

CHAPTER IV

Rehearsals

IFIRST MET THE FOLIA DO BAETA at an event which the foliões called a rehearsal (*ensaião*), and over the years I have been to countless other rehearsals held by companhias both in São Bernardo and in various small rural towns throughout the southeast. Yet I was told by one folião after another that folias did not rehearse. They claimed that everyone knew their parts, so they did not need to rehearse; the reason they came together every now and then was so the musicians would not forget their parts.

Indeed, companhias do not rehearse, if by a rehearsal one understands the pursuit of perfection in the performance of a piece in which stress is placed on the product of the performance. In their rehearsals they do not stop in the middle of a toada to correct mistakes; they do not select out difficult transitions and perform them over and over again to get them just right; and there is no conductor attempting to draw out her personal interpretation from the musicians. In terms of the sounds of the music, there is little to distinguish their performances at rehearsals from their performances at visitations. For foliões rehearsals are seen as social events, in which they meet because of the enjoyment they get out of making music together.

Rehearsals are held at the dono's house, generally on Sunday afternoons (See plate II.) They are sporadic events, arranged more or less at the last minute, whenever the dono of a companhia decides to hold one. In rural areas, however, rehearsals are held less frequently than among urban companhias. Rural groups tend to concentrate their rehearsal activities in the

months preceding their journeys, while the urban companhias I worked with held them throughout the year, though they increased in number during November and December to prepare for the departure. Although I do not believe my interest in their activities significantly altered their rehearsal patterns, it may have had an impact on the number of rehearsals held by some of the groups, who staged them a bit more frequently for my benefit. For the most part, the musicians come to rehearsals on their own, but often they are accompanied by sons or nephews in the hope of encouraging them to join the group. Sometimes wives and daughters also attend, but generally they stay in the kitchen with the dono's female relatives helping them prepare coffee and snacks. In the beginning I felt quite self-conscious about the fact that I was often the only woman present among the musicians, and though my unease diminished with time, I never completely overcame it.

During rehearsals the same set of three or four toadas are repeated indefinitely for hours on end, and I could not help wondering how they did not get bored by the repetitiveness of their music. Yet, while I was among them, neither did I, even though I sometimes got tired of listening to my old recordings. After I learned various parts and began to join in the music making, I found rehearsals to be a very pleasant way to spend a Sunday afternoon, and I always looked forward to them. Many foliões openly acknowledged that their primary motivation for going to rehearsals was the pleasure they experienced while making music with other people. Zezo, for example, claimed that singing in the folia de reis was like a "bath for the soul," a comment echoed by Oswaldir, who said that singing in the folia made him forget about everything else, temporarily displacing his preoccupations with everyday affairs.

With a few notable exceptions (Finnegan 1989; Koskoff 1988; Turino 1993; and others), ethnomusicologists have paid little attention to the rehearsal context, giving precedence to the study of public performances. A dominant view in Western thinking conceives of the performance context as a arena in which the musicians present a polished product to be scrutinized by a critical audience purely for its aesthetic merit. As any trained Western musician knows, to achieve performance excellence, musicians must engage in extensive preparatory work, including a learning phase and countless individual practicing and rehearsals with other musicians. Because rehearsals are often organized to prepare for specific performances, the procedures and processes of social interaction that take place during rehearsals facilitate with the ultimate goal of presenting an acceptable final product.

Thus, along with the acquisition of performance competence, the rehearsal context is a privileged sphere for the acquisition and rearticulation of dominant concepts associated with music and the social world of its production.¹ Since many societies do not hold a product-oriented view of music making, they also have no concept of a rehearsal as such (Koskoff 1988, 59).

Folhoes, however, do organize events called rehearsals, even though they hold a very different view of music making from that dominant in the Western musical universe, and in line with this difference, they orchestrate their rehearsals in terms of their own goals. Rather than emphasizing the product of their performances, folhoes conceive of music making fundamentally as a space for sociability, and they organize rehearsals as social occasions. From the point of view of those involved in the music making, the "product"—the music produced—is judged in terms of the quality of the interactions the musicians set in motion to create it. During performance they strive to construct an atmosphere of camaraderie among the musicians, marking an inclusive and participatory orientation toward music making.

Blacking (1980a) argued that the performance requirements of participatory genres are likely to promote modes of interaction during the performance that articulate with the patterns of social interaction that are valued by the participants in nonmusical spheres. The concept of "performance requirements" is particularly useful to ethnomusicological analysis, in that it encompasses both the structural properties of musical sound and the performance practices employed in music making. While certain formal musical properties may be more conducive than others to generating particular interactive patterns, the musical structure of a genre does not necessarily determine the social uses to which it is put. As Thomas Turino (1993) has shown, groups performing musics that sounds almost identical can hold radically different conceptions about music, music making, and the social relations of musical production, such that their musical practices and performance experiences are also distinct. Even though a particular genre may be used in different ways, its musical structure can be explored extensively in performance in relation to the conceptual frameworks and objectives of the group making use of it. In this chapter I shall be looking at how the formal properties of the *roda* articulate with the conceptual orientations of the performers, in order to generate the social experience folhoes strive to create during music making.

Setting Rehearsals

In the beginning it was something of a mystery to me how the folhoes found out about their rehearsals, since the members of the groups did not all live in proximity to one another and none of them had telephones. I soon discovered that communication among them was maintained through word-of-mouth networks, in which the *dono* began by informing his closest neighbors when he intended to hold a rehearsal, and among them they decided how best to let the others know about it. Often folhoes in the same *companhia* were employed in the same place or near the employment of other folhoes, so they would take responsibility for informing them. Sometimes a folião worked with someone who lived near another member of the group, and this person would agree to take the message to his neighbor. These networks were extremely efficient, and within a matter of a few days all the members of an ensemble would find out about an upcoming rehearsal.

I was often the only person left uninformed, because I was not connected to these networks even though I had a phone. Phone calls from São Bernardo to São Paulo were quite expensive for the budgets of most folhoes, but it also became clear to me that many of them did not feel comfortable talking into telephones. On the only occasion in which Alcides called me to let me about a rehearsal, this otherwise highly articulate man became totally tongue tied. Immediately after we spoke I attempted to reconstruct our conversation in my field notebook. Admittedly my reconstruction contains a few exaggerations, but they emphasize my perception of the exchange. I have reproduced it below:

R.: Hello?

Alcides: Hello?

R.: Hello? Who's speaking?

Alcides: Hello?

R.: Who's speaking, please? Who would you like to speak with?

Alcides: Hello? Suzel? Is that Suzel's house?

R.: Yes, this is Suzel. Seu Alcides?

Alcides: Tell Suzel that Alcides, Alcides from the *folia de reis*, has a message.

R.: Oh, Seu Alcides, how are you?

Alcides: I'm fine, I'm fine.

R.: And how is Dona Cleotide [his wife]?

Alcides: She's fine.

S.R.: And the rest of the foliões?

Alcides: The folia, everyone's fine.

S.R.: That's good.

Alcides: Clotilde sends her regards.

S.R.: Thank you, and send my regards to her, too.

Alcides: Clotilde told me to call you.

S.R.: I see.

Alcides: She sends her regards.

S.R.: My best regards to her, too. What's the folia doing these days?

Alcides: The folia? The folia is fine.

S.R.: I'm glad to hear it. You said you had a message.

Alcides: Yes, Clotilde wants to know when you are coming over here?

S.R.: Any day now. I'll come around any day now. When would it be convenient for you?

Alcides: Any time, come around any time. Are you coming on Wednesday?

S.R.: On Wednesday? Is something happening on Wednesday?

Alcides: The folia is meeting on Wednesday.

S.R.: Oh, you're having a rehearsal.

Alcides: A rehearsal.

S.R.: At what time? When should I come out?

Alcides: Come any time.

S.R.: But the foliões won't be coming around until the evening, right?

Alcides: In the evening.

S.R.: Right. I'll come around on Wednesday then. Thank you for letting me know.

Alcides: Clotilde sends her regards.

S.R.: Thank you, my regards to her, too, and tell her I'll see her on Wednesday.

Alcides: I will. Go with God.

S.R.: And you. Good-bye, and thanks for telling me about the rehearsal.

I'll be there.

Alcides: OK. Good-bye, then.

S.R.: Good-bye.

The discomfort Alcides displayed in talking on the phone could be put down to his inexperience with the medium, but it also highlights the modes of interaction prevalent among members of folia communities. Alcides was

far more used to face-to-face interactions, and his inability to see the person to whom he was speaking was clearly disconcerting to him. Moreover, when speaking on the telephone, the caller is required to present her intentions in a fairly direct manner; such explicit expressions of intentionality, however, cause discomfort among many foliões, as they expose them to rejection, which could be experienced as a slight to their personal integrity. Even though Alcides distanced himself from his intentions by deflecting them onto his wife—and his invitation was not rebuffed—the experience was so disquieting to him that he never called me again. To keep abreast of the groups' activities I had to be physically present among them, constantly visiting people associated with each of the groups. Their mode of communication centered on direct, face-to-face encounters, and information circulated through the networks as people met one another in their neighborhoods or work.

Conversations

When I first established contact with Zé Quatorze, he told me that he had arranged a rehearsal with his group for that Sunday at 2:00 p.m. I arrived punctually at the designated time, only to find that I was the first person there. It was well over an hour before the first foliões arrived and then after two and a half hours before all the musicians were present so the ensemble could begin to sing. Among the first foliões to arrive were Lázaro, contralto and estribillo player of the ensemble, and Quim Braz, the ajú-je; the last were accompanying instrumentalists without vocal parts. At the arrival of the musicians more or less replicated the group's inter-hierarchy. As people arrived they sat about chatting, exchanging news, discussing various issues related to their daily lives and folia activities. This experience I learned to arrive a bit late for rehearsals, but I always had to be among the first arrivals to observe the arrival patterns of the musicians and to participate in their conversations.

One rehearsal held by the Folia do Zé Quatorze, Lázaro informed the group that he had heard that Toninho, the drummer, would be unable to play that afternoon. Zé Quatorze said that that was too bad because Toninho was a good drummer, but they would surely be able to find someone to play it for them for the rehearsal. Quim Braz volunteered his niece, Zé, who had come with him to the rehearsal, and soon afterward he commented on how nice he thought folias sounded when they had two

caixas. There was general agreement on this, and a discussion ensued in which the foliões began remembering ensembles they knew of that had two drums. This led into a discussion about the suitability of accordions in the folia. It was remembered that the Kings did not have an accordion, so it could not be considered a folia instrument. Another folião, however, reminded the group about how Zé dos Magos was willing to carry this heavy instrument around from house to house for his companhia, even though he was a very small, thin man; surely, he speculated, the Kings looked favorably upon this sacrifice even though none of them played the accordion. (See plate 12.) This was followed by the perennial debate about the problem of excessive alcohol consumption in the folia, and the various strategies donos can employ to regulate it.

A few days later I met up with a few members of the Folia dos Maguinho, who commented on how they had heard that Zé Quatorze was looking for a second drummer for his group. Although the ensemble never recruited another drummer while I was among them, an accordion player did join the group on their next journey. After this incident I began to view the discussions prior to rehearsals as informal committee meetings, in which the group's leaders put forward their proposals as a means of measuring their acceptance among other members of the group. Their suggestions, however, were couched as commentary on the procedures and opinions of others, rather than as direct propositions. By thus muting the authorship of intentions, the person making the proposition could maintain his distance from it in case it was not acceptable to other members of the group. The support of a proposition could be audibly measured by the number of people who entered the discussion echoing the original instance with similar examples. Likewise, an idea could slip away inadvertently through the absence of any discussion, without compromising the integrity of the person who first raised the issue. Moreover, this mode of decision making allowed for the emergence of consensus toward the leaders' proposals through nonauthoritarian means; their propositions merged with all the other examples raised after their initial comment, just as they merged into the thematic flow of the conversation, which moved continuously from one subject to another. In this manner the divide between formal decision making and informal conversation remained ambiguous, all part of the sociability of the rehearsal context.

There is a relatively restricted set of themes that emerges time after time in these discussions from one folia to the next. Without doubt the problem of excessive alcohol consumption during folia activities is the most widely

discussed issue in folia communities. They also argue about what constitutes backtracking during a journey, given that folias are not supposed to pass by the same place twice, lest they encounter a Herod; they talk about the advantages of wearing uniforms on their journeys; they confirm the hazards inherent in folia encounters and so on.

The outcome of these discussions filters back into the informal communication networks, as people comment on what happened at a given rehearsal. Some issues are presented as decisions taken by the leadership, but they are often communicated as hearsay, rather than as clear-cut intentions. Indeed, the young men I met after Zé Quatorze's rehearsal claimed to have heard that he might be looking for a drummer; they did not claim to know for a fact that that was Zé Quatorze's intention. This allows for the emergence of new voices in their ongoing debates, integrating folia affairs into the social life of the community.

Music Making

Music making begins only when all the musicians that are expected to be joining to the rehearsal have arrived; to begin without someone could be seen as an offense, causing that person to abandon the group. When the dono believes everyone is present he brings in the banner and the musicians pare themselves to start singing, tuning their instruments and taking their performance positions, all the while strumming and testing their instruments. Before taking up the estribilho, the instrumentalist responsible for this part listens to the doodling people are making on their instruments, as if anyone is still tuning an instrument, and when he is satisfied that they are all ready, he simply begins. When the others hear the first notes of instrumental introduction over their warm-up sounds, they begin to tune up their parts. The first toada can go on for a long time, and it is followed by others which sound almost identical. Indeed, sometimes the back-to-back parts perform the exact same parts even though the front voices have different melodic lines each time. Coffee and snacks are served at some point, and about three or four hours of singing the musicians begin to disperse. Precisely because toadas are so repetitive, folia musicians are extremely aware of minute aesthetic details in their performances, and when questioned, many of them are able to discourse at length on the musical roles of vocal and instrumental part. For some parts musicians are expected to incorporate variations throughout their performances; there are concepts

regarding the volume appropriate to some parts; there are ideas about the personality types best suited to certain parts, and so on. This knowledge is acquired primarily through music-making experiences, and the *foliões*' awareness of the characteristics of the different parts is further enhanced by the changes in performance positions that often take place when the group commences a new toada.

The degree of my participation varied tremendously from one group to the next, determined primarily by the musical needs of the different groups at the rehearsals I attended. Most of the time I performed as an accompanist, playing either the viola or the caixa, but if there was an insufficient number of singers, I often filled in the missing part. Like most new *foliões*, I began my career as a *folia* singer performing the *tala* part, and as I gained confidence, I filled in for absences in other vocal parts as well. During one rehearsal with the *Folia do Zé Machado*, the group leader decided to put me to the test, since on several occasions I had sung as *ajudante* for him at rehearsals: I was invited to attempt the *embaixada*, but after a few rounds I could not think up any new verses, so I stopped and returned the role to Zé.

During their journey in 1988, Wanderley, the regular *ajudante*, would be arriving late one evening, but Zé Machado was anxious to keep the banner moving, so I was asked to fill in for him until he arrived. This caused quite a stir at every house we visited, and several years later a member of the group made a point of reminding me of the night I had sung "up front." The novelty value of this was twofold: not only was it extremely rare for a woman to sing a front voice, it was altogether unheard of for a member of the upper classes to be singing in a *folia* at all. When I played toward the back, my presence was less conspicuous until after we had finished singing. Then, however, I was introduced as a reporter, and my reason for being there could be explained in somewhat more understandable terms.

My participation within the *companhias* diverged significantly from that of the wives and daughters of the *foliões*. The license I enjoyed clearly derived from our class differences. Patterns of interclass interactions in Brazil are marked by patronizing attitudes on the part of the upper classes toward members of the lower classes, but the relationship I established with the musicians was new for both sides, and therefore it was open to considerable negotiation. Indeed, I was caught off guard—but deeply moved—the first time a *folião* told me that I was different from other "rich" people: he claimed I treated the *foliões* as my equals. The main argument he used to substantiate his claim was the fact that I was not ashamed to sing with them.

Singers

The solo style begins with the *embaixador* singing on his own, clearly establishing his part as the principle voice of the ensemble (section A of musical example A.1 in the appendix). But the *embaixador* does not speak for himself; rather, through his improvisations he acts as spokesman of the Three Kings, which realigns him with his human companions (see Roseman 1991, 115–16). Given the sacred content of the improvisations, everyone pays close attention to the *embaixada*. After visitations many people could recite word for word the text of the verses used to bless them, indicating how closely they had attended to the improvisations. In particular the singers listen carefully to the *embaixada* because they are called upon to repeat the *linha* when they enter the ensemble. They also attend to it because the *embaixada* often includes commands which the *foliões* or the family being visited are expected to follow. For example, the *embaixador* can instruct the *foliões* to kiss the banner or ask the family at a *pouso* to put the banner away. Even in rehearsals, if the *embaixador* incorporates such an instruction into his verses, it is followed by the rest of the ensemble, blurring the divide between rehearsals and rituals proper.

Other *folia* styles begin with a duo in parallel thirds performed by the front singers. Since the text is improvised, the *ajudante* has to anticipate mentally what the *embaixador* is likely to sing, and the voice often lags slightly behind the main part. Because of its highly formulaic character the singers of the second voice in the duetted styles are able to follow the *embaixador* quite easily. As João, the *ajudante* in Alcides's *companhia*, put it, "soon as he sings the first word, I already know what he is going to sing, can change a bit, so you have to pay attention, but I always know what he is going to sing." A duo that has been singing together for many years tends to acquire a high degree of simultaneity in its performances. In fact, for someone unfamiliar with the tradition, it could be difficult to distinguish the singer of the principal voice from the *ajudante*.

One of the most characteristic features of southeastern traditional musics is the use of parallel thirds. Throughout the region, whenever someone begins to sing the first voice of a toada or a piece from the *música setaneja* repertoire, another singer present is likely to join the soloist, placing his part a third below—or a sixth above—the principal line.² The two voices are perceived as a unit, such that when one is not present, as Zé Quatorze said, "something is missing, so two always have to sing together." In a

duo of parallel thirds each part can be distinguished relatively easily, while the relationship between the voices is perceived as harmonious.³ Parallelism involves a duplication of the melody in another register and therefore requires some of the same coordinated effort necessary to unison singing, since the text, the rhythm, the intervals, and the attacks should be enunciated simultaneously by the singers. The greater the simultaneity in the performance of the parallel lines, the more the participants must attend to one another during performance. Indeed, when singing together, the front singers often turn toward one another, which allows them to coordinate their behavior with greater precision. (See plate 13.)

Commonly the principal voice is placed in the upper register to make it easier to hear; being the more salient of the two, it is considered the most important. Yet for the last chord of the verse, the *embaxador* takes the melodic role while the *ajudante* performs the tonic, creating an inversion in the musical roles of the two singers, such that the principal voice becomes harmonically subordinated to the second. By rendering the role of the first voice somewhat ambiguous, dominance becomes structurally muted, and the two voices join to form a complementary whole. Just as a high degree of simultaneity among the front singers mutes the prominence of the *embaxador*, the harmonic inversion in the final chord also neutralizes the musical dominance of the main voice. Far from being merely an aesthetic preference among southeasterners, as some researchers have argued, parallel thirds have conceivably been so stable throughout the region precisely because this musical element provides a sonic means of reconciling the asymmetry of social relations with notions of essential human equality.

In the *mineiro* styles there is a permanent game in which the prominence of one voice is subtly—and sometimes not so subtly—transferred from one register to the next up the hierarchical ladder. Members in the *Folia do Baeta* claimed that after the part of the *embaxador*, the *contrato* was the most demanding voice in the *folia*. In their performance style the *contrato* mediates between the front voices and the back voices; it makes its presence known in section C (musical example A.1), which is still the domain of the front voices, but it is also the lowest part in the chord sequence supporting the *cacetero*, the *tipe*, and the *contra-tipe*. While singing with the front voices, the *contrato* tends to look forward, attending to the front singers, when he begins to sing with the back voices, he generally turns toward them, identifying with the singers who have just joined the ensemble. With the entrance of the back voices (section E), the singers split into two quasi-independent vocal units, in which the four voices in the upper registers—the *contrato*, the

cacetero, the *tipe*, and the *contra-tipe*—maintain strict vertical parallelism, in contrast to the two lower voices—the *resposta* and the *ajudante*. Consequently, the singers in each block focus their attention primarily upon those musicians with whom their parts are most closely aligned.

The *contrato* is in particular evidence during the period in which he sings with the front voices (sections C and D). Besides being the highest voice, which is performed with considerable *gusto*, a good *contrato* is expected to embellish his voice, purposefully deviating from an exact parallel duplication of the principal melodic line. Besides a short countermelody over the long notes of the *embaxador* and the *resposta* (section C), the *contrato* tends to add melodic and rhythmic ornaments through well-accented attacks. Often the ornamental variations are quite minute, such as a change in the rhythm of a melodic motif, an extra turn, or the omission of a frequent figure. Because the music is otherwise so repetitive, these minor variations stand out quite prominently, calling attention to the voice and its singer. This voice is also evident in the duetted *mineiro* style, where the *contrato*—or *meião*—surfaces a phrase before the final chord, as in musical example 1.2. Because of the volume *contratos* use in their singing, their position in the upper register is especially noticeable. The *foliões* claimed that the *contrato* was well suited to “communicative” people, or those who liked to “show off.” As in the *Folia do Baeta*, where the *contrato* was generally performed by Paulinho, Oswaldir’s second son, throughout the *Guaranésia* region the position was most frequently occupied by young men in their late teens or early twenties. It is seen as a trampolined to a front voice, since it is an ideal place for a promising young musician to exhibit his musical abilities. Despite their low status in relation to the front singers, each of the back voices is valued at the level of discourse for certain characteristics attributed to it. The *cacetero*, the *tipe*, and the *contra-tipe* singers are meant to perform their parts with considerable volume and zest, so their entrances provoke surprise, because they are in such high registers, they are considered difficult. In several *roadas* the back voices come in as separate configurations, with greater volume than the singers before them. By staggering the parts in this way, each one enjoys the limelight for a few moments during the cycle. The final voice—the *tala*—comes in only at the end of each *roda*. The low status associated with this voice is compensated by the fact that *caceteros* claim that it is very difficult to find someone capable of performing it, and it is so high and requires considerable volume. By managing to sing it, a performer demonstrates publicly that he has good lungs and would be capable of moving forward within the group when a space became vacated.

Indeed, the performance of the *folia* is evaluated very closely within *folias*, since it is this voice that guarantees the climactic effect of the final chord.

The *foliões*' notions about the value of each of the different vocal parts in the ensemble articulate with the processes of interaction that take place during performance, causing continuous shifts in people's attention as the *roda* progresses. While the *embaixador* is being performed, attention is directed at the *embaixador*, but as each new vocal configuration joins the ensemble, attendance diverts toward the new singers, progressively moving from the front of the ensemble to the back. This constant cycle of successive turn taking is also implicated in blurring hierarchical distinctions, as one enters the flow of the continuous repetitions.

Instrumentalists

Just as there are discourses to neutralize the hierarchical distinctions among the singers, the space for the interpretation of musical roles in relation to the instrumental parts is just as flexible as—if not more flexible than—it is for the vocal parts. As we have seen, *foliões* acknowledge a clear hierarchical ordering in the instruments, in which the *viola* is the most prestigious *folia* instrument, followed by the *tambourine* and finally the *caixa*, and these notions are extended to encompass other instruments related to the primary instrument in each category. This view, however, is crossed by numerous other discourses which relativize the importance of each of the instruments; some are valued because they are solo instruments; others are important because they provide steady accompaniment; still others enrich the texture of the music with improvisations. The prestige of an instrumental part can also be interpreted in terms of the difficulty involved in its performance, but it can be seen in terms of its function in maintaining the unity of the ensemble. Ultimately, the normative ideas about instrumental hierarchy are preserved, while the roles of each of the individuals performing them are represented in terms of their contribution to the collective effort in the music-making process.

Without doubt the most prestigious *folia* instrument is the *viola*, but usually there are several *violinistas* (*viola* players) in a *companhia*, and generally they are not all playing the same thing; some of them duplicate the *roda* in parallel thirds, while others strum their instruments to provide harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment for the ensemble. Because of the prestige attached to this instrument, it is often felt that the *embaixador* should play the *viola*; moreover, because it is considered more difficult to duplicate the

Musical Example 4.1

Tablature for *viola* in "rio abraço" tuning (*Folia do Zé Machado*)

$\text{♩} = 115$

Vin-te cin-co-de-de-zen - bro, ai, Na-ho - ra-de-Deus-a-mém, ai, Na-ho - ra-de-Deus-a-mém, ai

Although all the strings resonate sympathetically, only the three highest courses are strummed.

Viola tuning: d'/d' - b/b - g/g - d/d' - G/g.

More than simply to strum an accompaniment, many *foliões* claimed this should be the role of the *embaixador*.

The most common tunings for the *viola* in southeastern Brazil—the *rio* (d'/d', b/b, g/g, d/d', G/g) and the *cebolão* (c'/c', c#/c#, a/a, c/c', A/a)—are particularly suitable for doing this, since a melody in thirds can be formed by sliding the fingers along the frets in two simple hand positions. The double strings give the instrument a full metallic timbre, alluding to the presence of several "voices" simultaneously. (See musical example 4.1) Some *foliões* claimed that the *resposta* or *ajudante* should also play the *viola*, and that his part should be strummed with the "natural" tuning system (c'/c', b/b, g/g, d/d', A/a). While the *embaixador* reproduces the two voices, the second *viola* can be viewed as an instrumental representation of the back voices. The two *violas*, then, function as an instrumental realization of the vocal parts, and the timbral similarity of the instruments emphasizes the dominance of the *embaixador*'s *viola* part. Up until quite recently an accompaniment based on two *violas* had been prevalent in a wide

range of southeastern musical traditions of Iberian origin. Like the parallel third, it is able to articulate the value placed on the muting of recognized hierarchical relationships. Its ability to elicit this association may explain why the instrument is so favored by the saints.

Nowadays it has become more common to find *companhias* in which the singer of the second voice plays the guitar because of the strong influence of *música sertaneja*, which replaced the second viola with a guitar around the 1940s, when the style began to be recorded (Reily 1992, 346). Against a guitar accompaniment the parallel thirds of the viola remain prominent, because the timbres of the two instruments are sufficiently distinct. On several occasions *foliões* told me that the clarity of sound one achieves with a viola and a guitar makes the music sound more orderly. Currently, however, the prestige of the viola is declining in favor of the guitar, which is rapidly coming to be seen as a more modern instrument than the viola because of its associations with the Brazilian upper classes.⁴ In the *Folia do Baeta*, for example, both Oswaldir and Zezo played guitars, claiming the guitar is a more versatile instrument than the viola. While Oswaldir strummed an accompaniment, adding picked embellishments between phrases and at harmonic transitions, Zezo performed a bass line.

The *estribilho* is generally performed by a high-pitched instrument, such as a violin, a bandolim, or a cavaquinho, to the accompaniment of the rest of the musicians; frequently two high-pitched instruments perform the *estribilho* together in parallel thirds. In *companhias* that have accordions, the *estribilho* is often played on this instrument, since it is the loudest of the melody instruments in the ensemble. The instrumentalists responsible for the *estribilho* general stand near the front, often directly behind or to the side of the *embaixador*, indicating their importance within the group. Just as *toadas* belong to the *embaixadores* who made them, *estribilhos* are seen as the property of the instrumentalists who play them. For example, *foliões* spoke of Januário's *estribilho* or Geralinho's *estribilho*, and a competent player can have several *estribilhos* in his repertoire. Like *toadas*, *estribilhos* present very little melodic variation from one performance to the next, since they serve as cues to the rest of the musicians, informing them when the singing should begin or when the piece should end. According to Januário, one of the *estribilho* players in the *Folia do Baeta*, "The gang becomes accustomed to the *estribilho* a certain way. If you change it, it all gets messed up."

Since the *estribilho* often contrasts with the *toada*, *foliões* tend to think of their playing in terms of what they perform during the *estribilho* and what they perform during the *toada*. In some groups the *estribilho* is per-

formed between each two renditions of the *toada*, but in others it is performed only at the beginning and at the end of a complete verse sequence. In such cases the musicians need to watch for a cue from the *embaixador* to know when to begin the coda, making the necessary adjustments to their playing. The technique Oswaldir used most frequently was to sing a series of three rhyming couplets rather than just two, and when the musicians heard that a third couplet used the same ending as the previous two, they launched into the *estribilho* as soon as they had completed the *toada*. In other instances the context of the *toada* itself provided a clear indication that the *embaixador* had sung his final *linha*. No other outward cues or special gestures were used that would indicate his control over the group, as one would expect of a conductor. In order to move into the *estribilho* as an ensemble, all the musicians had to be closely tuned in to one another, and occasionally there would be someone who would not make the appropriate transition.

In many *companhias* a high-pitched stringed instrument is also used to provide a countermelody during the *toada*, and often this role is performed by the *estribilho* player. While the *estribilho* is kept stable from one interlude to the next, the instruments that play countermelodies during the singing in vary their performances, as Mário did on the cavaquinho for the *Folia do Baeta* Alcides: "You can't always play the same thing. Like on the cavaquinho you go changing the way you play, always changing" (Mário). Since in this *companhia* Alcides's viola and the *caixas* provided a stable cue for the musicians, Mário was free to play variations even during the *estribilho*. (See musical example 4.2.) The chance to incorporate constant variations in his performances enhanced Mário's experience within the group, challenging him continuously to devise new alternatives. He claimed that it is because his *estribilho* involved improvisation that he never got bored during performance. Along with the countermelody, most *companhias* also have a guitarist to form a bass line, which like the countermelody provides space for the musician to engage in improvisations. (See musical example 4.3.) In these examples one notes that some phrases vary from one version to the next, but others remain practically identical. Indeed, the techniques used by the soloists are similar to the modes of formulaic composition used by *embaixadores* in verse improvisations. Over the years instrumentalists have developed a fund of musical phrases that can be inserted as alternatives for each section of the *toadas* in their repertoire.

The remaining strings, primarily violas and guitars—but also cavaquinhos and bandolins—accompany the ensemble with strummed chords. There is no prescribed limit on the number of people allowed to play the accom-

Musical Example 4.2

Mário's performances of two different counter-melodies for the *cavaquinho* to the same *toada*. They have been placed on a single system to facilitate comparison.

$\text{♩} = 48$

du - as ban-dei-ra na gló-ria ai

Com

du - as ban-dei-ra na gló-ria ai

Com

Cavaquinho tuning: d' - b' - g' - d'

paniment, so anyone who can play one of these instruments and wishes to join the group can do so. This is equally true of the small percussion instruments. While some instrumental soloists have considerable scope for personal expression, the percussion instruments—the caixas and tambores—are not so free. One of the most common patterns for the tambores in southeastern Brazil is the one used in musical example A.2. This pattern employs a technique that is typical of *folias de reis* throughout the region, in which a tremolo effect is achieved by rubbing the outer rim of the drum with the thumb of the playing hand. While the tambores can perform minor improvisations, and often very elaborate phrase endings, the caixas tend to follow much stricter rules. Generally speaking, the drummers memorize their parts and attempt to reproduce them identically from one take to the next. (See musical example 4.4.) Sebastião, the drummer of the group, justified this practice in the following way (see plate 14): “We know when the caixa is supposed to play. If the caixa player deviates from this, if he gets mixed up, the voices also fall out. . . . So the caixa player is like the art of the companhia: the whole ensemble depends on him. . . . The caixa player cannot make a mistake. Anyone else can make a mistake, but the caixa player cannot make a mistake.”

In Alcides's companhia the drums are known as the caixa and the *tripia*,

Musical Example 4.3

Geralinho's performance of three different bass lines for the guitar to the same toada. They have been placed on a single system to facilitate comparison.

$\text{♩} = 115$

BL I
BL II
BL III

Toada

Bar omitted

Vin-te cinco de dezem - bro, ai, Na ho

BL I
BL II
BL III

Toada

ra de Deus, a - mêm, ai, Na ho - ra de Deus, a mêm, ai

and the caixa is considered more important than the smaller repico because it plays on the beat. (See the caixa and repico parts in musical example A.2.) Yet foliões were quick to point out that even though it is more important because it keeps the group together, the repico is more difficult to play, and Alves claimed that "you can't let just anyone take it or the group will turn into anarchy." To some extent as it is for the tala, the low status of the caixa is compensated by its importance in maintaining the unity of the group. If the caixa is the heart of the ensemble—the instrument that gives it life—the tala is the face that guarantees that the group achieves a climax at the end of each toada. Just as this is generally the first voice a young folião performs before pressing forward in the vocal ensemble, it is often through the caixa that young instrumentalists are initiated into the ensemble.

Although the vocal parts are considered more prestigious within the ensemble, some instrumentalists insisted that it is more fun to play among the pianists, and I would be inclined to agree with them. Instrumentalists in the same instrument generally cluster together, entering into private musical dialogues with one another. For example, an instrumentalist with a rhythmic part can introduce a different pattern or a new way of marking a

Musical Example 4.4

Toada and percussion parts (Folia do Baeta Neves)

$\text{♩} = 50$

Toada

Re - u - ni - mo a com - pa - nhi - a, oi la ra, Ai, nes - ta

Pandeiro

Caixa

ho - ra de a - le - gri - a, oi la, nes - ta ho - ra de a - le - gri - a, oi la

ra, oi la

Re - u - ni - mo a com - pa - nhi - a, oi la ra, Ai, nes - ta

REHEARSALS

ni - mo a com - pa - nhi - a, oi la ra, Ai, nes - ta ho - ra de a - le - gri - a, ai la, Oi, nes - ta ho - ra de a - le - gri - a, ai la

harmonic transition into his performances. If those around him notice the new motif and find it appealing, they can take it up on the next round. As others take notice, they too often adjust to the new musical suggestion. Over the years, instrumentalists have built up a series of accompaniment motifs and transitional passages, and they attend to one another in order to produce them simultaneously. When these transitions are achieved successfully, broad grins appear on the faces of all involved.

Throughout the toada most of the instrumentalists are continuously engaged in performance, and this sustains their attention to the group, marks its participatory and inclusive orientation. This continuous engagement emphasizes the communal nature of the music making (Sugarman 1988, 26), neutralizing the hierarchical distinctions embedded in the structure of folia organization. The diversity of roles performed by the instrumentalists reflects them to coordinate their parts with the rest of the musicians in a variety of ways. Some musicians perform in unison with other participants, and often these musicians stand together to facilitate the simultaneity of

their actions. Others have unique parts which have to be coordinated rhythmically and harmonically with the rest of the ensemble, requiring them to attend to their colleagues according to a series of individual strategies, depending upon what part they play and where they are positioned within the ensemble. The percussionists and the accompanying strings are primarily responsible for maintaining the pulse for the group, which they establish in negotiation with the *estribillo* player. All other parts coordinate with this tempo by tuning in to one another in a complex network of mutual attendance to achieve musical consensus. As the group gains momentum, they tend to slowly increase the tempo of their performances, which also increases the tension in their mutual attendance.

Social Relations of Musical Production

Among *foliões* the social relations of musical production are conceived in terms of the musicians' ability to act in consort to produce a coherent performance within an atmosphere of camaraderie. During performance *foliões* tune in to one another, listening carefully to how those around them interpret their parts. The performance requirements of the music are such that they lend themselves to a diversity of interactive patterns among participants, promoting constant shifts in the focus of their attention, organizing them and reorganizing them into various groupings. At particular moments in the toada the performances of specific individuals are put in relief, drawing the attention of the other participants to what they are doing. At the same time, each musician is coordinating his behavior with the others, synchronizing it with some while entering into contrasive musical relationships with others, generating fluid and shifting patterns of mutual attendance. Such processes of group coordination are, of course, common to ensembles everywhere, but among *foliões* they are overtly expressed through body language: the musicians turn toward one another to indicate their identification with their peers, and they look at one another and smile to acknowledge the contributions of others. Given their emphasis upon the sociability of music making, *foliões* actively play up the processes of social interactions they engage in during performance, openly expressing their enjoyment in the group activity.

All the musicians attend to the cues of the *estribillo* player, since his performances begin and end each toada, although the *estribillo* player attends to the cues given him by the *embaixador* so he will know when to begin playing his solo. The singers pay special attention to the texts of the *embaixador's* improvisations, since they have to repeat them once they enter the ensemble. Special attendance is given to the entrances of the different vocal configurations, since positive evaluations of the group's performances are closely linked to their ability to create a powerful crescendo effect. The different vocal blocs listen carefully to one another in order to achieve a high degree of simultaneity. At times some musicians focus upon the *contrato's* variations, evaluating his musical ability, just as they pay special attention to the subtle variations in an instrumental solo. The instrumental accompanists attend to one another, often synchronizing their rhythmic patterns to give greater coherence to the ensemble. The specific musical interests of particular individuals draw their attention to the performances of particular individuals if they are trying to learn their parts. Thus, the musicians' attention is in a constant state of flux, shifting from one coparticipant to the next, and in the act of performing together they assimilate and re-create their repertoire. It is precisely the absence of a clearly defined musical leader to centralize the group's attention which heightens the participants' experience of the interactive diversity they generate in their performances.

It is in performance and with the musical support of the rest of the group that individuals engage in experimentation, presenting new contributions to their companions. All of them use rehearsals to try out new musical alternatives: the *embaixador* experiments with new verses, the *contrato* tries out new accents; the instrumental soloists attempt to create new ways of performing their countermelodies; accompanists devise new patterns and passages. If the musicians are not satisfied with the outcome the first time around, they have another chance when the toada begins again. The repetitiveness of the music allows them to elaborate and perfect their ideas, and once they have arrived at a satisfactory alternative, they can consolidate it in the next repetitions. While they are experimenting they also attend to the reactions of their coparticipants to see how others view the suitability of the proposed alternatives; others express their approval of new musical suggestions through overt body language as well as by taking them up in the next rounds.⁵ In this way musicians build up a stock of shared musical ideas which can be introduced at different times to add variety to their performances.

Since *foliões* conceive of music making in terms of the social relations involved in musical production, they orchestrate their performances in a manner which highlights their musical interactions. They explore the interactive possibilities embedded in their repertoire, such that the musical structure ar-

ticulates dialectically with their conceptions about music and music making to enhance the experience of sociability during their musical activities. The respect *foliões* have for the embaixador's ritual knowledge and improvisational skills is expressed in their attention to the embaixada, the notion that the contrato part provides a privileged space for a young musician to demonstrate his musical potential directs attention toward his performance, expectations heightened toward the end of each cycle as the ensemble awaits the climactic entrance of the *tala*, and so on, each performer in turn becoming the focus of group attention. Their enjoyment in making music together does not derive from an ability to reproduce their parts in perfect concordance with a predetermined model, but from the interactive processes they set in motion during performance. Within *folia* communities it is the quality of the social interactions that take place during performance that informs the evaluations participants make of their music-making experiences.

The *foliões'* notions about rehearsals are consistent with a participatory and inclusive orientation toward music making, leading them to engage in extraordinary conceptual acrobatics to downplay the hierarchical distinctions that are structurally embedded in their organizations. Because all are constantly engaged throughout the performance, guided by their own individual interests—rather than those of a conductor—they create an atmosphere of camaraderie and egalitarianism which marks their music making as a collective achievement. Like countless other genres of participatory music, the repertoire of the *folia de reis* is highly repetitive and adheres to a strict formal structure, features which allow participants to learn their parts with relative ease and enter the performance arena without requiring extensive prior training. Furthermore, the *folia* can accommodate people with varying levels of musical competence, from beginners to experienced musicians, creating spaces for anyone interested in participating. The clear framework of the style allows for controlled variation, in which each participant leaves his imprint upon the whole while simultaneously acquiring an awareness of the contributions of others. During performance *foliões* maintain a continuous dialogue with one another, balancing their search for novelty with their attempts to achieve musical consensus based upon a well-embodied musical scaffolding.

The kind of negotiation *foliões* achieve is possible only because all the musicians know their parts very well. Instead of having to focus their attention primarily on what they are performing, they can gear their attention toward each other. Their familiarity with the music allows them to alter their parts and perceive minor alterations and cues proposed by others. It is pre-

cisely the formalization and repetitiveness of the *folia* repertoire that allows participants to become so familiar with the music they are performing that they are able to divert their attention away from what they are doing to focus upon one another, increasing their awareness of their relationships with others.⁶ The intensity of interpersonal interaction among the participants promotes a recognition of the presence and contributions of their peers.⁷ Given the social emphasis *foliões* place upon music making, they sing only when they are experiencing a sense of well-being. When a musician is in mourning, for example, he temporarily leaves the group until he has overcome his sorrow, when the *companhia* arrives at a house where someone has died recently, the household often asks the *companhia* not to sing, taking only the banner into the house to bless it. The association between singing and well-being means that *foliões* generally stop singing when they feel ill at ease with their colleagues, often abandoning the group on a permanent basis.

Folias are voluntary associations, and to maintain their numbers they depend upon preserving a sense of camaraderie among their members, but this is not always easily achieved. It is most commonly the leader of the group who is accused of having offended a member by abusing his position or by manifesting an attitude of superiority toward other *foliões*. *Zé dos Magos's* *foliões* refused to continue singing under Alcides because of his autocratic leadership style; Longa, *Zé dos Magos's* sister, left her brother's *companhia* to join the *Folia do Zé Machado* because she felt that, in her presence, Maguinho had intimated that he did not approve of women in a *companhia*; Tonico left a *companhia* that is now extinct to join the *Folia do Baeta* because the dono commented that he sang too softly. Just as mobility was the peasant solution for affirming personal integrity, *folia* membership is extremely volatile, with musicians moving about from one group to another each time they feel the least bit slighted.

To an outside observer, *foliões* appear to be extremely sensitive to offense. This is not surprising, given the constant humiliations they experience on a day-to-day basis as members of the lower classes in the worst-paid and most demeaning jobs available in a highly class-conscious society. While they must put up with much of this humiliation in the workplace, the idea of tolerating it among their peers is out of the question. Even the slightest affront can be taken as an insult, such that leave taking is accompanied by the "excuse anything" (*desculpe qualquer coisa*), in the hope that some unattended disrespectful action will be overlooked. Living on the margins of society, they have all experienced humiliating situations in their encounters

with the upper classes, and within their own communities they strive to shield themselves from further belittlement.

The preoccupation with offending colleagues becomes particularly touchy when a *folião* is systematically making a mistake. A common way of dealing with such problems is the use of positive reinforcement. I experienced this in 1994 during my first performance with a *folia do divino* in Campanha, Minas Gerais, where I was given the *tambourine*.⁸ The group played in a style that was slower than any group I had performed with up until then, and I was obviously speeding everyone up, even though I was doing my best to hold back. After a few cycles I finally assimilated their tempo and was able to keep my part fairly steady. Soon afterwards a few of the musicians turned and smiled at me in approval; until I was able to play it to their satisfaction I was basically ignored. A feeling of acceptance into the group persisted from then on, in that eye contact and smiles continuously linked me to other musicians in the group for the rest of the day.

While musical integrity is ultimately the responsibility of the *embaixador*, musical practices are learned more through imitation than direct instruction. Verbal disapproval of someone's performance may be voiced on occasion in relation to children, but it is avoided where adults are concerned, at least in their presence. To come right out and tell someone that he is performing incorrectly could offend him, and a *folião* who feels he has been slighted will almost certainly abandon the group. Since sociability is the ultimate aim of the activity, camaraderie outweighs considerations regarding the aesthetic quality of a performance as a product. Thus, "incorrect" performances are generally tolerated, while the rest of the group remains hopeful that eventually a musician playing inappropriately will note where he errs and align his performance more closely to that of the rest of the group. This is not to say that *foliões* do not make aesthetic judgements about musical sounds; rather, the sound quality of one's own group's performances is perceived first in light of the quality of the social interactions musicians engage in to generate the musical sounds. The coherence of a performance is seen as a result of the degree to which the participants are able to coordinate their behavior with one another to achieve musical consensus. The quality of the sound is a measure of the quality of the social integration within the group. The ultimate goal is to achieve an aesthetically pleasing product in which the harmonious sounds of the music reflect harmonious social relations among the performers.

In participatory genres like the *folia de reis*, the reification of music—that is, the divorcing of music from the social relations of its production—is him

dered, since participants experience a direct involvement in the creation of the final product. With reification, music comes to be conceived in terms of fixed structures, which once composed take on an existence as real entities. Thus divorced from the processes involved in their production, musical structures become available for evaluation purely in terms of their aesthetic merits as objects. In a reified orientation to music—like that dominant in Western thinking—the focus of attention is placed upon the integrity of the sounds, to which the music makers become subservient. In nonreified orientations to music it is the sounds that reflect the integrity of the social relations of the music makers. Among *foliões* the sounds heard as music are perceived as an outcome of the negotiations of those involved in producing them, allowing the musicians to acquire consciousness of how they have contributed to the music that emerges out of their encounters with other people, just as they note the role of others in the final production. Thus, what appear to be "conceptual acrobatics" may in fact reflect quite accurately the way in which many *foliões* experience their music making; they are, therefore, far more than rhetorical discourses formulated to comfort musicians in the ensembles' lower ranks.

Competing Frameworks

The *foliões'* social ideal during music making emphasizes egalitarianism and camaraderie, why, one might ask, do they repeatedly mark the hierarchical organization of their associations in such explicit terms? Although a particular conceptual framework may be dominant in a given context, people rarely operate according to a single set of coherent ideas, and these conceptualizations can be—and usually are—contradictory and conflictual (see 1986; Watson 1991). Indeed, *folia* activities are informed by both hierarchical and egalitarian orientations. On the one hand, *companhias* are highly structured and rule-governed associations, but on the other, they are extremely fluid; just as their membership is in constant flux, people's roles within the organization are constantly changing. For every "norm" there are countless exceptions, which accommodate the pragmatic circumstances of the moment.

For *companhias* to exist as associations they require some form of leadership, and as we have seen, they envisage three leadership positions as a means of decentralizing the decision-making process. Thus, the hierarchical organization of the *folia* is itself relativized, and any *folião* who is interested in par-

ticipating in internal decision making need only arrive at rehearsals early enough to participate in the discussions before the music begins. Furthermore, companhias must contend with other factors: first, the style is structured around a variety of distinct musical parts, and second, their membership is continuously changing. Because folias are voluntary associations, the norms must be continuously negotiated to accommodate the people participating in them without threatening their personal integrity. By defining each of the roles within the organization in hierarchical terms and by establishing a clear framework for the internal mobility of their membership, participants—particularly newcomers—are able to assess fairly rapidly what roles might be available to them, accommodating their individual projects to the requirements of the tradition in accordance with the makeup of the group at any given time. The norms provide a backdrop against which negotiations can take place, constituting a shared understanding of the degree of elasticity the organizations can tolerate without requiring overt explanations that could be taken as offenses; to join the group, newcomers will have to perform toward the back, unless none of the former members of the group is interested in occupying an opening in one of the more prestigious parts.⁹

In effect, then, the internal hierarchy of the companhia provides a mechanism for dealing with the negotiation of musical roles within a style marked by heterogeneous parts in which participants hold a nonreflexed orientation toward music making. Thus, foliões are emphatic in representing their associations in terms of their internal hierarchy, while they simultaneously engage in downplaying it. Yet in negotiating the weight each conceptual framework is to receive, there is considerable scope for variation. While Alcides's authoritarian leadership procedures were considered unacceptable to the members of the Folia do Zé dos Magos, the members of his own companhia are willing to accede to them; his centralized mode of leadership is legitimated by the fact that his foliões considered him to be the most knowledgeable embaixador in São Bernardo.

The competition among companhias brings to the fore its own set of conceptual frameworks. When assessing the performances of other companhias, foliões do not only evaluate the extent of the embaixador's esoteric and ritual knowledge, they also become highly critical observers of the aesthetic merits of their musical performances, even though such evaluations are downplayed in relation to their own groups. Since these exercises are generally geared to pointing out the shortcomings in the performances of others, one's own companhia supposedly emerges as aesthetically superior, and one's own embaixador as more knowledgeable. Thus, the construction of the integrity of

one's own companhia is predicated upon an ability to extract the performances of other groups from the social relations of their production.

The modernization of the folia tradition that is currently taking place, particularly in the urban context, however, has increased the space given to aesthetic considerations in assessing one's own group's performances. This often conflicts with the social orientation toward music making, by placing greater stress on the quality of the music and on the public image of the group during performance than previously occurred in such groups. In São Bernardo this was most noticeable in the Folia do Baeta Neves, where there was the greatest number of entrances and exits of musicians during my research period. Just before I began working with them, the group had lost a drummer; I was told by other members that this had happened because one of the leaders of the group had called his attention to the fact that he was late one day, even though people were still milling around when he arrived; allegedly he handed the caixa back there and then and never returned again. The new caixairo stayed in the group only for a short period. He left, it was said, because he occasionally missed a beat; one time this happened during a visitation, and someone looked at him with a frown on his face, publicly humiliating him. Two elderly brothers left in 1988 because they felt some of the young musicians in the group had ridiculed their style of singing; they said they saw them imitating it to their peers, calling it old fashioned. These are but a few examples of the ten or so foliões who have abandoned the group since Oswaldir took the banner; the vast majority left because they felt slighted by another member of the group.

The Folia do Baeta is also the only companhia I ever encountered that had actually expelled any foliões from its ranks. It is a point of honor among folia leaders to claim that they do not tolerate disorderly behavior in their ensembles, but very rarely are direct measures taken to expel anyone. One fono in Batatais, São Paulo, once told me that he allowed only respectful people to join his group, but he had never had to exclude anyone from his companhia, because only orderly people ever wanted to join it; anyone who devoted to the Three Kings, he claimed, would know how to respect the tradition. In the Folia do Baeta three musicians were turned out of the group for excessive alcohol consumption. While their drinking had long been considered problematic within the group, things came to a head when they arrived besotted to a public presentation organized by the São Bernardo Department of Culture. It was decided that to allow them to join the group on the stage could ruin the group's reputation, and after some loud and strong exchanges between the three and the leadership, they finally agreed to leave

the premises. Two of the excluded musicians were allowed to rejoin the *companhia* several months later, having promised to moderate their drinking during *folia* activities.

On the one hand, the imposition of order in a *companhia* resonates positively within *folia* communities, since it is seen to reflect the modern urban lifestyles of its membership, marking them off from the backward and rustic aesthetic of their rural past; on the other, it entails a greater preoccupation with the product of performance, constituting a move toward a more refined conception of music making. Finding the means of reconciling these radically opposing forces constitutes a major challenge for the leaders of urban *companhias*, which they achieve to a greater or lesser degree. Throughout my research the *Folia do Baeta* had little difficulty replacing the musicians who abandoned the group, since new members were easily attracted by the "orderly" image of the *folia*, with its various uniforms and "modern" sound, but especially by the opportunities afforded within this group to make records and to participate in public presentations in São Bernardo and other places, sources of considerable pride among the group's membership. For the sake of these opportunities some *foliões* were willing to swallow their pride when slighted, remaining in the group for longer than they might have done under similar circumstances in another *folia*.

Negotiations

In São Caetano one year I had to teach Owaldir a lesson, and the next day he didn't sing; he spent the whole day without singing. I had to take the *embaixada* all day. . . .

The banner was at Geraldinho's house, and we went to get it. . . . When we were leaving, I said, "Look, let's see if we sing all the way to Belê's house and we'll leave the banner there. . . . and we'll go home to rest. Tomorrow is Saturday and we can sing the whole day" . . . I even asked the group if everyone agreed. They all agreed. . . .

When we got to Belê's it was around 10:15. . . . I was going to sing to ask the family to put the banner away. . . . but before I could begin [Owaldir] talked . . . to his son, Paulinho, to Juarez, to Jacaré. He said, "Look, let's sing through the night" . . . But I was the coordinator, and we had decided we were going to stop there and return on Saturday. He was responsible for the banner, but I was coordinating the group. . . .

Then I said, "Listen, are you serious or are you joking?"

"No, I'm serious. Let's sing all night?"

I said, "What did I say at Geraldinho's? Didn't I say that when we got here we would stop to come back tomorrow morning, that we would rest, and that tomorrow we would sing all day?"

"Right, but we've decided to sing all night."

"All right then, but I end my part here. Tomorrow I'm off to Arceburgo, because when you invited me to coordinate this, I intended to coordinate it. If I am to coordinate it, the responsibility is mine; if it's not mine, then it's yours." I said, "Look here, the notebook is here. . . . From now on you follow on with the banner without me."

"Ah, but, Zezo."

"No, either I decide or you decide. If you think you have the right, fine. I made my decision back there. If you want to disregard my decision, go ahead" . . .

He said, "Alright, but we're going to sing" . . .

So I moved aside, and he said, "Ah, but you have to sing the *resposta* for me."

I said, "No, from now on you make do. Don't you make the decisions? If you're going to continue all night long, then you can sing the *embaixada* and then 'respond' to yourself as well. You think you can do both things at the same time, so do both of them; sing both voices. I'm not going to sing," and I didn't sing.

Then his son, Paulinho, did the second voice. Paulinho was singing the *contrato*. He would leave that voice and respond to the *embaixada*. . . . and on the return he would sing the *contrato*.

In his verse he called me . . . twice to come sing. . . . and he started to cry. . . . With tears flowing he pleaded with me to sing; I didn't go. . . . Then he sang another verse apologizing for what he had done; I didn't go. . . . When he reached the last verse, he asked the family to put the banner and the instruments away. Then I went and responded for him, because that was what we had decided. . . .

The next day he didn't sing. He was so upset, he was so ashamed. . . . that he stayed the whole day following the banner without singing. (Zezo)

This account of his confrontation with Owaldir represents more than a struggle over authority within the group; it was played out amid tensions between "traditionalist" and "modernist" orientations toward *folia* activities in the ongoing negotiations of the group's public image. In the

days in which companhias made “direct journeys” (*viagens diretas*), remaining en route for the full twelve days of the Christmas season, the groups often performed all night long; some foliões even claimed that companhias should perform only at night, since the Kings traveled only when the stars were out. Musicians often spoke of their nightlong peregrinations with fondness, remembering them as contexts which consolidated the sense of camaraderie they strove to create during performance. But they also claimed that nocturnal visitations commonly led many foliões to overindulgence in alcohol consumption. In fact, in rhetorical fashion Oswaldir himself once asked me, “Nowadays who would like to be woken up at four in the morning to let a motley band of drunkards into their house? . . . What would we do if some family refused the banner?”

Obviously I wanted to know whether this had ever happened. Oswaldir claimed that the companhia had never been openly rejected, but some families had pretended to be away or not to have woken up when the companhia came around; others had given them an offering, but had asked them to wait outside while they took the banner around the house to bless it. But, he said, “Sooner or later someone was bound to offend the Three Kings”; it was just a matter of time. In their drive toward “modernization,” the foliões had been negotiating an end to late-night visitations, to restore their respectability within the local community. By the time I began my research there was general consensus in the group that they should stop singing around ten in the evening.¹⁰

While the victor here seems to have been the “civilizing process” (Elias 1978–82), the responses to the conflicting frames of reference continued to be triggered by deeply rooted commonsense notions of personal integrity and the role of singing as an expression of social well-being. In marking the boundaries of his authority, Zezo explicitly invoked the structure of the music as an icon of the mutual dependence and complementarity of the roles of the leaders. Furthermore, he claimed his decision had not been imposed autoritatively; before taking it he had sought—and received—the (harmonious) consent of the whole group. However “modern” the Folia do Bata may have appeared to its members, the dominant conceptual framework in forming their musical activities continued to articulate a social orientation toward musical production.

From the time a folião enters an ensemble, he becomes immersed in the interactive web that characterizes folia music making, in which the exchange of overt facial and bodily expressions among musicians acknowledges their contributions to the collective achievement. To perform together the musi-

cians coordinate their actions with one another, and in the sounds they produce, their links to one another reverberate throughout the body, heightening their sense of social integration. These are powerful bodily experiences, which are not easily debased by competing conceptual frames, particularly when they are also resonant with everyday patterns of sociability.

The sociability of music making, particularly in the rehearsal context, is integrated into a complex network of face-to-face interactions linking musicians, their families, neighbors, and work colleagues on a day-to-day basis. Rehearsals are special events which break with the everyday to highlight nonverbal means of sociability, but they are also familiar, resonating with valued patterns of social interaction outside the immediate musical sphere. These patterns are rearticulated, organizing social exchanges throughout the rehearsal. Just as the vocal parts have staggered entrances, arrivals at rehearsals more or less replicate these entrance patterns, such that those with the most prestigious parts arrive first. This provides the leadership with an opportunity to discuss group affairs while they wait for the rest of the musicians. Suggestions are put forward as commentary on the procedures of others, and they are endorsed through successive repetitions of analogous situations. The crescendo effect of the successive vocal entrances in performance replicates this mode of collective decision making: in performance the *en-baixador* improvises a text which is then taken up by the successive vocal configurations, in a manner which repeatedly endorses the initial proposition. Furthermore, because improvisations have a formulaic quality, similar themes emerge time and time again in different guises, just as foliões discuss a set of stock themes over and over again in a different order and with a different emphasis each time they meet.

By transporting familiar modes of social interaction into the performance arena, foliões add new dimensions to the way they experience their social relations. While on a day-to-day basis face-to-face interactions emerge primarily in the form of dyadic relations across households, group music making re-creates these complex webs in a single event, allowing them to be experienced as the basis of a community. During performance musicians engage in a diversity of interactive patterns, articulating links with all the other musicians simultaneously, links which can be—and are—extended conceptually to encompass their families and neighbors into a fluid social network.