradores de favelas cariocas. *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*, 115-142.
- Macdowell, P. D. L. (2010). *O espaço degenerado: ensaio sobre o lugar travesti na cidade modernista* (Master's thesis, PPGAS/DAN/UnB). Retrieved from [http://www.dan.unb.br/images/doc/Dissertacao\\_268.pdf](http://www.dan.unb.br/images/doc/Dissertacao_268.pdf)
- Machado, L. Z., & Magalhães, T. Q. D. (1985). Imagens do espaço: imagens de vida. *Brasília, ideologia e realidade. Espaço urbano em questão*. São Paulo: Projeto/CNPq, 191-214.
- Machado Da Silva, L. A. M. (2008). *Vida sob cerco: violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*. Nova Fronteira.
- Machado da Silva, L. A., & Pereira Leite, M. (2007). Violência, crime e polícia: o que os favelados dizem quando falam desses temas?. *Sociedade e Estado*, 22(3).
- Manchado da Silva, L. A. (2004). Sociabilidade violenta: por uma interpretação da criminalidade contemporânea no Brasil urbano. *Sociedade e estado*, 19(1), 53-84.

- Marcus, G. E. (1995). Ethnography in/of the world system: The emergence of multi-sited ethnography. *Annual review of anthropology*, 24(1), 95-117.
- Meira, R. R. (2004). *Frente ou fundo?: a inserção da casa unifamiliar na escala residencial do Plano Piloto de Brasília* (Master's thesis, FAU/UnB). Retrieved from [http://repositorio.unb.br/bitstream/10482/16427/1/2013\\_RicardoReisMeira.pdf](http://repositorio.unb.br/bitstream/10482/16427/1/2013_RicardoReisMeira.pdf)
- Montoya Uriarte, U. (2017) Experiência e gente nas imagens da cidade. *Iluminuras, Porto Alegre*, 18(44), 284-311
- Paine, R. (1967). What is gossip about? An alternative hypothesis. *Man*, 2(2), 278-285.
- Panerai, P. (2006). *Análise urbana*. Editora UnB.
- Park, R. E. (1915). The city: Suggestions for the investigation of human behavior in the city environment. *American journal of sociology*, 20(5), 577-612.
- Patriota de Moura, C. (2009). Within Walls of Urban Enclosure: Reflections on Women's Projects in Brazil.
- Patriota De Moura, C. (2014). Horizontes de Condomínios: Muros, Medos e Perigos. *A Cidade e o Medo. Brasília: Verbena/Francis*
- Patriota de Moura, C., & Januzzi, V.P. (2019) Brasília classificada: novos espaços de classe média na capital federal. *Tempo Social*, 31(1), 113-134
- Rio, J. D. (1908). A alma encantadora das ruas/The Enchanting Soul of the Streets.
- Rocha, L. D. M. (2014). O Repertório dos Projetos Sociais: política, mercado e controle social nas favelas. *Dispositivos Urbanos e Trama dos Videntes: ordens e resistências. Rio de Janeiro: FGV/Faperj*, 1, 291-312.
- Santos, C. N. F. D., & Vogel, A. (1985). *Quando a rua vira casa*. São Paulo: Projeto.
- Shwalb, D. W., & Shwalb, B. J. (2014). Fatherhood in Brazil, Bangladesh, Russia, Japan, and Australia. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 6(3), 4.
- Smith, R. T. (1973). The matrifocal family. *The character of kinship*, 121-144.

Strathern, M. (1987). The limits of auto-anthropology.

Telles, E. E. (1992). Residential segregation by skin color in Brazil. *American Sociological Review*, 186-197.

The Overseas Security Advisory Council, USA. (2018) Brazil 2018 Crime & Safety Report: Brasilia. Retrieved from <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/0bcacf6a-16d4-43c5-9a05-15f4ae523762>

Tomba, L. (2004). Creating an urban middle class: Social engineering in Beijing. *The China Journal*, (51), 1-26.

Valladares, L. (2005). *A invenção da favela: do mito de origem a favela. com.* editora FGV.

Vasconcelos, L. F. L. D. (2014). *Patrimonialização na Unidade de Vizinhança nº 1* (Bachelor's thesis, DAN/UnB). Retrieved from [http://bdm.unb.br/bitstream/10483/6730/1/2013\\_LarissaFernandesLinsVasconcelos.pdf](http://bdm.unb.br/bitstream/10483/6730/1/2013_LarissaFernandesLinsVasconcelos.pdf)

Zhang, L. (2012). *In search of paradise: Middle-class living in a Chinese metropolis.* Cornell University Press.