Re-Imagining the Geography of the Favelas: Pacification, Tourism, and Transformation in Complexo do Alemão, Rio de Janeiro

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines the recent intersection of two forces, complementary and competing: pacification and favela tourism in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Rio’s favelas have long been considered archetypal neighbourhoods of poverty and crime. Pacification involves a military and police occupation of targeted communities, to control drug cartel-related violence. Complexo do Alemão is a cluster of fifteen favelas, transforming through pacification and tourism at a rapid pace, both materially and discursively. This research involves a comprehensive look at these forces in Alemão, incorporating results from my 2013 field research, including interviews with residents and guides. Tourism in Alemão has seen mixed success; still, it brings unique benefits to the local population, such as protection, accountability, and a means to reclaim occupied space. In addition, favela tourism is an integral tool to tackling the stigmatization of favela residents as talentless criminals, part of a larger reshaping of ‘favela’ in the geographical imagination.

Keywords: Favela tourism; pacification; imaginative geographies; tourism; urban poverty; occupation
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my brilliant, sharp friend Douglas Silva Ribeiro. Douglas was a courageous and adored brother, son, ally, and colleague. He gave so much during his short time here. I dedicate this thesis to his legacy.
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List of Acronyms

BOPE  Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais, or Battalion of Special Police Operations
CORE  Coordenadoria de Recursos Especiais, or Coordination of Special Assets
NGO  Non-governmental organization
PAC  Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento, or Growth Acceleration Program
RA  Residents’ Association
UPP  Unidades de Policia Pacificadora, or Pacifying Police Unit

Frequently Used Portuguese Words

Asfalto  Asphalt – the rest of the city (excluding favelas), the ‘formal’ city.
Barraco  Shack – generalized term for common favela dwellings.
Caveirão  Tank – used for military action.
Cojuntos habitationais  Social housing complexes.
Favela  Dense dwelling agglomerations in Brazil. Often negatively associated with crime, violence, and poverty.
Favelado  Residents of Favelas.
Morro  Hills – common location of many favelas in Rio.
Teleférico  Cable car, or gondola.
Telenovela  Brazilian soap opera
A teleférico car passes overhead on a cloudy day in Complexo do Alemão.
Chapter 1.
Introduction

*Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings.* (Said 1993: 7)

The favelas of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, are widely regarded as a classic case of urban social stratification. Rio's 1,300 favelas – poor informal urban districts frequently written off as “slums” – are home to over two million residents (IBGE 2011). According to media and policy reports, the favelas are hotbeds of drug trade and informal economy, with high levels of violent crime. This perception underwrites the current policy of favela “pacification,” designed to facilitate Rio's hosting of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympics.

Significantly, however, the perception of favelas as spaces of criminality is inaccurate and misleading. While it is true that drugs and violence are a reality in many favelas, it is in no way true of them all. Some have grave problems, but others are legal, relatively safe communities, with permanent housing, services, and amenities. Similarly, while scholars (Alves & Evanson 2011) estimate only 1% of favelados (or those living in favelas) have anything to do with the drug traffic, all residents are vilified regardless. Inside Brazil and around the world, however, the dominant perception of favelas leaves little room for this diversity. Outside their neighbourhoods, favelados are treated as “others,” stigmatized for trying to transcend their limitations or for accepting them, guilty by association (with the drug trade and violence).

These stereotypes of violent, crime-ridden favelas are produced by various mechanisms. The concept of the favela is constructed through representations of
poverty, violence, and difference that circulate in the social realm both via media (film, print, the internet and television) and via state and para-state practices like policy-making, electioneering, and the judicial system. These dialogues not only shape life in the favelas and Rio, but are also exported to the rest of Brazil and beyond. In combination, they construct what Said called an “imaginative geography” (1978) of the favela. Imaginative geographies are “representations of other places – of peoples and landscapes, cultures and ‘natures’ – that articulate the desires, fantasies and fears of their authors and the grids of power between them and their ‘Others’” (Gregory, Johnson, Pratt, & Watts 2009: 369-370). My research examines the imaginative geographies (both competing and complementary) working to rewrite the definition of favela in the local setting of Complexo do Alemão (a large cluster of favelas in Rio’s North Zone). There may be implications for broader-scale international imaginative geographies, but these issues are beyond the scope of my research; my focus is local and is intended as a case study.

Favelas and favelados are “othered” in the imaginations of many, from Brazilians’ stigmatization and discrimination based on reports of violence and poverty, to North Americans’ romantic assumptions of adventure and vitality. These layered imaginative geographies of favelas as places of irrational violence have significant effects on favelados, and reinforce daily stigmatization. Drawing on a combination of discourse analysis and qualitative personal interviews conducted in Rio’s Complexo do Alemão, this paper examines the ways in which these imaginative geographies are being challenged by the complex interaction of potentially contradictory developments, favela tourism and state policy (pacification), both in part aiming to transform favelas and their representation. It draws on research conducted in the fall of 2013, during which time I lived in a favela community for one month, and specifically, formal and informal interviews with residents, tour guides, and observation of tourists and pacification police.

1.1. Background

While favelas have undergone significant transformation in recent decades, they are not a new part of Brazil’s urban landscape. Some favelas date as far back as the 1880s (Davis 2006), but their numbers increased particularly rapidly in the early 1900s,
and again after World War II, initiated by social housing crises (Pino 1997). While the affluent global North experienced decreasing inequality and rising incomes post World War II, in Brazil, dictatorship, internal displacement, and economic instability (leading to massive foreign debt, rapid inflation, and uneven growth), produced the opposite: from 1960 to 1970, 90% of the population lost ground in relative income (de Janvry 1981).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Brazil finally turned its economy around, but only through denationalization of major industries, trade liberalization, deregulation, and subsequent deindustrialization. The ensuing acceleration in long-term urban unemployment has exacerbated the social exclusion of the poor and related urban violence (Rocha 2002). National homicide rates are positively correlated with “inequality of income, proportion of youths in the population, the degree of urbanization, and the extent of economic vulnerability” (Pereira 2008: 188-189). While Rio’s 2011 unemployment rate fell to 5%, recent favela unemployment rates remain high at 15% (Bryson 2011; Alava 2013). Population growth rates in Rio’s favelas continue to surpass any other areas’ – almost 28% between 2000 and 2010, while the rest of the city grew only 3.4% (Hurrel 2011).

Rio’s successful bids to host two mega-events in 2014 and 2016 have motivated the city government to render the city tourist “friendly.” A major component of these efforts are measures designed to “pacify” the favelas. This effort is not unprecedented, but today’s pacification process is more forceful than previous attempts. In most cases, pacification measures involve three main components: (1) infiltration of the favela by Special Forces; (2) installation of Pacifying Police Units; and (3) ongoing monitoring and evaluation. These steps are customized by strategy and timeline depending on each favela’s specific history and security situation.

The pacification program, which Harvey (2012: 117) has labelled “social and class warfare,” has had varying degrees of success (depending upon one’s perspective). Because many favelas have long relied on a governing cartel for basic services provision, the imposition of police order has sometimes disrupted or destroyed social and physical infrastructure (McLoughlin 2011). Some large favelas like Rocinha and
Complexo do Alemão have had periods of peace followed by outbursts of violence, amid complaints of UPP bribery, rape, robbery, and other abuses (Barbassa 2012).

In communities deemed beyond recuperation, like Favela do Metrô, straightforward demolition makes way for mega-event infrastructure (Phillips 2011). While some housing is replaced via development on the urban periphery, many families remain displaced, without adequate compensation. Resistance to pacification is common. Residents of Vila Autodrómo, near the site of the future Rio Olympic Park, developed a “People’s Plan” to fight the planned destruction of their community, including proposals for infrastructure/housing development, public services and environmental protection (Rolnik 2012). Initially, residents of Vila Autodrómo won an injunction preventing demolitions, but in March 2014, this was overturned and demolitions have begun (Steiker-Ginzberg 2014).

Alongside pacification, some favelas are mobilizing to try to change their position in the social hierarchy. One of the most common ways is through the favela tourism industry. Rocinha, Rio’s largest favela, has been running tours since 1992 (Freire-Medeiros 2012). Rocinha’s well-developed tourism sector has a range of tour options, from ‘poverty safari’-style armoured Jeep tours to low-impact walking tours. In the last decade, however, international tourism in the favelas has expanded, particularly in pacified favelas, as the presence of armed UPP assures tourists of their safety.

Complexo do Alemão is a cluster of fifteen favelas in the North Zone of Rio. Its official population is 65,000 (IBGE 2011), but many estimate it might be as high as 300,000 (Perlman 2010: 105; Sluis 2011: 9). It has been a target of pacification since 2010. Currently, there are around 1,800 UPP stationed in the community (O Dia 2012). One year after the pacification campaign began in Alemão, a teleférico (cable car system) was built for transport up the steep hillsides (see Figure 1.1 for a photo of this system in use). Free for residents to use twice a day, the teleférico charges tourists a fee, and provides accessibility and mobility not otherwise affordable to locals (Byrne 2013). The project is part of a larger initiative, PAC (Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento, or Growth Acceleration Program), implemented by the Rio government to improve economic growth and infrastructure in poor areas (Skalmusky 2011).
Complexo do Alemão presents unique opportunities for tourism, as it was the setting for a popular Brazilian telenovela (soap opera) called Salve Jorge. This, combined with the fact that the teleférico is the first of its kind in Brazil, means Complexo do Alemão is one of the only favelas that receives large numbers of Brazilian tourists – from Rio and elsewhere. This is unusual, as tourists in other favelas are almost exclusively European or North American (Freire-Medeiros 2013), and holds potential for transforming the domestic stigmas many favelados face.

Stigmatization and exclusion are everyday experiences of favelados. On the other end of the spectrum, there is the growing trend of “favelization,” a term Kertzer describes as “the use of references to Brazilian favelas to market luxury products to a primarily non-Brazilian audience” (2014: 42). Favelas have come to symbolize stereotypical Brazil. These stereotypes are circulated globally, through imaginative
geographies of policy, media, film, and tourism. Together, these representations transform the favela into a “global trademark and tourist destination” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 56).

The complexity of these representations produces significant discursive contradictions. As Williamson, an urban planner and director of a favela-focused non-governmental organization (NGO) argues, “International media are presenting Rio’s favelas either as violent no-go areas or cheap places for tourists to stay. They can’t be both, so which is it?” (Griffin 2014). This dichotomy has a long and tangled history, one that goes far beyond mega-events in Rio. Film and television have for decades portrayed the favelas as places of seductive violence, and it is in part for this reason that international favela tourism is so popular today. Many guides feel they have to “play up” this image of violence to give the tourists what they are looking for, while at the same time emphasizing their tours through these “warzones” are completely safe. In some ways, the pacification abets the criminalization of favelas, as its heavy-handed tactics illustrate to the rest of Brazil and the world that favelas are danger zones to be controlled, their inhabitants closely monitored and surveilled.

This duality creates challenges to transforming the meaning of the favela. Today, the favela is produced and exported through these imaginative geographies. Favela inhabitants are trapped: theoretically, between these conflicting dialogues, and literally, between the police and the cartels, both of whom operate with impunity (Perlman 2008: 260). The ensuing contradictory imaginative geographies of the favela as both stigmatized (domestically) and praised for its exoticism (internationally) are strongly reinforced by both sides, presenting challenges for transforming these discourses.

1.2. Research Questions and Objectives

This project analyzes the geographies of occupation, displacement, and knowledge production involved in the attempt to reshape Rio’s favelas materially and discursively. It is a case study of the Complexo do Alemão favela, investigating how pacification and tourism are redefining “favela” in the global imagination.
My project will analyze the following processes in favelas: (1) the history and geography (both in “theory” and in “practice”) of pacification and favela tourism; and (2) the response to pacification, both inside and outside the favela, and associated transformations, if any, in the imaginative geographies of resident and non-resident actors. These objectives shape two integrated research questions:

1. What does pacification look like on the ground in Complexo do Alemão? What policy-level logics or theories make sense of or justify these strategies, and what implications does this process have for favela tourism in Alemão?

2. How have pacification and tourism affected and reproduced imaginative geographies of favelas?

My research looks at how the networks of tour companies, government policy, favelados, and international tourists interact and collaborate to shift the meaning of the favela. I examine the tension between Brazil’s struggle to be known for something other than the favelas, and the favelas’ struggle (sometimes at odds with Brazil’s) to recreate themselves in the global sphere.

1.3. A History of Rio’s Favelas

A Brazilian tourism website, BrazilCultureAndTravel.Com, explains in simple terms the disjointed nature of favelas’ treatment by asfalto (‘formal’ city, i.e. non-favela neighbourhoods) Brazilians compared to international tourists:

The majority of Rio’s residents see the neighbouring favelas as dark, violent places that drag down the reputation of their city. Few ever venture there. foreigners, on the other hand, find some aspects of the slums endearing. The uninhibited energy of the locals and the lives they lead fascinate newcomers. There is a touch of romance in these crowded, shoddily constructed communities that attracts people interested in experiencing the real Brazil. (n. d.)

The contrast is clear. What remains unclear is the logic behind it. If, as the website claims, “most people would be surprised to find that their prejudices about Brazilian slums have no basis in reality,” (n.d.) why is it that the population that lives next door to the favelas takes this “non-reality” for granted? Examining the long, tense
history of the relations between the favelas and broader Brazilian society can help address this question.

Since the early 1900s, soldiers returning from war were given temporary permission to settle in the hills of downtown Rio (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 56). The settlements that sprung up in these areas were haphazardly built, and proved impossible to patrol due to the steep topography and lack of planning (ibid). Between 1890 and 1906, Rio had a severe lack of low-income housing (Perlman 2010: 26). Mayor Passos set out to remake Rio into "tropical Paris," which involved the destruction of most slums, tenements, and shelters (Perlman 2010: 26-27). Concurrent with these plans, a large population of recently freed slaves migrated to Rio; growing numbers of urban poor were left scrambling for housing. This led to an explosion of growth in favelas as the only solution to the housing crisis. The early favelas' steep hillsides, or morros, of which Rio has quite a few, were densely planted, and difficult to farm or build on, so the largely illegal growth of favelas on undesirable land was ignored for the most part. After the 1930 revolution, however, President Getulio Vargas sought to tackle the favela problem with new regulations, prohibiting the construction of new housing in favelas, encouraging their removal, and even replacing some with social housing neighbourhoods “designed with the aim of imposing discipline on former favela residents, turning them into ‘adjusted’ citizens” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 57). Over the next few decades, favela resistance became organized against this new threat. Many established Residents’ Associations (RAs): volunteer-led, elected informal governance institutions, advocating for infrastructural development and other improvements.

Following World War II and continuing through the 1960s, industrialization and urbanization helped drive widespread internal migration to Rio that contributed to extensive growth in favelas (Perlman 2010: 27). During this time, favela populations in Rio’s South and North Zones increased by 98% (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 59). By the late 1960s, favelas were emerging in wider media and academic discussion – they had become “a central issue in theories of marginality and of the culture of poverty” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 59). The military coup of 1964 brought with it renewed efforts to eradicate Rio’s favelas, and spurred favela residents’ re-organization into the Federation of Residents’ Associations for protection. More than 100,000 people were evicted from
their favelas with force between 1968 and 1975, while social housing was built as a substitute. Problems with these *cojuntos habitacionais* (or housing complexes) included location (most were very far from jobs and the downtown core) and lack of infrastructure (including access to transportation). Frustrated with these conditions, many families left and moved back to the core to rebuild their lives in new favelas (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 60).

Many favelas in Rio enjoyed infrastructural advances in the 1970s, including basic sewage, water, and electricity. In the early 1980s, the *One Family One Plot* program legalized some favelas, and RAs were given official political recognition under the leadership of populist Rio State Governor Leonel Brizola, who “forged new links between the state government and the RAs” (Friere-Medeiros 2013: 61). In the political forefront, investment in favelas gradually began to replace the removal effort. At the same time, however, globalization and the flexibilization of labour, as well as the relocation of the national capital from Rio to Brasilia, led to major job losses in Rio. Unemployment among the urban poor grew rapidly, and Rio quickly became the Brazilian city with the lowest rate of social mobility (Perlman 2010: 52).

During the 1980s, what began as a small, relatively nonthreatening and geographically dispersed marijuana-based drug industry changed dramatically with the arrival of cocaine, increasing police corruption, and arms trafficking. The favelas were the perfect places from which to command the drug trade for several reasons: 1) social exclusion; 2) isolated, hilly topography; and 3) comparatively young and often unemployed populations (Perlman 2010: 165). This shift expanded the marginalization of favelas in Brazil with force. As Perlman writes, whereas “before, it was poverty that made the favela residents [marginalized] in the eyes of others, now it is the drug traffic – guilt by proximity” (Perlman 2010: 157).

After many failed attempts to eradicate the favelas, the Brazilian state finally shifted its stance towards them, as their continued growth seemed both uncontrollable and inevitable. Since 1992, Rio’s official plan has included the *Favela-Bairro Program*, which recognizes favelas as something to be improved, not destroyed. More recently, the *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* (My Home, My Life) program, launched in 2009, aims to
expand home ownership for low-income families (Perlman 2010: 326). This program is not without its problems, however, as there is no incentive to make payments. Many view it as a failure though it continues today. In recent years, the bulk of infrastructural development in favelas are grouped under the PAC and its current successor, PAC II. These are federal funds, matched with private sector investments, and designed to bring both infrastructure and work to areas of need in Brazil (Ribeiro 2007). As I mentioned earlier, it was the initial PAC investment that brought the now famous *teleférico* to Complexo do Alemão. Critics of the PAC emphasize its large, “showy” projects which seem to be favoured before basic needs (Osborn 2013).

In July 2010, Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes introduced a new municipal favela-upgrading project called *Morar Carioca* (loosely translated to mean To Live as a Rio Resident). This program’s goal is to ‘upgrade’ all of Rio’s favelas (larger than 100 homes) before 2020. Partnered with the Brazilian Institute of Architects, the necessity for upgrades is assessed on a case-by-case basis; in reality, the bureaucratic nature of the program has caused long delays (for preparing applications, processing time and waiting for funding approvals, etc.). As Osborn (2013) writes, “Despite the incredible promise of *Morar Carioca* in theory – in practice, the program’s name has been used so far by local authorities only to undertake authoritarian and unilateral, often arbitrary, interventions in Rio’s favelas.”

While most of these programs have realized some success upgrading urban services, they have all ultimately failed to address the growing, fatal problem of the favelas: illegal drug trafficking and associated violence (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 63). The illegal arms trade has allowed some drug cartels to become more powerful than the police themselves; their weapons are more sophisticated, and their impunity unquestioned. In Brazilian society, favelas have come “to be seen as criminal headquarters, [their inhabitants] potential delinquents” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 63). Homicide is the most common cause of death for 15-24 year old urban Brazilians, and rates are positively correlated in areas with higher proportions of inequality and youth (Pereira 2008: 188). The bulk of Rio’s violence has historically taken place in the favelas.
To combat this, and coinciding with successful bids to host the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games, Rio de Janeiro committed to a policy of “pacifying” the favelas in 2008. The Olympic Zones, where most of Rio’s mega-event infrastructure is focused, coincide with the location of many favelas. Overlaps between these seemingly contradictory urban phenomena (tourism infrastructure and poor neighbourhoods) are significant. As noted earlier, pacification involves the installation of permanent police presence in certain selected Rio favelas. Other aspects of the program include the UPP Social, which aims to upgrade services based on feedback from community members. In Complexo do Alemão, the UPP Social is responsible for installing free wireless internet for the neighbourhood. However, it is extremely unreliable, and the residents report that as long as it has been running, no one has been able to connect to it. Apparently these shortfalls are common: newspaper articles often discuss the still-pervasive lack of sewage, garbage collection, and lighting in many pacified communities (Elliott 2013). While I was in Alemão, there were two water shortages, each lasting for a few days. During these droughts, the UPP had water privately trucked in to each of their stations, but residents did not (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2. UPP gets private water delivery while shortage remains for community.
It is also important to note the very specific geography of the pacification project: only 39 out of Rio’s 1,000 favelas are currently monitored by the UPP. Most are not targeted by this or any other reintegration strategy. This is due to many factors, but most significant in the decision to pacify a favela is its proximity to tourist areas (either wealthy areas or mega-event infrastructure) and the relative perceived threat (the ‘normal’ level of violence in the favela in question). This geographic targeting further exacerbates polarization of the poorest populations in Rio, by providing the relatively wealthier favelas (near tourist areas) with security and development, while continuing to exclude the poorest neighbourhoods from the city government’s agenda.

Many inhabitants feel trapped between the new UPP and the cartels, which, for the most part, still have a presence in favelas. Reports of bribes, disappearances of innocent favelados, and other abuses of power do little to instil confidence in their newfound leadership. A survey conducted in May 2013 showed 70% of Brazilians did not trust the police, an increase of almost 10% from 2012 surveys (Ribeiro 2013). My anecdotal experience in field research suggests these figures are even higher amongst favelados. In addition, as many believe the pacification campaign is a temporary measure and will be discontinued after the mega-events, most residents are hesitant to embrace their new governance and security structures. And, while gun-related violence has decreased following pacification (Rossi 2012), this reduction of violence has not yet changed the imaginations of the majority of Brazilians. Instead, pacification has perpetuated the criminalization of favelas, with their counter-insurgency style of invasions and patrols.

The Brazilian and international media have reproduced these representations enthusiastically. Rio is portrayed as ‘the divided city’ (Ventura 1994) – and depictions of the favelas as criminal and “evil” headquarters usually omit the fact that “favela residents are most often the victims of all sorts of violent crime… [as well as] the rigid law of silence” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 64) imposed by the governing cartels. Alves and Evason refer to favelados as "double casualties" -- literally, of powerful weapons fired in dense communities, and figuratively, by media reporting that demonizes their neighbourhoods as loci of criminals (2011: 4-5). These portrayals also leave out the fact that most of the asfalto’s labour source comes from favelados, and many involved in the
drug trade (especially purchasers) are upper or upper-middle class. These interrelations make it impossible for Rio to be a ‘divided city’ in practice, but the theoretical divide is strong.

As well, a new force emerged in the early 2000s: paramilitary militias (often made up of ex-police or ex-military) have invaded some favelas and taken over from cartels, imposing their rule and surveillance while profiting from “protection” rackets (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 65). In light of these dynamics, middle- and upper-class Brazilians’ tendency to blame and resent the geographic area of favelas for their cities’ notoriety is perhaps understandable. But it is the average inhabitants who are blamed, not only the estimated 1% of the favela populations involved with criminality, nor the violent tactics of the police.

An artist living in Complexo da Penha told me a story of his experience temporarily moving from Penha to a ritzy neighbourhood in the South Zone of Rio, Ipanema:

A while ago I moved to Ipanema. My neighbour was an older lady who was married to a judge, and she knew I was from a favela. So she started to create problems. My sandals, Havaianas, were on the ground in front of our doors, and she was prejudiced and racist because [in her eyes] these shoes proved that I was from a favela. So she asked me to move them because she didn’t want others to know (like people coming over to her house). She just wanted a reason to criticize me. The worst thing for a rich person is to know that a person from a favela is living next door to them. It devalues the area. They think, ‘How can he afford to live here? Maybe he is hiding from something. He must be a criminal.’ It’s never positive, their thinking... It didn’t make me want to stay there. So I moved back to Penha. (Angelo, personal communication [hereinafter p/c], 9 Oct 2013)

This type of prejudice is common and widespread, and has implications for social mobility. Perlman’s (2010: 154) interviews with 750 favelados in Rio produced the following results: 84% felt stigmatized and discriminated against because they lived in favelas. Residence in a favela ranked higher than any other perceived reason for discrimination, including skin colour, gender, and appearance. Coinciding with this, international media praise the favelas’ energy, music, and lively pace of life. The favela
is produced and exported through imaginative geographies created through media, film, capital flows, tourism, and academia. These often-paradoxical images leave favelas in limbo – and the pacification program contributes to this with its concentrated geography and reinforcement of criminality.

My thesis is organized into five chapters: 1) Introduction 2) Context and Methods, 3) Pacification, 4) Favela Tourism, and 5) Conclusions. Chapter 2 begins by situating my field research within the recent events and context in my chosen case study, Complexo do Alemão, and concludes with an explanation of my methods. Chapters 3 and 4 communicate my findings using a blend of field research and qualitative theory. While pacification and favela tourism have inherent overlaps, I have chosen to address them in separate chapters due to their respective importance in my research.

Chapter 3 discusses the current pacification campaign in Alemão, and centers on the perceptions of resident interviewees and media portrayals of the changing favela. As I have mentioned earlier, pacification has made strides in reducing statistics of gun violence in favelas, but my research indicates the program faces ideological, physical, and monetary obstacles that could possibly threaten future success. Many residents do not trust the program will be continued post-Olympics, thus they view the pacification as a temporary disruption of cartel rule. This compromises the effectiveness of the operation, and increases the tension between community members (most of whom have no relationship with the drug trade) and the UPP.

Chapter 4 examines favela tourism’s dependence on pacification, and importance in transforming the imaginative geography of the favela. The results of my interviews and theoretical research have illustrated favela tourism plays an integral role in this process in three key ways. First, by acting as a form of re-education for tourists, tourism assists in breaking down preconceived discriminatory notions about favelas and favelados. Second, tourism acts as a means of empowerment for resident guides, in reclaiming the right to what many now feel is occupied space. Lastly, favela tourism provides guaranteed surveillance/accountability against two opposing sources of violence (the cartels and the UPP). It is because of these reasons that most residents
support the growth of the favela tourism industry, yet are wary of the future of pacification.

The final chapter (5) closes my thesis with conclusions, questions and speculations for the future of security and tourism in Complexo do Alemão.
Chapter 2.

Context and Methods

2.1. Complexo do Alemão

Rio de Janeiro’s Complexo do Alemão is one of Brazil’s largest favela clusters, larger than many Brazilian cities (Perlman 2008: 260). Figure 2.1 depicts a fraction of its area and gives a sense of Alemão’s immense density and size. The favela’s Human Development Index (a United Nations Development Programme quality-of-life measurement) scores lower than Cape Verde and Gabon (Perlman 2010: 176), but the population remains economically diverse. Poverty increases with distance from the train station or Metro connections, and decreases with transportation accessibility.

Each of Alemão’s fifteen neighbourhoods has its own history, culture, and governance structure (in the form of the Residents’ Association). The communities are close knit, and what little public space exists is utilized extensively for leisure, conversation, work, and other neighbourhood functions. Surveys show the majority of favelados wish to stay in their communities, for reasons such as "high levels of solidarity and community spirit" (Alves & Evanson 2011: 3). There is a wide range of privilege and economic status even within neighbourhoods. Some residents have swimming pools and hi-speed internet, while others lack running water or electricity. Some party in Lapa, a hip neighbourhood in the South Zone, “every weekend, while others suffer from hunger” (Sluis 2011: 10).
Complexo do Alemão is located in the poorer, industrial North Zone, far from the picturesque beaches and expensive hotels for which Rio is famous. Alemão’s violent and contested history, however, is also globally notorious. It is the subject of a new documentary, *Complexo – Universo Paralelo* (Parallel Universe), a drama called *Alemão* (which follows the 2010 police invasion), and is the setting for the Brazilian soap opera *Salve Jorge*. Situated on a cluster of steep *morros* and interspersed valleys (see a typical view, Figure 2.2), it is located on historically undesirable land. Due in part to this geography, Complexo do Alemão’s history is shaped by a very specific spatiality of violence and territory constructed by warring drug cartels. Certain *morros* have been occupied by opposing cartels, and many *favelados* have been caught in the crossfire. Most inhabitants are entirely uninvolved in the dynamics driving the violence. One resident explained to me if you combined everyone involved to some degree with drug
criminality (traffickers, sellers, users, and sympathizers), it would add up to less than 10% of the population (André, p/c, 2013). Other research claims this group’s proportionality is far smaller: 1% of favelados (Alves & Evanson 2011: 5). Yet the UPP lacks the local historical knowledge of these favelas to efficiently target criminals, thus the entire population is treated as a potential threat.

Figure 2.2. View looking over the steep hillside from Itararé, teleférico station in the background.

Prior to pacification, on June 27, 2007, the governor of the state of Rio ordered the federal police to invade Complexo do Alemão and to repress the drug cartels as a display of power (Perlman 2010: 168). Over 1,300 police and military launched a coordinated attack, throwing grenades and firing ‘indiscriminately’ for ten hours (Alves & Evanson 2011). At least nineteen children were killed by stray bullets (Alves & Evanson 2011: 1), along with many others, as the violence continued for months. Eighty-five people were wounded between May and August 2007 (Alves & Evanson 2011: 2). The ‘massacre,’ as it came to be known, exacerbated tensions and frustration within the favela, and led to violent retaliations.
In December 2008, Rio state Governor Cabral and city Mayor Paes announced the beginning of the Favela Pacification Program, and it reached Alemão in late 2010. Four years into Alemão’s pacification, violence between the UPP and the cartel has ramped up, and many residents feel caught in the middle of the conflict between these forces in their communities. Criticized extensively in Brazilian and international media, the pacification program shows no signs of easing; violent retaliations by cartel members are met with troop reinforcements, while the community demands peace with slogans such as “Fora UPP!” (“Get Out, UPP!”).

Complexo do Alemão’s pacification began with the invasion of around 3,000 military and police, with tanks, armoured cars, and rifles. The raid began in neighbouring Complexo da Penha, and entered Alemão on November 28, 2010 (Poirier 2012). Jessica, a tour guide and Alemão resident, recounted the first few days of this conflict:

When they came it was very violent. I was home for only half of it because I went to my Uncle’s house when I could. There were three days of conflict, and on the second day, my house was shot twice. One of the bullets almost hit my head. (p/c, 9 Oct 2013)

Approximately fifty people died, while the majority of those involved with criminal activities chose flight over fight (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013). Following the invasion, the military occupied Alemão for eighteen months before it was deemed safe enough to turn over to the newly trained UPP forces.

Because of the massive territory and geographic diversity of Complexo do Alemão, four separate UPP bases have been installed – each controls a section of the favela, and is named after the neighbourhood they patrol. Figure 2.3 depicts one of these bases, at the top of Palmeiras. Relative peace followed the initial inauguration of these units. After a few months, however, violence aimed at Alemão’s UPP became commonplace. In December 2012, a shootout between police and drug traffickers left two suspects and one member of the UPP dead (Willis 2012). In May 2013, shots were fired at an annual Peace Run, precipitating a series of events that left one trafficker dead, and Alemão under a two-day cartel-imposed curfew in retaliation (Lopez Conde 2013). On February 1, 2014, three cars were burnt in front of Alemão UPP stations.
Shootings had been reported for days prior, and Molotov cocktails were thrown at the UPP stations (de Paula 2014). On March 6, 2014, a UPP officer was shot and killed on a patrol in the Nova Brasília neighbourhood (Extra 2014). After this most recent death in Alemão, Rio Secretary of Security Beltrame suggested perhaps the favela needs a “reoccupation” and a change of tactics to combat these growing security threats (Mazzacaro 2014). A few days later, 30 members of BOPE (Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais, or Battalion of Special Police Operations), a military helicopter, and 100 more UPP officers arrived to reinforce security in Alemão (Parkin 2014). At the time of writing, shootings remain an all too frequent reality. But it is crucial to remember: in a community of 300,000 individuals, violence is confined to exchanges between UPP officers and the drug cartels. Most of the neighbourhoods, and 99% of the population, constitute vibrant, strong communities despite these incidences of violence. As Prouse (2014) emphasizes, “favelas are much more than this police violence. They are networks and circulations of people that are often working together… to mobilize resources, be they cultural, social, financial, or otherwise.”
Military police in Rio are Brazil’s most corrupt police force (Jones 2013), and there are many reports of UPP abuses of power. The most famous case is of Amarildo, the bricklayer who disappeared from Rocinha and was later found tortured and killed (Bowater 2013). After much protest and public backlash, ten UPP officers were charged with murder (BBC News 2013). The case was unprecedented in Rio. Amidst all these new security measures, Rio’s crime rate is on the rise (Rinaldi 2014), with exceptional growth in outlying areas. This trend suggests the drug gangs who have left favelas have simply relocated to new, unpacified regions. According to a July 2012 study (Rossi), gun violence in Complexo do Alemão decreased as much as 37% between 2010 and 2011. Gunshots can still be heard nightly, but it is unclear whether these are salvos (shots fired into the air at night by the drug cartels to remind the police of their presence (Gilsing 2013: 9)) or targeted shootings, as most incidents go unreported unless they involve a police death. In general, residents of Alemão seem to distrust the police, who “criminalize everyone” (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013), and prefer not to engage with them.

Amidst these waxing and waning tensions, other dimensions of Complexo do Alemão are transforming rapidly as well. Alemão has received a modern, extensive cable car system for tourists and residents (Byrne 2013; see photos, figures 2.4 and 2.5), become the first favela with a cinema (MacInnes 2012), and is the site of favela-led projects such as Barraco #55, seeking to transform the favela’s image through discursive production and international collaboration. These types of initiatives are suggestive of favela residents’ ambition and determination to challenge their communities’ stigma within Brazilian society and abroad. Pacification alone is not enough to challenge decades-old discrimination, hence the need for such projects to shift popular opinion as well.
Figure 2.4. A view of two teleférico cars passing above Alemão.

Figure 2.5. Inside one of the teleférico stations, a beautiful view of Rio.
The tourism industry in Complexo do Alemão is modest but extremely unique. As mentioned earlier, while most favelas’ tourists are predominantly Caucasian (with around two-thirds from Europe (Freire-Medeiros 2011: 26)), in Alemão, this is not the case. Because of the cable car, Salve Jorge, and the UPP presence, it is estimated more than half of Alemão’s tourists are from Brazil (de Lima 2013). This presents a unique opportunity for breaking down the discriminatory barriers that many favelados face.

But these new developments bring with them collateral effects. Many people resent the cable car and other new “advances” because they were not consulted about their needs. While many favelados’ level of mobility has changed, hundreds of homes were destroyed in the construction of the cable car stations and support frames. These removals have had “serious repercussions on residents’ health… [including] stroke, depression, hypertension, and even suicide” (Freitas 2014). As resident tour guide André told me,

The removals of the houses were imposed. They didn’t have any kind of cultural questions about it. They didn’t care who lived there, or what. No. Just get out. Like the 17th Century Brazil, when the Portuguese family would find a good house, and write PR (Príncipe Regente). But people said it meant Ponhase na Rua. Put yourself in the street. Because we are taking over. It’s the same now. Just like in the past, the military dictatorship. Nothing can stop them, because they are the law. (p/c, 2 Oct 2013)

Since the UPP have been installed, rents in Alemão have more than doubled (O Dia 2013), creating challenges for the high percentage of unemployed and underemployed residents. The formalization of services such as utility bills is another expensive, unforeseen consequence of pacification. Anecdotally, I was told the price of many staple foods in the favela grocery stores has doubled in recent years. Some scholars assess that post-pacification, favela residents are “unable to take advantage of skyrocketing [housing] prices,” and many have been “forced to sell to speculators,” instead of getting to take advantage of the “newly incorporated benefits of the state they had been long denied” (Lee & Beatriz Mian 2013).
Clearly, Complexo do Alemão is transforming at a remarkable pace. These transformations are felt not only by Alemão residents, but news of these changes are also exported to greater Brazil and globally through favela tourism. This has important implications for transforming the imaginative geographies of the favela.

2.2. Methods

In the fall of 2013, I arrived in Rio and took up residence in Complexo do Alemão in the midst of these major transitions. While Alemão already stood out as an intriguing case, the opportunity to work out of a local research and arts center fortunately decided my fate. I was accepted for a research residency at Barraco #55, and this unique opportunity allowed me to be hosted in the community, by community members, rather than stay at a less personal, for-profit hostel in a favela like Rocinha.

I chose to conduct my research through a mix of discourse analysis and qualitative personal interviews, in order to get a better sense of individuals’ reactions to pacification and tourism. Reading the Brazilian and international media coverage of pacification, I was shocked by the apparent absence of consultation with communities and their members. Though residents have their own varied platforms for discussion, many dominant platforms have left their side out of the debate. Looking further, I found articles on independent news websites written by favelados, raising this very issue, and others – for example, the building of the showy teleférico in Alemão before addressing basic needs of healthcare, education, and sanitation facilities (Viva Favela 2014). These representations are far from the optimistic images presented in most mass media coverage of Alemão’s new transportation spectacle, such as the World Bank’s article entitled “Brazilian Favela Boasts Top Education, Safe Transportation” (2013). Interviewing favelados in Alemão was a logical choice to approach my research questions directly, in great detail, while also addressing this imbalance.

I began this project aware of the inescapable neo-colonial implications that naturally result from a white middle-class Canadian conducting research in poor Brazilian communities, and I end it with even greater sensitivity to these dynamics. I acknowledge my privilege in every step of this project, including (but not limited to)
access to funding, Barraco #55’s generosity and support, and of course, for the trust of the residents who took the time to speak to me. I did not choose to research the favelas to “give a voice” to the residents of Alemão – their voices are louder and stronger than any outsider’s voice could ever be. Instead, my choice to research Rio’s favelas comes from a deep concern about increasing disparity and human rights abuses, a love for the country, and my Brazilian friends who have encouraged me every step of the way. Never in the month I was in Alemão did I receive anything less than enthusiastic encouragement for my research and presence in the community. Likely this says more about the Brazilian customs of welcoming and accommodation than it says about me, but it did help to assuage my uneasiness regarding my background.

I arrived at the tail end of Rio’s winter season on September 26, 2013 and stayed until October 22, 2013. Prior to arriving, I conducted discourse analysis involving media coverage (Brazilian and international news sources), the complex histories of Rio and favelas, theoretical research, and policy documentation regarding pacification. Through this, I felt I had a firm grasp on the context I was arriving at; within a few hours, I realized how limited (though necessary) this base of knowledge was.

An increase in gun violence and related conflict in the month before I left for Rio had me concerned about my personal safety – not only as an outsider, but a white, middle-class outsider who was sure to stand out like a sore thumb. Upon arrival, residents continually told me how glad they were that I was there, and tried to make sure I felt comfortable. After decades of living in a controlled, contested territory, all of the favelados I spoke with positively embraced their favelas’ newly opened doors. One resident told me never in her life had she met so many foreigners than after the pacification began. I was also told that being a white foreigner, I was likely one of the safest people there. Neither the UPP, the cartels, nor any of the residents wanted anything bad to happen to foreigners, as it would look bad for the police, and justify additional military intervention (which, in turn, would be “bad” for the cartels and residents as well).

The interview process required research ethics approval, and sampling, conducting, and transcribing. The Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board
approved my project on August 6, 2013. I decided before leaving Vancouver I would try
to interview as many people as I could in the following categories: 1) residents of
Complexo do Alemão; 2) NGO staff working in Alemão; 3) favela tour operators; 4) members of the UPP working in Alemão. After arriving and getting settled, it quickly
became clear that the tense relationship between the community and the pacification
police meant interviewing the UPP would likely compromise my relationship with
residents.

Residents and my hosts told me if I wanted to interview any officers of the UPP, it
would be better to talk to officers in another favela so as not to be seen as a
“sympathizer” by the community. As well, residents told me the UPP on the street were
not allowed to discuss matters of the pacification with me. Due to the local and sensitive
nature of my project, I decided to take a different route and contact individuals from
CORE (Coordenadoria de Recursos Especiais, or Coordination of Special Assets) or
BOPE, both of whom were involved with the initial invasion of Complexo do Alemão.
Though I was able to make contact with an individual from CORE that was willing to be
interviewed, his schedule was extremely busy and he was not available before I had to
leave Brazil. I have since lost contact. I sensed a bit of hesitation on his end, and thus it
is possible though he initially agreed to be interviewed, he may have purposefully
evaded my attempts to arrange a meeting.

While I was able to meet a few representatives from NGOs, I soon realized there
were more than 20 organizations working in Alemão, with extremely varied goals and
approaches. This, coupled with the fact that tourism and pacification were already
complex issues to try to get a sense of in a limited time frame, led me to scale back my
research and focus mainly on meeting and interviewing as many residents of Complexo
do Alemão as possible. My secondary focus was interviewing tour guides in the
community, and taking tours to get a sense of the information conveyed to visitors. I met
with five Alemão tour guides (four of whom lived in the favela), and interviewed four of
them. I went on and observed a range of tours: a four-hour teleférico/walking tour by
André (working for Visita Guiada), a two-hour walking tour given to 30 South American
student architects (most from Chile) interested in housing design and the teleférico, and
many informal tours from friends showing me various places around the community. I
also spent many days sitting at the small tourist market at the last station of the teleférico (Palmeiras), observing tourists and speaking with individuals running tourism-oriented stalls.

Establishing a presence for myself in the community was very important. Barraco #55’s small house is used extensively by the community for a host of purposes, such as RA meetings, musicians’ jams and recording, free yoga classes, and social events. In addition to these internal purposes, it also hosts researchers, artists, musicians, and tourists from outside of the community. This meant as soon as I arrived, I was interacting with at least five people a day, before even leaving the house. This, coupled with my chosen methods of personally interviewing residents and tour guides in confidential, one-on-one settings, provided a platform for honesty and trust that (in my opinion) is sometimes missing in larger-scale, more formal research.

Through living at Barraco #55, I utilized word-of-mouth networking to conduct eleven recorded semi-structured interviews with members of the community and tour guides, and many more informal conversations as well. My interviewees age from early-twenties to mid-fifties, the bulk of them in their late-twenties to early-forties. Their backgrounds are varied, but most have lived their whole lives in Complexo do Alemão, and all are deeply invested in the community’s future. Appendix A outlines a list of interviewees, and Appendix B includes sample interview questions (for residents and tour guides). I conducted all of my interviews either in Barraco #55 or at Palmeiras station (the tourist market). I used purposeful and snowball sampling methods due to my limited time and resources, as well as the sensitive nature of my research. Additionally, I brought along a formal script to recruit interviewees through opportunity sampling, but residents advised against its use, as such a formal approach would alienate myself from the community.

All interviews were strictly voluntary, and there was no cash incentive to participation. Most people I met were eager to share their knowledge and stories with me, albeit sometimes surprised I was interested in hearing them. All interviewees were assured of their privacy, and given the option to have their identities remain confidential. If they chose that option, they are referred to in this thesis under a pseudonym. All of my
interviewees are referred to by first names only, and all participants signed a consent form (translated to Portuguese) prior to being interviewed. Unfortunately, my Portuguese skills were not strong enough to facilitate interviews without translation, so I employed a local tour guide/freelance translator and a trilingual friend to trade off as my translators. Both translators signed confidentiality agreements prior to interviews, and actively interpreted throughout the interviews, which allowed me to ask for clarification or follow-up questions. The interviews spanned 30 to 90 minutes, and all were digitally recorded with permission, to ensure no information was missed.

Though I am immensely grateful for my translators’ assistance, the logistics of scheduling translation meant all interviews had to be planned ahead of time, which was sometimes difficult given their pre-existing schedules. The social realities of my case study presented particular challenges alongside its particular opportunities. Due to a variety of factors, which I speculate include reasons such as unreliable transportation, unpredictable traffic jams, and long working hours, many people with whom I interacted were hesitant to plan meetings ahead of time and preferred a more spontaneous approach. In addition, many people I met in Alemão did not consider it out of the ordinary to show up an hour late for meetings, if not more. Lastly, because of the language barrier and the need to establish myself in the community first, I wasn’t able to make many contacts (aside from my hosts) before arriving in Rio. While these obstacles mean I wasn’t able to interview as many people as I’d hoped, upon reflection, I am content with the range of people I was able to interview, and quality of data that results from these interactions.

After my month in Rio, I came home and transcribed my interviews. Next, I strengthened this interview data with secondary resources, including local and global media, academic research papers, policy documents, and books. These sources ground my interview data with contextual and theoretical backgrounds, to help to fill in the gaps of my primary research. I recognize the limitations of my small-scale approach, and do not intend my research to be an exhaustive study of Complexo do Alemão as a whole, nor used to make generalizations of any other favelas. Through exploring the processes of pacification, tourism, and transformation in Complexo do Alemão, my intent is for my research to contribute to the wider debates involving geographies of
occupation, social policy, and slum tourism, and hope it stimulates further discussion of these issues.
Chapter 3.

Pacification

The State of Rio de Janeiro employs 9,543 pacification police officers, divided into 39 bases in favelas scattered around the city of Rio (UPP 2014). The annual expenditure for this program is around $360 million US dollars (Lee 2014). While gains made by the pacification program are represented in reduced homicide statistics, as of August 4, 2014, crime rates in Complexo do Alemão have increased beyond pre-UPP levels. Attempted murder, in particular, has increased 250% in the first six months of 2014 compared to the same time frame in 2010. Aggravated assault is up almost 82%, while rape is up almost 67% compared to four years ago (Rogero 2014). Residents of Complexo do Alemão describe the UPP troops in their community as “murderous,” “abusive,” “brutal,” and “racist” (Froio 2014b), and the situation is “more tense than at any time since the UPP began” (Watts 2014). Parties disagree on the source of this escalating tension:

Police blame drug traffickers… Others say the main problem is that pacification has not been followed by improvements in social services and infrastructure despite promises from politicians. Adding to the tension are human rights violations by police, which add to the widely held impression in the favelas that they are no better – and often a lot worse – than the gangsters they replaced. (Watts 2014)

Still others point to the deep-seated tension between favelados and police that has developed through at least fifty years of violent treatment. While one critic of the program (Ashcroft 2014) agrees the pacification program has positive potential in theory, the UPP are “paying for the decades of neglect which preceded their existence.” In his eyes, it would be impossible for the “same police institution which killed 1,330 people in Rio in 2007 [to] suddenly, drastically, transform its philosophy and expect citizens to instantly accept this reincarnation” (Ashcroft 2014).
In 2012, 5,934 people went missing in the state of Rio – most were men from favelas (Oritz 2014). The violence and corruption for which the Brazilian police are notorious could not simply be forgotten with the beginning of the UPP program. Why, then, has this program been supported not only internationally, but also by most asfalto Brazilians? Decades of framing the favelas as criminal headquarters and blaming them for the city’s problems might have something to do with it. While the police are occasionally framed as violent but methodical, favelados are framed as even more violent and irrational. Drug traffic in the favelas is treated as an insurgency, a “cancer” hiding in plain sight, its very existence a threat to state security. The heavy-handed tactics of pacification, including military invasions with tanks and helicopters, disappearances of favelados, and drawing/pointing guns at residents during daily patrols (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2) can thus be justified as “collateral damage” in the struggle for cartel-free favelas. On these terms, pacification is a pre-emptive strike – one necessary and urgent in order for the city of Rio de Janeiro to survive.

Figure 3.1. UPP patrol in Alemão, early evening, guns drawn.
Figure 3.2. UPP patrols at night, guns in hand.
This chapter begins with an investigation of the range of theories that can help to make sense of pacification, including the historical criminalization of slums and their inhabitants (Davis 2006), pre-emptive measures for quelling urban insurgencies (Manwaring 2005; Sullivan & Bunker 2011), states’ monopolization on violence (Weber 1946; Benjamin 1996), and the creation of a state of exception (Agamben 2005).

Drawing on field research, I then examine the perception of pacification based on residents' lived experience in Complexo do Alemão. Finally, I look at the ways in which pacification exacerbates the stigmatization of favela residents as innately violent, and how institutions such as tourism in Alemão can create a space to challenge this rhetoric.

3.1. Monopolizing Violence

*Women shake their hips seductively and children dance in flip-flops to booming electronic music, while young men brandish pistols and the occasional assault rifle. It’s just another funk party in one of the lawless favelas on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. (Darlington 2014)*

The excerpt above begins a CNN article on the continuing presence of drug cartels in favelas, post-pacification. From these portrayals, it would appear nothing has changed. This “typical” scene is repeated constantly: it doesn’t matter where in Rio it occurred, because all favelas are “lawless,” even after the addition of thousands of police. According to these reports, residents follow their roles as outlined above, decided only by their gender and age. Almost anywhere else, this would be a tense, puzzling, and highly charged scene. In the favelas, the media presents it as a normal way to socialize and let off steam: “just another party.” On my flight to Rio to begin my field research, a friendly Brazilian flight attendant asked me where I was staying. When I told him I was going to conduct research in a favela, his face went white. “There’s nothing for you there,” he told me, and frantically scrawled his family’s phone numbers and address on a paper, “for when you need to get out of there.”

This myth of inherent criminality has perpetuated throughout decades in Rio, appears largely resolute despite changing conditions on the ground, and continues to dominate popular opinion (including that of the media, popular culture, the state, and even many academics). As Davis argues in *Planet of Slums*, the “categorical
criminalization of the urban poor is a self-fulfilling prophecy, guaranteed to shape a future of endless wars in the streets” (2006: 202). This has only become more relevant in post-pacification Rio. The examples above are glimpses into the universe of “demonizing rhetorics” that “construct epistemological walls” around favelas, disabling “any honest debate about the daily violence of economic exclusion” (Davis 2006: 202). These demonizing rhetorics do not only circulate in places like the media and the imaginations of many; they also inform policy, such as military strategy. Their claims about the criminality of slums like favelas contain implicit responsibilities to take action, thus strategies like pacification are justified beyond any doubt (other than why they waited so long to begin).

Framing residents of favelas as criminals excuses their deaths from being grievable. Butler describes precarity as a “politically-induced” condition where “certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death” (2009: 25). The lives of favela residents, surrounded by direct and indirect violence, are thus precarious. Being part of the precarity, however, does not lead to recognition and strength, but instead leads to the specific exploitation of targeted populations, of lives… cast as ‘destructible’ and ‘ungrievable.’ Such populations are ‘lose-able,’ or can be forfeited, precisely because they are framed as being already lost or forfeited; they are cast as threats to human life as we know it rather than as living populations in need of protection from illegitimate state violence. (Butler 2009: 31).

Thus, when these lives are lost, there is no tragedy to grieve. The loss of these populations, or violence towards them, is deemed necessary “to protect the lives of ‘the living’” (Butler 2009: 31). Given the vast majority of favela residents have no connection with criminality, this generalization is especially disconcerting.

Recently, a host of geopolitical scholars have analyzed the relationship between policing and cycles of urban violence in troubling ways. The discursive link between poverty and insurgency is used to justify pre-emptive violence against civilian populations. Manwaring writes of the “complex emergencies” that arise from conflict involving “criminal and terrorist actors who thrive among and within various host
countries” (2005: 4). When there is “no easily identified human foe to attack and defeat,” he argues, “battle space is everywhere, and includes everything and everyone” (2005: 4-5). Manwaring argues increasing poverty is a destabilizing cause of “social violence, criminal anarchy, illegal drug trafficking and organized crime, [and] insurgency” (2005: 5-6). The very existence of urban gangs (e.g. cartels in Rio), left unchecked, is thought to cause “the slow but sure destruction of the state, its associated government, and the society” (Manwaring 2005: 41). Further, in Sullivan and Bunker’s work on insurgency and “feral cities,” they refer to “illicit non-state actors” as a “form of societal cancer” (2011: 764). This “cancer” analogy is used to argue for the “need for combat and high intensity policing operations to stabilize cities falling into such darkness and despair,” (Sullivan & Bunker 2011: 764). Pacification is such a tactic, and it is clear how this line of thinking has proliferated in its support.

If, as Manwaring, Sullivan, and Bunker infer, poverty causes insurgency, then it follows that slums are criminal headquarters. This is not a new perspective on urban poverty. As Davis writes, “counterinsurgency-driven strateg[ies] of slum removal” began in 1967 Argentina, but have spread to prominence globally since (2006: 109). Since the 1970s, he argues, it has become “commonplace for governments everywhere to justify slum clearance as an indispensable means of fighting crime” (2006: 111). But often slums threaten the state “simply because they are invisible to state surveillance” (2006: 111).

This criminal rhetoric opens the door for strategies to ensure the eradication of criminality. Unfortunately, these tactics operate under “better safe than sorry” policies. All residents are guilty until proven innocent. This is not only a violation of human rights, but also has tangible effects on residents of favelas. Wacquant argues the militarization of favelas contributes to Brazil’s “centuries-old national tradition of control of the dispossessed by force” (2003: 199). If today, “it is ‘things’ which freely circulate, while the circulation of ‘persons’ is more and more controlled,” (Žižek 2008: 102), this is especially true in pacified favelas. UPP security checkpoints and roadblocks are a nightly occurrence in Alemão (see Figure 3.3). While these controls are usually justified by the claim that favelados are victims of the drug cartels’ rule, the residents I spoke to emphasized, overall, the relationship between cartel and residents was not stressful or
tense: “There was no tension with the drug dealers before. They just lived here,” (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013). The relationship between the UPP and the residents, however, is extremely tense.

Figure 3.3. Nightly Security Checkpoint in Alemão.

Insights from legal and social theory can shed light on the politics of pacification. As Weber writes in his 1919 essay, “Politics as Vocation,” the legitimacy of a modern state depends on its ability to “successfully claim the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory” (1946: 78). Violence that challenges that monopoly is a threat to the existence of the state, thus the state’s vital responsibility is to maintain it. In a similar vein, Kienscherf argues the state “legitimizes” itself through “the protection of its citizens from both internal and external violence” (2013: 1). This relationship is not static, however; each state’s monopoly on violence must be constantly renegotiated and reinforced by striking back against any internal and external threats.

Benjamin’s “Critique of Violence” is similarly important. He writes that violence per se is not a problem, but violence in the hands of individuals is seen as a “danger...
undermining the legal system” (1996: 238). Any violence outside of the law “threatens it not by the ends that it may pursue, but by its mere existence outside the law” (Benjamin 1996: 239) – hence, a disruption of a state’s monopoly on violence. If so, then the violent capacity of the drug cartels leads the state to wrest control of communities whose very existence is thought to threaten the state’s own existence. Militarism is the “universal use of violence as a means to the ends of the state,” (Benjamin 1996: 241) and in Rio, this means conquering territories that since their beginning have been left outside its jurisdiction. While the state formulated many strategies for favela eradication over the bulk of the 20th century, ultimately they all failed. The image of favelas as violent criminal headquarters used to legitimize/justify these tactics, however, remains in the forefront of media and policy. Some argue these failures are in fact necessary for the capitalist structure of Rio to continue: the city depends on (and has depended on, for decades) a steady supply of cheap, unskilled labour from poor residents living close to the city’s core: “Favelados are the reserve army of labour of Rio de Janeiro and presumably always will be” (Pino 1998: 36). Thus, a shift in strategy towards formal reintegration of favelas into Brazilian society has come at a huge cost in violent power struggles, to which the cartels retaliate. The brutal struggles over territory in Alemão show, as Žižek writes, “violence and counter-violence are caught up in a deadly vicious cycle, each generating the very forces it tries to combat” (2008: 80).

Kienscherf writes of the breakdown of clarity in the state’s responsibility for “security.” He argues that while “traditionally, there has been a clear dividing line between domestic public safety (provided by the police) and foreign defense (provided by the armed forces),... this dividing line has become rather fuzzy” (2013: 1). Today’s pacification program is evidence of these “fuzzy” lines. Public safety and foreign defense work hand in hand in the UPP, as cartels, though technically a “domestic threat,” are treated as insurgent enemies that justify both the military and the Special Forces (BOPE, CORE), in addition to police presence.

Agamben’s *State of Exception* suggests an understanding of the pacification program as an “extension of military authority’s wartime powers into the civil sphere” (2005: 5). Through years of criminalized portrayals, the situation in the favelas has been constructed as so dire, it would seem only direct military intervention could stand a
chance to counter the opposing force. By presenting the situation as “sudden danger,” this framing of “necessity carries a dispensation with it, for necessity is not subject to the law” (Agamben 2005: 25). Thus, Rio’s government, with support from security forces, and underlying dominant discourses, has created a “zone of indistinction” (Agamben 2005: 26) wherein the favela itself is produced as a threat to order, undermining the normal, “healthy” parts of the city, and thus subject to whatever means necessary to immediately correct this indiscretion.

3.2. Pacification in Practice

I feel very invaded by the pacification. It’s all military space now. We can’t occupy it anymore. We can’t work here, we can’t stand there...
(Paulo, p/c, 8 Oct 2013)

Pacification in Complexo do Alemão affects residents’ lives profoundly. Many parts of daily routines have changed since the UPP arrived, from the formalization of residents’ services and utilities, to their modes of transportation. Often pirated in the past, utilities such as water and electricity are now formalized and residents pay for what used to be free. The long-standing resident-organized transportation system in favelas has similarly been transformed: white Volkswagen vans called combis that run on set routes, picking up and dropping off residents along the way, are now subject to permits hinging on inspections, costly insurance, and flawless criminal records (O Globo 2014). The geography of many neighbourhoods has been reconstructed in tandem: newly constructed UPP bases take the place of houses and businesses, and ‘safe’ vs. ‘unsafe’ areas have shifted in location. While most residents I spoke to felt the pacification criminalizes residents for things out of their control – that their only “crime” is living in a favela (Froio 2014b) – there were a few positive themes repeated in interviews as well.

When asked of the benefits, most residents focused on the “opening up of opportunities” (Angelo, p/c, 9 Oct 2013) to meet people from other countries and other areas of Brazil. This includes tourists – “Now people are coming here, there is an income for people because of tourism” (Paulo, p/c, 8 Oct 2013) – but also researchers, NGO staff, and other groups of people that exchange knowledge and culture with local
communities. Some residents argued that this would be “possible without pacification” (Angelo, p/c, 9 Oct 2013) while others insisted that without pacification, “you guys [foreigners] wouldn’t be here” (Paulo, p/c, 8 Oct 2013). One explained to me that since she could not afford to travel, meeting people from other countries in her community was a way she could learn about the world (Leila, p/c, 21 Oct 2013). While the media focuses on increased security in the favelas, these benefits are rarely mentioned, let alone praised by residents.

A new study by sociologist Silvia Ramos, based on 2007 homicide rates in Rio, shows there were 7,398 fewer homicides than expected between 2008 and 2013 (Balocco 2014). The authors of the report credit pacification. Homicide rates in Rio are still considered ‘epidemic’ according to the World Health Organization, which outlines a maximum of 10 deaths per 100,000 population as a normal level (ibid). Rio’s is almost triple that, at 28 deaths per 100,000 (ibid). While the media tells of years of imprisonment of favelados by the cartels, and the UPP is hailed as unlocking their shackles, this was not a story I heard from Alemão residents. Rather, those I spoke to prioritized the benefits listed above, involving increased interaction with outsiders.

The lack of community consultation regarding pacification-related projects is a common complaint. While the media praises the teleférico cable car for increasing mobility in Alemão, residents stress they didn’t need it or ask for it. Hospitals and schools, they argue, are far more urgently needed, and many resent not being consulted on such massive infrastructural development.

Everything they do here is from their minds, they don’t ask us anything. They just think, ‘oh, maybe they want a skatepark’ and then there is a skatepark. They don’t consult people. They don’t study the history of the place, before pacification. They just do what they want. And often it isn’t very useful. (Angelo, p/c, 9 Oct 2013)

André told me the teleférico has transformed mobility for some residents, but not all. “There are still people who are afraid to go to where they don’t know, they don’t trust [the teleférico], they’re afraid” (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013). But this is changing: “The younger generations are making their older relatives go to the hospital in Bonsucesso. So then they have to use the teleférico” (ibid).
Some concerns regarding pacification are more serious. Angelo, an artist who lives in neighbouring Complexo da Penha but sells his paintings in Alemão, recounted being kidnapped by the UPP because he looked like he had money. They told him to “prove where his money came from” and to “document all his art” sales, which he was unable to do without time to gather his records. So the police took him.

They said they were taking me to a police office in a police car, but at the last minute they changed course, and took me to a place where no one could hear me. They asked me, ‘Do you really understand what is happening to you right now?’ If they killed me... I have tattoos – it would be on the news, it was next to the favela. No one would believe I was killed because of their corruption. So I had to give them money. That is why I don’t feel secure here. The police have too much discretion to do what they want. They are cops, and I am nothing. (Angelo, p/c, 9 Oct 2013)

Afterward, Angelo told others about his experience, and is still afraid of “revenge” for “denouncing the police for what they did” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013). Given the recent increase in disappearances in Rio, with many pointing fingers at the UPP, these fears are legitimate (Brooks 2013). Paulo told me that since the UPP troops are intentionally rotated, they never get to know the community or its unique history and dynamics. He explained:

Before, even though there were drug dealers, they knew us, and respected us. Now, we have good police and bad police – and they change all the time so they don’t know me, and don’t respect me, and I don’t feel safe. There are still gunshots. We don’t trust the pacification. I’ve lived here for forty years and I used to know everyone that lived here, but now our neighbourhood is disconnected. (p/c, 8 Oct 2013)

Paulo’s feelings were echoed in other residents’ interviews. André, a tour guide and resident of Alemão, told me the police sometimes get frustrated when they can’t find their “targets” and “shoot energy transformers, to make people go without power” (p/c, 2 Oct 2013). Residents write that UPP police consistently stop and frisk “children, who have no way of being suspects,” and yell and curse at residents in populated areas to embarrass and humiliate them (Froio 2014a). Figure 3.4 depicts a standard daily patrol, during which this sort of activity can occur. The UPP’s unquestioned discretion is a
common criticism. As Benjamin wrote, police violence may exist “for legal ends,” but carries with it the “authority to decide these ends itself within wide limits” (1996: 242).

Figure 3.4. UPP Daily Patrol in Alemão.

These dynamics explain residents’ lack of faith in the pacification campaign, but there are other contributing factors. One is the lack of follow-through on programs that are supposed to accompany the police presence. For example, the UPP Social, a branch of the UPP responsible for an umbrella of projects from education to jiu jitsu lessons (UPP Social 2013), established free wireless internet in Complexo do Alemão, but it did not work during the month I was there (I was told it has never functioned properly). Paulo told me the UPP Social makes plans and promises, but nothing is completed.

Us people in the community are doing the social work ourselves... It’s only people from the Residents’ Association that are making things happen... The Residents’ Association functions as the state for us. It’s the light company, and the firefighters. (p/c, 8 Oct 2013).
Paulo is also a part of the RA of Palmeiras, which is the last hill of Complexo do Alemão. He is the director of sports for children and adults. Many other residents also contribute to the volunteer-run RAs, which are responsible for many functions in the community.

The lack of faith in the permanence and follow-through of the UPP has important implications for its success. Because people’s behaviour depends on their expectations of the future (which are formed through belief systems, knowledge, and routine (March & Olsen 1989: 22)), the Rio government’s historical lack of credibility is a critical flaw. In Rio, the lead up to every election sees politicians initiating projects and making promises, but after elections, most of these projects fall by the wayside. Residents often lump pacification into this category. Because the program is supposed to last at least 15-20 years, its success depends on its continuation and stability, but residents can hardly be expected to trust these promises. One resident, Felipe, pointed to the "methods they are applying, the buildings they are constructing, and even the approach of the police" as indicators that the pacification is temporary and unsustainable (p/c, 20 Oct 2013). As Wainwright writes, successful counterinsurgency strategy requires an “absolute unity of effort across military and nonmilitary, state and civilian lines. The role of a civilian is to support the military” (2013: 44). When civilians are not only critical of the military, but also actively suppressed and criminalized through an occupation, this strategy’s success seems even less likely, long term.

In light of these criticisms, residents of Complexo do Alemão came together in March 2014 to compose a manifesto, pleading for a change in tactics, and ultimately, for peace. A joint effort between a handful of NGOs, with widespread community participation, the manifesto is entitled “We want to be happy and walk freely in the favela where we were born” (Livingstone 2014). The authors demand the demilitarization of their neighbourhoods, basic sanitation and schools, and more dialogue “between favela residents and the State’s public security” occupying their neighbourhoods. According to residents, the militarization of favelas is not “pacifying” them, but is instead leading to more conflict: distrust of the police by residents, and reciprocal violence by the cartels. “A policy for peace is not built with one foot in the door, freely assaulting residents. Peace is not built with a caveirão (tank)” (ibid).
In July 2014, over the course of fifteen days, nineteen people were injured by stray bullets and three people were killed in conflicts between police and drug traffickers in Alemão (Froio 2014b). Residents’ outrage over the pacification program has intensified, causing many to organize a social media protest (because “they don’t feel safe enough to protest on the streets” (Froio 2014b)). Using the hashtag #SOSComplexoDoAlemão, thousands voiced their dismay with the police presence on Twitter and Facebook. They say they “felt safer four years ago, before pacification, and that gun violence is much worse now” (Froio 2014b). One resident wrote, “We’ve been a stage for soap operas, documentaries, now we are the stage of a war where the victims are innocent” (Froio 2014b). Here, the historical relationship between the state and favelas is clear: “used for the rich to profit, but forgotten when help is needed” (Froio 2014b). An unnamed resident stressed they “felt safer before because there were warnings when the police came into the favela so [they] knew when to hide. Now, [shootouts] happen unannounced” (Froio 2014a). And, while these shootouts are threatening in their own right, residents fear their repercussions more: their existence “give[s] police more leeway to kill people” (Kudialis 2014). Black youth are disproportionally targeted; they are 146% more likely to be victims of violent crime than white citizens (Kudialis 2014). The validity of these statistics is consistently demonstrated in Alemão: 21-year old Jorge Ruan Vianna, a waiter with no known ties to cartels, was shot by UPP police on August 5, 2014.

Recently, a resident wrote an article for Rio On Watch, describing the current state of affairs in Alemão:

The State has failed overwhelmingly in its mission to bring peace. It filled the favela with police, more and more police, and, with no evidence that the situation was improving, brought even more police. The true face of “pacification” began to show: this police, though dressed in a “new uniform,” was still the same old police. Just like the old police, the same habits blossomed. As a consequence of installing under-prepared police to confront a giant, violations intensified… As every action leads to a reaction, frequent shoot-outs became a daily occurrence once again, and indicate an unprecedented political dispute without limits. (Paz 2014)

This was the same basic argument that most residents repeated to me in different forms when I was in Alemão, though unfortunately, the situation has intensified
much more since my field work. The grieving mother of a shooting victim asks, “I want to know how a pacifying unit can be so violent. We want peace!” (Froio 2014b). State officials have consistently responded to these violent incidences with reinforcements of police troops, and bringing in special forces such as BOPE. Instead of questioning their tactics or looking into the reasons for escalating violence, the state continues to fight fire with fire.

3.3. From Pacification to Tourism

As Benjamin and Agamben suggest, the state of exception has increasingly become the rule in modern governance (Agamben 2005: 6). Thus, constructing violence in favelas as dire, framing all residents as criminals, and establishing pacification as “necessary” and urgent not only excuses the state’s responsibility to treat fairly its population, but also expedites these theories to the forefront of policy. Violence in the favelas is nothing new, and has been largely ignored by Rio’s politicians and security forces for decades. Yet this shift in policy frames violence as an immediate and sudden danger, requiring urgent militaristic intervention. Demonizing all favela residents as criminals transforms the situation from a military occupation of slums to a war against cancerous urban insurgencies that must be defeated if the state intends to survive.

While violence is clearly still an urgent problem in Complexo do Alemão, the media covering these shootouts only focuses on the cartels’ role, never the role of the police. Continuing violence reinforces the idea that pacification is necessary, and pacification reinforces the idea that these neighbourhoods are violent. Violence is depicted as a fundamental characteristic of the community, one the police must dismantle, and never something in which they play an active part. Media reports of violence in favelas attribute it to all residents, and Brazilian newspapers publish photos of confiscated drugs, weapons, and supposed criminals daily for the whole country to witness and applaud. As Larkin writes, the “image of the chaotic favela is absolutely essential to justifying and framing police action and legitimating the state,” thus it is the responsibility of the police to reinforce this image to, in turn, reinforce their own legitimacy (2013: 570). In the Manifesto for Peace, Alemão residents denounced the media for their part in this, citing Extra newspaper’s front page on March 16, 2014 as
exemplary. The newspaper claimed residents took “to the streets to protest under the orders of drug traffickers,” and received “money for doing so” (Livingstone 2014). Residents responded: “Once again, the mainstream media has played its role in the criminalization of social movements and of the favela” (Livingstone 2014).

The favelas’ criminalized imaginative geographies continue to dominate the discursive landscape. They “legitimate a vocabulary [and] a universe of representative discourse” (Said 1978: 71) about what a favela is, and what types of people live there. Pacification and associated media coverage create “spaces of constructed (in)visibility” (Gregory *et al.* 2009: 371). At the same time, tourism is creating a space for imaginative counter-geographies. These are “deliberate attempts to displace, subvert, [and] contest imaginative geographies installed by dominant regimes of power” (Gregory *et al.* 2009: 371). These counter-geographies are produced from local tour guides, actively represented by these negative dominant discourses, and “seek to give voice and vision to their subjects and to undo the separations between our space and their space” (Gregory *et al.* 2009: 371). Favela tourism can provide a space for reshaping dominant discourses, and transforming the meaning of favela on an international scale.
Chapter 4.

Favela Tourism

[Us tour guides] want to show everyone that Alemão is not like people think (the prejudices). They think the traffic rules everything you do because you live in a favela – you wake up to the sound of guns, and if you buy some kitchen gas, you have to pay off the cartel. (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013)

At the top of Palmeiras station (or palm trees, in English), the view includes most of Complexo do Alemão, Rio’s famous Pão de Açúcar (or Sugarloaf) and Corcovado Mountains, Guanabara Bay, and downtown’s distant skyscrapers (Figure 4.1 depicts some of this panoramic view). On most days, you can see it all at once: mountains, sea, and favelas overlapping with the asfalto. The last stop on Alemão’s teleférico, Palmeiras has become the locus of tourism in Alemão. Here, one can find panoramic scenery and a market selling souvenirs, artisan products, t-shirts, and food (one stand, selling Complexo do Alemão watches, jewellery, and dioramas, is pictured in Figure 4.2). Music is often blaring, a competition between different restaurants and stands, and friendly dogs wait patiently for scraps of food. The stalls are organized and rented out by the Palmeiras Residents’ Association. Next to this market looms one of Alemão’s four UPP stations (as shown earlier, in Figure 2.3), thus the market’s food retailers are frequently serving pacification police alongside tourists and locals. It is a mixing place, attracting a diverse cross-section of residents and visitors.
Figure 4.1. Melisa at Palmeiras Station

Figure 4.2. Typical tourist souvenir stand at Palmeiras.
During my fieldwork in Fall 2013, the tourism landscape of Complexo do Alemão centered around a company called Visit a Guiada that ran guided cable car tours and walking tours, a few main local companies/operators, and some external operators (small scale, including taxi drivers from the South Zone). Tourism infrastructure is largely limited to the teleférico and the Palmeiras market. The level of formal organization is small, especially compared to the tourism industry in some South Zone favelas like Rocinha. But while organized tourism in Alemão is still developing, it brings with it considerable opportunities.

Considering the contested history of Complexo do Alemão, and favelas in general, it may seem like a surprising setting for a tourism industry. But tourism here relies on these contested histories, including violent conflict and the drug trade, alongside peoples’ curiosity of witnessing these unique communities. Together, these issues have led to the proliferation of favela tourism (and even slum tourism, more broadly). As Urry writes, tourism is often present in “what would have been thought of as the unlikeliest of places” (2001: 2). Tourism involves an anticipation of the extreme “other,” built through film, media, and journalism, which constructs and reinforces the tourist gaze (Urry 2001: 3). Gazing, as Urry and Larsen write,

refers to the ‘discursive determinations’ of socially constructed seeing… Just like language, one’s eyes are socio-culturally framed and there are various ‘ways of seeing’… Gazing at particular sights is conditioned by personal experiences and memories and framed by rules and styles, as well as by circulating images and texts of this and other places. (2011: 1-2)

But as many scholars point out, “there is no single tourist gaze” (Urry & Larsen 2011: 2). Gazes can be active or passive, demonizing or praising, and have significant effects on the targets of this gaze – residents of favelas, in this research (Kingsbury 2011: 661). Tourism is attracted to places’ “associated images of nature, nation, colonialism, sacrifice, community, [or] heritage,” and many of these themes are central to the favela’s imaginative geographies (Urry 2001: 2). These imaginative geographies create and shape the tourist gaze. The 2002 film City of God’s “monstrously graphic detail” (Harvey 2012: 100) of the drug-related violence in the favelas is often cited as a
catalyst for international interest in the favelas, but while it may have contributed to more recent popularity, favela tourism began long before that.

This chapter begins with a brief history of slum tourism (situated in a broader context of Global South tourism), and tourism in favelas in particular. From there, it looks at the ways in which the favela is produced and consumed, by guides, tourists, and residents. Specifically, it focuses on the branding of creativity, and culture-centered tours. Next, this chapter examines the unique tourism landscape in Complexo do Alemão, and its similarly distinctive benefits that it brings to residents. First, tourism has an important role to play in shifting the imaginative geography of the favela, both for Brazilians and international visitors, through regaining control of the favela’s image. Second, tourism functions as a “shield” in Alemão. The presence of outsiders is a mediating force in the community, one that forces accountability for the “two powers” (the UPP and the cartel). The last benefit of tourism I discuss is that of residents reclaiming their rights to what many feel is occupied space, through controlling some aspects of who enters the community and the way Alemão is framed. Finally, I speak to some of the barriers favela tourism faces in Alemão, before moving onto the final chapter to analyze the interactions between pacification and tourism.

4.1. Power, Production, and Globalization

As Mowforth and Munt write, “tourism is one of the principal ways through which our ‘world-views’ are shaped” (2009: 6). Tourism is lauded as “the largest single industry” worldwide (Mowforth & Munt 2009: 13), and international tourism is growing faster in the Global South (4.8% average between 2005-2013) than the Global North (3.0% during the same time frame) (UNWTO 2014). South America’s international tourism arrivals, in particular, had an average annual growth rate of 5.2% between 2005-2013, which is significantly higher than the global average of 3.8% (UNWTO 2014). The majority of countries in the Global South receive more tourists than they send globally (Mowforth & Munt 2009: 27), thus, tourist migration flows from the Global North to the Global South are “a reminder of the global map of power” (Mowforth & Munt 2009: 16).
Global international tourism incorporates a wide variety of tourism types, all the way from “leisure” on one end of the spectrum to “dark” on the other. Dark tourism involves tours to sites associated with “death and disaster” or human suffering (Foley and Lennon 1996: 198). Due to discourses of poverty and violence, some scholars consider slum tourism a part of dark tourism. However, while some slums are associated with suffering and violence, tourism in slums is fundamentally distinctive: it “provides a powerful touristic experience that embodies the triumph of the human spirit over adversity, of hope against the odds” (Freire-Medeiros 2013: 168) which is not present in dark tourism sites such as Chernobyl. A simplistic labelling of favela tourism as ‘dark’ empties the landscape of all but poverty and fear, and ignores the rich and varied touristic draws, from fine arts and music to community strength and resilience. There are also interconnections between slum tourism and cultural tourism (which focuses on the “lifestyles, values, beliefs, and customs” of residents (Kingsbury 2005: 116)); however, this type of tourism does not emphasize the dimensions of power, poverty, and resistance that are central struggles for many slums today – especially favelas. As Freire-Medeiros writes, “‘social tours’ sell participation and authenticity,” and there are clear overlaps with various tours available in slums (2009: 582). But slum tourism doesn’t fit neatly within any one of these classifications, thus it has emerged as its own discipline, growing quickly in tandem with the global industry itself.

Slum tourism has a long, rich history, with its roots in 16th Century London (Seaton 2012: 22). Today, slum tourists “significantly shape the image of slums in the Global South through their photos, films, and reports, contributing to the discursive production of the slum” (Steinbrink et al. 2012: 4). The first “slummers,” in fact, were not there for leisure; they were “journalists in search of a good story, academics looking for an interesting research field, and social reformers, political activists, and ‘helpers’” (Steinbrink et al. 2012: 4). These reasons continue to explain a large part of outsider presence in favelas, and both historically and today have played a significant role in tourism development. Photos, writing, and films produced by these “professional slummers” have also contributed to “the discursive production of the slum as an attraction” (Steinbrink et al. 2012: 4). Slum tourism exists in much of the Global South, with particular prominence in cities in South Africa, Brazil, and India. The remainder of
this section will discuss how slum tourism reached the favelas of Rio, and posture theories to help explain its more recent growth, especially in Complexo do Alemão.

In Brazil, tourism reached the favelas in 1992, when “political tourists” in town for the Rio Summit demanded to know more about the favelas (Freire-Medeiros 2009). When tour operators began to take participants into Rocinha, “the favela started travelling” (Frenzel 2012: 52). While Rocinha’s tourism industry has grown steadily since then, in recent years other favelas have begun to offer their own tours. Many residents of Complexo do Alemão note the pacification campaign’s importance in facilitating this growth. Jessica, a resident and tour guide in Alemão, explained:

Tourism is here because of the police. But the tourists think that the police are a good thing. Tourism is a way to show visitors that [pacification] isn’t [a good thing]. It is an alarm, here to prove to [tourists] that the favela is not just poor people buying, selling, and using drugs. We are just families, living in a poor place, trying to develop. (p/c, 9 Oct 2013).

Jessica’s comments raise a few key points. Alemão tourism in many ways depends on the pacification program, but at the same time, it helps to inform the tourists about the reality of favelas and their residents. Residents note that there was far less interest in touring Alemão prior to the pacification project. The violent and dangerous stigma simply trumped most people’s curiosity in visiting. While the UPP program boasts new levels of security in favelas, it does so at the expense of the residents. These claims are based on the police presence, and associated ability to combat violent crime – which only furthers the criminalization and stigmatization residents of these communities have experienced for decades. However, while many tourists feel the existence of the UPP makes their visit safe, when they arrive, locals hope they will see the neighbourhoods were already safe, normal communities – regardless of the police presence. Tourism helps contradict the image the UPP’s presence perpetuates: that these neighbourhoods are teeming with criminals, and thus require constant and heavy military/police control. During a locally-guided walking tour, tourists can observe children playing together in the street (Figures 4.3 and 4.4), shopkeepers greeting every passerby, and people working in public spaces. If tourists observe weapons, they belong to the police, not residents. In combination with information provided by their
resident guides, they may see that the police are often a source of violence, and not just a solution to pre-existing forms of it. They may see for themselves that some favela residents live in four-story finished homes with pools on the roofs, to help dispel myths of absolute poverty. Through this, they may see for themselves that these communities are safe, resilient, diverse, and productive, and take that information out of the favela with them.

Figure 4.3. Boys play outside a café.

Figure 4.4. Boys get kites ready to fly off the hillside.

These insights and more can be gained on tours of Alemão, but the first struggle is to get tourists to go there. Cleber, a tour operator in Alemão, spoke of the barriers to bringing tourists to the community. Alemão is in the North Zone, far from touristy areas and the beaches of the South Zone. It is also located in “the heart of the biggest criminal faction in Brazil,” and most residents don’t “have any experience or contact with tourism” (Cleber, p/c, 14 Oct 2013) since it is so new to the area. It is uncommon for residents to speak English or other languages other than the occasional Spanish, and unlikely that most international tourists speak Portuguese. Given these obstacles, and the area’s negative stigma, the slow pace of tourism development makes sense. Two main factors, the teleférico and the telenovela Salve Jorge, have been key to the acceleration of tourism in Alemão. In addition, the broader production of the favela as the locus of art and culture helps draw international tourists.
Increasingly in our globalized world, places are produced and consumed “omnivorous[ly]” (Urry 2001: 2). The production and consumption of the favela involves the marketing of culture (e.g. shared history, community bonds, public celebrations, and sports), creativity (e.g. expressive arts such as painting, music, and dance), and energy (e.g. extremely dense, busy neighbourhoods, with a fast pace of life). Through tourism, favelas are marketed as ‘events,’ as opposed to ‘spaces’ (Sheller & Urry 2004: 158). Tours (and associated advertisements) focus more on musical performances, art exhibits, sporting games, and dance parties, rather than the spaces that hold these events themselves. These new dynamics are “shifting mental maps that lie outside conventional urban imaginaries” about what it means to live in a favela (Sheller & Urry 2004: 165). This is done through the actions and initiatives of favela inhabitants and tour operators, organizing and promoting these events, but also through tourists’ communications of their experiences post-visit.

Many favelas today are “negotiating their legitimacy and inclusion as urban stakeholders through a powerful branding” of arts and culture (Russo 2012: 175). This involves the adoption of new discourses, which promote the significance (and consumption) of favela-produced art, music, media, and culture, and exporting these products and ideas globally (ibid). Music such as samba, parties/dances such as baile funk, and creative community engagement projects are now ‘exported’ to the mainstream through channels such as the internet. Other exports include “the language of street-slang, fashion, [and] craftwork” (Williams 2008: 493). The internet plays an important role in these creative processes: in many favelas, most residents have access to the internet, which has provided a voice for inhabitants to communicate their own experiences of “favelas” to the geographical imaginary. Instead of being limited to local conversations, favelas can, through the internet, “legitimize themselves through [their] success and global production” (Russo 2012: 180-181).

Favelas are “increasingly seen as a cultural asset,” and tours are “promoted as a source of development and income” for the slums of Rio (Frenzel 2012: 53). People refer to favelas as “cultural incubators,” with some pointing to the high use of public space, a tolerance for noisy streets, and do-it-yourself approaches as possible explanations (Bonnisseau 2014). Most hours of the day, speakers on telephone poles
blast music, news, and even church sermons into the streets of Alemão. Windows are left open, dogs bark constantly, people yell, children play, and stereos and televisions compete for valuable ear space. Noise is highly tolerated and even encouraged in many cases. As many forms of art also have low barriers to participation, in this context it perhaps makes sense that favelas have high concentrations of artistic output. Most cultural activists in favelas also agree that, after decades of being spoken for and condemned by the media and politicians, residents of “favelas yearn to find means of expression,” (Bonnisseur 2014). Residents are eager to tell their own stories, and to use fine art and music as platforms for this expression. Flyers, brochures, and posters in tourist hotels and hostels encourage overnight stays in favelas for “parties, Brazilian funk music, and Favela hype” (Rolfes 2010: 435). Most tour companies emphasize authenticity, originality, and sustainability, and many also make reference to pacification, as part of their safety encouragement.

The vast majority of tours in favelas include visits to stands where locals sell crafts, art, and/or music. Creative products such as these serve to connect favelas to tourism and vice versa, leading to further integration with broader Brazilian society. Some even claim this exchange of goods will lead to increased “inclusion and emancipation” for residents (Russo 2012: 175). Culture has become the primary focus for many favelas wishing to change their reputations in Brazil and globally. These new discourses “invent, produce, market and circulate” new, altered, or transformed places “and their corresponding visual images” (Urry 2001: 2). Harvey notes the potential for processes of globalization to help “local initiatives percolate upwards to a global scale and vice versa” (2012: 101). As tourism is inherently linked with globalization, these local initiatives can also help in the rewriting of imaginative geographies on a larger scale. Thus facilitated by globalization, favela-led initiatives have the capacity to reach a much larger audience – and include a wider diversity of voices – to reflect more accurately the reality of life in the favelas.
4.2. Touring Complexo do Alemão

None of the favelas in the South Zone offer what we have here, in terms of different kinds of tourism. Because all favelas are unique: physically, logistically, and structurally. (Cleber, p/c, 14 Oct 2013)

Brazil’s President Dilma Rousseff was present on the opening day of the Complexo do Alemão teleférico in July 2010, stating after pacification, and infrastructure like the gondola, “the area has every potential to become a tourist spot” (Maresch 2011). The first in all of Brazil, this cable car system is especially momentous precisely because of where it was built, and is evidence of a larger reshaping of the favela. As Rousseff said at the opening ceremony: “Part of the Brazilian population was doomed to abandonment, but now we are spending our resources on those most in need” (Maresch 2011). Critics refer to the “long list of infrastructure and other necessary projects in the 1,000-plus favelas of Rio” (Landesman 2012) that have yet to be built, but the developing tourism industry nevertheless relies heavily on the teleférico. One tourism company running tours in Alemão, Rio 40 GrausTurismo, urges potential tourists to experience the slums, to see “the scene of a turned page in the history of Rio de Janeiro” (n.d., emphasis mine).

Complexo do Alemão’s new cinema has also been important landmark for curious tourists. Though most people wouldn’t blink an eye at the addition of something so common in western culture, it is another first for a Brazilian favela. An estimated 91% of patrons had never been to a cinema at all before the CineCarioca Nova Brasilia opened its doors (MacInnes 2012). But the effects of the theatre reached further than this: shortly after it opened, an audio/visual/digital school opened, as interest and demand in film grew. The square surrounding the cinema was revitalized as public space, new bars and restaurants have opened nearby, and a football field has opened next door (MacInnes 2012). These additions bring a sense of stability that has been absent for decades in favelas, and is felt both within and outside the favela. The cinema, as a catalyst for these subsequent shifts, has added to the rebranding of culture in the favelas, through many inhabitants’ newfound interest in film and the associated school.
In a similar vein, the *Salve Jorge* telenovela has been a large draw for tourism. The show’s plot surrounded a single mother living in Alemão who fell in love with a Brazilian military officer, part of the pacification campaign. Their love is fraught with obstacles, and Alemão provides the perfect setting for duplicities like love and violence, or security and danger. The show ran from October 2012 to May 2013, and captured the focus of many Brazilians – both inside the favela and throughout the *asfalto* (Chao 2012). Since the show was not only set in Alemão but also filmed throughout the favela, many fans of the show (especially Brazilians) have taken tours to Alemão to see how the reality compares.

Cultural events, *Salve Jorge*, the *teleférico*, and Alemão’s cinema all contribute to tourism draws, but it is challenging to make distinctions between them as most tourists have more than one interest for tours. Similarly, because the tourism industry in Alemão is still growing, and many tourists go without guides, it is difficult to find reliable statistics about the number and origin of tourists. *Teleférico* ticket statistics give some indication. Since the cable car is free for residents twice a day, but 5 Reais each way for non-Rio residents (or those who have not yet applied for a resident card) — which is quite expensive for daily use — it can be assumed most ticket purchasers are visitors (international or Brazilian). As of May 2013, SuperVia, the company that operates the *teleférico*, estimated the daily use as 12,000 people (about 50% of capacity). On weekends, 60% of users were buying the more expensive 5 Reais tickets for single rides, but on weekdays this drops to about 30% (de Lima 2013). The figures must be considered with care, however. Not all residents have or regularly buy the cards that allow the discounted rate, thus they may end up having to spend 5 Reais for the trip. Still, the numbers show Complexo do Alemão has become a significant tourist destination in Rio. Participant observation in the first and last stop of the cable car as well as conversations with residents throughout my field research in October 2013 pointed to a strong majority of tourists from Brazil over other places. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 illustrate a tour group of predominantly Chilean architecture students guided through Alemão by my hosts. Infrastructurally, Alemão is quite unprepared for large tour groups. The streets are narrow, often with parked cars taking up half the width, and the sidewalks (if any) are cramped. Yet as long as tourists were respectful and kept to the side when residents drive by, no one seemed bothered by their presence.
Figure 4.5. Chilean tour group walking through Alemão.

Figure 4.6. Chilean tour group observing the teleférico.
In this section, I have provided an overview of the dynamics contributing to the growth of favela tourism in Alemão, and set the stage of the tourism landscape. The remainder of the chapter will examine the unique benefits and barriers involved with Complexo do Alemão’s tourism industry.

4.3. Tourism as a Shield

Us residents don’t find [tourism] negative. We even sometimes open the doors to our houses to let people see how we live. (Paulo, p/c, 8 Oct 2013)

Tourists who enter Complexo do Alemão can get some sense of the reality of life there, (re)educate themselves about the meaning of the favela, and share this knowledge with their peers post-tour. As André, a tour guide, told me, tourists want to “learn from the inhabitants. They want to know the things that they won’t see in the news,” like whether or not the “police are violent, the girls are hot, which NGOs care about children, where the libraries are...” (p/c, 2 Oct 2013). These are all examples of real questions, based on popular portrayals of favelas, that tourists ask guides. In short, tourists visit Rio’s favelas eager to learn the real story of favelas, to compare it to the popular discourse, and usually arrive open to counter-narratives. This is an extremely valuable tool in shifting the imaginative geographies of favelas. Felipe, an Alemão resident, explained the media wants to remain in control of favelas’ image, thus they don’t want tourism to develop, because “once everyone goes into the favelas, they will see that it’s different and they will begin to change this image. Then [the media] would lose their power” (p/c, 20 Oct 2013).

Nearly all of the guides I spoke to prioritized breaking down of favelas’ stigma as the reason for their participation in tourism. Jessica told me she became involved to “show the other side of the coin...[and] to break the prejudices about the favela” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013). The tourism school Jessica attended was for Alemão residents only, to ensure the educational focus of the tours would be accurate and not sensationalist (as tends to happen with outsiders). Angelo, an artist, told me tourism gives him “more of an opportunity to show [his] work, which is sometimes critical of the corruption of
pacification” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013). Ellen is a resident whose local organization links internal and external projects to bring about meaningful exchanges of art and culture. She stressed the importance of “changing the image people have” about Complexo do Alemão (p/c, 20 Oct 2013). This notion was always talked about alongside its capacity to self-replicate, “to echo” these new discourses through the participants’ networks (ibid). Esteban, who works at the tourist market at Palmeiras, told me he meets tourists from “everywhere… every country comes here” (p/c, 8 Oct 2013). After their visits, he explained, these global tourists take their newly acquired “knowledge and experiences to their own countries” (Esteban, p/c, 8 Oct 2013).

Cleber runs a tourism company called Turismo No Alemão (Tourism in Alemão). Since the tourism in Alemão is quite sporadic, he employs many community members as part-time guides (while they hold other jobs the rest of the time). His guides wear matching red shirts, which have become quite iconic in the community and are also sold at the Palmeiras tourist market. Cleber told me his dream is for “tourists to become [the community’s] voice… they will listen to us, they will be our shield” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). This is a crucial, and powerful, dynamic in the local development of tourism. There is a level of forced accountability with tourism that can otherwise be absent in the pacification era. Tourists commonly take photos, speak with media, post blogs, and otherwise communicate their experiences. If they witness corruption or abuses of power by the police, they might publicize it. Tourism thus becomes a “shield.” Since many residents feel caught between the “two powers” – the UPP and the cartel(s) – they appreciate the way in which tourism imposes an accountability both sides must respect. While residents publicize the abuses and crimes they witness in their own ways, due to the long-standing criminalization and stigmas the residents face, the same actions coming from an impartial outsider have much different implications. Felipe noted the possibility that tourism might transform “the community for the good, or in a negative way,” and stressed it was too soon to make a judgment either way:

In the past, the confrontations between the police and traffic were terribly violent, and the community was always caught in between. We need to find a way for the conflict to stop. Tourism might be a way to stop this. (p/c, 20 Oct 2013)
In short, violence in the community makes the UPP appear both vulnerable and failing, and at the same time justifies increased security (or backup from BOPE). This, in turn, has negative consequences for both the UPP and the cartel(s) present in Alemão.

The final important benefit deriving from favela tourism in Alemão relates to reclaiming the right to their communities, as many view the pacification as an occupation. Most residents I spoke to feel their communities were invaded and taken over by UPP/BOPE forces. Their daily experience is military occupation. While many outside the favelas see this as a dispute over territory between the cartels and the police, many favelados feel their own right to the community is gone too. In other words, since the majority of residents here have absolutely nothing to do with the drug trade, they did not feel like their community belonged to the cartels before pacification. But now, post-pacification, they feel their communities are no longer theirs to control. Most residents involved in favela tourism in Alemão are not primarily interested in “capitalizing” on their communities’ newfound “safety” due to the pacification, but rather, many see tourism as a way of reclaiming their rights to their own communities. In Alemão, UPP officers patrol the streets at all hours of the day and night with their guns drawn. Tourists can experience (however briefly) the criminalizing tactics the UPP employ, by witnessing daily patrols, or seeing massive police presence in troops and weapons. Taking tourists into the favela is not only a way to educate others about the reality of the favelas and breakdown discriminatory boundaries by spreading this knowledge; it is also a way for residents to communicate to the UPP that they are not afraid of them, and that it is their community to display and share with whomever they want. In this way, being a guide becomes an act of reclaiming space, a proving of agency, and an act of resistance. As part-time guide Paulo told me,

Before, we didn’t have military police or tourists. But then we were invaded. It was extremely aggressive. But the arrival of tourism brings the opposite. Now this feeling is dissipating. It’s a positive change because tourism brings value to the community. (p/c, 8 Oct 2013)

Herein lies some hope in this situation: the community’s solidarity against the occupation can sometimes be organized around symbiotic relationships with outsiders.
4.4. Barriers and Limits to Success

While these benefits are influential and significant, they are, for the most part, very difficult to quantify. As the industry develops, I hope these phenomena grow in tandem. Lessons can be learned from other favelas’ tourism industries. Threats to the sustainable development of Alemão’s tourism industry are varied, and include (1) the persistent fascination of violence by some tourists, and guides’ (especially external to the favela) capitalization of this; (2) lack of real monetary investment in the favela; (3) competition from other favelas; and (4) self-serve tourism with little or no interaction with residents.

Alessandro, a guide in Alemão, explained to me that most of the tourists interested in violence and the drug traffic are Brazilian. “Foreigners find guns and violence really wrong, barbaric. They’re curious, but they don’t like it. Brazilians like it” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). For many tourists, their preconceptions of the favela are what drives them to visit, to see a “boca [drug dealing spot], or to take a photo with a bandito [drug dealer/criminal]” (Alessandro, p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Guides who are personally invested in the transformation of Alemão’s imaginative geography will likely dispel these inflated rumours, but many fear the entrance of bigger, external, profit-driven companies will dwarf the local industry, capitalizing on and exaggerating the problems of violence and criminality. Scholars researching favela tourism in other favelas have found this to be true (Freire-Medeiros 2011: 21, 26; Steinbrink 2013: 13). As Rolfes writes, some favela tour operators “mention drug trade and crime as everyday phenomena in a favela, and visitors are warned not to photograph certain groups of people” (2010: 433) even when they are told it is perfectly safe. These contradictory incidences are reflected in the reviews written by returned tourists. One Australian tourist, who toured Rocinha in September 2012 writes: “You really got to see the favela up close: going to a favela artist's studio, a local shop woman hosting us and sharing a shot of Cachaça, local child buskers, etc. There was even a police raid right in front of us!” (TripAdvisor). This review also states that the tourist felt safe, yet this excitement from a ‘police raid’ or related occurrence is not unparalleled. A British tourist in February 2011 echoes this sentiment when writing about the “adrenaline rush seeing all the guns stashed under the locals’ belts” (TripAdvisor). Clearly, some tourists who travel to favelas are searching for that
level of mediated risk – “an adrenaline rush” reminiscent of the effects of roller coasters – and while there is demand, there will likely continue to be companies profiting from it. Still, almost every tourist who wrote a review on TripAdvisor emphasized how safe he or she felt in the favelas, and this is an important shift. It is possible that while the imaginary of violence in the favelas is still prevalent in many people’s minds, it may be beginning to fade amidst larger transformations in the meaning of favela.

As Freire-Medeiros writes, “the commercial relationships between residents and tourists are informal and sporadic, if existent; there is no distribution of profits -- the capital generated is only marginally reinvested in the favela, and always by way of charity” (2012: 181). This is similarly the case in Alemão, though efforts are being made to move away from this model (e.g. by developing tours that incorporate specific sites for investment such as artist studios and sports arenas). These efforts are limited in scope, however, and there is no formal collaboration between local representatives and tourism companies. Most residents agree that guides have a responsibility to return profit to the community: “it’s only fair” (Jessica, p/c, 9 Oct 2013).

Although Alemão was the first favela to receive the teleférico, it wasn’t the last – Morro da Providência’s cable car finished construction in late 2013 (Custers 2014), and plans for Rocinha’s are in the works (Viva Favela 2014). Because Alemão is so much further from tourist zones than Providência, and has a less-developed tourist industry than Rocinha, many fear they will lose tourists to these newly built systems when they are operational. Alessandro told me tourism’s biggest challenge in Alemão is to “fight to get the tourists’ interests,” because there are “a lot of other favelas offering different things to the tourists,” especially in the South Zone – “our biggest competition” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Cleber spoke with a few large-scale tourism companies at a tourism conference in Rio, attempting to forge partnerships to have some control of the direction of tourism development in Alemão. None were interested in collaboration, however, and he looked genuinely concerned and upset when he told me, “all the big companies want to enter so badly that I’m scared. They want our tourism to be disorganized, no advertisements or big presence, so they can justify [taking over]” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Of particular concern was his conversation with a large company that operates armoured Jeep Tours (critically referred to as “poverty safaris” by many) in other favelas, whom
Cleber suspected wanted to enter Alemão with similar tours: “I told them I will die before that happens. And they said, ‘okay, you’re going to die, because we are coming with our Jeeps.’ It won’t take long” (Cleber, p/c, 14 Oct 2013).

Some residents and guides noted the limits to knowledge a brief visit can provide, and stressed that for more fundamental shifts in the favelas’ image to occur, people would have to live there for “at least a week to really understand the place” (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013). Cleber told me most tourists on his tours “want to experience the favela, but not get to know it,” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Angelo noted the lack of real connection with residents in most favela tourism, thus “most tourists see specific points in the favela, but don’t have the real context. They don’t live here, so they don’t really experience it” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013). Frisch argues that tourists’ pre-existing negative images of favelas transform after tours only in a “relative” sense – not necessarily to a positive image – and that this shortfall is likely “rooted in the missing participation of, and little interaction with, the local population” (2012: 334).

Leila spoke of the positive effects that can ripple outwards with the growth and diversification of tourism: “When the tourists come, they see, and they tell their friends that it isn’t a bad place, and then more people end up coming here” (p/c, 21 Oct 2013). But as Cleber reiterated, the tendency for information gained from tours to echo outside the favela can be positive or negative:

So when you come from your country and you’re here in [Alemão], and you walk around, and you tell someone else and they’re curious and want to come here… This generates an echo outside. The government and the authorities would never imagine this is possible… But when people come here and see broken houses, garbage, children without shoes, and start to talk to more and more people, it’s bad. This can echo too. (p/c, 14 Oct 2013)

Discourses of poverty on their own, however, are far less demonizing in their own right than discourses of criminality and inherent violence, thus this could still be a hopeful turn. In addition, these discourses can be countered with counter-narratives of residents’ choosing. While I was researching in Alemão, a few residents were working on plans to transform a trash dumpsite into an attractive, resident-run, separated recycling center (see before photo, Figure 4.7, and in progress, Figure 4.8). A tour that
included a visit to this type of project, for instance, would emphasize the resourcefulness and creative problem-solving skills of the favela residents (and take away from a focus on ‘dirtiness’ or poverty).

Figure 4.7. Cable car passing above Alemão, view from dumpsite.
The nature of self-serve cable car tourism does not allow for a very interactive experience of Complexo do Alemão, and many residents see its capacity for exploitation (i.e. through the practice of gazing downwards on the favela, without experiencing or engaging with it). As Alessandro noted, some residents see the teleférico tours as “exotic, showing the poverty from above but never com[ing] down to see the reality. It’s a safe distance” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Another guide estimated 1/3 of the population is “really supportive [of tourism], another 1/3 indifferent, and 1/3 is confused or critical or doesn’t understand it” (André, p/c, 2 Oct 2013). Jessica postured that most negative reactions to tourism arise because “there are people who think that tourism is something that came from the police, so [those residents] are afraid of it” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013). Cleber told me, “today, tourism [in Alemão] is innocent and people like it,” but his fears of outsiders’ future developments threaten that balance (p/c, 14 Oct 2013).

Recent research conducted by a resident of a São Paolo favela, Paraisópolis, produced different results. While people I spoke to were generally supportive of tourism in Alemão, residents in Paraisópolis commonly noted feeling “uncomfortable,” or “like a puppet,” their communities transformed into “a zoo” by tourism (Rodrigues, Ribeiro, & Correa 2014). Some said they felt “disrespected and used” (Rodrigues, Ribeiro, &
Correa 2014). While other respondents admit that they “cannot be hypocrites and say it
doesn’t help [economically],” tourism also “exposes [their] weaknesses, intimacies, and
goes against their rights” (Rodrigues, Ribeiro, & Correa 2014). Tourism in Paraisópolis
is quite different than in Complexo do Alemão: first, São Paolo’s slum tourism is quite
under-developed relative to Rio’s; second, the there is no pacification campaign in São
Paolo; and third, Paraisópolis does not have the contested history Alemão has. Thus,
while the Paraisópolis study’s results cannot easily be generalized to Alemão, they led
me to wonder how much my presence as an outsider shaped the content of my
interviews. It may also be true, however, that the benefits slum tourism brings to the
unique setting of “pacified” Alemão really do trump these negative yet unavoidable
aspects of slum tourism. Research led by Brazilian sociologist Freire-Medeiros seems
to support this possibility: she and her team interviewed 178 Rocinha residents and
found 84% were supportive of a tourist presence – only 3% had a negative perception
(Freire-Medeiros 2012: 181).

4.5. Initial Assessment

Regarding the popular representation of Complexo do Alemão, Jessica noted
there are “still more negative things in the newspapers than positive” (p/c, 9 Oct 2013).
Recent months’ media reports of violent conflict exacerbate this pattern. While existing
tourism can help to “break these prejudices,” (ibid) it cannot do so alone. More effort is
needed to work within tourism, to increase connections between locals and tourists.
While people’s perspectives vary on how to best achieve these goals, everyone I spoke
to agreed that more interaction between residents and tourists was necessary to
guarantee the success of potential benefits. Infrastructural development should focus on
training local guides, English and additional language education, and forging new links
between local organizations to increase the level of engagement between tourists and
locals. Culture is a strong focus of many favela tours, but connections between cultural
organizations and tourism groups need further development in Complexo do Alemão.
Music, art, and sporting events are in many cases integral to local community
involvement in Alemão; experiential tours to artist studios, concerts, or games could not
only benefit these areas economically, but also increase interaction and give tourists a better sense of favela life.

Amidst much uncertainty, however, positive transformations resulting from tourism can already be seen in various, far-reaching ways throughout the community. Alessandro told me that on many of his tours, residents “interrupt during the tours, very excited, to share their own knowledge, and tell the tourists where to go, and to give more information… Now they feel more proud of their own neighbourhood” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013). Other scholars’ research often echoes this sentiment; speaking of international tourists, one favela resident said they felt valued by tourists: “they shake our hands, talk to us, dance with us – unlike Brazilians” (Williams 2008: 487). Because of this, meaningful interaction between favela residents and the tourists becomes more possible, which generates a greater possibility for an accurate ideological export of the “trademark” of the favela. Alessandro ended our interview on a positive note: he believes that while “this is a process that will take a lot of time, things are getting better” (p/c, 14 Oct 2013).

What, then, can be learned from these continually shifting dynamics? Complexo do Alemão’s unique experience with both tourism and pacification offers correspondingly noteworthy insights. In the concluding chapter, I lay out my final arguments, analyzing to the best of my ability the complex interactions between favela tourism and pacification. I examine the effectiveness of both processes in reshaping the imaginative geography of the favela, and speculate for their respective future developments. These insights, based on field research and discourse analysis, provide a framework that other communities may be able to learn from, as tools for resisting future occupations. In addition, they provide a counter-narrative to the popular belief that favelas need large-scale military and police intervention, and that this type of occupation is fundamentally beneficial to the community.
Chapter 5.

Conclusion

Complexo do Alemão is an assembly of extremely strong, resilient, and talented communities. Dealing with the forces of pacification and tourism has not been easy; still, people carry on, resisting and transforming these processes to the best of their ability. No doubt, there is still a long way to go. This research captures part of the community’s struggle, and highlights its determination to shape its imaginative geography. Blending field research and theory, this thesis examines the transformative forces of pacification and favela tourism in Complexo do Alemão in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The case study of Complexo do Alemão, based in personal interviews and participant observation, provides an illustration of the forces reshaping a community’s image, for better and for worse.

My interviews and conversations while living in Alemão for one month highlight the extreme tension between the community and the pacification police. Violence continues, and residents grow increasingly frustrated. Yet, while pacification has not solved problems regarding violence and the drug trade in Alemão, local tourism can provide many community benefits. When operated and planned by socially-conscious residents, tourism can function as a “shield,” keeping community members safe from violence between the UPP and the cartels. Tourism also has immense power to create new imaginative geographies about what favelas are, and what types of people live there, and residents can use this power to challenge pre-existing notions outside of the favela.

In this final chapter, I summarize my research, first by returning to my objectives and methods for achieving them, analyzing both the strengths and weaknesses of my approach. Next, I provide an analysis of my main findings, revisiting the theoretical
frameworks I raised earlier, and examining their capacity to help us interpret the processes I researched. Then, I step back from my case study and connect it to others researchers have observed in slum tourism industries globally, in countries like Namibia, South Africa, and India. I end the chapter with an update on the condition of Alemão’s tourism, and some recommendations for future research.

5.1. Overview

In the beginning of this thesis, I introduced my research by presenting the paradoxical representations of favelas as both inherently violent (and thus stigmatized) and exotic/touristic (and consequently objects of praise). The existence and proposed necessity of Rio’s heavy-handed pacification campaign perpetuates the story of the dangerous favelas, while resident-run tourism endeavours to dismantle it. In Chapter 1, I posed two integrated research questions:

1. What does pacification look like on the ground in Complexo do Alemão? What policy-level logics or theories make sense of or justify these strategies, and what implications does pacification have for favela tourism in Alemão?

2. How have pacification and tourism affected and reproduced imaginative geographies of favelas?

To address these challenging uncertainties, I conducted discourse analysis and qualitative theoretical research to help make sense of (1) the logics behind pacification, and (2) the logics involved in reshaping the community’s image for tourism. I took lessons in Brazilian Portuguese to facilitate my field research, before travelling to Rio de Janeiro and living in Complexo do Alemão for one month. I spoke to many residents, guides, and visitors, and I formally interviewed eleven community members and/or tour guides. While there, in combination with interviews, I observed the pacification process and the budding tourism industry. I went on tours myself, and spent countless hours sitting at the Palmeiras tourist market, walking through the various neighbourhoods, and observing interactions between the UPP, tourists, and the community.
This research is not an exhaustive report on the pacification process in Rio de Janeiro, or on favela tourism overall. I hope these results can be taken for what they are: a snapshot of an incredibly important time in the changing history of Complexo do Alemão, one fraught with obstacles yet gleaming with strength and possibility. Still, these are not isolated developments, and I hope knowledge can be gained from my thesis to help similarly developing communities. The marginalization and criminalization of urban poverty is a global issue, and Alemão residents’ exceptional efforts to resist it are important.

I fully acknowledge the varied limitations to my research. My inescapable outsider position in the community, country, and culture will partly shape my results. As a fair-skinned, middle-class Canadian, I stood out in the community, and a few residents seemed wary of my intentions. It is likely that the accommodations necessitated by my positionality (such as having a translator present due to language barriers) affected some of my data, or residents’ willingness to be interviewed. My methodological choice to conduct interviews (a more time-consuming method, but with better quality results) over surveys (a wider audience and array of feedback is possible, but the quality lessens) also placed limits on my data in the form of number of participants, and ability to generalize about the entire community. I also was limited by my inability to interview members of the UPP or BOPE as I had intended, due to the aforementioned fear of compromising my trust with the community. My short time in Alemão was another barrier, and follow-up interviews would be a fascinating addition, provided I had the time and financial resources. Acknowledging these weaknesses, I also recognize my strengths in choosing a diverse methodological approach. My intent was to address my research questions with multifaceted answers, taking into account as much applicable data as possible (including theory, discourse, experiences of community members and tour guides, and my own personal experiences).

5.2. Findings

Rio’s longstanding tradition of blaming favelas for many of its problems seems to be continuing, as is evident in the enduring justification for violent policies like pacification. Critical urban theory illuminates the background of this rationale. Davis’
writing on criminalizing poverty traces the circulation of these demonizing rhetorics in our society, and the grave effects they can have on impoverished communities (2006: 202). The historical production of favelas as spaces of irrational violence continues, only now through a different lens – one centering on violence towards the police (the state), instead of criminals fighting criminals. Butler’s writing on precarity and poverty helps us see how favela residents have been framed as criminal, in order to make their lives “ungrievable” (Butler 2009: 25). This type of logic has paved the way for policies such as pacification to continue.

Geopolitical scholars’ research linking poverty and insurgency lends itself well to pernicious policies like pacification. This research, however, is based on flawed claims, and must be refuted. While Manwaring and others blame poverty for “social violence, illegal drug trafficking, and insurgency,” (2005: 5-6) my research highlights the fundamental complexity of these issues. Poverty in Rio’s favelas has long, complicated histories, and a simplistic analysis ignores these histories and the processes that have shaped them. Instead, my research shows violence in the favelas must be seen not as a “cancer” (e.g. Sullivan & Bunker 2011: 764), but as a back-and-forth protest to violently-imposed rule without community consultation. Violence in the favelas is self-perpetuating, precipitated by both UPP policy and the cartels. Four years into the pacification program, the situation in Alemão remains extremely volatile. Shootings are at least a weekly occurrence, but the focus has shifted from cartels against other cartels to cartels against UPP police (and intense retaliations). Almost exclusively, media reports of these events place the blame firmly on continuing cartel presence in Alemão, positioning the exchanges of fire as unprovoked and brutal. Neither the members of the occupying police force nor those who are not favela residents are able to distinguish between the estimated 99% of residents not involved in the drug trade and the 1% who are cartel members (Alves & Evason 2011: 5). The entire community is stigmatized. Even after pacification, favela residents are “caught between the arbitrary authority of violent drug gangs and the arbitrary authority of violent police” (Freeman 2014: 31). Sadly, this is not a new situation for Alemão and other favelas in Rio de Janeiro. But it is proof that much more work is needed to challenge this pattern.
Weber famously remarked on the necessity of state monopoly on the legitimate use of violence in a given territory as essential to its power (1946: 78), and in the same vein, Benjamin argues violence is a “problem” only when it is “outside of the law” (1996: 238). Agamben’s writing on the state of exception helps explain how favelas have been geographically and imaginatively marked off as “zones of indistinction,” (2005: 26), not subject to traditional laws. These ideas, put to work in the criminalizing tactics used with favelas and their residents, help explain how a process such as pacification has been justified, tolerated, and accepted in Brazilian society, even amidst widespread criticism and rising crime rates. While the pacification campaign has attempted to regain a “monopoly on the legitimate use of violence” for the state of Rio, it has ultimately generated new violence. The UPP’s aggression towards favelados is both physical and emotional. Tourism disrupts this. Tourism in Alemão has become a mediating force, a response to the state surveillance via pacification, by generating the residents’ own method of surveillance (through the tourists themselves). Acting as a means for residents to reclaim their own communities, it grants agency to the many residents that feel the pacification unfairly criminalizes, needlessly surveils, and represses them.

Similarly, resident-run tourism can maintain some control over its development. When tourism is beneficial to the community, the benefits are widespread; more residents support and participate in it, the level of meaningful interaction between tourists and locals increases, and tangible benefits to the community grow in tandem. Thus, favela tourism as a “shield” presents a hopeful possibility. Especially given the exploitative nature of many slum tourism companies, the opportunity for community solidarity to be strengthened in Alemão through the presence of tourists is both unusual and encouraging. Outsider visitors become crucial to the protection and preservation of the inside community, rather than exploiting it through their visits. This mutualistic relationship is more likely to continue in this direction when both parties benefit from the exchange.

A few guides mentioned increased interaction between outsiders (asfalto Brazilians and international visitors) has positively motivated community members to change conditions that they have been unhappy with in the past. According to André, where disenchantment and apathy previously reigned supreme, some of his neighbours
are now saying, “Let’s not give into the downward spiral. Let’s try to get better jobs, better education” (p/c, 2 Oct 2013). Tourism brings things to Alemão that for decades it has been denied: positive interactions with outsiders, participation and input into the discourses concerning their communities, and a way to export these counter-narratives on a global scale.

As Felipe stressed during an interview, tourism’s growth is “inevitable,” (p/c, 20 Oct 2013). What residents can do, he believes, is try to “transform it to [their] advantage, so it’s not predatory, not exploitative” (ibid). Tourism in Alemão is not without its problems, or without challenges to its sustainable future development. The tourist gaze is drawn to what is “out of ordinary,” and places will continue to be produced and consumed accordingly (Urry 2001: 2-3). This has implications for favela tourism that include perpetuating the negative and violent frames if only in order to generate interest. Tourism focuses on ‘events,’ as opposed to ‘spaces’ (Sheller & Urry 2004: 158), which poses challenges to a more comprehensive rebranding of the favela as a space of culture and art, instead of as a stage for fleeting performances. While favelas can try to rebrand themselves through arts and culture, these talents could be reduced to tokenism, and trivialized for economic gain (especially by outsider companies). And though inviting outsiders to favelas can help dispel myths about criminality and inherent violence, it can of course also reinforce them, depending on context. The same global processes that can rebuild positive imaginative geographies about the favelas can be co-opted to perpetuate negative imaginative geographies. The “echoes” of outsider experiences are extremely powerful, and the lens interpreting these complex communities depends heavily on one’s guidance, purpose, and direction.

These risks threaten the presently rather innocuous nature of tourism in Alemão, but they are not inevitable. Residents are determined to thwart them, and work diligently to ensure tourism does not develop along such exploitative or opportunistic lines. Putting these challenges into perspective, the benefits tourism brings to an occupied, repressed, and marginalized community are invaluable. It is difficult to judge the long-term trajectory of tourism development in Alemão, and much of it depends on the future of pacification. But while pacification seems to have created as many problems as it claims to solve, tourism is currently a refreshing break in a potentially depressing story.
line. Rather than compound criminalization, exoticization, or marginalization, tourism in Alemão provides a space for residents, however constrained, as much as possible to produce their own discourses and communicate them as they wish. These narratives, or counter-geographies, transcend national barriers. The traditional role of the tourist transforms into a much more important and beneficial one for the community (as “shield,” instead of “voyeur”). These are vital to the resident-run struggle to combat pacification, and to the creation of new discourses concerning favelas and favelados.

5.3. Situating Alemão in a Global Slum Tourism Context

While Alemão’s slum tourism is certainly unique due to issues of pacification, occupation, and cartel presence, it can still be a useful comparison with other industries globally. Lessons can be learned from other industries’ and locations’ successes and failures. Current global slum tourism research supports many of my findings, and at the same time, indicates potential challenges ahead for Alemão.

In Buning and Grunau’s research on slum tourism in Namibia (2014), they document a marked positive image shift of the slum for returned tourists. However, they found that this only achieved short-term results; as time passed after their tours, most tourists’ negative image of the slum returned. Though it cannot be directly applied to Alemão, this study reveals potential barriers for Alemão’s effort to transform its own negative image, since the media and state continue to perpetuate negative imaginative geographies. More research is needed to study these aspects for returned favela tourists, and to search for ways to overcome them.

In work on Dharavi, India, Yavuz (2014) criticizes movies like Slumdog Millionaire (2008) for simplistically portraying a desperate, inescapable poverty. She shows how harmful these depictions can be for residents, who feel discriminated, and undignified as a result. Parallels can be drawn with the Brazilian context, both in the way movies such as City of God (2002) and daily media reports unfairly portray residents of favelas as talentless, violent criminals, and in favelados’ self-organized attempts to dispel these myths (through vehicles such as tourism). Similarly, Hendawy and Madi’s research on Cairo’s slum tourism demonstrates that activists use social media to brand and promote
positive recognition of the slum (2014). They argue this can help inhabitants retain a sense of ownership and belonging. Their study can be compared to Complexo do Alemão, as residents there use social media not only to rebrand their communities by sharing music and fine arts, but also to combat negative media sensationalism and to get the “real story” out.

Graf’s work on slum tourism in Bangladesh argues that interaction with slum dwellers is essential to the slum receiving long-term benefits (in the form of donations, volunteering, etc.) (2014). These findings also support my argument that tourism in Alemão must include more meaningful interactions with residents, in order to increase the possibility of breaking down negative imaginative geographies (according to residents, guides, and others’ research). Blakeman’s research on slum tourism in Nairobi, Kenya implies tourism can be an extremely useful tool for social empowerment in poor communities (2014). This also corresponds to Alemão, as some *favelados* see tourism as a means of reclaiming the rights to their occupied communities (and hence, empowering them in the process).

Koens writes of the significant barriers small township tourism companies face in gaining market access in Cape Town, South Africa. He notes the “inequalities of power and conflicts of interest” (2012: 83) between smaller and bigger companies ultimately leads to “fractured communities” (2012: 96). While local guides certainly resented and felt threatened by larger companies entering Alemão, my assessment was not of a “fractured community.” The level of participation and cooperation I observed between guides seemed much stronger in Alemão than Koens’ assessment of Cape Town. Perhaps this is because the guides in Alemão, for the most part, are part of the community, which has to work together to resist two common enemies: the UPP, and the entry of large companies (who have not yet taken over). Guides in Alemão also generally rely less on tourism for economic benefits (as many have additional jobs).

As Basu writes, tours to the Dharavi slum in India “expose the high economic energy and extreme industriousness of the slum inhabitants, rather than their abject poverty” (2012: 72). Resident tour guides in Alemão are also rejecting more voyeuristic models of slum tourism. Based on a study incorporating results from tourism in South
African townships, Brazilian favelas, and Indian slums, Rolfes found similar dynamics at work. He writes that all of the tours he observed in these three places “aim at relativizing poverty as the primary association with townships, favelas, or slums”:

The goal is to correct the observation according to which poverty is the primary factor dominating living conditions in these areas. The first-order observation becomes the starting point for a different distinction or drawing of borders. According to this (new) definition of borders, life in informal settlements is not exclusively characterized by poverty, misery, or suffering. Rather, the inhabitants’ creative engagement with the precarious living and working conditions is presented. (2010: 439, emphasis in original)

These conclusions are clearly echoed in my observations of tourism in Complexo do Alemão, and are an enormously constructive tool for a stigmatized community. Rolfes argues that “poverty tourism” is, thus, not an appropriate term in these instances, because it highlights the “deliberate sightseeing and the explicit demonstrations of poverty” (2010: 440). Instead, slum tourism (or “slumming” (Rolfes 2010)) should be understood as a complex process that is not inherently damaging or exploitative. As one Rocinha resident reiterated during an interview with Freire-Medeiros, “Like it or not, [tourists] end up helping, directly or indirectly. They bring their eyes into the community” (Freire-Medeiros 2012: 183). More often than not, in the pacification era of favela tourism, this is an urgently needed service.

5.4. A ‘Bleeding’ Favela

A year has passed now since I first set foot in Alemão, and much has changed. A follow-up conversation with my hosts at Barraco #55 let me in on some disheartening news. First, Visita Guiada, one of the main tourism companies in Alemão during my field research, ceased operation. Then, the sparkling promise of the 2014 World Cup’s tourism boom in Alemão was thwarted by media reports of continuing violence in the community; the majority of pre-booked tours during and after the mega-event were cancelled. Shootings in the community are still met with more and more troop reinforcements, and as of yet, there appear to have been no internal examinations or reflections on the usefulness of this strategy. As one resident writes in October 2014,
“Our favela, Complexo do Alemão, is bleeding. The alleyways have marks which will never be erased, the marks of innocent blood, results of the State’s attempts to pacify through force… Everyone now wants the UPP project to leave” (Paz 2014).

The November 2014 presidential election refocused attention on many issues presumed resolved. The State Security Secretariat reported 41 areas of the state of Rio are controlled by drug cartels or militias “to the point that access to democracy is impeded” (Barros 2014). This meant only candidates with criminal connections were permitted to campaign in these areas. Complexo do Alemão was one of those areas, as were 9 other “pacified” favelas. Barros believes this proves definitively that “the criminals did not lose control of that territory, as the government proclaimed, and as many residents ended up believing” (Barros 2014). While their activities have become more surreptitious, their power remains strong. Some scholars contend that rather than integrating favelas with the rest of the city as intended, pacification has exacerbated segregation and distance. Larkin argues that in Rio,

police action in the favela actually further de-legitimizes the state in the eyes of favela residents, both by underscoring the failure of state-imposed day-to-day order and revealing the way that raids operate as both spectacle and farce. (2013: 555, emphasis in original).

Considering the massive efforts involved in pacification, and the evidence, both in my own research and in that of others, pointing to its failures at many levels, there can be little doubt that pacification only serves to further divide favelas from the state, and diminish any chance of widespread trust and cooperation. Yet the pacification program marches on, seemingly untroubled by the mounting proof of its disastrous effects.

Critical research is urgently needed to track the ongoing pacification process and its impacts. Wide-ranging studies, which engage a diverse cross-section of community members, are needed to evaluate the long-term effects of the process itself. Moving forward for these communities requires consultation with residents, and communication between the state and community members. Rather than imposing blanket policies on nearly forty diverse, unique localities, time must be taken to work with communities instead of against them. Only then will there be a chance the violence can be effectively challenged. Simply withdrawing the massive police presence could destabilize the area.
even further, leading to more civilian casualties in the process. However, working with residents to replace pacification with something better – something that emphasizes integration rather than penalization – would be a start. More analyses that look closely at the long-term implications of both pacification and favela tourism are necessary. Pacification and favela tourism are both powerful forces reshaping imaginative geographies of the favela. It is important to remember that these imaginative geographies do not merely exist ephemerally; they have real, tangible effects in residents’ quality of life, employment, socialization, and mobility. Any transformations in these dominating discourses have material effects as well.

5.5. Moving Forward

While many residents had high hopes for the pacification project, it has ultimately worsened feelings of marginalization and dispossession. Perlman argues that if residents’ initial optimism “had been reinforced by the delivery of social services and by a participatory process for determining community needs, this crisis may have been avoided” (Lee 2014). For fundamental changes in the organization and operation of communities like Alemão to occur, some argue it will take a “culture of peace” to overthrow a “culture of drug trafficking” (Barros 2014). The pacification program is in no way establishing a “culture of peace.” On the ground, there are no signs of this changing anytime soon, but residents of Alemão and many other favelas continue to demand it.

Given the dynamic nature of both tourism and pacification in Complexo do Alemão, speculating on future developments is challenging. Only time will tell if the pacification campaign continues as scheduled for fifteen more years, or if, as many suspect, funding will be cut after the mega-events. The impact on residents, however, will likely outlast the length of the program.

Complexo do Alemão, like many favelas, is produced through representations of violence, illegality, and poverty. Moving away from these exploitative mechanisms involves increased collaboration with residents, and consultation with them regarding ways to sustainably grow the tourism industry so there is mutual respect, education, and
economic benefits to the community. Through these efforts, the negative imaginative geographies of Complexo do Alemão can be substantially challenged, and replaced with more humanized, diverse geographies of residents’ choosing. As many residents and guides were quick to remind me, tourism is not capable of making these transformations alone. Yet it provides a hopeful starting point, and a relatively accessible way for community members to get involved, to take responsibility of their representation and hence, to take this power away from the UPP and media and restore it to their rightful hands.
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Appendix A.

List of Interviewees

Residents of Complexo do Alemão
- Ellen (Director, Barraco #55)
- Felipe (Musician)
- Esteban (Food Stand Operator at Palmeiras Tourist Market)
- Leila (Aesthetician, retired)
- David (co-founder of music school for youth)

Resident Tour Guides
- Andre (Visita Guiada)
- Paulo (Turismo no Alemão)
- Jessica (Bom Fruto)
- Alessandro (Visita Guiada)

External Tour Guides
- Cleber (Turismo no Alemão)

Other
- Angelo (Artist)
Appendix B.

Sample Interview Questions

Complexo do Alemão Residents

• What is your role in the community?
  o How long have you lived here?

• Can you describe the initial entrance of the UPP?
  o How has the pacification campaign affected your daily life?
  o What has been the biggest impact on your life since the UPP entered the community?
  o Did you feel unsafe in your community, prior to pacification? Do you perceive a difference in your personal safety now? Why or why not?
  o Do you think it has affected notions of favelas in broader Brazilian society?
  o Do you believe the UPP will continue after the Olympics and the World Cup?

• What is your experience with favela tourism in Complexo do Alemão?
  o Do you support the growth of the industry?
  o Do you think bringing tourists into the favelas is positive? Are there negatives associated with it?
  o Do you think it matters if the company is based in the favela, or outside? If the tour guides were raised in the favela or not?

• Do you think changing the meaning of ‘favela’ globally has implications for how favelas are treated in a local sense?
  o What about the context of stigmas in greater Brazil? What affect do you think favela tourism has on this? Pacification?

Complexo do Alemão Tour Operators

• What company do you work for?
  o How long have you been a tour guide? What was your job before this?
  o What prompted you to enter this business? Is it rewarding in some way, or just another job?
  o Where did you grow up? If not in a favela, had you spent time in favelas prior to running tours in one?

• What do you see as the relationship between pacification and tourism?
- Do you think the pacification program affects the perception of favelas nationally and internationally?
- Does this encourage the growth of the tourism industry?
- Did your company run tours in Alemão prior to pacification?
  - Have your perceptions of favelas, residents, and favela tourism overall changed since you became employed in this industry? How so?
  - Do you feel a responsibility to educate tourists about the favelas’ reality, or do you see yourself as providing entertainment for tourists?
  - Do you think tour companies should be required to return some of the profits to the community in some way?
- How do residents feel about your work?
  - Have you received positive or negative feedback from residents? If either – why do you think that is?
- Do you see the favela tourism industry as growing, long term?
  - Do you think there is a relationship between safety in the favelas and tours?
  - If the pacification process is successful long-term, do you think interest for tours would wane?
- Do you think negative stigmas of favelas and their residents in Brazil is growing, shrinking, or staying the same?
  - Why? What could be done to improve this? Does your role working in tourism impact this?