



Interviewer: Thanks for your participation in this project. The aim of this questionnaire is to elaborate a detailed and coherent narrative of your history. So, I recommend you to feel free to speak about anything you want without caring about speaking with depth. This is what we want. Tell me about the place where you were born and how was this place, and the people that lived there.

Interviewee: I was born in Bahia. The “All Saints Bay”, land of axé, happiness, of Candomblé and the black people. Of braid, afoxé and what else? Of feasts and of my work, which is the braid, I feel fine about it. I’ve been working here for seven years, braiding, making afro hairdos and distributing beauty, because I’m a African black woman and I’m very beautiful, which pleases the tourists, they like to see this beauty.

Interviewer: How was your childhood? Which are your most beautiful memories?

Interviewee: When I was a child, I loved to play soccer, my mom used to tell me always: “What are you doing over there, in the middle of the boys?” [laugh] I was always playing soccer, but about my profession, at that time, I didn’t braid my hair, but my sister used to do it. So-- Wait, wait, wait. Take it off, Padu. I used to play a lot with the boys, it was the “baba” (to play soccer), I used to be in the middle of the boys, playing “baba”, and my sister called and I didn’t braid my hair, my sister was the one who did it. So, my mom always prevented me from playing soccer. So, I started to get closer to my sister to learn how to braid because, at that time, I didn’t do that. But I liked to braid. So, I had to ask my sister to braid my hair. So, I used to stay at her house, she braided my hair and I started to learn how to do it. I didn’t attend any courses, but I’ve learned it and now, I do every kind of braid, every kind of hairdos, but I didn’t attend any courses, but I can make any hairdo that you ask me. So today, I work here by myself, I’m self-employed and make any kind of hairdos. So, I’m a hairdresser.

Interviewer: Talk about your parents and grandparents, where were they from?

Interviewee: My father is also from here, Salvador, my grandmom, already deceased, is from Salvador. My grandmom was a very good person, she died nine years ago. She was an excellent person and I’ll never forget her, she was always at my mom’s house and my grandmom’s house, at my mom’s house and my grandmom’s house. I always went with her to the street market, we always hung out, and whenever she needed, I was the one who accompanied her. She was a very good person.

Interviewer: And which were the professions or jobs of your parents, your mom, your grandparents?

Interviewee: Which what?

Interviewer: Their professions or jobs?

Interviewee: My dad works at SOCIMEL, a car business, and my mom works at other kind of business, called Rádio City, which fixes stereo systems, radios, these kind of things, televisions, computers, that is her job, she works there.



Interviewer: What do you remember about your parents and grandparents? What do you remember about what they did, ate, drank or talked about?

Interviewee: My dad used to drink, and on Sundays, he used to go with us to the beach and park. My mom used to stay at home, my dad had a car, at that time, because today, now, they are separated, but at that time, when I was a child, when we were all together, he used to go out with us on the weekends, he never stayed home, he used to put everybody in the car and go out.

Interviewer: How was to work in your profession when you were a child? Was it different?

Interviewee: When I was a child?

Interviewer: How was to work as a “trançadeira” (a person who braids hair), when you were a child?

Interviewee: No, I happened to work as a “trançadeira” as an adult, when I was a child, I didn’t work here with this. I came here as an adult, after I got married.

Now, I have three children. When I was a child, I didn’t work, just played. I started to work when I grew up.

Interviewer: How did you learn to do what you do? Do you have any story about it?

Interviewee: The story that I got is that I used to go to my sister’s house, and I’ve learned it with her. My sister used to sell acarajé and braid hair in the clients houses and, at that time, I wanted to braid hair. She didn’t charge money from me, but she charged me something else. I went to her house to do the cleaning, I used to wash the pans that she used to make the acarajé. I used to spend the week. Every day I washed the pans, and everyday she braided my hair. Each day, she braided a little, in order to not get it done and for not letting me to go away. To end the week. She only finished the braid on Saturday, for me to return to my mom’s house with my hair braided, but every day she used to make it a little, and every day, when she arrived- she used to braid a little and went out to work, and when she came back, braided a little more. So, she finished, and I washed the pans, and the other day, she braided, you know? And that was the way, not letting it to end soon, and I could help her there. That was how I used to pay her.

Interviewer: Do you like to eat?

Interviewee: To eat? Very much. [laugh] Yes, eating is what I like the most.

Interviewer: And which are your favorite dishes?

Interviewee: I like caruru, vatapá. I like fish, shrimp, shrimp bobó. I like beans, calf’s foot jelly, tripe stew. This kind of strong dishes, I eat a lot this kind of food with olive oil, this is what I like the most.

Interviewer: Could you share a recipe with us?



Interviewee: To share? Sorry, I didn't get it.

Interviewer: A recipe of any dish that you know.

Interviewee: To talk to you? A dish that you could do? The Baiana dishes. I like Baiana food a lot. And what is Baiana food? Caruru, vatapá, fradinho beans. It's shrimp bobó, arrumadinho, chicken xinxim.

Interviewer: Do you cook at home?

Interviewee: Sometimes, I cook, but my husband cooks more. He is the one who cooks at home.

Interviewer: Do you like to cook?

Interviewee: I don't like that much, no. Because I don't know how to cook, my husband is the one who cooks at home. He cooks better than me. My strong point is to do the cleaning, to take care of our things, our clothes, the houses' things. But the food is with him. I say to him: "Today, I want to eat this", and he cooks it, you know?

Interviewer: Do you like music?

Interviewee: Yes, very much. Especially reggae. I'm a reggae fan.

Interviewer: What kind of music do you prefer?

Interviewee: Reggae, Bob Marley, Edson Gomes, Gregory Isaacs, already deceased. Lucky Dube, Lauryn Hill. I'm very much in love with reggae. I like other kinds of music, but if I have to choose one, it would be reggae.

Interviewer: Do you sing?

Interviewee: Yes, sometimes, I'm distracted and start to sing. It's not about singing at stage, no, it's to sing for myself. To feel that I'm happy, to express my feelings.

Interviewer: Can you sing for me?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What song?

Interviewee: Wait, let me remember a song, now. Let's go. There are days in our lives that we think we won't be able to do it. There are days in our lives that we think about disappearing. I would like to stay with you a little more. I would like to stay with you a little more. And the people at home is already loving my decision. I ain't got anything else, not even the girlfriend that gave me her heart. I would like to stay with you a little more. I would like to stay with you a little more. I'm, I know that I'm the black sheep of the family. I'm, I know that I'm the black sheep of the family.

Interviewer: Thanks very much. Thanks very much. Have you got any sentence, any favorite popular saying, any expression or saying?

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Interviewee: I have. Go away, go. My popular saying is-- Wait, just a second. Is it recording now? Take it off, take it off. No, because I want to ask something to a person. No.

Interviewer: Which religion do you practice?

Interviewee: I'm catholic.

Interviewer: And how important is religion to you?

Interviewee: For me, there is no importance at all. My importance is that I'm catholic, and I don't frequent any religion. I just say I'm catholic, and that's it. And I have faith in my God, which is the only one I have faith in. And it's strong and firm.

Interviewer: Is there a connection between what you do and your religion? Do you incorporate your religious beliefs in your profession?

Interviewee: Yes I do, because I work here everyday together with all kinds of things, so I get here, open my place, and the only thing that I call is for God, the Father, the Almighty.

Interviewer: What is the name of your profession or job?

Interviewee: I'm a "trançadeira" (a person that braids hair).

Interviewer: And what do you think about your profession or job?

Interviewee: I think-- I think a lot of things, because this is my profession, trançadeira. I rely on the people to braid hair. I keep thinking about the future, because I'm self-employed, I work by myself, I'm not regularly employed, or anything else. I get very worried about my future, because with each passing day, Pelourinho is getting emptier, tourists are disappearing. In a time like this, it was supposed to be full of people, but we see it all empty. I worry a lot about my profession.

Interviewer: How did you start to work in this profession?

Interviewee: When did I start? My sister was the one who started it first. And then she came to work at a hair salon here, in Pelourinho. And she called me to work with her. I spent a lot of time working at the salon. And then, there were some "trançadeiras" at the street. And I said: "Look, I won't be here in this salon forever. I'll search for a place for me." And everybody was registering themselves at that time, they were doing the register of the street "trançadeiras". I used to work at the salon, but I always got informed. I said: "I won't struggle to make the others to grow, I'm going to look for my growth". And then, I went up there, at the yard, to contact the girl that was doing the registers. And then, I registered myself. I joined the "trançadeiras" association, which is an association. And then, it was done. She asked me to choose where I would like to work. I chose this street. At that time, I used to stay at the other side, over there. And then I decided the place, and it was done. And I said to my clients of the salon that I would be working at that place. The salon wasn't doing that good, the owner was gone-- she was traveling, and gave me the salon. And so, I gave the keys of the salon to her mother. There was no movement, and I couldn't

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afford to pay the water, electricity bills without clients. And so, I stayed at the street. I chose the place, bought my things and stayed at the street until now.

Interviewer: How long--

Interviewee: Raíssa, we won't get it, ok?

Interviewer: How long have you been working at this region, the Pelourinho?

Interviewee: I've been working here for nine years.

Interviewer: And what kind of things do you like about working here, and what you don't like?

Interviewee: I like working here. The only thing I don't like is the present moment. There was a lot of thefts, lot of robberies. And we, that work here all day long, that rely on the tourists, we are forced to see the thieves robbing the tourists, and we can't do anything about it. Because we are not police. And the losers are us, because we rely on the tourists. They say to each other: "I was robbed at Pelourinho", and many tourists that want to know the Pelourinho don't come anymore, just like the present moment. At this time, it was supposed to be full of people, here in Pelourinho. And the guide. I have many guides, people who work with tourists, as my contacts, and they say to us that the "gringos" (tourists) are afraid of coming here because of these things they are reading on the internet, about the robberies. Nobody wants to come here to be robbed. We lose a lot with all this, not only me but also the shopkeepers that work here.

Interviewer: Have you worked in other places?

Interviewee: Yes, I've worked at a travel agency.

Interviewer: What kind of things do you like about your profession?

Interviewee: I like to braid hair. I like to create hairdos. I create the hairdos and braids by myself, I make other kinds. The client comes to me: "What do you think about my hair?" And then I create, and look to their hair. I say: "Look, this is going to look great for you." Then, I create a braid, or a hairdo. And the client feels good. So, for me, this is great.

Interviewer: What do you don't like in your work?

Interviewee: When I leave.

[laugh]

Interviewee: Isn't that so? No, when I leave.

Interviewer: Did you have other kinds of work before?

Interviewee: I used to work at a travel agency. I looked after children. I also did cleaning. And I used to wash bed sheets. I did a little of everything.

Interviewer: How do you think about the way tourists hear you?

Interviewee: How do they hear me?

Interviewer: How do they see you?

Interviewee: How do they see me?

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Well, the tourist that passes by me sees me sat here, working, calling, many of them understand my language, and there are many that don't understand. But those who don't understand my language, I talk to them with my hands, making gestures, showing it. The tourist is seeing me here showing a tererê, a braid. He is seeing that I'm working. Yes, he is seeing my uniform here, look, and it's written "traçadeira" in capital letters, so, they have to-- As I see him as a good person, the tourist that is coming here, in this city, must see me as a hardworking an honest person.

Interviewer: How is your relation with the people of Bahia?

Interviewee: My relation with the people that I know is great, and I also try to get along with the people that I don't know, to be friend of them. I'm a communicative person with everybody.

Interviewer: Do you have a different relation with men and with women?

Interviewee: No, I don't have.

Interviewer: Do you have children?

Interviewee: Yes, three, two girls and one boy.

Interviewer: Talk about them, their lives, their work. What are your hopes and expectations for them?

Interviewee: Now we're going to talk about other things, which are very important. My children are my- other people, too, that help me a lot, and they're people that have never moved away from me. I stayed here all the time, my pregnancy with them here, I had--

Criança: I'm gazing. I'll go to the library, ok?

Interviewee: I had them, and after 15 days, I was already here. They were almost raised here, at Pelourinho. Everybody knows it, and there were even some artist children that was formed over there. Because my son plays at Olodum. He has made many advertisements. My daughter, too. Today, she is a postcard with me. So, one thing creates the other. Sometimes, it's a little hard, but at the same time people come here, when I'm with them, and they call to do a performance, to play, take pictures, jobs. And it helps me, because they earn their own money, and it helps me. I raise the children as artists. They follow the path, I teach them which path is that. I

show it for them, they see, all day long, the reality, they see when the cops are arresting, and they see many boys on the streets. "These [unintelligible 00:19:42] I say: "Look, do you see him? He doesn't have a mom." I show everything to them. They are children that already know these things, they see everything.

Interviewer: Which are your hopes for you sons and daughters?

Interviewee: My hope is to have a better future, a better future. What I do for them is aiming that they may recognize the path, tomorrow or later on, the struggle I've been through for them to become a- he and she to be a good person, and to work to achieve their goals, too.

Interviewer: Are you teaching your daughters to do what you do?

Interviewee: If I am teaching? No, I'm not doing it. But my daughter, just by being with me and watch my job, she got to know it. My five year old daughter already knows how to braid, my twelve year old son knows how to do the tererê, and he also braids, but doesn't do the tiara. But he does everything, tererê, little braid. Sometimes, I'm here, full of clients, braiding their hair, and I say: "Go over there, Caio, and do that girl's hair." And he does the tererê and the braid quite well. He already knows how to do it. That's great. That's great.

Interviewer: Would you like to have them continuing your work?

Interviewee: No. I like because they work when it's their break time. When I arrive in the morning, when there are some braids to do, they do it for me. At midday, I prepare the things, and they go to school. And when there are no classes, on Saturdays that I work, when I have to braid, I prefer that they do it, it doesn't bother me.

Interviewer: Have you ever lived in another state?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Do you participate in any group or organization?

Interviewee: No, only in the "Trançadeiras" Association, just in this association.

Interviewer: And can you tell me about your participation in this organization?

Interviewee: My participation is when we have the meetings, when we talk about what is going wrong, what is happening, what we need in Pelourinho. There's a meeting, and I say that I need safety, policing. Just that. Because I work here, the other colleague works over there, so I don't have anything with my work partners, what I am concerned is about the safety of the tourist that comes here. And I'm tired of seeing robberies, thefts over there and being unable to do anything. So, I always join the meetings to ask for safety, put more cops on the corners, because, sometimes, they are lacking.

Interviewer: What kind of relations do you have with the other women that work in this region?

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Interviewee: This one, the relation that I have [laugh] with her. She works here, and she, too. So, it's ok for me. Because I work on the street, she serves me some coffee, or water. This is important, to have friendships. It's very important.

Interviewer: And with the other "trançadeiras"?

Interviewee: I also have a relation with them. Sometimes, I'm with a client, and then another client arrives, so I have the phone numbers of my colleagues. I say: "Hello. Are you busy now? I have a client for you, come here." And then they come, and help me. With my partners, I don't have any kind of problems.

Interviewer: Would you like to talk about anything else, something that we hadn't talked yet?

Interviewee: No, because I've already talked about what I had to talk.

Interviewer: Could you tell me the year you were born?

Interviewee: It's January 26.

Interviewer: Of what year?

Interviewee: 1975.

Interviewer: Which was the last year of school that you've attended?

Interviewee: I've studied until the fifth grade.

Interviewer: And what is your profession or job?

Interviewee: No, for me, it's not a profession at all.

Interviewer: And where do you live? What is the name of your neighborhood?

Interviewee: Largo do Tanque.

Interviewer: Thanks very much for your participation. If you have any questions or wish to add anything to your participation, you may talk to me. Thanks.