

# Territorial and Corrosive: The “jogo do bicho” (Animal Game) and Organized Crime in Brazil

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*That in fact is why I joined the police. I like being at the heart of things.*

—Albert Camus, *Les Justes*, 1949<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

**B**eneath the charms of Rio de Janeiro, with its glorious beaches, football, samba and carnival, lurks a criminal group structured according to mafia principles. This organization has always been part of *carioca* folklore,<sup>2</sup> but it is only in the past few years that it has truly been targeted. After the federal police’s “Furacão” operation in 2007, the organization was exposed as never before. This paper will introduce the group, its characteristics and methods. We will examine the specialized literature and cases involving these criminals, as well as their history, in order to throw light on this criminal operation and the role it has played in the “descent into hell”<sup>3</sup> of Brazil’s former capital, struggling against drug trafficking, violence, corruption, and a climate of fear.

We will begin with the history of the animal game, from the moment of its creation, at a time when Brazil was at last becoming a Republic, until the military

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1 Translated as “The Just Assassins” in *Caligula and Three Other Plays*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and Justin O’Brien (New York: Vintage, 1962).

2 *Carioca* is the name given to the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro.

3 During the Rio Olympics, striking police protesting at Rio de Janeiro’s international airport held up a banner aimed at tourists and athletes: “Welcome to Hell.” *Washington Post*, June 29, 2016, accessed February 3, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/early-lead/wp/2016/06/29/welcome-to-hell-rio-police-tell-visitors-as-body-parts-wash-up-on-olympic-beach/>

coup in 1964. We will then focus on the period under the military dictatorship, when dubious relations developed between the Bicheiros<sup>4</sup> and the regime,<sup>5</sup> and when the torch was passed between generations of *cupola* members.<sup>6</sup>

Thereafter, we will examine the two big judicial investigations, beginning in the 1990s, that targeted the animal game's *capi*. These revealed a modern criminal organization, using sophisticated techniques to control several different activities at the same time: the traditional animal game, slot machines and, in the 2000s, casinos. We will learn that behind the illicit activity tolerated by carioca society, there exists a huge criminal network organized as a mafia.

We will go on to develop criminological analyses, perhaps the key part of this thesis. We will compare the criminal practices of the Bicheiros to those of other criminal organizations elsewhere in the world, especially the Italian Mafia. We will observe the difficulties encountered by the Brazilian judiciary in settling charges on the Bicheiros, as also happens in similar situations elsewhere, partly because of a lack of appropriate laws and partly because of the avoidance strategies that these criminals adopt. We will see that at the present time, the third generation of godfathers is progressively replacing the "uncles."<sup>7</sup>

Lastly, we will challenge some preconceived notions. We will first seek to demonstrate that the Bicheiros, more than just a criminal operation, are an organization similar to the Italian Mafia and other international criminal organizations. As we expose the functioning of this criminal network, we will show that the damage done in Rio and in Brazil goes beyond breaches of domestic security. Finally, we will identify the collateral effect of the Bicheiros' crimes on the morale and ethics of carioca society: corruption, violence, and so on.

In a new global world order, nations and other international interests are increasingly worried by the internationalization of crime. For analysts and specialists in this field, understanding criminal phenomena facilitates detailed evaluation that could lead to improved security policies.

This paper's objective is thus to expose an organization that has profited from the folklore and tradition of a lottery that has existed for over a century, to become a transnational criminal operation: modern, hybrid, entrepreneurial, and mafioso. Meanwhile, society and the press in Brazil have been blind to the situation and have long viewed the bicheiro as a sort of Brazilian Robin Hood, supporting the Carnival and popular culture.

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4 The term Bicheiro, capitalized, will be used in this article to describe the chiefs of the *cupola da bicho* that controls the animal game. There are of course lower-ranked bicheiros; these will be referred to as godfathers.

5 The dictatorship between 1964 and 1985 was marked by intermittent military repression of leftist opponents. In an initial period between 1964 and around 1969 fundamental rights were respected. This was followed by a phase of significant repression from 1969 until 1974, when at last the government decided to initiate a slow and gradual return to democracy.

6 The *cupola* is the animal game's operational command unit, composed of the most important family chiefs.

7 In Portuguese, the bicheiros who command the operation are known as *tios*, or uncles.

The criminologist's role is to provide society with the tools to identify threats to its development and preservation, and to supply analyses that challenge a blinkered, change-resistant approach.<sup>8</sup> Bringing together historical data, theoretical analysis, crime news and court reports, this study will look at the whole picture in order to improve our understanding of the Bicheiros, and the direct and indirect damage they do to the carioca community and Brazilian society in general.

## 1—HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANIMAL GAME

### *Invention of the Animal Game*

The invention of the animal game (*jogo do bicho*) goes back to 1892, not long after the opening of the zoo in what was then the country's capital, Rio de Janeiro.<sup>9</sup> The creation of new leisure facilities was part of a wider project of modernization and renewal in the Brazilian capital. One of the project's aims was to cope with the massive influx of immigrants at the end of the nineteenth century, but it was also seeking to position this new tropical capital as one of the world's great capital cities.

The mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Francisco Pereira Passos, is attributed with the idea of modernizing the city. He had visited Paris on many occasions and decided to instigate works to remodel Rio, emulating Haussmann's regeneration of Paris during the Second French Empire. The carioca mayor's office hoped that this project would make Rio de Janeiro equal to the great European metropolises.

It was Baron João Batista de Vieira Drummond—known as Baron de Drummond—a member of the carioca aristocracy, who was responsible for creating a zoo in 1884 in the Vila Isabel neighborhood. To finance the operation and upkeep of his new attraction, the Baron came up with a lottery for the zoo's visitors on an animal theme, with tickets costing a few coins. Each entrance ticket was stamped with the image of an animal, chosen from a list of twenty-five (the same list that is used today). At the end of the day, the zoo drew lots and the winner took home cash worth twenty times the cost of the entry ticket.

According to the Brazilian historian Felipe Santos Magalhães,<sup>10</sup> the first draw took place on July 3, 1892, when twenty-three visitors, whose tickets bore the stamp of the winning animal (the ostrich) won the prize. But the original purpose of the lottery was quickly distorted: it was bringing in large sums of money for Baron de Drummond and became the zoo's principal activity. Before long, the public were only interested in zoo tickets because they enabled participation

8 Alain Bauer and Xavier Raufer, *La face noire de la mondialisation* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2009).

9 Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil from 1763 to 1960, by which time the President of the Republic, Juscelino Kubitschek, had built a new capital city in the center of the country in order to encourage migration to the interior.

10 Felipe Santos Magalhães, “Ganhou Leva...Do vale o impresso ao vale o escrito. Uma História Social do Jogo do Bicho no Rio de Janeiro (1890–1960).” (PhD diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2005).

in the lottery. An office was even opened in the center of the city so that players had no need to go to Vila Isabel—the out-of-town location of the zoo—to buy them.

The game was immediately legitimized by carioca society. The government, on the other hand, stopped short of regulating this new kind of lottery. As a result, with the passage of time, it became established throughout Rio, taking advantage of the grey area between legal and illegal.

The animal game's little-known history is vague on what led to its creation. One long-standing theory attributes its appearance to a sort of peaceful popular protest against Brazil's anti-capitalist Republic, which had been in place since 1889. Magalhães<sup>11</sup> notes that many studies recount this positive version of the lottery's creation,<sup>12</sup> but fail to recognize the fact that the initial objective was swiftly forgotten and that the animal game fell into the hands of the Bicheiros, whose purpose remains to this day the acquisition of easy money, power, and the perpetuation of their hold on crime.

Magalhães also says that Baron de Drummond was not interested in the fine arts, nor in architecture and urban planning, as his biographers suggest.<sup>13</sup> Instead, Drummond was basically an audacious capitalist entrepreneur who, by the beginning of the twentieth century, had already made his fortune thanks to this new market and the support of his friends in government. The opening of the zoo coincided with a period of strong growth in Rio's property market and brisk financial speculation.

### *From Indifference to Repression*

The cordial relations between Baron de Drummond and the Rio mayor's office, springing from their common aim to modernize and civilize the city, would later become strained by the ambitions of the mayor, Pereira Passos, who wanted to transform "Rio, city of favelas" to "Rio, city of marvels."<sup>14</sup> As the success of the animal game grew, the mayor came to feel that the proliferation of lotteries was giving Rio a bad name, and withdrew his permission for the Baron's lottery project.

The game of animals and other lotteries thus became a cause of conflict between the city council and the lottery operators. In addition to the dominant zoo lottery, other games of chance were multiplying in the city and escaping the

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11 Ibid.

12 Elena Soárez, "Jogo do bicho, um totemismo carioca" (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro/ Museu Nacional, Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology, 1992); Selena de Mattos Meira, "Jogo do Bicho: a resistência pela transgressão" (Master's dissertation, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Postgraduate History Program, 2000); Roberto DaMatta and Elena Soárez. *Águias, burros e borboletas: um estudo antropológico do jogo do bicho* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1999), 28.

13 Luiz Edmundo, *O Rio de Janeiro do meu tempo*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Conquista, 1957) vol. 4, chap. 28.

14 This popular sobriquet for the city of Rio de Janeiro remains in use to this day.

authorities' control. It reached the point when there were bookmakers taking bets in the shops and at every Rio crossroads. To prevent Rio from turning into one large casino, the politicians authorized some activities (horse racing, bowling, billiards) but not others, including the animal game.

The beginning of the 1900s saw the final rupture between the animal game and the state. According to Magalhães,<sup>15</sup> the government's attempt to regulate entertainments and games of chance was a reflection of Protestant influence in Rio, stemming from the strengthening of relations between Brazil and the United States and their foreign policy as expressed in the corollary to the Monroe doctrine.<sup>16</sup>

Even though the *bicho*<sup>17</sup> was illegal, its staying power lay in its popularity and its presence in the local press, which published the results. Nevertheless, the daily *O Bichinho* reported suspicions of rigged draws and the existence of a syndicate controlling the game and plunging Rio into vice. The paper organized a mechanism for informing on the Bicheiros, with one of its employees stationed every day in the Café de Paris in the Largo da Carioca, to glean information that could lead to the group's prosecution.<sup>18</sup>

It should be acknowledged that recourse to lotteries in order to finance state activities (especially public works) was not something new: in those days it was common practice in Europe. However, in Europe a criminal class did not develop on the back of the lotteries, since in the old continent it was the government that managed these games, which were aimed at the leisured classes. In Brazil, on the other hand, the government had ceded the management of the lotteries to the private market, which mostly targeted the poorer classes, for whom the lottery offered the only chance of escape from poverty.

The laxity of the Brazilian government gave shopkeepers and bookmakers a free rein to run these illegal lotteries, despite laws that had forbidden certain types of games since the 1840s. The situation therefore continued to deteriorate until 1873, when decree 5.207 was promulgated, forbidding the sale of lottery tickets in Rio's streets: from that moment on, tickets could only be sold in offices and shops designated by the mayor's office.<sup>19</sup> However, street vendors carried on, forcing the enactment of a stricter law: decree no. 372 of January 9, 1903. As soon as it was adopted, the mayor's office mounted operations to seize the tickets, and for a time these had a positive effect.

It is clear that the sale of tickets for the animal game was poorly controlled, whether by the authorities or by the private market, because anyone who wanted

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15 Magalhães, “Ganhou Leva...”

16 In his corollary, president of the United States Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) announced a US expansionist policy towards Latin America, replacing a policy of neutrality with a stance that would tolerate no threat to the United States' fundamental interests.

17 *Bicho*, a shortening of *jogo do bicho*, is commonly used by Brazilians to refer to the animal game.

18 The Largo da Carioca is a very busy public square and crossing point in the city center.

19 Magalhães, “Ganhou Leva...” 79.

to take part was able to do so. The Bicheiros, territorial chiefs who controlled their fiefdoms with an iron fist, only emerged at the beginning of the 1950s. Between 1910 and 1950, it was not only shopkeepers but also entrepreneurs who were involved in the entertainment market. The latter were responsible for the relationship between the bicho and the cinema. This close link with popular culture would always remain a feature of the animal game.<sup>20</sup> We will see later that a similar link also exists between the Bicheiros and the Rio Carnival.

According to the historian Alice Gonzaga, in those days the animal game provided a source of funds for film production.<sup>21</sup> Gonzaga asserts that the producers Paschoal Segreto, Jácomo Staffa and José Labanca financed their principal business—film—with the revenues from ticket sales. While for Segreto, the bicho remained a secondary activity, the game itself became the main business of the Labancas, who became Rio's first Bicheiro family.

The illegal nature of the animal game alarmed investors unwilling to be associated with a criminal activity, and from the 1940s onwards the lottery passed into the hands of individuals who became specialists, modernizing and organizing the operation of the underground lottery. As time passed, territorial disputes became more frequent: these were the first indications of what would become the organized crime associated with the animal game.

### *The Animal Game's Transition into Organized Crime*

Studies written about the animal game, a familiar element in Brazilian popular culture, focus mainly on its social and folkloric aspects. Evidence of the criminal aspect only becomes apparent in crime reports and Brazilian legal proceedings. Yet from the beginning of the 1950s, the bicho and its promoters would become the basis for organized crime in Rio, foreshadowing other criminal operations, such as the control of drug trafficking in the favelas.

From the 1940s and 1950s onwards, the structure of the animal game gradually strengthened, with the emergence of “animal houses” (shops selling bicho tickets, still an illegal activity) and “fortresses” (where the cash from sales was brought and accounts were filed). Fortresses also served as the regional godfathers' headquarters.

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20 According to Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto: “The study by DaMatta and Sóarez (1999) on the history of the game's creation emphasizes its duality: with a simple draw rewarding the luckiest, this game of chance gradually came to be associated with a complex system managed by “bankers,”—who could be described as the animal game's financiers—while for the players it was associated with notions related to the interpretation of dreams, the divinatory arts, and numerology.” [Our translation]. Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto, “*Jogo do bicho: un jeu de hasard au cœur de l'économie carioca*” in *Sciences du jeu* [online] 3, July 22, 2015, accessed February 11, 2018, <http://journals.openedition.org/sdj/377>

21 Alice Gonzaga, *Palácios e poeiras: 100 anos de cinemas no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Record/Funarte, 1996), 36. Cited in Magalhães, “Ganhou Leva...” 84.

The Bicheiros were thus dividing up the territory. Now, anyone who wanted to manage the animal game or slot machines (and in the 2000s the casinos) had to get the agreement of the cupola, and then go through the points of sale, the “banks.” The newcomers also had to pay the godfathers a monthly tax on their profits. Each region, with its banks, was controlled by a Bicheiro. The animal game spread throughout the State of Rio, and from there into Brazil’s principal metropolitan areas.

As telephones became more common, they too became integral to the trade and were used to make ticket sales. The trust between the population and the Bicheiros was evidenced by the fact that telephone sales were simply recorded by the “banker” in a notebook, without any receipts. Running the bicho relied on reciprocal honesty and trust: the bankers trusted their customers to pay for their tickets later, and the customers trusted that the bankers would always pay out. Telephone sales strengthened this bond of trust between all parties.

During the Cold War, the Bicheros experienced real growth. At this time Latin America was influenced by the United States more than ever. The enemy was communism. The Brazilian generals, who came to power in a coup d’état, could not have cared less about the offenses committed by the carioca Bicheiros. Influenced by the Truman Doctrine and McCarthyism,<sup>22</sup> Brazil’s military sought to tackle the “red menace” by means of the National Security Doctrine, a repressive state framework that mostly targeted left-wing opponents. Naturally, the generals, with their respect for moral standards, work, and the rule of law, could not ignore the animal game. However, the repression of the game by the forces of law and order was of secondary importance.

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22 After the Second World War and the Cold War, hemispheric security became an anticommunist alliance, based on “containment.” Two USA laws sealed the pact between the United States and Latin America: the Mutual Defense Assistance Act (1949) and the Mutual Security Act (1951). Thereafter, experts and military hardware flooded in, and Latin American officers and non-commissioned officers learnt what a “modern army” was. According to Father José Comblin, the National Security Doctrine, fundamental to the Latin American dictatorships of the 1970s and 1980s, sprang from the fusion of three streams of thought:

1) *A geopolitical ideology of national socialism*. Written works by Latin American generals have titles that are very similar to works by theoreticians of Nazi expansion such as Karl Haushofer and Rudolph Kjellen.

2) *An ideology of anti-subversion* developed by the French army—the first to confront this new kind of war—in Indochina and Algeria.

3) *An ideology of homeland security* established by the Pentagon in 1947. In their foundational thinking and core concepts—homeland security, subversion, the enemy from within, international communism, the nation in peril—these Latin American strategies take their inspiration from McCarthyite legislation in the USA, buttressed by US experiences in Vietnam, as well as from the “counterrevolutionary warfare” that took place in Latin America after the victory of the Cuban revolution.

*The Animal Game and Its Murky Connections  
with The Military Regime 1964–1985*<sup>23</sup>

In Brazil, conservatism and respect for the rule of law and moral standards were responsible for the doctrine behind the coup d'état that removed the “communist threat” presented by President João Goulart of the Brazilian Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PTB). The military wanted Brazil henceforth to abide by the positivist motto on the Brazilian flag: “order and progress.”<sup>24</sup> These principles suggested to the cariocas that the military government would bring Rio's increasing criminality under control. And to begin with, that is what happened.

However, the criminal fraternity's adaptability succeeded in turning the tables. The Bicheiros would profit from the very complex era of boom and bust in Brazil between the 1960s and 1980s. The totalitarian chapter saw an “economic miracle,” violent political repression of communism and left-wing organizations, and finally the “lost decade,” when Brazil plunged into an economic crisis characterized by an annual inflation rate of more than 200%, and by a fall in GDP that marked the beginning of a severe recession. Relations between the Bicheiros and the government were also marked by highs and lows.

Before going into the details of this complex relationship, we should emphasize that ambiguous associations between totalitarian regimes and mafia organizations is not a phenomenon unique to Brazil. According to Jacques de Saint Victor, the Italian Mafia also managed to survive Benito Mussolini's first years of power and finally established a sort of coexistence with the Fascist regime, based on its connections with high-ranking members of the Fascist party.<sup>25</sup>

In Mussolini's Italy, the Fascists could not, at first, tolerate organizations powerful enough to compete with the state. Jacques de Saint Victor describes the context in which the Duce appointed Cesare Mori as prefect of Palermo. Between 1925 and 1929, Mori's iron fist pleased everyone. In the campaign against the Mafia's base in Sicily, the government proved that it was in control of its territory; but the Mafia bosses also benefited from these measures, reinforcing their status as they re-calibrated the balance of power between the families. But when Cesare Mori went after the Mafia heavyweights, he was thwarted: the upper echelons of Sicilian society, linked to the Mafia, managed to convince Mussolini that Mori might destabilize the age-old coexistence between the Mafia and the state. Following pressure from the elites, Mussolini removed Cesare Mori and Luigi Giampietro, Palermo's chief prosecutor. From 1932 onwards, the head of the government and the Mafia reached an understanding. The Duce granted the Mafiosi

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23 Aloy Jupiara and Chico Otavio, *Os porões da contravenção* (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2015). This section is at a great extent based on the remarkable research realized by Jupiara and Otavio who plunged into the intelligence military's archives in order to reveal the Bicheiros' relationship with the military's dictatorial regime.

24 Based on the positivist thinking of the French philosopher Auguste Comte.

25 Jacques de Saint Victor, *Un pouvoir invisible* (Paris: Gallimard, 2012).



an amnesty in order to buy the allegiance of these “men of honor,” who would consequently support the Fascist party.

At the end of the Second World War, the Italian Mafiosi presented themselves as victims of Fascism and took up with the Allies, starting with the Americans, taking advantage of the new international context and the bipolar order that was beginning to develop. This demonstrates the remarkable adaptability of mafia organizations, which are never guided by ideology: the Italian Mafia associated itself first with Mussolini and then with the Allies.

In Brazil, it was much the same thing. Like Mussolini, successive military presidents ordered the governors of Rio de Janeiro and police chiefs to crack down on the Bicheiros and the animal game in the region. In 1968, the fifth Institutional Act—known as AI 5—provided the legislative framework that would allow the federal government and the State of Rio to curb the Bicheiros’ activities. Written by General Artur da Costa e Silva, the text granted dictatorial powers to the president; suspended the Constitution, Congress and personal freedoms; and imposed censorship. The decree was the start of the harshly repressive era of Brazilian dictatorship—the years of lead—a time when the military were no longer accountable to anyone.<sup>26</sup> This was also the start of an aggressive campaign against the carioca mafia, similar to the campaign waged by Mussolini in Italy.

The military regime needed to ensure that it had a monopoly on the use of force. As a result, any group—political or criminal—that threatened the government would be violently repressed. Some of the great barons of the animal game, such as Castor de Andrade, occasionally spent time in jail, mostly in the Ilha Grande prison.

Castor de Andrade was the first of the bosses to feel the effects of the state’s clampdown. General Luís de França Oliveira, secretary for public security, conducted a ruthless campaign against the Bicheiros. At the end of 1968, Castor de Andrade and other bicheiros such as Natal, Nilo Camelo, Elídio Gomes de Oliveira, José Caruzzo Escafura and Mario Stabile were arrested and imprisoned in Ilha Grande.

Castor was charged with bribery and immorality offenses. But the arrangements for his detention demonstrated his power to corrupt. Instead of languishing in an 8m<sup>2</sup> cell like a common criminal, he was put up on the island in a furnished and redecorated eight-bedroom villa, with servants and a boat to deliver his frequent guests. In an interview for the newspaper *Pasquin*, Castor spoke of his time in prison: “I was imprisoned on the island. However, I was given a huge house, which I had renovated. I took on four servants and a butler. I organized samba school parades. I had a games room, a telephone, a cinema. It was such a nice house that it was known as the “guesthouse.” When the prison governor had guests, he would put them up in my house.”

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<sup>26</sup> The most repressive era in the history of Brazil (between 1968 and 1974) was known as “the years of lead.”

If the government changed its attitude towards the Bicheiros it was partly because, as well as managing the lottery, they were also smugglers, bringing quantities of foreign products into Brazil. Rather than the game, it was this that pushed the military—under the pretext of nationalism and national industry—to crack down on some criminals. However, this attitude did not last: although Castor was reined in by the military in 1969, by 1980 he was having a heyday. He established himself as the most powerful bicheiro, protected by an untouchable reputation. The book *Mémórias de uma guerra suja* discloses statements by police chief Cláudio Guerra, one of the harshest men engaged in the machinery of repression, which show that Castor held shares in a metallurgical plant (Indústria e Metalúrgica Castor) belonging to the father-in-law of Johnny Figueiredo, son of the president at that time, General João Batista Figueiredo.<sup>27</sup> According to Guerra, Castor became so close to the military that he had a badge giving him free access to the marine intelligence service.

It was therefore, ironically, during the years of lead that this bogus government offensive against the barons of the game took place. It was then that Anísio Abrahão David and Ailton Guimarães Jorge, alias “Capitão Guimarães,” stepped into a void left by the arrest of minor bicheiros and became important figures in the animal game. Thanks to their respective links with the world of politics and the military, these two men helped the Bicheiros to infiltrate the state by corrupting its agents, especially by co-opting policemen and soldiers. Once their sphere of influence was firmly established, they could run their businesses without constraints.

The story of how Capitão Guimarães joined the Bicheiros is emblematic of the relationship between the dictatorship and criminals.<sup>28</sup> When the military took power, Guimarães was an officer, a product of the prestigious Agulhas Negras Military Academy. Trained in an atmosphere of discipline and hierarchy, he put his background to use to support the realization of his ambitions. Guimarães recognized that from his rank he would never become a general. In 1981, the career of the “captain” came to an end. After nineteen years in the army, seven of which he spent suspended for unlawful activities, Guimarães dedicated himself to games of chance.

Making the most of his experience, he became one of the *capi* of the animal game. His years in the military police had taught him to use violence against his enemies (the left-wing opposition, seen as communist by the military). He had also forged relationships within the forces of law and order, which would later protect him. These were useful competencies and connections.

Casting aside everything he had learnt at the Military Academy, Guimarães brought the military and the Bicheiros closer together and obtained the government’s complicity for the new chiefs of the cupola known as Club Baron de

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<sup>27</sup> Rogério Medeiros and Marcelo Netto, *Mémórias de uma guerra suja* (Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Aloy Jupiara and Chico Otavio, *Os porões da contravenção*, chap. 1, 3 - 6.

Drummond.<sup>29</sup> However, it was not easy for him to become one of the Bicheiros. As is the norm in all mafia organizations, Guimarães had to prove his daring, toughness, and intelligence before being accepted. He succeeded thanks to one of the most powerful barons of the day, Angelo Maria Longa, nicknamed “Tio Patinhas,” the Portuguese name for the Disney character Scrooge McDuck.

Guimarães was introduced to Tio Patinhas by Euclides Nascimento, a criminal investigation officer in Rio’s judicial police force. Nascimento was the boast of the elite corps of carioca police that was established in 1969, and founder of the “Death Squad” that liquidated left-wing militants on the orders of the military. In 1971, Tio Patinhas had two problems that Guimarães could solve. Firstly, one of his associates owed him money. The solution gave Guimarães access to the animal game: Tio Patinhas sold him the banks belonging to the debtor, for the price of the debt. Secondly, Tio Patinhas wanted to put an end to extortion by corrupt members of the military in relation to the Bicheiros’ contraband network. It was no coincidence that this racket depended on Guimarães. Why get into a fight with these crooked officers? The Bicheiros preferred to offer them a partnership.

Guimarães, who knew his days in the army were numbered, decided to join the criminal fraternity. His ambition led him to dispose of one of Tio Patinhas’ associates so that he could move up the organization and increase the territory he controlled. Despite Capitão Guimarães’ violence, Tio Patinhas admired his way of doing things.

The fact was that Capitão Guimarães brought military *savoir-faire* to the management of the animal game. In particular, he introduced a proper business management system, thus initiating the synthesis between the business model and the mafia model described by Paulo Baltazar.<sup>30</sup> For a long time, the Bicheiros had run things in a rudimentary fashion based on “gentlemen’s agreement.” With the advent of Guimarães, management, accounting, and financial management were brought in and associated processes were dematerialized. The cupola increasingly resembled a military headquarters and the “old” bicheiros were won over. A few years later, Guimarães became an heir to Tio Patinhas and one of the animal game’s *capi*.

If the advent of Capitão Guimarães was a sign of modernity, it nevertheless plunged the animal game into the unknown. Guimarães’ connections with the hard men of the military regime were only one example of the dubious links between the Bicheiros and the military’s repression of the left-wing opposition. The research conducted by Aloy Jupiara and Chico Otavio<sup>31</sup> underlines how close Guimarães was to the regime’s thugs, as also noted in the final report of the National Truth Commission (Comissão Nacional da Verdade, CNV).<sup>32</sup> The

29 So-called in memory of Baron de Drummond, the animal game’s founder.

30 José Paulo Baltazar Júnior, *Crime Organizado e Proibição da Insuficiência* (Porto Alegre: Livraria do Advogado, 2010).

31 Aloy Jupiara and Chico Otavio, *Os porões da contravenção*.

32 Comissão Nacional da Verdade, accessed February 4, 2018, <http://www.cnv.gov.br/>

Commission, established by law no. 12528/2011, set out to reveal the true history of military repression under the dictatorship and confirmed that the military government and its “men of the shadows” used torture and murder to quash the opposition, resulting in the disappearance of 434 people.<sup>33</sup>

According to statements made to the CNV in February 2014 by Colonel Paulo Malhães,<sup>34</sup> previously a member of the Army Information Center (Centro de Informações do Exército, CIE), Capitão Guimarães ordered a series of assassinations in Niterói, near Rio de Janeiro, as soon as he joined the Bicheiros. This was so that he could gain control over the animal game in the region, while benefiting from the protection afforded by the regime and the police. Among his contacts was Colonel Freddie Perdigão Pereira, an officer and member of military intelligence, considered to be one of the regime’s most brutal members. The friendship between Guimarães and Freddie exposed the relations between officials and organized crime. For example, when the military regime ended, Freddie Perdigão Pereira became chief of security for the Bicheiros. By now retired, he managed the security of transportation companies linked with the Bicheiros, as well as personal security for the capi.

Guimarães was also close to Colonel Ary de Aguiar Freire, an intelligence officer, who was accused of having mounted a bomb attack in Rio on April 30, 1981: a booby-trapped vehicle exploded in front of the Riocentro convention center where a concert was being held for an audience of twenty thousand people. There were two victims, whose identities were swiftly revealed: military officers linked to the intelligence service. But the Military Justice Department found no culprit and closed the case without taking further action. A Brazilian approach to implementing a “strategy of tension,” it seems.

This attack, famous in Brazil, was denounced as a failed attempt by the military to convince Brazilians of the dangers of the radical left—and for years the military hid the truth. In 1985, a judicial inquiry revealed another case linking the military intelligence services to Guimarães. Behind the attempt to kill the Brazilian journalist Alexandre Von Baumgarten, lay an intelligence operation, “Operation Dragon,” and that Colonel Malhães, Colonel Aguiar, Colonel Ary Pereira, Capitão Guimarães, and Sergeant Roberto Fábio had been involved. Despite the evidence, the case was dismissed by the military justice system.

This episode shows that Capitão Guimarães did not become part of the hierarchy of crime by chance. His position as both a member of the military and a criminal was as useful to corrupt officials as it was to the Bicheiros. Clearly, many of the Bicheiros’ employees were in fact potential military intelligence agents. All the rumors circulating in the streets of Rio about the game’s network reached the ears of the repressive regime.

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33 Comissão Nacional da Verdade, Report, December 2014, Vol. 1: 8. Accessed February 4, 2018, [http://www.cnv.gov.br/images/pdf/relatorio/volume\\_1\\_digital.pdf](http://www.cnv.gov.br/images/pdf/relatorio/volume_1_digital.pdf)

34 Paulo Malhães (17/04/1938 – 25/04/2014) confessed to participating in acts of torture and assassinations during the military regime.

Guimarães thus became one of the most formidable mafiosi of Rio. His expulsion from the army in 1981, followed by the end of the regime, changed nothing: neither his status nor the system. Instead, at the end of the eighties, Guimarães expanded his territory to other states in Brazil and developed alliances with other criminal groups so as to assert his supremacy.<sup>35</sup>

When the military regime came to an end and its repressive apparatus was dismantled, some members of the military and police were forced into unemployment: all they could do was to work for the Bicheiros. Ex-spies and policemen carried on working undercover, for the sole benefit of the game's mafia.

It was also in 1981 that another capo appeared in the news. Anísio Abrahão David,<sup>36</sup> the bicheiro who controls the bicho in the Baixada Fluminense region<sup>37</sup> and is president of the Beija-Flor, one of the most famous Samba schools, was accused of abducting and killing Misaque José Marques and Luiz Carlos Jatobá. According to the news reports, they were taken away by the police on the orders of Anísio for having broken into the house he owned in the area and stolen jewelry and cash. The judicial investigation revealed a more complex story: it turned out that Misaque had witnessed an abduction carried out by the secret police, whose prey was the ex-brigadier Júlio Gonçalves Martins Leitão, implicated in drug trafficking. Misaque had informed the public prosecutor and had thus become a target for corrupt agents of the state. Anísio and five policemen were arrested, but in the end only three of them were sentenced. Anísio was found not guilty.

In August 1991, during the investigation into the murder of Eliana Müller, Anísio's ex-wife, and her new partner, the judiciary seized a letter in which Eliana, who was under the threat of death, disclosed Anísio's crimes, including his involvement in the Misaque-Jatobá affair. It was her own father and brother who murdered Eliana, after Anísio sacked them from the Beija-Flor samba school, where he was president, as revenge against his ex-wife. The trial took place in Nilópolis and needless to say Anísio was not even put under investigation.

At the time, Hélio Luz, chief of the Baixada Fluminense judicial police, told the carioca press that neither police nor prosecutors could take action against Anísio, because his influence over the local police and judiciary gave him a sort of immunity. Hélio Luz and the state chief of police, Nilo Batista, attempted to take the case outside the jurisdiction of Nilópolis, but it was tried there nonetheless. Eliana's father was acquitted but her brother was sentenced to twenty-four years in jail.

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35 The Marselha operation, conducted by the federal police in 1989 in the state of Espírito Santo, revealed the connection between the carioca Bicheiros and the band of professional assassins known as Scuderie le Cocq, led by police chief Cláudio Guerra, a former agent of the repression, and the bicheiro José Carlos Gratz, who was elected deputy for the State of Espírito Santo some years later.

36 Aloy Jupiará and Chico Otavio, *Os porões da contravenção*, chap. 5, 30-33.

37 The Baixada Fluminense (with a population of almost three million) is in the west of the State of Rio and includes the towns of Nilópolis, Nova Iguaçu, Belford Roxo, Duque de Caxias, Magé, and Mesquita.

These cases show how the Bicheiros were able to infiltrate the state and demonstrate the close relationship between the mafiosi and public officials.

## 2 - THE JUDICIAL INQUIRIES THAT WERE INITIATED IN THE 1990S

**W**hy did these only begin in the 1990s? The answer lies in both global and Brazilian history. Until then, the Brazilian and carioca authorities had more important issues on their minds. From 1930 to 1964, Brazilian political life was bedeviled by conflicts between the government of Getúlio Vargas (president between 1930 and 1945, and again between 1951 and 1954) and the right. These conflicts ended with the suicide of the president, who decided to “leave life to enter history.”<sup>38</sup>

The period between 1930 and 1964 was marked by rapid industrial growth. A salaried class became established and poor neighborhoods sprang up around the big Brazilian cities. Samba and carnival flourished in these working-class quarters, but so did the animal game, which was seen as a quick way out of poverty. As a consequence, for politicians—especially the populist Getúlio Vargas—taking action against the animal game would have meant lost votes in elections. That is why, for more than thirty years, the first generation of Bicheiros was able to take advantage of the state’s negligence.

It is well known that from 1964 onwards, the Cold War and the battle against communism dominated the global political context. The fight against organized crime would not really be addressed before the 1990s—one has only to consider the growth at that time of other criminal groups, such as the Colombian and Mexican cartels. In the early days of the animal game until the beginning of the 1960s, the Bicheiros profited from the fragility of the young Republic. From the 1960s onwards, and especially during the military regime (1964-1985), they benefited first from the state’s indifference and then from its complicity.

It was not only the fault of the state: we should not underestimate how good the Bicheiros were at self-protection, with their key strengths of adaptability and resilience. The godfathers of the game used their mafia techniques to get what they wanted by infiltrating the state, by bribing officials, and through intimidation and violence.

After twenty years of military dictatorship, the 1990s saw the re-establishment and strengthening of democracy, and brought in a period of political stability in Brazil. With the 1988 Constitution, competitions for public service appointments were enshrined in law and rigorous criteria were introduced for the recruitment of officials. A new generation of police and magistrates set out to rein in the Bicheiros—although it was still no easy task.

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38 Extract from the suicide letter Getúlio Vargas left to the Brazilian people.

***The Operation Led by Judge Denise Frossard and  
The Public Prosecutor Antônio Carlos Biscaia***

*I did it because I didn't know it was impossible.*

—Denise Frossard on the conviction of the Bicheiros

According to Jean-François Gayraud, “a knowledge of the history of organized crime indicates two laws that are always proven and often ignored: 1) organized crime—especially of the mafia variety—always comes to light late because of its clandestine nature; 2) the later it comes to light the more firmly it is entrenched and the harder it is to eradicate.”<sup>39</sup>

The inquiry led by Prosecutor Biscaia and Judge Frossard bears out Gayraud’s view, revealing the existence of a criminal organization that for years had profited from the blindness and complicity of the authorities. Discreetly, but with extreme violence, it had taken control of lucrative criminal markets, games of chance, contraband, and money laundering.

Nearly a century after the creation of the animal game, Brazilian justice convicted the “crime barons” for the first time. On May 21, 1993, after an inquiry lasting two years and seven months, involving twenty-eight volumes and 7,500 pages of documentation, Judge Frossard sentenced Castor de Andrade, Ailton Guimarães Jorge (Capitão Guimarães), Anísio Abrahão David and eleven other bicheiros to six years’ imprisonment. But she also sentenced herself to a life marked by the fear of assassination. On the morning when the sentences were to be read out, a man carrying explosives was arrested in front of the courthouse: his target had been the judge. In 2001, there were four attempts on Denise Frossard’s life. She says that “one day I was in the sights of a professional assassin, but he didn’t shoot because he hadn’t been paid. Luckily he was a professional.”

The Bicheiros thought they were untouchable: in February 1993, during his trial, Castor de Andrade gave a brazen speech (live on television, during the carnival parade) condemning the investigation of the Bicheiros, which he held to be unjustifiable. Police and the justice system had protected the carioca Bicheiros for years, and for the first time these criminals had to fear a small group of honest officials. The beginning of the inquiry was difficult: any action by the judicial police, the prosecutor, or the judge was immediately relayed to the godfathers by the corrupt officials in their pay, who were everywhere in government.

But an anonymous tip-off revealed the location of Castor de Andrade’s headquarters, enabling the State of Rio’s public prosecutor, Antônio Carlos Biscaia, to seize a large quantity of the cupola’s financial records. Once they had been examined, the public prosecutor’s office had sufficient evidence to back up the allegations. As well as the twenty individuals who were arrested, the heavy weapons, and the slot machines that were all found in Castor’s hideout, the investigators

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39 Jean-François Gayraud, *Le monde des mafias: géopolitique du crime organisée* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2008). Unless otherwise stated, all translations of cited material are our own.

unearthed a list of civil servants, police officers, members of the military, and politicians who were paid by the bicheiro to protect him. The list included Rio's police commissioner, the State of Rio's federal police chief, senior officers of the state judiciary police, members of the state military police, journalists, federal deputies, prosecutors, and state governors.<sup>40</sup>

After the trial of the godfathers of the game, Denise Frossard delivered a scathing critique of criminal proceedings in Brazil. The judge called for the creation of a pool of investigating magistrates to direct inquiries, along the lines of the Italian model. According to Frossard, "the police do not represent the rule of the Republic .... The judge directing the inquiry would steer clear of abuse and bribery. Of course there are honest members of the police force, but an in-depth investigation is needed into the corruption within the judicial police in the State of Rio."<sup>41</sup>

For a while, Brazil thought that this inquiry would destroy the parallel power of the godfathers of the game and their coterie. But no: in 2007, another operation targeting the Bicheiros revealed that they had become even more powerful. Convicted solely of criminal conspiracy, the 1993 defendants did not spend more than three years in prison. Since then, the animal game had been modernized. In addition to the traditional game, slot machines and casinos sent profits rocketing. The Bicheiros are now the darlings of Rio society, living like the richest cariocas, near the beaches of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon, and in the smart Niterói district. The Bicheiros succeed each other as directors of LIESA (the Independent League of the Samba Schools of Rio de Janeiro) and manage the carioca Carnival budget: 25 million reais (around 7 million euros in 2017).

Of the fourteen convicted in 1993, four had died: Castor de Andrade, Raul Capitão, Emil Pinheiro, and Paulinho Andrade (Castor's son). The others continued to run the cupola and the carnival. Capitão Guimarães, Luiz Drummond, Anísio Abrahão David and Antônio Petrus Kalil ("the Turk") had extended their territories and their power. In 2007, Operation Furação would try, once again, to bring them down.

### *Operation "Gladiador" and Operation "Segurança S/A"*

In December 2006, the federal police of the State of Rio arrested some police officers of the judicial police in the same state and members of the military police protecting the Andrade family businesses: the operation of the animal game, slot machines, and casinos in the west of Rio. At the time, the inquiry suggested that a system of bribery had pervaded Rio's judicial police force, reaching as far as its director, Alvaro Lins. Nineteen people were arrested, including the capi Rogério de Andrade and Fernando Iggnácio.

Two years later, a new investigation into the judicial police unveiled a web

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40 Marcelo Auler, *Biscaia* (Rio de Janeiro: Cassará, 2012).

41 Interview in the newspaper *O Globo*, May 22, 1993, 17.



of corruption implicating both the carioca police and Rio politicians. Alvaro Lins, who had in the meantime been elected to Congress, was arrested and accused of running a network corrupting the top echelons of the state, including the former governor, Anthony Garotinho, and his wife. The sixteen people involved were accused of bribery, facilitating smuggling, criminal conspiracy, money laundering, and the illegal operation of games of chance.

### ***Operation “Furacão”***

At dawn on April 13, 2007, the directorate of intelligence of the federal police unleashed a wave of arrests targeting the barons of the animal game and everyone associated with this vast mafia network. More than 600 federal police executed around 100 search and arrest warrants for bicheiros, magistrates, Rio State police, federal police, lawyers, and politicians. Operation Furacão (or Hurricane) was the most crippling blow that the justice system had delivered to the carioca mafia since the 1990s.

Following information supplied by a source regarding a criminal conspiracy in the State of Rio federal police—responsible for tackling smuggling, counterfeiting and other tax related offenses—an investigation was launched by the counter-intelligence division of the directorate of intelligence (DICINT). The information had revealed police officer involvement in a web of corruption, and since this division of counter intelligence was responsible for protecting the federal police from exterior threats, including corruption, DICINT took charge of what would be the most important police investigation into illegal gambling in Brazil.

In 2006, the federal prosecutor and the federal police had already received information suggesting something was wrong within the department responsible for smuggling offenses. Now, more detailed information pointed to the involvement of a police commissioner and an officer in one of the investigative teams. According to a lawyer who had been a victim of the police officers, these two were asking for money in exchange for closing investigations for lack of evidence. After installing telephone bugging equipment and undertaking closer surveillance, the DICINT officers realized they were on the right track.

The investigation proceeded and numerous pieces of evidence had been gathered, when the interception of a telephone call caught the investigators’ attention: an exchange between the officer under investigation and an unidentified individual concerning casinos operating in the city of Rio. To begin with, the investigators had no idea where the investigation would lead them. Two years later, the power of the “animal barons” was exposed, as was the organization’s entrenchment in every aspect of government. These barons had succeeded in infiltrating the executive, judiciary and legislative arenas and in co-opting, by means of bribery, public servants in the local authorities, the State of Rio and the federal government.

When the investigation was completed, the public prosecutor demanded the conviction of the godfathers of the animal game, for their part in a criminal

organization: 1) conducting its activities in the State of Rio; 2) specializing in the operation of electronic games of chance and casinos; 3) established and structured with the aim of committing crimes that included bribing officials, influence peddling, money laundering, tax evasion, and smuggling electronic products, among others.<sup>42</sup>

When handing out the sentences, Judge Ana Paula Vieira de Carvalho described the Bicheiros as a group that displayed the essential elements associated with a criminal organization: multiple agents, stability and longevity, profit on assets as their objective, and a very complex structure. She identified further elements, perhaps less essential, that characterize the sophisticated structure of such a criminal organization: a rigid hierarchy, division of labor, compartmentalization and secrecy (for example an absence of contacts—telephonic, sms, emails, and so on—between the cupola and lower ranks), connections with the state, through the bribery of officials and financing of electoral campaigns, involvement in legal and illegal markets, and territorial control.<sup>43</sup>

The structure of this organization reflects the mafia model: the rigid hierarchy that the cupola maintains; the Club Baron de Drummond acting as a “court of law” for conflict resolution; territorial control; and recourse to violence and intimidation. This is evidenced in a petition seized during the raids, addressed to the Club Baron de Drummond, in which a bicheiro reports that a rival is accusing him of murders in order to take control of a region. However, while the data demonstrates the existence of a mafia-style group, the modernization of organized crime requires its practitioners to adopt an entrepreneurial attitude to management, using shell companies set up in the name of accomplices.

Similarly to the Italian Mafia, this organization is not only involved in illegal activities: it also controls legal businesses such as restaurants, hotels, sports halls, medical practices, and shipping companies. It is important to note that the organization also functions as a network, enabling the leaders to profit from the action of accomplices working on behalf of the group. This is a criminal organization structured on a business model as well as a mafia model, active in both legal and illegal markets.

The criminal group consists of entrepreneurs and mafiosi linked to games of chance and other legal activities, who require protection—from lobbyists, lawyers, officials, and public servants—to ensure the smooth running of their businesses. The group bribes police in a number of the Federation’s States, as well as judges and prosecutors. It finances the electoral campaigns of numerous politicians so that they will vote on laws that benefit them, including the legalization of casinos and slot machines. At least temporarily, Operation Furacão has checked their ambitions.

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42 Trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012

43 Decision of Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho in trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012: 446. Accessed February 12, 2018 <https://www.conjur.com.br/dl/sentenca-300.pdf>

### *Characteristics of This Criminal Group as Revealed by the Investigations*

The 1993 operation and Operation Furacão did not wipe out this criminal menace. However, the wealth of information made public by the sentence of the Furacão trial to criminologists and to the public was invaluable. Taking into account everything that has been gathered over years of judicial investigation, we will now look in more detail at the criteria that will allow us to conclude that the Bicheiros are a mafia-type organization.

The organization devised by the bosses of the Club Baron de Drummond has several characteristics that have certainly been noted by Brazilian legal practitioners and criminologists, but also by their European counterparts, such as economist and mafia specialist Clotilde Champeyrache, who describes a “hierarchical, perennial structure, resorting to violence and intimidation to establish control over its territories and to carry out illegal and legal activities.”<sup>44</sup>

### *The Mafioso Mystique*

The rules that govern the bicheiro’s life reflect the principles, traditions and “laws” that guide and regulate criminal life. This aspect is typical of the mafia model, so often exploited by American cinema. Just like Hollywood’s version of the Italo-American Mafioso, the carioca bicheiro’s role is to be the protector of his family and an accomplished and envied businessman. Keeping at a distance from the “dirty jobs” that are assigned to his employees, the bicheiro cultivates his image as a businessman running one of the Rio carnival’s samba schools, a wealthy executive who is also an engaged and generous citizen: the bicheiro frequently hands out social subsidies to families and individuals within his fiefdom. In this guise, he finds favor with both high carioca society and Rio’s poor.

This behavior corroborates the similarity between the Bicheiros and mafiosi. Here is what Clotilde Champeyrache says about the justifying myths that surround such organizations: “The power of the mafia, whether in Italy or as the term “mafia” is applied beyond Italy’s borders, relies on the ambiguity that surrounds it. It is recognized as a criminal association and as such should be associated with negative values. Yet it does not attract the censure that is usually attached to criminal gangs. Instead, it maintains the aura of an “acceptable” criminality, peddling—despite everything—positive values linked to honor, respect, and family.”<sup>45</sup>

This description fits the Bicheiros. For example, Anísio Abrahão David is honorary president of the Beija-Flor samba school, often the winner of the carioca carnival, and has good relations with politicians and Brazilian artists. According to a 2012 study by Luiz Carlos Prestes Filho, Culture Secretary for the State of Rio, the carnival industry employs more than 250,000 people. Anísio Abrahão’s image

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44 Clotilde Champeyrache, *Sociétés du Crime—Un tour du monde des mafias* (Paris: CNRS, 2007), 8.

45 Champeyrache, *Sociétés du Crime*, 35.

as patron of the carnival has not been tarnished by the murder charges for which he has been investigated in the past.

The same is true of Ailton Guimarães Jorge, alias Capitão Guimarães, who was president of LIESA from 2001 to 2007, when he was imprisoned as a result of Operation Furacão. His image has not been harmed by his past, which involved torture and murder under the military regime.

Amongst these gangsters, Castor de Andrade personifies the myth of the archetypal bicheiro.<sup>46</sup> He is described in the book by Andrew Jennings, a Scottish investigative journalist known for his research into corruption at FIFA and the Olympic committee, as a gangster loved by everyone, from the poor to the Brazilian elite.<sup>47</sup>

Jennings exposes the friendly and professional connections that had existed between João Havelange and the Andrade family since the 1980s.<sup>48</sup> This extract from his book, describing the marriage of Castor de Andrade's daughter, is proof of the way these mafiosi infiltrate Brazilian society, and the complexity of their affairs:

“It is Rio's wedding of the year. The father of the bride is Brazil's biggest gangster, racketeer and, they say, murderer of 50 rivals. He stays out of jail by paying off the city's politicians, judges and police. He owns a football club. The two most honoured guests sit at his table. I'm looking at a photograph taken at the wedding banquet. One guest, to the right of the frame, is tall, avuncular with a Roman nose and has the hardest eyes in the room. It's João and he controls world football. Between João and the gangster sits his son-in-law, the young man who in a few years time will become boss of Brazilian football ( ... ) This photograph reveals how world football came under the control of organized crime.”<sup>49</sup>

Jennings also describes Castor as the most important patron of the carioca carnival. It was he who brought the popular festival worldwide recognition. He headed the Imperatriz Leopoldinense samba school, five times winner of the carnival. Castor cultivated his image as a benefactor: “He lets it be known that he is a good Catholic, making acts of devotion to Our Lady of Aparecida [patron saint of Brazil].” He splashed a lot of money around the city, for example as “patron of the Bangu Club, handing out bundles of cash to the team.”<sup>50</sup> Castor had

46 Castor Gonçalves de Andrade Silva, born in Rio de Janeiro in 1926, died of a heart attack on April 4, 1997, leaving his family embroiled in a bloody battle between his nephew and his son.

47 Andrew Jennings, *The Dirty Game: Uncovering the Scandal at FIFA* (London: Arrow Books, 2016).

48 João Havelange (born May 8, 1916 in Rio de Janeiro, died August 16, 2016 in the town of his birth), was president of FIFA between 1974 and 1998, after Stanley Rous and before Joseph Blatter. From 1963 to 2011, he sat on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as its most senior member. On April 30, 2013 he resigned from his position as honorary president of FIFA, following allegations of corruption.

49 Jennings, *The Dirty Game*, 21.

50 Jennings, *The Dirty Game*, 22-23

always maneuvered within the highest reaches of power. It was said that General Waldir Alves Muniz, Rio’s police commissioner, had been instructed by the military dictatorship to “avoid problems with Castor.” When he was president, General Figueiredo was said to have broken with presidential protocol by shaking Castor de Andrade’s hand at an event. These stories demonstrate the power of the Bicheiros, especially under the military regime, and the myths that surround them.

### *Hierarchical Structure*

The investigation discovered, as Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho reiterated in her sentencing,<sup>51</sup> that the highest level of the cupola consisted of the barons Anísio Abrahão David, Ailton Guimarães Jorge, and Antônio Petrus Kalil. Family members of the capi made up the second level. Júlio Guimarães was right-hand man to his uncle, Ailton Guimarães Jorge. In Anísio Abrahão David’s clan, Nagibe Suaid and the brothers José Renato Granado Ferreira and Belmiro Martins Ferreira took care of management and logistics. Antônio Petrus Kalil’s deputies were his sons, Marcelo and Antônio.

This family-based structure acts as an “executive board,” with a crucial role in management, centralizing decisions and settling disputes. Evidence shows that the board adjudicates and punishes transgressions according to a code of conduct specific to the Bicheiros. The documents found during the raids show the allocation of profits to the chiefs. For example, the accounts of Julio Guimarães, Capitão Guimarães’s nephew, show that his share was much less than his uncle’s. However, telephone bugging revealed that the “uncles,” as their subordinates call them, make decisions without getting too closely involved: they may all flatly deny the existence of this structure, but the uncles are at the top of the tree. They authorize deals and then delegate to relatives (and future heirs), eventually enabling the Bicheiros at the bottom of the ladder to run some territories.

The uncles get the lion’s share of the profits. Remaining sums are shared amongst the lesser bicheiros, according to rank. The organization’s employees receive a monthly salary. The investigation showed that several police officers were regular employees, working for the Bicheiros as chauffeurs, bodyguards, or right-hand men to some of the godfathers. The police chiefs in the departments where these police officers “worked” were paid to turn a blind eye to the absence of their staff.

## **LONGEVITY AND TERRITORIAL CONTROL**

**I**n terms of longevity, this organization has clearly made sure of its own perpetuity. Recent history has shown that the organization was pursued first by the military, then by the law in the 1990s and by Operation Furacão in 2007. Yet it has always managed to adapt, to recover and to carry on with its business. Paulo

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51 Decision of Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho in trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012: 276

Baltazar sees this as an essential factor in the mafia paradigm: the organization lives on beyond the lifespan of its members.<sup>52</sup>

For the first time, express evidence was seized during Operation Furacão: documents confirming that it was at the Club Baron de Drummond that territorial control was transferred, especially between members of the same family. For example, a statement was seized showing that, in the case of death or incapacity, Antônio Petrus Kalil would pass responsibility for managing his “affairs relating to games in general” to his son Marcelo Kalil Petrus. Marcelo would therefore take his father’s place at the Club Baron de Drummond after his death.

“DECLARAÇÃO - EU, ANTÔNIO PETRUS KALIL, BRASILEIRO, CASADO, RESIDENTE, A AV. CINCO 818, CAMBOINHAS, NITERÓI, RJ, DECLARO PARA OS DEVIDOS FINS QUE NO CASO DE MINHA MORTE OU INVALIDEZ, OS MEUS NEGÓCIOS DE JOGOS EM GERAL (NUMÉRICOS E ELETRÔNICOS), PASSARÃO A SER ADMINISTRADOS POR MEU FILHO MARCELO CALIL PETRUS, A QUEM CABERÁ DECIDIR SOBRE OS NEGÓCIOS E DISTRIBUIR OS LUCROS DA SEGUINTE MANEIRA:

10 % DO ADMINISTRADOR MARCELO CALIL PETRUS

22,5% DA ESPOSA THEREZINHA CALIL PETRUS

22,5% DO FILHO ANTÔNIO PETRUS KALIL FILHO

22,5% DO FILHO MARCELO CALIL PETRUS

22,5% DA FILHA SILVIA CALIL PETRUS

SEM MAIS PARA O MOMENTO, NITERÓI, 06 DE JUNHO DE 2005.

ANTÔNIO PETRUS KAL TESTEMUNHAS:

1- NOME: TEREZINHA CALIL PETRUS

2- NOME: JOSÉ CARLOS MONASSA BESSIL, ASS:”

Another statement by the bicheiro Emanuel Lula de Farias, alias “Poti,” set out the eventual transfer of his territories.

« RIO DE JANEIRO 25 DE AGOSTO DE 2004

DECLARO A QUEM INTERESSAR POSSA QUE EU, JOSÉ CARDOSO DOS SANTOS, BRASILEIRO, CASADO, COM 74 ANOS DE IDADE PORTADOR DA CARTEIRA DE IDENTIDADE NÚMERO 790.628, RESIDENTE E DOMICILIADO NA CIDADE DO RIO DE JANEIRO, GOZANDO DE PLENAS FACULDADES MENTAIS, QUE APÓS O DIA 25 DE AGOSTO DE 2005 E OU APÓS A MINHA MORTE OS MEUS 50% NA LOTERIA Z SERÁ DIVIDIA DA SEGUINTE FORMA:

37,5% PARA JOSÉ CARDOSO DOS SANTOS RG 790.628

12,5% PARA JOÃO OLIVEIRA DE FARIAS RG 04642342-2

A DIVISÃO DA SOCIEDADE ACIMA REFERIDA INCLUI TODOS OS PONTOS DE BICHO, MAQUINAS E DEMAIS MODALIDADES DE JOGOS QUE POR VENTURA POSSAM SURGIR FUTURAMENTE.

JOSÉ CARDOSO DOS SANTOS JOÃO OLIVEIRA DE FARIAS »

TESTEMUNHAS

CEILZA RIBEIRO DOS SANTOS EMANOEL LULA DE FARIAS »

52 Baltazar Jr, *Crime Organizado*

Evidence of this kind, collected by the investigators, shows the level of organization and centralization put in place by the leaders. The aim of all this is to avoid the bloody territorial wars that had tarnished the Bicheiros' record between 1980 and 2000.

However, the transfer of power within the families is not always without its difficulties. For example, in the Andrade family, a war broke out after the death of the capo, Castor de Andrade, who left his son Paulo to run the business. This did not go down well with the chief's nephew, Rogério de Andrade, who murdered his cousin in an ambush. Castor de Andrade's son-in-law, Fernando Iggnácio, swore vengeance. As a result, since 1997, the year of Castor's death, more than fifty people have been killed. The finale occurred in the heart of Barra da Tijuca, a wealthy quarter in the west of Rio. On April 10, 2010, Rogério de Andrade's car blew up in the middle of a boulevard, injuring him and killing his seventeen-year-old son, who was driving. These disputes and murders harm business and alert the authorities who are forced to take action, even when they are corrupt. This brings us to another of the organization's defining traits: secrecy.

## SECRECY

This trait is shared with the Italian Mafia. Its importance is paramount, because it allows the organization to perpetuate itself. In order to remain strong and to operate at the center of the system, mafiosi live in the shadows. When this rule is not observed, mafia organizations suffer. An example of this is the Second Mafia War,<sup>53</sup> when the Corleonesi faction fought other Cosa Nostra clans, resulting in hundreds of Mafia deaths and a climate of fear that followed the assassination of officials, including the judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino.

Likewise, disputes between the Bicheiros of Rio in the 1980s and 1990s, when power passed from the older generation of barons to their heirs, led to the trial of 1993 and their first convictions. When the Bicheiros were examined, the close ties between them were revealed. Yet Anísio even asserted during the Misaque-Jatobá trial that he did not know Guimarães—a typically mafioso statement.

Judge Ana Paula Vieira de Carvalho pointed out that a clandestine operation relies on compartmentalization.<sup>54</sup> The godfathers of the game create a chain of command in which orders do not go directly from the cupola to the foot soldiers. The bosses can thus protect themselves against potential incrimination, since they themselves commit no criminal act. In addition, great secrecy attends the organization of high level meetings, as on March 12, 2007 at the house of Anísio Abrahão David: the Bicheiros are shown in a photograph arriving with their bodyguards.

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53 Gayraud, *Le monde des mafias*.

54 Decision of Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho in trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012: 368

### ***Infiltration of the Organs of the State***

Operation Furacão exposed the Bicheiros' *modus operandi* for infiltrating the structure of the state, reflecting their short, medium, and long-term interests. Infiltration of the forces of law and order represents a short-term interest. The Bicheiros need protection for the significant quantities of cash flowing between the gaming banks, clearing houses (*descargas*), and accounting and administrative offices. The Federal Highway Police must be paid to prevent interrogations and searches: the animal game may have existed since the nineteenth century, but it remains illegal. The judicial and federal police must also be bribed, since they both conduct investigations against organized crime.

The roll-out of *Furacão* revealed that both the home of Capitão Guimarães and the office of Júlio Guimarães, in the Barra de Tijuca, were protected by the military police. When the federal police arrived at Júlio's office, military police officers tried to stop the search that had been ordered by Judge Vieira de Carvalho. The federal police seized more than a million reais (around €300,000) from Júlio's office, which had been intended as payment to police officers protecting the family. The list of corrupt individuals included military, federal, and State of Rio judiciary police officers.

The investigation disclosed that federal police chiefs from Niterói and Campos, towns in the State of Rio, often received payment so that they would not take action against casinos, slot machines, and the animal game within their jurisdictions. More than fifty military and Rio judiciary police officers were convicted of working for the Bicheiros, whose accounts revealed that a hundred police officers were corrupt, including former judiciary police chiefs.

Anecdote: one of the police chiefs on the pay of the Bicheiros had a heart attack before being arrested. When the day came, he admitted to the arresting officers that he was relieved and hoped he would now be able to sleep, because for months he had been expecting the police to arrive at dawn, which made him so anxious it had kept him awake.

The Bicheiros did not only bribe police officers. Their mid- and long-term objectives obliged them to seek other forms of protection, since while they might have corrupted some police officers, the vast majority were honest. As a result, the Bicheiros often had problems with the law. The solution was to employ good lawyers, who would do whatever it took to prevent trials going ahead. The lobbyist Jaime Garcia established a network of law firms who would be able to persuade the judiciary to agree to the unimpeded operation of casinos and slot machines. It seems likely that some of these decisions were bought. Following the investigations, the federal police raided the offices of three magistrates, two of whom were federal judges and one a minister of the Court of Justice. The federal judges were remanded in custody, but await the final judgement in liberty.

The Bicheiros' knack for infiltration does not stop with the police and justice system: they want to write their own laws, so they need accomplices in the



Legislative Assembly of Rio de Janeiro and the National Congress. The financing of electoral campaigns is the preferred strategy for building relationships with politicians. The accounts seized during the raids included campaign contributions benefiting several candidates. Judge Vieira de Carvalho noted<sup>55</sup> that the criminal entity had contacts with other parliamentarians through Simão Sessim, Anísio’s cousin and deputy, but also obtained meetings, including with the President of the Republic, under the pretext of discussing the organization of the carnival. In fact, the organization was trying to enlist support for passing a bill to legalize casinos and other forms of gambling, including the operation of slot machines and the animal game.

### ***Connections with other criminal bodies and diversification***

During a parliamentary Commission<sup>56</sup> set up to look into the bicheiro Carlos Cachoeira’s bribery of Waldomiro Diniz, deputy secretary of parliamentary affairs, the Italian anti-mafia agency (Direzione Investigativa Antimafia, DIA) provided information proving the connection between the Brazilian Bicheiros, the Spanish Ortiz family, and foreign mafias.

This goes back to 2000, during a federal police operation in the south of Brazil, targeting corrupt federal police officers and the local Bicheiros. Based on information from the DIA, this judicial investigation unveiled the alliance between the Ortiz family, at that time owners of the companies Astro Turismo and Banco Tour; the Italian Mafiosi Fausto Pellegrinetti, Lillo Rosario Lauricella, Guiseppa Aronica, and Franco Narducci; and the French gangsters Julien and François Filippeddu.<sup>57</sup> The DIA sent the Brazilian authorities statements by Lillo Lauricella suggesting that Fausto Pellegrinetti was responsible for laundering Columbian drug money.

The money laundering operation for Colombian drugs, which find their way to Europe via the port of Santos in São Paulo, Brazil, was managed by the Banda della Magliana gang, a proto-mafia gang from Rome, and run by Fausto Pellegrinetti and Lillo Lauricella. The latter also revealed the existence of a partnership between the Italian gang and the Ortiz family, based in Brazil. According to Lauricella (who was assassinated after collaborating with the judiciary) the bicheiro Ivo Noal, who controlled the game in the State of São Paulo, was the initial intermediary between the mafia and the Brazilian Bicheiros. Lauricella was the operator sent out to Brazil while Fausto Pellegrinetti remained in Italy.

Lauricella also explained that the Filippeddu brothers, linked to the Corsican National Liberation Front, came to Brazil to give him support. Under the Italian

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55 Decision of Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho in trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012: 668

56 Report of the Parliamentary Commission, CPI dos Bingos, accessed February 9, 2018 [www.senado.gov.br/comissoes/CPI/Bingos/RelFinalBingos.pdf](http://www.senado.gov.br/comissoes/CPI/Bingos/RelFinalBingos.pdf)

57 The Filippeddu brothers are featured in *Les Héritiers du Milieu: Au cœur du grand banditisme, de la Corse à Paris* by Thierry Colombie (Paris: La Martinière, 2013).

judge's questioning, Lauricella described the arrangement between the Italian Mafia and the Bicheiros. Lauricella stated that in order to operate on Brazilian territory, it was necessary to have a connection with Brazilian organized crime. He explained that the Italians had come to an agreement in São Paulo with Ivo Noal, and in Rio de Janeiro with the "animal game cupola." Lauricella testified: "We paid Ivo Noal \$80,000 a month. We got started in Brazil because Alejandro Ortiz was there, he was stronger, it was he who got started in Brazil with Filippeddu. In Rio there's a cupola, "the cupola of Rio," just like we have [in Italy], with a capo and sottocapi in each zone."<sup>58</sup>

As regards links between the Bicheiros and other mafias, Judge Vieira de Carvalho also noted that "there were other pointers that would be worth exploring, showing the organization's connections with other foreign mafias."<sup>59</sup>

Even after all these years, the raid carried out on the headquarters of the Brazilian company Betec Games, which imported the electronic machines installed in casinos, as well as slot machines installed in local shops, corroborated Lillo Lauricella's revelations, since its shareholders at the time included José Renato Granado Ferreira and his brother Belmiro Martins.

Betec had previously been owned by the companies BMT Brasil Informática and Informática Franco, this last belonging to the Italian Giuseppe Aronica and the Spaniard Alejandro Ortiz, together with his son Johnny Viveiro Ortiz. Then, in the house belonging to the lawyer Silvério Nery Júnior, the federal police seized a file labelled "Ortiz family dossier." The investigators found that it contained a Brazilian newspaper article, dated March 17, 2004, referring to the relations between foreign mafia organizations and Brazilian entrepreneurs whose business was games of chance. The article makes reference to the Italian operation known as "Malocchio."

In 2011, a year after the attempt on Rogério de Andrade's life, a federal police inquiry led to the arrest of Israelis Meier Zloff and Yoram El Al, one of the FBI's fifteen most wanted men. The Israelis were suspected of having organized the attack on Rogério and being implicated in the operation of slot machines, smuggling luxury cars, and international drug trafficking. The involvement of Israeli organized crime (the Albergil family) in the animal game business shows that the carioca Bicheiros did not confine their connections with other mafias to the Italians.

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58 The original text reads: "Ivo Noal noi lo pagavamo 80 mila dollari al mese. Noi partiamo dal Brasile perché c'era Ortiz, che era più forte, cioè è lui che parte dal Brasile com [stet] Filippeddu. A Rio de Janeiro esiste uma [stet] cupola, cosidetta cupola a Rio de Janeiro e a livello cupola come la intendiamo noi, eh, dove c'è capo e ci sono sottocapi per zone." "Máfia, Política, Jogos de Azar e Cachoeira," Instituto Brasileiro Giovanni Falcone, accessed February 10, 2018. [http://www.ibgf.org.br/index.php?data\[id\\_secao\]=3&data\[id\\_materia\]=33](http://www.ibgf.org.br/index.php?data[id_secao]=3&data[id_materia]=33)

59 Decision of Judge Ana Paula de Carvalho in trial record no. 2007.51.01.802985-5, Justiça Federal, Rio de Janeiro, 2012: 908.

### ***The Heaviest Sentence Ever Served by the Bicheiros***

The investigation resulted in two rulings by Federal Judge Ana Paula Vieira de Carvalho. In the first (March 13, 2012) she sentenced Ailton Guimarães Jorge (Capitão Guimarães), Anísio Abrahão David, and Antônio Petrus Kalil (the Turk)—the criminal organization’s heavy hitters—as well as Kalil’s heirs, to forty-eight years in prison for criminal conspiracy, bribery, and money laundering. Other defendants were sentenced to twenty-one years, including corrupt lawyers, and police officers. Implicated magistrates await the judgement of the Supreme Court of Justice or the Supreme Federal Court. Politicians who have parliamentary immunity have not yet been prosecuted.

This operation hit the criminal organization hard, because the casinos were banned for good, making a significant dent in their turnover. Moreover, the judiciary seized criminal assets, houses, apartments, boats, and bank accounts in Brazil and abroad. However, the Bicheiros still have their freedom while they await the Appeal Court’s judgement, continuing to manage their affairs and seeking other legal loopholes to avoid prison.

## **CONCLUSION**

All the above factors attest to the fact that the organization created by the Bicheiros is certainly in the mafia mold, managed in a modern and businesslike way, and benefiting from a network of partners and associates who guarantee the success and stability of their legal and illegal activities. This mafia does not have the same international reputation nor the power of other mafias originating in Italy, Russia, Japan, China, and so on. However, it has built its business skillfully and has evolved in the same way as other mafia organizations. It has conquered its territory by means of intimidation, violence, and complicity with public officials. It has developed by increasing its spheres of influence, to maximize profits. It has learnt to divide up responsibilities and tasks and to cooperate with other families, rather than fighting with them.<sup>60</sup>

Taking all of this into account, there is no doubt that behind this clandestine lottery, deeply embedded in local culture, lurks a powerful mafia organization. Yet Brazilian society’s understanding of this criminal phenomenon remains vague. As we have seen, the jobs created by the carnival and the operation of the animal game give the Bicheiros legitimacy in the eyes of the working classes. This phenomenon also exists in Italy, where the inhabitants of regions controlled by the Mafia believe that the Mafiosi do more for them than the state. This complicates the struggle against the mafia. According to Jean-François Gayraud:

The eradication of high-level organized crime can only be achieved in one of two ways. The first is prompt, proactive intellectual and

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60 Gayraud, *Le monde des mafias*, 67.

political recognition of the reality and gravity of the issue. That is why early detection is crucial. The second way would involve the intelligence and security services ... Criminal matters, dealt with under common law, are usually the monopoly of police law enforcement, which functions reactively, after the event, when offenses have been seen to be committed. Judiciary and law enforcement agencies, by their very nature, have great difficulty in dealing in a consistent way with stable, permanent, and clandestine criminal phenomena. Law enforcement agencies often only deal with organized crime in a haphazard way, intermittently, when specific crimes occur.<sup>61</sup>

Gayraud's views are substantiated in the fight against this mafia that is corroding and corrupting the State of Rio and Brazil itself. Reviewing attempts since the 1990s to stamp out the organization, the conclusion must be that the state's stance has been reactive. The operation led by Judge Frossard and the prosecutor Biscaia was the first major judiciary operation to target the animal game cupola. Nevertheless, it did not succeed in rooting it out: ten years later, the Furacão investigation revealed a criminal capacity that has further developed and adapted to its objective: to guarantee the perpetuity of this lawless network. According to Clotilde Champeyrache:

Undermining the foundations of mafia-style organized crime requires a huge and sustained effort: a comprehensive mobilization of the apparatus of the state, as well as of civil society ... The battle must never be allowed to ease off, either through an excess of optimism or through defeatism.<sup>62</sup>

Champeyrache's statement throws light on one of the reasons why Brazilian justice is unable to eradicate this "cancer." In Brazil, major judicial investigations rarely happen. Worse still, smaller scale criminal investigations, led by local judicial police, are simply a pretext for putting pressure on the Bicheiros, forcing them to offer more cash to corrupt police officers and magistrates. These minor judicial interventions benefit corrupt officials in two ways: they protect them from criticism, since they can't be accused of being passive, and they offer an opportunity to increase remuneration for their "services."

Operation Furacão succeeded in closing all Brazil's casinos, because the judges no longer give permits for this kind of operation, for fear of being seen as linked to the Bicheiros. However, the operation of slot machines and the animal game continues unabated. Police officers are still receiving money from the mafiosi and continue to protect them. To this day, politicians who want to legalize games of chance continue to defend the Bicheiros' interests. A vote for the legalization of games of chance has been described as imminent since the beginning of 2016.

61 Gayraud, *Le monde des mafias*, 13.

62 Champeyrache, *Sociétés du Crime*, 291.

Another impediment to the pursuit of the Bicheiros is that Brazilian justice is too slow. Operation Furacão took place in 2007, but it was not until 2014 that the Bicheiros were sentenced to thirty years’ imprisonment—and this is only a first judgement, which may be referred to a higher court, allowing the defendants to remain at liberty while they await the final verdict. The allegations against magistrates who were bought by the criminal group are already out of time. The politicians have not been prosecuted, either because of lack of evidence, the absence of agreement in Congress, or their parliamentary immunity.

After operating for nearly a century, this mafia entity has had damaging effect on carioca society’s morale and ethics. Corruption instigated by the Bicheiros has resulted in even worse issues: police officers who take dirty money from the game lose their moral bearings and go on to accept money from drug trafficking and other criminal activities. These “bent cops” confiscate and resell heavy weapons and drugs to the narcotics dealers in the favelas. The judge who has been bought by the Bicheiros goes on to receive money to free bank robbers and white-collar criminals.

The corruption that originated with the Bicheiros in the 1950s has infected and continues to infect Brazilian morals. Carioca society is used to problems being sorted “in the Brazilian way”: in Rio, no one any longer believes in the justice system, the police, or the rule of law. There is a local saying, “Give everything to your friends, the law is for your enemies.” The corruption of laws, institutions, and individuals is largely accepted.

That is why the Bicheiros are responsible, perhaps indirectly, for the current climate of fear. They have undermined the basis of civilized society: respect for the rule of law. Even after the two big judicial investigations, the Bicheiros retain their image as successful businessmen, admired by the public. As in Mexico, if you ask a kid from one of the regions controlled by the drug cartels what he would like to do when he grows up, he will reply without hesitation or shame that his dream is to become a drug dealer.

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