For Marielle: Mulhere(s) da Maré—Danger, Seeds and Tides

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"Eu quero o país que não ta no retrato … Quem foi de aço nos anos de chumbo Brasil, chegou a vez de ouvir as Marias, Mahins, Marielles, malês."

–From the 2019 samba-enredo of Mangueiras

"… and their sharpest aches will wrap experience until knowledge is translucent…"

—Claudia Rankine, "Coherence in Consequence," 2001

Calls for solidarity with Brazilians mourning the brutal assassination of Marielle Franco rang out almost immediately last March. This March is no different, as pain and determination have only grown since her death. But I want to honor Marielle in a different way this evening—by taking her radical intellectual work seriously. In doing so, I want to avail ourselves of the concept of the *encruzilhada* (the crossroads)—that space of being and becoming, of transition and metamorphosis, of communication among the living, the dead and the not-yet-born, and yes, of danger—which is found in many African and diasporic systems of knowledge and belief—so that we can imagine encounters between Marielle and others (some Brazilian, some not) and the ideas and practices they might discuss.

Marielle's praxis itself enacted the notion of the crossroads. In an interview shortly after her first election as councilwoman in 2016, she argued that widening "the dialogue between 'historical feminists and hashtag feminists,' between the favela and the paved city, between the police force and the community" was part of our collective responsibility. In her work, Marielle traversed many landscapes, including places where people "like her" were *not supposed to be seen*—the municipal palace, the courthouse, the university; she died on the way back from one such *roda de conversa.*

We don't have time this evening to pull every bearer of ideas into the crossroads to dialogue with Marielle or to plumb every promise or consequence of her thinking. While recognizing their huge importance,

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Vitória Cribb, Beau[try] and Undefined in Tormento Series, 2018. 3D digital art printed on wooden board. Courtesy of Formas Exhibition.

I will not focus this evening on the more frequently-discussed North American black feminist thinkers who write on the matter of black people, police, and prisons: Angela Davis, Michelle Alexander, Joy James and Elizabeth Hinton, among others. Mainly, I will work through the slim but intellectually powerful volume that is Marielle's posthumously-published master's degree thesis in public policy, entitled *UPP: The Reduction of the Favela to Three Letters*.

Her short-lived administration was known for its active defense of women, of the LGBTQ population, of Afro-Brazilians, and of both favela-dwellers and the families of ordinary police officers. When she was slain, Marielle was chairing the Commission for Defense of Women, and she had just become the rapporteur charged with monitoring federal intervention in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Given the importance and urgency of Marielle's production of knowledge, her assassination was not just that of a singularly important political figure. It was also a blatant attempt at what Sueli Carneiro (2005), following Boaventura Sousa de Santos (1997), has called *epistemicide*: the quashing of a people as knowing subjects. The attempt failed. Please think along with me, while I will try to make *her* knowledge, borne of experience and reflection, translucent and consequential.

Constructing a Different Type of Knowledge

Most of the time, acknowledgements in academic publications do not make riveting reading. We skip them. But this beginning to Marielle's book discloses a way of constructing radical, relational knowledge, which is important to understand at the outset. The list of names in her acknowledgements reflects what some Latinx scholars call *la*

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política-epistémica—and helps us see how, in the spaces she traversed in her short lifetime, Marielle sowed the seeds of a new crop of black female and transgender favela representation not just in the Rio de Janeiro state and federal legislatures, but also in other states, and amongst a different set of women, namely, those *Women of the Tides* fighting to retain their lands and culture in the Northeast. Perhaps we should also place new Rio de Janeiro State Deputies Dani Monteiro, Renata Souza, and Monica Francisco, all of whom were former advisors to Marielle, and Erica Malunguinho of São Paulo, in our imaginary crossroads with Marielle—since all of them now occupy democratic spaces in Brazil not intended for black women or people from favelas and peripheral communities.

In opening her study, Marielle acknowledges the "new generation" that frequented community educational centers in the favela as "*o bonde de inteletuais da favela*" the streetcar of favela intellectuals, which refers to those who, like her, don't walk to the night sessions but come mostly by streetcar or bus. Brazilian historian of the Black Movement Amilcar Araujo Pereira notes the importance of these independent community institutions, first emerging in the early 1990s in several cities, known as "*pre-vestibulares para negros e carentes*"—liberated spaces of learning and consciousness-raising. They are staffed almost totally by volunteer Afro-Brazilian activist-school teachers and professors who dare to help construct a future for black youth diverging sharply from cheap manual labor and domestic service in white homes. This grassroots intellectual tradition and practice began years before the advent of university quotas, and still continues. The hard-won (and now imperiled) social measure of Pro-Uni scholarships paid for the schooling of black thinker-activists—products of the community *pre-vestibulares*, such as Marielle herself—possible. In her study, Marielle reflects on herself as both a professional and a researcher, obligated to make careful use of her access to data and information. She also thanks a host of dancers, funk-friends, professors, kin both chosen and blood, as well as the feminist mutual support group known affectionately as NOS, or *Núcleo Organizado das Sereias*. Her acknowledgements take seriously the themes of both love and violence. And she makes a not-so-oblique reference to the slave ship when she calls the workroom in the Human Rights Commission the "*porão*"–the cargo-hold. This is a study which heralds an intellectual practice working in the crossroads of several intellectual traditions: radical, black, feminist and queer. But I want to add two more ways of thought which draw from all these but have a specific *becoming*

Vitória Cribb, Beau[try] I, 2018. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

which Marielle's research and everyday practice make manifest: *favela* thinking and *quilombola* ideas. I believe that this is what she had in mind when she singled out for our notice the category "favela intellectuals."

Policy/Space: Studying Maré and UPPs

Marielle's study takes as epistemic objects the UPPs, or Police Pacification Units, and the favelas for which they were designed, in the period 2008 to 2014. In particular, she takes her own community, the favela of Maré, as a case study within the larger inquiry. Maré, she describes, is "a territory with a significant network of civil society organizations"—resident associations, non-governmental organizations, collectives, "and dozens of projects underway." Home to Marielle and 140,000 other human beings living inside ten square kilometers and stitched between the wealthy city arteries of Linha Amarela, Linha Vermelha and Avenida Brasil, Maré would come under heavy occupation.

Let me pause here to introduce briefly, into the crossroads, another maré, one which touches upon the themes of space and identity, which came immediately to my mind when I first opened Marielle's book. In the Brazilian Northeast, along the sea-curving Recôncavo and in many rivers of the interior, are fishing *quilombos* (maroon communities) where women and men are waging a struggle for human rights and territory—for land, waterways and the ways of life and knowledge that shape them as a people—a struggle that is as difficult and important as that of the favelas. I have come to know them as they identify themselves: *Mulheres da Maré*, Women of the Tides. By resisting encroachment on *quilombola* rights to ancestral territories and the social gains of the last decade or so, *quilombola* communities are producing political knowledge, too—ideas which dialogue with those of Marielle and her sisters and brothers in the urban Maré, ideas which are drawing on a shared heritage of fugitive resistance going back to slave revolts and escapes, not to mention the social proposals of 20th-century *quilombismo* and the Unified Black Movement.

By resisting encroachment on *quilombola* rights to ancestral territories

Public Security or Penal State? Interrogating UPPs

Though supposedly for lack of funds, it never did receive an official UPP, 3,000 professional soldiers and security officers descended upon and occupied the favela of Maré. These units were vaunted by the city government as part of a public security or safety initiative. Marielle argues that instead of effecting any *real* change, these units of State force ended up merely maintaining prior conditions. Based on this assessment, the establishment of UPPs in Rio de Janeiro follows what Marielle terms the penal state model. Its proponents argue that certain measures are needed to successfully pursue a "war on drugs" and eliminate criminality. Penal states, Marielle suggests, seek broader support from the whole city by alluding to "peace" in narratives aimed at winning over public opinion. But these security measures were never intended for the *entire* city, which makes their creation and functioning what she calls an instance of "differentiated regulation." In Brazil, there is a saying that addresses this preferential treatment: "For my friends, everything; for my enemies, the Law." Moreover, far from these security measures providing any qualitative change in the lives of the public, the Units are an auxiliary force helping to concretize, "a model of the city centered on private profit, and not on its population…[one] marked by exclusion and punishment."

Vitória Cribb, Undefined I, 2018. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

Marielle asks pointed questions about the Pacification Units. Do they *really* change how public security is administrated and delivered? Do the UPPs represent a change in security for what Marielle refers to, numerous times throughout her study, as "the *whole* city" (*o conjunto da cidade*)? This notion of a *conjunto* is an important pillar of her argument—its distinct democratizing bent.

The policy of UPPs, Marielle's study asserts, leaves out what *every* part of the city should have: access to public services, the right to decent dwellings, sanitation, commerce, and transport. In the favela, she found, such rights—human rights—relegated to secondary importance, left to languish ineffectively, limited by official decrees, or poorly executed in legal practice and negated by daily "petty political interventions." Tensions and conflicts between municipal and federal governments aggravate the problem, because, in Brazil, federal government determines security laws and fiscal legislation.

As one case in point, Marielle argued that eight years of UPPs in the favela of Morro Santa Marta, in Botafogo, had "militarized social policy"

Deploying a strategy they defined as "strong listening," the UPPs took over forums

without improving living standards for residents. Popular measures might have addressed living standards more effectively if they hadn't been suppressed by the so-called "UPP-Social" facet of the pacification units. Deploying a strategy they defined as "strong listening," the UPPs took over forums to interpose themselves between the population, local leaders and the State, usurping the role of existing grassroots organizations and local leadership, Marielle's study contended. In the process, the supposedly "social side" of pacification reduced the question of social inequality to just a technical and management problem. They equated security policy to political economy.

Critique of Militarization, Pacification and Loss of Life

Marielle delivers a devastating indictment of the "war on drugs," noting that "neither the illegal drugs, nor small or large weapons, are produced in the territories against which war is declared." This war, and the instruments set up to wage it, including the UPPs, might, according to Marielle, more properly be seen as "part of a project of capital to make" the favela a "viable" place for "business, and not to resolve the problems of criminality." She goes further: it was state negligence and exclusion of residents from essential public services, circumstances created long before the drug traffic, Marielle asserts, which allowed drug traffickers to take over the territory of the favela—territory then recast, in the dominant ideology, as "spaces of exclusion" and violent "territories of poverty."

What changes in the life of favela residents, then, did the UPPs actually bring? Marielle's carefully researched answer: encroaching gentrification, real estate speculation, higher bills for scarce utilities, and bans on creative expression and nascent creative industries, all for the sake of mega-events and Big Business. It is speculative real estate production in particular—something found in both "Marés,"—which has caused, according to Saskia Sassen, the "systemic expulsion" of longtime inhabitants, whether in favelas or in *quilombos*. Well after the Pacification Units had been installed in the favela, research by Marielle and others shows, homicides continued apace. Marielle mentions names and families of the dead and injured, humanizing them:

> The marks of homicides are not present only in research, in the numbers and indicators. They are present, above all, in the breast of each mother of a favela resident

Vitória Cribb, Beau[try] II, 2018. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

> or mother of a police-person who has lost their life. No public excuse, whether governmental or not, is capable of shushing the mothers who have lost their children ... There is no way to make a hierarchy of pain, or to believe that it will hurt only the mothers of young favela dwellers. The bellicose, militarized state is responsible for the pain which falls as well on the 16 families of police dead since the initiation of UPPs.

Her words call to mind Afro-Brazilian poet and literary scholar Éle Smog's poignant verse, "To Our Quota's Dead," where yet another

favela mother cries out over small dead bodies: "Lord have mercy, what slaughter is this!"

Critique of the Penal State

Theoretical and experiential reflections on the nature of the State, neoliberalism, and the imbrications of the latter with the penal state buttress Marielle's arguments. Her empirical data cover the occupation of Marielle's home community of Maré by the federal forces, which began in April of 2014 and lasted until June, 2015. But her research also includes abundant documents from State authorities, including the Brazilian Ministry of Defense, and Marielle marshalls a formidable set of data from official decrees, legislation, and internal police bulletins, on what she terms "the militarization of the favelas and of the [so-called] 'pacified' territories." She found that "the war against drugs," as carried out on the ground in the favelas, led to many avoidable confrontations. Armed agents of the state provoked inhabitants, whether in gangs or not, besieging involved communities in a steady "encircling of daily life." Far from making its citizens safe, the presence of the UPPs further endangered them. But then again, State security policy had never been implemented to serve those that lived in the favelas.

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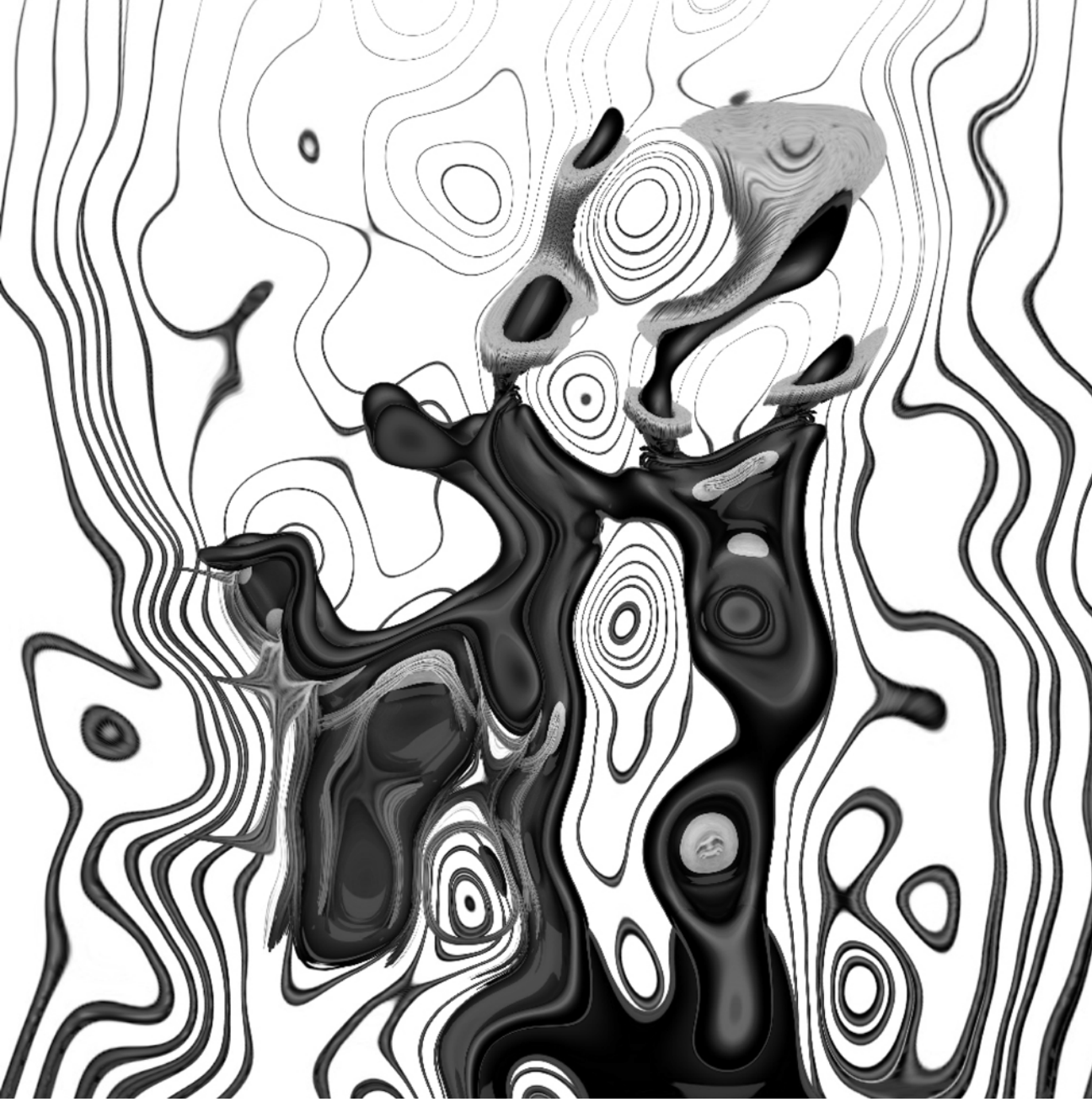
This was a war in which the federal government spent 41.9 million Brazilian *reais* monthly, for the occupation of Maré alone. One of the documents which Marielle secured from The Brazilian Ministry of Defense reads, "the occupation of Maré is considered a modern conflict. An irregular war, without borders, with a diffuse enemy." However, *private sector* money, in addition to federal funds, helped finance the implementation of UPPs in Rio de Janeiro. It was most unfortunate, and hardly coincidental, that the ideological framing of a so-called war on drugs converged with the staging of two grand events in Brazil: the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. As federal and private money poured into the installation of the military state, so that the "whole" city could be safe for these mega-events, and the simultaneous construction of infrastructure for these events made the rich richer, the poor in the favelas suffered. This latter point is critical to one of Marielle's key arguments, i.e., public policies enacted in a penal state come at the cost of policies for social well-being neither being contemplated



Vitória Cribb, Undefined II, 2018. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

nor carried out. No wonder then, that among the most important issues that Marielle raises in her analysis are: "respect for residents' rights, the diverse [modes of] resistance possible, and the changes in social relations [that come] with the arrival of the Armed Forces."

The social changes brought about by the pacification of favelas, Marielle argues, have also had broader implications, impacting the entire city in a variety of ways, and further altering relations between the State and Brazilian society. Public policies in the territories where the disadvantaged majority reside, Marielle suggests, can be characterized as either completely *absent* or "not being totally present"—except mainly in police action.

Counter-proposal to Exclusion and Militarization

For Marielle, the answer to the dilemma lies in a double move: structural reforms which demilitarize the favela and wager on breaking the cycle of violence instead—and a policy that unifies the sovereignty of the whole State by disarming and breaking up the criminal groups. This two-pronged response would entail new training for police, one aimed at ending the dehumanizing practices and ideologies of policing, whose historical roots in Brazil, as in the USA and elsewhere, lie in slavery and anti-black racism, which has persisted way past emancipation. This takes us back to the crossroads…

"Rather than asking how the police can kill less," Camp and Heatherton recently wrote of the U.S., we might consider a broader set of questions, including "*How have these issues been addressed in other global contexts*? And … *what alternate definitions of security might we imagine*?" (emphasis mine). Indeed. "How then might we incorporate Marielle's favela thinking, and her *quilombola* ideas, into a more globalized study of carceral regimes? "I have a suggestion: her study should be read alongside the online documents of the Movement for Black Lives, in particular their widely-discussed policy demands under the rubric "A Vision for Black Lives." (U.S.-based black feminists might agree. They were among the first to make strong declarations of solidarity when the news of Marielle's killing broke out.)

"How then might we incorporate Marielle's favela thinking, and her *quilombola* ideas, into a more globalized study of carceral regimes?

Just imagine the vivid, consequential engagement between *A Reduction of the Favela to 3 Letters* and MBL's "Immediate End to the Criminalization and Dehumanization of Black Youth Across All Areas of Society Including, but Not Limited to, Our Nation's Justice and Education Systems, Social Service Agencies, Media, and Pop Culture." Camp and Heatherton cite an even more pointed, necessary invocation by another interlocutor, whom Marielle might readily meet within our crossroads, BLM co-founder Patrisse Cullors:

> When our political activism isn't rooted in a theory about transforming the world, it becomes narrow; when it is focused only on individual actors instead of larger systemic problems, it becomes shortsighted … We have to have solutions for people's real-life problems, and we have to allow people to decide what those solutions are.

Vitória Cribb, Beau[try] III, 2018. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

We also have to create a vision that's much bigger than the one we have right now … This is a broader fight for the Black diaspora, both on the continent and across the globe. It's essential that we center this conversation and also our practice in an international frame. If we don't have those critical dialogues, if we don't have that praxis around internationalism, we won't have a movement that is about all Black lives. I don't actually think we're fully integrated around this. The focus on the US is so intense and hyper-vigilant … I think we need a shift. We need to have a much more integrated theory but also practice around all Black lives globally.

Can I put it more plainly? *UPP: The Reduction of the Favela to Three Letters* needs to be on any Prison Abolition—or criminal justice—syllabus! For a widely-respected example, see the Prison Abolition syllabus circulated by the African-American Intellectual History Society in 2018.

Resistance and Favelas Re-/Self-defined

In her final chapter, Marielle posits some aspects of possible resistance as she analyzes the current conjuncture. Just as importantly, she describes, with the insight of one born, raised and living in a favela, "the diversity of participation and the organizing process which guides the collective life and productive arrangements in the favelas"—a life made in the most difficult margins of a big city, with ingenuity and courage. In this, Marielle recalls the work of other scholars, such as Abdulmaliq Simone, on "people as infrastructure," and the "modes of provisioning and articulation" which make socio-economic life possible in otherwise precarious and under-serviced urban spaces.

It is worthwhile to recapitulate explicitly, within Marielle's favela thinking, how she sees those who shape the landscape from the inside. In her reading, favela dwellers are protagonists in the city's own development and a living contradiction to dominant ideologies. Favelas, Marielle argues, "invented their [own] diverse forms of regulating and resisting life: by means of the arts, residences, mobility, meetings, etc." Their communities have been the nursery of many collectively-constructed social ideas and political demands. Moreover, "if the favela-dwellers did not 'descend' [into the rest of the city], if they didn't come onto the pavement to execute various types of work, including in the services and residences of the middle class or dominant sectors of the society, the city would practically stop," she asserts unhesitatingly. What might this mean for the well-worn cliché of favelas as places in supposed *opposition* to the rest of the city?

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Criminalization, Genocide and Repressing Funk

I want to say a bit about one other aspect of Afro-Brazilian social life, repressed in Rio's favelas under the pacification policy, which Marielle singles out for analysis: the vibrant, youthful musical culture known as funk, and especially its hugely popular, and income-earning *bailes* or public dances. In effect, her study asserts, the war on funk in the favela

Vitória Cribb, Undefined III, 2018. 3D digital print. Courtesy of the Artist.

is a war on Afro-Brazilian youth—an important adjunct, if less deadly, to the genocide of black youth widely denounced by social movements across the country. For Marielle, the criminalization and repression of *funkeiros* is an exercise in "*non*-rights." Afro-Brazilian historian Wilson Mattos (2008) lends us another name for the same phenomenon in an earlier era: *blacks out of order*. The guarantee of citizens' rights drops out of sight here, and favelas are turned into "spaces of absence" and lack, inhabited by "*vagabundos*"—vagrants, loiterers and wastrels, to use the language criminalizing free blacks in New England's cities, after the abolition of slavery there, and in the emancipated, formerly-enslaved U.S. South. All of these regimes had the intent of keeping black people

from competing economically or excluding them as possible laborers—relegating many to sharecropping or miserably-paid domestic labor (Augusto, 2014). This is part of the longer economic history of the favela, one on which Marielle was quite clear. In fact, much new scholarship in post-Abolition studies in both the U.S. and Brazil addresses this.

Alternatives: Resistance and the Rights of Full Citizenship

Counter-policies are at the heart of Marielle's critique of how favelas have been caught in the mire of militarization. She presents several, which were derived by collective work, including the reflections of Machado da Silva e Leite and the dialogues and public protests initiated by the residents of Favela da Maré in 2009. Common to all these alternative public policies is their basis in popular organizing in community life, such as that done by neighborhood associations and peoples' assemblies, and in what Marielle, with clear-eyed realism, calls "possible resistance" in the face of a general discouragement against the right of association and ongoing violence. One striking vehicle for these counter-ideas is a handbook coming from the favela of Santa Marta, the first community on which Rio's UPPs descended: *The Cartilha Popular* or *Popular Handbook*, which explains that the residents of the favela should be respected by security officers and in other instances of public power, that residents have the right to full citizenship, and that residents can lobby public entities. The *Cartilha Popular* brought me swiftly back to the crossroads—where I could imagine Marielle and the residents of Santa Marta in intense dialogue and exchange of practices with the young organizers of SNCC. I could see them putting copies of the *Cartilha* down on the table, as well as the equally simple but profound handbooks that SNCC developed in the late 1960s in Lowndes County, Alabama, to let local residents know what the sheriff and other officials could and could not legally do—so that they might aspire to take on the responsibilities of public office themselves.

I could imagine Marielle and the residents of Santa Marta in intense dialogue and exchange of practices with the young organizers of SNCC.

Marielle discusses other favela-produced instruments of public knowledge and struggle, which carry within them the seeds of alternative policies: the Carnaval afro-block "Se benze que da," which gave a resounding pushback to the criminalization of impoverishment and of social movements, with its joyful invitation to "Come out on the street, Resident." The policy formulations which emerged from a local conference on public security, the *Conferencia Livre de Seguranca Publica,*

Vitória Cribb, Hábito, 2019. 3D digital art. Courtesy of the Artist.

asserting: "Maré que queremos em functionamento na Maré" (roughly: How we want Maré to function). The 2009 seminar *"O que é a favela, afinal?"* (What is the favela, after all?), organized by the Favelas Observatory and Amnesty International (Brazil), where new ground was broken in terms of self-definition. Participants' reflections in the seminar pointed towards a concept of the favela which, while affirming the obvious fact of the predominance of blacks and descendants of Brazil's indigenous people, also, in Silva's words, "contemplated the complexity and the diversity of this territory in contemporary urban space" and denoted the favela as a space with a wealth of plural social subjects living together "in their cultural, symbolic and human differences." This analysis conducted by favela-dwellers, along with invited academics and civil society organs, delineated a sharp socioeconomic rundown, which noted precarious formal investment by the market, high levels of un- and under-employment, and the outsized role of informal means of income-earning. The seminar noted, as well, the favela's marked verticality-by-necessity, as well as its bent for auto-construction of housing, which did not obey "the normative urban standards of the State."

Subsequent to the 2009 seminar, Amnesty International and the Favelas Observatory organized a campaign entitled "*Somos da Maré e temos direitos*" (We are from Maré and we have rights.) That drive, which organized various collectives, was acutely conscious of Brazilian history, when it invited residents out to a peaceful demonstration. Explicitly marking the 50th anniversary of the 1964 military coup, when soldiers and tanks occupied the streets of Rio, favela residents declared on a 2014 "Maré Vive" poster: "We need to mobilize, to demonstrate, against new forms of dictatorship in the city's strategic spaces. Peace is not donated, it is won!" This is a critical perspective that recognizes that solutions emanating from the paradigm that created the problem cannot solve it, as Audre Lorde long ago stressed.

Call for De-militarization

The relational thinking in Marielle's work (and those of the organizations, residents and colleagues with whom she worked) suggests new ways of responding to these dilemmas and new social relations. Marielle's thesis, having carefully dissected the results of militarization, calls for a struggle against it: by ending "territorial inequality" with its differential distinctions among the citizens of Rio and curtailing use of the "enterprise-city" as an excuse to snatch away human rights, repress popular demonstrations and stymie cultural practices; and by stopping the erection of those bothersome "acoustic barriers" walling off favelas as well as the expulsion by force of many of the poorest of its residents. In short, she calls for de-militarization of society at the municipal, state and federal level, specifically by delinking the police from the Armed Forces and creating instead a unified civil police force with the right to form unions. Then might begin the construction of a new model of civil policing. Marielle's thinking here calls to mind another radical community-inflected analysis of police oversight elsewhere in the diaspora, Adams and Rameau's proposal for Civilian Police Control Board (CPCB). In this account, a monitoring entity should be entirely civilian, "comprised entirely of adult human beings—not corporate representatives—residing in the police district … living in it, not merely owning property in it, without regard to citizenship status or criminal history," and with "randomly selected board seats refreshed on a regular basis" to make "subversion of the democratic process virtually impossible." This, the authors argue, would be community decision-making on "how the armed force of the neighborhood is supposed to act … real liberation and power."

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Reinventing Public Security and a Model for the Whole City

But Marielle's own vision does not stop there. She calls as well for a very different model and role for the police, one which returns politics and public policies to the lead role, not the police. In this model, the police would stop using military helicopters, drones and the arms usually reserved for war, stop using lethal weapons when controlling demonstrations and big public events, or people already imprisoned. The current Brazilian Law of National Security, a legacy of the old

dictatorship, would be revoked and the category "political prisoner" would *not* be reinvented. The territories of the city's poor would no longer be assaulted by the imposition of a penal state. What really *could* ensure public security instead, on this account, is a strategy of "occupying public space, making living together in diversity a priority, guaranteeing more rights to its residents—and betting, above all, on the youth."

Conclusion: Marielle's Contributions

The theoretical contributions in Marielle's research lie in public policy (especially urban policy), critical urbanism, cultural geography, political theory (notions of the State, sovereignty), social theory (human rights, social welfare), and black feminisms. In Marielle's framing, cities can be thought of in two deeply contrasting ways: as the space of rights-bearing persons, or as they have become under neo-liberal ideology, as merchandise for private marketing. Reflecting on her own life experience, she reads favelas and periphery communities as actual or potential "locations of production," even with the low level of investment that the State has made in them. Marielle describes the transformation of favelas under neoliberalism and then re-imagines the social space they might become. Her study reveals the cultural, social and physical labor that goes into making those spaces everyday—climbing those steps, making that funk. In the midst of the favelas, she argues, a whole gamut of social movements and third-sector institutions have arisen, which put thousands of residents in motion, whether around educational, cultural, political and sports projects, or around political actions and demands, regulating and resisting life. Marielle was *thinking the city anew*, in terms of its cultural geography, in terms of it as one whole belonging to all the citizenry, as a space of rights and not just profit-making—in other words, she was *theorizing spatial justice*. She was rethinking public safety and public security as *ideologies* as well as policies. To put it another way, Marielle was imagining the possibilities of transforming notions about security from "ideological initiative[s] which respond to the needs of the moment," to something qualitatively different: a range of public policies not just for the city, but also for the state and *the whole society*. On one hand, she was rethinking the concepts of violence, militarization and pacification and, on the other, critiquing the discourse of "*assistencialismo*" or aid,

Her study reveals the cultural, social and physical labor that goes into making those spaces everyday—climbing those steps, making that funk.

cast as help for "those poor things." And she was theorizing the favela and peripheral neighborhoods in ways that might in some respects be extended to thinking about and with *quilombola* communities, too.

These are extraordinary gestures towards a broader unified definition of the polity—not "two nations" but rather a whole to be protected instead of repressed, a whole with multiple ways of being, of heterogeneity with justice, a civic landscape where public policies might emerge from dialogue, with services and real investments giving the whole population the right to the city…or to other territories, as determined by the law. This seems to be a powerful set of ideas in dangerous times... the kind that *make tidal waves…and plant seeds.* At the crossroads and in this room*:* **Marielle, presente!** ◍