

The *Micareta* and Cultural Identity

by

Benoit Gaudin

Translated by Laurence Hallewell

A traditional interpretation of the history of Carnival in Brazil, popularized by Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz, divides its evolution into three stages characterized sociologically in terms of the social groups organizing them: the traditional *entrudo* (a Portuguese-style masked ball characterized by practical jokes) within the family or among families of the same social level, the Venetian Carnival (also known as the bourgeois or grand Carnival), organized by middle-class clubs, and the street Carnival of the lower classes, best known for the bands of revelers known as *ranchos*, *blocos*, and *escolas de samba*. From around 1960 on, some of these various types of Carnival bands from the poorer districts of the cities began to undergo a change in organization. In Rio de Janeiro, some of the top *escolas de samba*¹ began to extend membership beyond their own communities to outsiders willing to pay to join. They also began to charge entrance fees for their qualification trials (Goldwasser, 1975: 65–82), pay their dancers and other participants, and regularize their finances. In Salvador (Bahia) at about the same time, the traditional Carnival band was combined with modern musical accompaniment,² the revelers dancing along with the *escola de samba* wore costumes designed to show that they had paid for the privilege, and onlookers were roped off from the parade (Mourão, 1987: 13). These “music *blocos*” used the money earned in this way to hire fashionable pop groups and improve their electrical equipment, producing real mobile shows.

With the modernization and increasing sophistication of their music, the commercialization of their activities, and the professionalization of the dancers and singers, Carnival bands have undergone a radical transformation: once community groups occupied with preparing and organizing their own participation in Carnival, they have gradually become commercial participants in the culture industry. This transformation has radically changed the history of lower-class participation in the festivities, creating a clear differentiation between the bands that have undergone modernization,

Benoit Gaudin is a professor of sociology and anthropology at the Université de Provence, Aix-Marseille I. Laurence Hallewell is a former Latin American studies librarian at Columbia University, now retired.

LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES, Issue 135, Vol. 31 No. 2, March 2004 80-93

DOI: 10.1177/0094582X03261192

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commercialization, and professionalization and those that are still run as family and community affairs, the normal practice in most other state capitals. Carnival bands, traditional or folk, had never before been organized as businesses.

The media, especially television, have played a decisive role in this transformation both by guaranteeing bands a source of income by paying for broadcasting rights and by encouraging them to compete with each other in liveliness and visual effects, thus making their displays more sophisticated and costly. With the development of domestic tourism in Brazil, these business-type bands, increasingly subsidized, have become the privileged representatives of the public agencies responsible for promoting the tourist sector, turning their local Carnivals into virtual postcard pictures of their cities.

THE BAHIAN MODEL OF CARNIVAL

Salvador has come up with a different way of organizing the pre-Lenten Carnival. As early as the 1980s, Queiroz (1980: 1482) observed that, while in Rio the better-off sit on the stage watching or judging the parade organized by the lower classes, in Salvador these social classes take to the streets and join in with the “people,” separated from the Carnival bands only by the rope. In this environment, the different social classes share the same physical space even if they do not actually mix in a mythical festive unity. This Bahian model of Carnival, Queiroz adds, serves as an example for small and middle-sized cities, contrasting with the *carioca* (Rio) model adopted by state capitals and the larger cities.

Early in the 1990s there was a wave of national and international interest in the culture of Bahia. The disk recorded by the American singer Paul Simon with the Olodum group and UNESCO’s decision to designate the Pelourinho District³ as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity were among the first events to draw world attention to Salvador and, by extension, the whole state of Bahia. This development, based on the then-new world music movement and on the special tourist attractions of Brazil, created a new fashion in the United States and in Europe and, indirectly, in Brazil itself. Hence the special attention given to the musical rhythm of the moment in Salvador, *axé* [a sort of samba-reggae—Translator’s note], which spread throughout Brazil. Through the national and international success of the pioneering Olodum group and Daniela Mercury, the local bands who played *axé* and livened up the Bahian Carnival began to enjoy success well beyond their home state.

Besides axé, Salvador's Carnival was able to take advantage of the fashion for Afro-Bahian culture, and it began to be featured on television across the country, with all the local peculiarities it had cultivated throughout its history: the traditional *afoxés*⁴ (such as the "Sons of Gandhi"), the Afro-bands (such as Olodum⁵ or Ilê Aiyê), and the famous *trios elétricos*. At this point the success of Salvador's Carnival began to rival that of Rio, and this was how the whole nation became acquainted with the Bahian way of organizing and celebrating Carnival—marching around behind musicians on a float instead of watching a parade, doing a "jump-up" instead of samba, and wearing their group's *abada*⁶ instead of individual fantasy costumes. This way of celebrating Carnival has become increasingly popular and inspired the modern *micaretas* ("Carnivals" held outside the traditional period of the three days before Lent). The success of the Bahian Carnival and its music, together with a favorable economic and social situation, has created the conditions for a veritable "rediscovery" of the Brazilian Northeast by tourists from Brazil and abroad.

THE TOURIST TRADE'S "REDISCOVERY" OF THE NORTHEAST

Interest in the music and the Carnival of Salvador was accompanied by a "rediscovery" of the tourist potentialities of the Northeast at a time when the image and reputation of Rio de Janeiro were suffering, at home and abroad, from an increase in urban violence. Whether deliberately or not, the Brazilian media and the state and city governments of the Northeast began to propagate a new image of the Northeast through journalists' reports, advertising campaigns, and even television soap operas: an image of a tropical paradise, a land of sun and fun, with endless beaches full of happy, good-looking young people (Mamede, 1996: 174–186). This image contrasts with its old stereotype as a barren land whose wretched inhabitants were dominated by a long-established landowning oligarchy and constantly in flight from its terrible droughts. Whole contingents of tourists from São Paulo, Rio, the far south of Brazil, and even Argentina were seduced by the region's new image and began to holiday and to celebrate Carnival in Salvador and elsewhere in the Northeast. The local authorities in the other state capitals of the region (and especially the agencies promoting tourism and culture) have sought to profit from this new fashion, running publicity campaigns about the beauties and attractions of their respective states.

In its marketing campaign to promote the image of a new Northeast of tourism and culture, the culture and leisure industry was not content just to

work with state and city governments: it made use of all the means of publicity available. To persuade Brazil and the world that, far from being a region characterized by drought, grinding poverty, and enormous social inequality, the Northeast was a wonderland of beautiful beaches, exciting music, and fun-loving natives, it needed all the power of television and its multicolored pictures, repeated ad nauseam. In a global context of increasing specialization in the economy and in culture, the Northeast came to be identified with tourism and amusement just as São Paulo is linked with industry and high culture, Minas Gerais with sobriety and good, traditional food, and Rio with samba and the beauties of nature. The extent to which television simplifies regional characteristics has no bounds. A few seconds of advertising is a great help in this tendency to stereotype and homogenize regional cultures. Taking such specialization even farther, the Northeast is divided into Natal, with its buggy rides among the sand dunes, Recife, with its *frevó*,⁷ Fortaleza, with its *jangadas*,⁸ and Salvador, with its *batucadas*.⁹

MICARETAS EVERYWHERE

In the early 1990s, this new fashion of regarding the Northeast as a region of tourist resorts produced a significant change in the world of Brazilian national festivals. A number of festivals outside the normal Carnival season were invented and introduced (Oktoberfest, St. John's Day, Bumba meu Boi, etc.). These innovations in the national cultural calendar were the initiatives of small and very small businesses, mostly in the Northeast, allied with the government agencies responsible for promoting tourism. Based on the traditional or folk festivals typical of a certain locality (such as the micareta of Feira de Santana [the upstate Bahian city built around its "St. Ann's Fair"—Translator's note]), they had a dual objective: to make money for the promoters and to attract tourists to the cities or states where they were being held.

Thus the modern micareta¹⁰ was inspired by the Bahian Carnival bands, both artistically (trio, axé, abadá) and in the way they were organized commercially. Dozens of these out-of-season carnivals have been created since 1991. The earliest, in the state capitals of the region, were followed by others in its smaller towns and then by yet others in state capitals outside the region. Many towns that had not bothered much about celebrating Carnival itself began to set up these out-of-season versions: the Micarande in Campina Grande (Paraíba's second city), the Carnatal in Natal (capital of Rio Grande do Norte), the Fortal in Fortaleza (capital of Ceará), the Carnabelô in Belo Horizonte (capital of the south-central state of Minas Gerais), not to mention

the Perifolias of other towns of the Northeast and even the CarnaBeach of Miami Beach, Florida.¹¹

As products of the culture industry, micaretas involve a number of commercial enterprises and government agencies both on the production side and in their public presentation. They have a common base in the Bahian pop music groups that play in the Salvador pre-Lenten Carnival and take their shows on the road throughout Brazil for the rest of the year, but in each town they are received by a local structure made up of Carnival bands, official or traditional, event promoters, sponsors, public agencies, and other bodies to which the local government has subcontracted aspects of the event. It is not easy to work out how these various agencies and bodies are related. What are the connections between public agencies and the event organizers, between organizers and the Carnival bands, between the bands and the musicians, between the officially recognized Carnival bands and their rivals? The answers to these questions are complicated and very often confidential (because of the amount of money at stake) and deserve to be pursued in their own right.

THE CASE OF THE FORTAL

Fortaleza's Fortal was begun in 1992 by a group of local Carnival bands whose innovation was to copy the Bahian way of celebrating Carnival. During the 1992 Carnival, Fortaleza was presented with a completely novel attraction—the parade of a Bahian-style Carnival band, complete with musicians on a float with electric amplification and participants dressed in brightly colored “shrouds,” separated from the onlookers by a protective rope. Unlike the usual revelers, this band paraded on the Sunday evening before Carnival Monday (the last Monday before Lent), and, more important, it paraded down the Avenida Beira-Mar, skirting the city's most fashionable beachfront, instead of the Avenida Pessoa Anta, where Carnival processions had hitherto taken place. Novel in locale (an upmarket residential avenue instead of a commercial street), music (the axé instead of samba), the revelers' behavior (dancing in uniform tunics rather than marching in fancy dress), and timing (on the eve of Carnival, not during it), this first Bahian-style Carnival attracted thousands of spectators despite the amateur nature of its organization.

However successful, this pioneering attempt would have remained just a pleasant amateurish diversion (like the traditional neighborhood Carnival bands) if its organization had remained in the hands of a group of revelers. To

become a real micareta like those of Bahia or their first imitators in Campina Grande and Natal, with various musical groups and a whole support infrastructure, it required the recruitment of fashionable pop groups and the money to pay for them and for the necessary electrical equipment. It had also to be able to offer services to the onlookers (security, first-aid facilities, etc.), things possible only with financial support and a business attitude. The model being imitated and the high cost of an appropriate organizational set-up meant that it could not be based on simple traditional relationships of community, neighborhood, or friendship.

The alternative, enlarging the micareta and putting it on a professional basis, was provided by Click Promoções, a company describing itself as in the business of organizing events. This company took over Fortaleza's next micareta, giving it the name Fortal and changing its date to fit the tourist trade—the 1993 Fortal took place at the end of June. Click Promoções took charge of organizing the event, from contracting Salvador's best-known musical groups to negotiating with the city government over security, rerouting traffic around the Avenida Beira-Mar, and all the other necessary preparations, such as finding sponsors, building bleachers for the spectators and stands for the judges, making arrangements with the press and television, subcontracting the sale of T-shirts, and so on. Since then, the whole event has come to depend directly or indirectly on Click Promoções. The general population no longer plays any part in the festival except as spectators. In the way it is organized, the Fortal, like other modern micaretas, represents a departure from the traditional way of participating in Carnival. Its organization now depends on private commercial firms and on them alone.

Anyone who has observed a micareta such as the Fortal will have noticed the way it caricatures the socioeconomic order of the society in which it takes place. A minority, well-off, young, and lively, is enjoying itself within the protection of a human chain of servants in the middle of a crowd of onlookers and revelers who are pushed aside by the official Carnival bands—the *pipocas*, second-class participants in the Carnival. The whole is highly symbolic insofar as it parodies the socioeconomic situation of one of the most unequal societies on the planet. This aspect of the micareta as parody has two sources. The first is the way in which Carnival mimics the social order of "normal" life. Queiroz has already explained this mimetic (rather than inverted) relationship to the social order: the festival takes place at a fixed and respected time and location, people are divided up according to their roles as onlookers, actors, and workers rather than dissolving into a single mass of revelers, and the social classes tend to remain separate and clearly demarcated (Carnival balls have controlled access, Carnival bands are organized

according to social connections, etc.) (Queiroz, 1994: 28–43). On top of this mimetic aspect there is the micareta's commercial basis. Organized by a private company, the festival divides people according to their commercial relationship to this company, that is, into customers, employees, and a much larger third group that can be considered potential customers.

The two structural types, that of Brazilian society and that of private enterprise, are not in opposition. It seems unnecessary to distinguish them, as the three groups in the former match the three in the latter (the customers being the members of the Carnival bands, the company's employees being the festival's security, and the onlookers and the pipocas being the potential customers). This match between the two types gives the whole event the appearance of a caricature: its commercial basis emphasizes the social makeup, imposing exclusion derived from business logic on a highly unequal social base.

Despite their apparent caricaturing of Brazilian elitism and social discrimination and their spatial expression of social exclusion, the micaretas do not seem to provoke any feeling of rejection, revolt, or frustration among those involved. Both those on the "outside" and those on the "inside" accept this situation of apartheid that divides them in their own cultural life. To tell the truth, they do not even seem to be aware of this aspect of caricature, thrilled as they are to dance, sing, and enjoy themselves. Far from being an event limited to one part of the population—the one with the money to pay to participate—the micareta also attracts large sectors of the less well-off and the poor, to the point that it can be considered an event for everyone.¹² Another surprise is that the "foreign" origin of the micareta—a festival that comes "from outside," as they say in Ceará—presents no obstacle to the event's success. However "artificial" and "imported" it may seem in relation to the traditional culture of this part of Brazil, the Fortal has, right from its first appearance, gotten top marks among all the country's micaretas, and this in a city that has never had a very strong tradition of celebrating Carnival.

Both the caricature look of the Fortal and the reaction or lack of reaction to this caricature are reason enough to study it sociologically, as is the huge success of an out-of-season Carnival in this land of rodeos, *forró* folk dancing, and celebrations of the feast of St. John. As Michel de Certeau teaches us, we must look beyond the consumers of cultural goods and their consumption to discover the meaning that individuals assign to their actions (1990: xxxvi–xl). What are the young people demonstrating, and what are they looking for? If it were no more than music and having fun, the micaretas would have had no more success than any other show. Participation in these events must have a greater and more complex meaning, and this is what we have to discover.

THE TWO SIDES OF THE MICARETA

The micareta is, paradoxically, both a public festival and a private one, unequal and socially exclusive in its organization but, at the same time, open to the whole community in the way it is performed. Indeed, in a situation of self-promotion and its attempt to attract potential customers, the organizers offer, free and to everyone, the chance to enjoy the show, even if they just watch or take part only as members of another, second-class Carnival band. It would be more correct, however, to speak of two festivals than of one. The first charges admission and is restricted, while the second is free and open to all. The two depend on each other in a reciprocal relationship. If one of them were to run into problems, the other would not outlast it for very long. They are united by the music, the voices singing, and the rhythm of the dance. When the float with the pop group appears, the pipocas go wild with glee, and their enthusiasm energizes the Carnival bands of the well-to-do. At the peak of the Carnival, the two groups of revelers stimulate each other and become a single mass.

This is why the Fortal seems not to create hard feelings among the pipocas: by taking part actively and physically in the festival, entering into a group that goes beyond the structural separation of the event (the group in which they are absorbed by the spirit of the fiesta), the pipocas (and the members of the "official" bands too) forget all about their social position and that of the others and transcend it. The liveliness of the carnival, shared by the two groups, creates a common feeling among all the participants. When everyone is singing together, when every human body is so taken over by the dance that it becomes harder to stay still than to join in, individual self-awareness dissolves into a feeling of the happy crowd and one becomes part of a different social reality. In the words of Jean Duvignaud, "while it lasts, the festival destroys and annuls the codes and rules that societies adopt to defend themselves from an aggressive Nature." He notes, to his happy surprise, "the union of God and man, of the id and the superego, in an exaltation of mood in which all the conventional indicators are falsified, mixed up, destroyed" (Duvignaud, 1991: 266).

This situation of "total entertainment" in which the social classes lose their separate identities converts the Fortal from a mere commercial event to a cultural happening. Since 1993, the year in which the Fortal was first organized commercially, it has quickly outgrown its original success to become a true Carnival. The number of pipocas, the sheer volume of their voices, and their active contribution give them full participation as actors in the festival,

on the same level as the musicians and the members of the organized bands. They are, for several reasons, the key to the event's success. First, they confer on it the legitimacy of endorsement by ordinary people: without their enormous numbers the Fortal would be nothing more than a very noisy and inconvenient intrusion of a private celebration into a public space. Secondly, the pipocas play a dominant role in livening things up: often they turn the official parade, whose enthusiasm can at times seem a little forced, into really exciting fun. Thanks to their contribution, the Fortal takes on a genuinely festive air that several local commentators have found to be just like the traditional Carnival: dancing and singing to the point of exhaustion, hard drinking, permissiveness, "Carnival love affairs," drug use (the drugs often sprayed with water pistols), and many other forms of excess.

This situation helps explain how the crowds react to the structure of the event. Not every pipoca wants to join an official band. Just as the members of such a band acquire prestige and pride by parading "inside the ropes," so the pipocas can be happy with their own position. Some are even proud of not being part of the structure of the event: they get their fun without having to pay for it. The usually pejorative word *pipoca* can be borne with pride.

WHY SO SUCCESSFUL?

Hypotheses to account for the success of the micaretas are mainly about who participates in the official bands, as it is obvious what motivates the pipocas: for them the micareta provides the chance to see and hear the stars of Bahian pop music alive, up close, and for nothing. One possible explanation lies in the many social transgressions that the micareta permits. Although the event is highly structured, the youngsters in the roped-off area still find themselves in a milieu in which many social restrictions and prohibitions have vanished. This gives many of them the chance to get drunk, to grope members of the opposite sex, and to do things that would not be possible outside Carnival such as experimenting with drugs. The micareta is very much like Carnival in that it allows the transgression of behavioral norms and represents, for many youngsters, their first chance to do so. Like Carnival, the micareta takes on the role for many of them of a rite of passage into adulthood.

A second hypothesis concerns the achievement of symbolic social mobility or, to use Bourdieu's terminology, a gain of symbolic capital. Indeed, belonging to an official band and parading within the ropes confers a privileged status, and this status can be attained by anyone able to find enough money to acquire the appropriate outfit. However expensive it may be to join

one of these official bands, entry is not formally denied to anyone but is determined exclusively by the rules of economics: many of the usual criteria of social division lose their effect here in the face of the power of money. Skin color, family name, which neighborhood you live in, and whether you belong to the right social network no longer matter. In fact, payment methods are adaptable and facilitated. To the same end, there is a wide price range among the various bands, making it easy for the less well-off to find one they can afford to join.

Becoming a member of an official band bestows undeniable prestige: it allows the individual to join the happy few, the group crowned with glory and surrounded with attention at the very center of the party. One is now part of the premier class of revelers, filmed by the television crews and admired by the onlookers, in the heart of the event that represents the most lively and fashionable part of the cultural life of the city. And on top of all this, the prestige of belonging to an official band is something that starts before the parade and goes on through the rest of the year, thanks to the outward signs of membership represented by the band's "shroud," shorts, and T-shirt or its label stuck on one's automobile. To show off the outfit, patronize the places connected with the band, and take part in the events that it organizes throughout the year gives teenagers, especially, an identification with the gratifying values that the band represents: modernity, fashion, excitement.

A third hypothesis to explain the success of the micareta with teenagers relates to the cultural identity of the Northeast. I do not, by this, wish to imply that they concern the cultural identity of just the Northeast; rather, the success they have had in this region is so enormous that we have to bring in the question of local cultural identity.

ANOTHER CULTURAL IDENTITY

Because they are creations of a culture industry whose concerns are closely tied up with the tourist trade, the micaretas represent a cultural watershed for the so-called New Northeast that the region's media and public authorities have been inventing or rediscovering since the early 1990s. The Northeast of the tourists, "tropical paradise, land of sun and wonderful beaches," is matched by a new cultural Northeast, the Northeast of festivals, best expressed by the new Bahian Carnival—a Northeast that is being promoted as a land of fun, of happy, lively people so fond of singing and dancing that they spend their lives inventing new festivities. The popularity of Bahian music, the chief attraction of the micaretas, helps strengthen this image. This

is how the cultural life of Bahia and, by extension, of the whole Northeast region has become so attractive—something for the rest of Brazil to desire and to envy.

This positive image is totally opposite to the traditional picture of the culture and the people of the Northeast, a picture in which everything about the Northeast is interpreted negatively—one whose origin lies in the relationship between the big cities of the Southeast and the poverty-stricken immigrants from the Northeast who have sought employment in those cities and one that is viewed by all *nordestinos* as an injustice that must be resisted and disproved.

This stigma is felt particularly keenly by teenagers, for they are at an age when their social contacts are branching out beyond the family and the school and are looking for models to identify with—seeking to become part of other spheres of socialization such as the university class, the sports team, the generation, and the national community. The micaretas, with their aura of fashionableness and dynamism and their positive values, offer them a very attractive alternative. Joining in their city's micareta, they have the chance to show the world that they are not what the Southerners say they are.

Presenting an image of one's self makes sense only if the Other can see it. To return to Dubar's terminology, *biographical identity* (identity for one's self) does not depend on *relational identity* (identity for the Other) (Dubar, 1991: 110–126). The reason the micaretas have had so much success with teenagers is that they are a performance that presents a whole way of being, of behaving, of organizing festivities and living them that is nothing like the traditional image of the *nordestino*. Thus, when they take part in this event, adolescents are helping shape a new image of their culture and of themselves—in fact, forming a new identity.

Television is the principal vehicle of this spectacle, these images, and the message to the Southerners who have stigmatized the region. The greatest pride of the Northeastern revelers—their greatest revenge—is that the Southerners who used to despise their culture are so impressed by it that they even travel to the Northeast to take part in its micareta. (Tourists “from outside” are carefully counted, interviewed, and researched during the micareta season.) The beauty and pomp of the festival become a basic part of this new picture of themselves and their cultural life that the Northeastern revelers send to the rest of Brazil through television: the virtual aspect of the festival is given primordial importance, and the fact that it is photogenic and has a good television impact is decisive for the motivation of the youngsters taking part in the micareta, although they are often unaware of this. In the case of the Fortal, the company that organizes it is fully aware of this and uses various arguments,

including the results of its own opinion polls, to justify the privilege of having the parade along the city's most fashionable thoroughfare, its "picture post-card." And indeed the images of the festival seen on television are especially sumptuous and impressive. This aesthetic side of the event has, to my way of thinking, been the main commercial triumph of the Fortal. It is because the festival is a joy to behold and *makes good television* that it has had so much success. The importance of the visual appearance of the event—its character as a spectacle—is reinforced by the behavior of the revelers, who become more animated when they are passing in front of the floats or when the television cameras are focused on them than at other times. This is when the crowd sends its message to the world.

To sum up, the success of the micaretas among Northeastern teenagers can be understood as a response to their participation in and active contribution to the production of a new image of their local cultural life and thereby to the cultural life of the whole Northeast. Even though this is an image dreamed up not by them but by the local culture industry and has been imported from outside (in this case from Bahia), the youngsters of Ceará fully identify with the Fortal because it provides them with the identity they are looking for.

NOTES

1. The escolas de samba have their own hierarchy. Those that had received top honors in the previous year's Carnival were known until 1970 as "Group One." Since 1970 they have been classified as "Special."

2. The musicians, the so-called *trios elétricos* (often exceeding the implied threesome), whose great popularity dates from the 1980s with Dodo, Osmar, and Oswaldinho, are invariably mounted and transported on a float or on the back of a truck rather than having to accompany the revelers on foot. Musicians, revelers, and paid participants all indicate their affiliation by wearing identical (usually oversized) T-shirts.—Translator's note.

3. The picturesque Largo do Pelourinho, the historic center of the upper city of Salvador, is so named for the stone pillory bearing the royal arms and municipal insignia that was erected in every newly founded colonial town as an authority symbol and served as the site of floggings and other such punishments. The name has been extended to embrace the whole traditional Afro-Brazilian heart of the city made famous in Jorge Amado's *Tent of Miracles*. Because of its importance for tourism, the area, which had become very run-down and crime-ridden, was totally restored and renovated in 1973. —Translator's note.

4. Carnival bands of blacks, usually associated with particular *casas de candomblé*.

5. The Afro-Brazilian creators of samba/reggae, a troupe of 19 performers founded in Salvador in 1979. In 1991 they performed in Central Park in New York with Paul Simon before tens of thousands of people. In 1996 Michael Jackson wore Olodum shirts and colors in Salvador to shoot his video *They Don't Care About Us*, and the group, with its resounding percussion, intoxicating rhythms, and mesmerizing vocals, became famous worldwide. —Translator's note.

6. Up until 1992, the standard Carnival costume was the so-called penitent's shroud. In 1993 Salvador's Eva band launched the *abadá*, a shorter and looser carnival costume consisting of "a loose tunic, bermuda shorts, a cap, a *mamãe-sacode* [a sort of feather duster with colored synthetic raffia instead of feathers—Translator's note] and other hand-held decorative objects to make the *abadá* even prettier" (Banda, 1997).

7. A frenetic dance form of African origin performed with an open umbrella. Like the samba, it is danced alone. The dancers prepare throughout the year in bands for the next Carnival. They wear lavish costumes a small part of the cost of which is borne by the local município for their value as a tourist attraction. Frevo music is sung with percussion accompaniment. Some of the songs are traditional and others written for the annual competition. The elements derive partly from the polka, the march, and the quadrille, but the result is unique and more spontaneous and compelling than any of them. There are no set steps; any that fit the rhythm will do. —Translator's note.

8. Primitive balsa rafts with a single mast that are used for fishing and formerly also for taking cargo to and from ships anchored offshore. —Translator's note.

9. A dance of African origin performed to the beat of a drum. —Translator's note.

10. Besides the Feira de Santana micareta, which has been around since 1937, there have been other micaretas in upstate Bahia since the 1950s. I use the expression "modern micareta" to denote those organized outside the state of Bahia in the 1990s (for further details, see Gaudin, 2000a). [The word itself, probably from the French *mi-carême*, "mid-Lent," is a Bahian regionalism for any Carnival-like festivity outside the normal pre-Lenten period. —Translator's note.]

11. On the specific case of Fortaleza's Fortal, see Gaudin (2000b).

12. The most conservative estimates of the numbers taking part in the Fortal or just watching are *several hundreds of thousands* a day, of whom those who have paid to participate amount to fewer than 45,000 (that is, most of the people involved are not customers of the commercial structure of the event).

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