Language as Hope

Daniel N. Silva and Jerry Won Lee

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Although it feels like we live in a time of seeming hopelessness, this pioneering book illustrates what language can teach us about the practice, logic, and feasibility of hope in the twenty-first century. Silva and Lee highlight how people living in Brazilian urban peripheries, who have grown accustomed to unrelenting prejudice and violence on an everyday basis, use language to survive and imagine futures that are worth aspiring to. In so doing, this book foregrounds how language becomes a matter of survival for these communities. It provides a thorough theorization of how language can produce conditions of hope, moving away from the idea of language merely as a tool of communication and toward something that can meaningfully impact social realities. Innovative and engaging, it is essential reading for researchers and students in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

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Para Marielle, Maureen, Maria de Lourdes e aquelas/es que se foram mas continuam de algum modo conosco.

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We write these words just one day after the 2022 presidential election in Brazil, where there is a bit more hope for a better tomorrow.

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Notes on the Text

Reference style: In Brazil, it is common for individuals to be referred to by their first name only. Marielle Franco, for instance, whose activism and legacy is at the center of much of our inquiry, was and is known in Brazil simply as Marielle. Therefore, we will use "Marielle" throughout for in-text references. However, for parenthetical references, when referencing Marielle and other Brazilian scholars and activists, we will use the surname in accordance with APA conventions. We should clarify, though, that we opt for "Franco, M." as in "(Franco, M., 2018)" because we do also cite the work of her sister Anielle as well, as in "(Franco, A., 2021)."

Transcription conventions: In transcribing oral data into writing, we have utilized the following Jefferson Transcription Conventions throughout this book:

(.)	A micropause
(0.7)	A timed pause, long enough to indicate a time
[]	Overlapping talk
(())	Analyst comments
<u>Underlining</u>	A raise in volume or emphasis
→	A sentence of particular interest for the analysis
CAPITALS	Louder or shouted words
=	Indicates that there was no pause between sentences
::	Stretched sound

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I Introduction

"A esperança é a última que morre."[1]

Popular saying

I.1 On Hope

This book aims to illustrate what language can teach us about the practice, logic, and feasibility of hope into the twenty-first century. The possibility of language as a form of producing hope is especially imperative if we accept the premise that we live, in the words of David Theo Goldberg (2021), in a "world of dread" (p. 1). There is indeed much to dread and to feel hopeless about in the world: climate change, environmental destruction, water scarcity, food insecurity, human trafficking, indigenous dispossession, reactionary populism, systemic racism, religious persecution, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, warfare, militarization, the vagaries of COVID-19, and severe economic inequalities and inequities, to name but a few global issues. Much of the dread that we have experienced is rooted in the social and economic stratification engendered and exacerbated by capitalism, in particular "the conflict between the needs of people and the requirements of profit" (Wood, 2002, p. 1). The idea of maximizing profits by exploiting human labor and natural resources has been historically entrenched in the very logics of capitalism, especially as it grew through colonialism, slavery, and extractivism via institutions of empire and the nation-state. Despair and dread are certainly some of the prominent sentiments felt by the peoples of Africa who were enslaved between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and forced into inhumane labor in the Americas. The same feelings must have affected indigenous peoples everywhere across continents, for instance in Oceania and Asia, as they were dominated, displaced, and often exterminated. What "feelings" of unease might we attribute to animals and plants in conquered lands, especially as their habitat gave way to models of expansion such as the sugar plantation and other forms of infrastructure establishment and their attendant decimation of biodiversity? What does it

[1] "Hope is the last to die."

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mean that affects of dread, despair, and hopelessness are disproportionately foisted upon beings who are declared “bare life” (Agamben, 1998) or “precarious life” (Butler, 2006) subjects, rendered ultimately as dispensable and disposable by contemporary regimes of violence?

Today, such effects of dread, despair, and hopelessness – proper to the scalable paradigm of modernist expansion described by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015) – are also distinctively embedded in the contemporary mutations of capitalism and its dispersion into the most intimate and formerly private spaces of our lives. For Goldberg, one of the root causes of dread is tracking-capitalism, which “mobilizes and applies algorithmically driven technology to track the movements, virtual and physical, of almost everyone and everything, nearly everywhere” (p. 79). Tracking-capitalism is distinct from yet another novel mutation of capitalism, namely surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2019). According to Goldberg (2021), “Surveillance proceeds by monitoring the content people are communicating. Tracking, by extension, plots movements and networks” (p. 80). Tracking-capitalism cares less about intent of behavior than it does patterns of behavior. As such, it could be said that what makes tracking-capitalism particularly dreadful are the inevitable degrees of separation between the individual and the tracking agent. It is difficult to hope for a corrective (e.g., “data privacy”) when we don’t know what we are hoping for in the first place. For instance, is it a matter of privacy if the data are being utilized in the aggregate, tracing patterns of people not individually but instead collectively? Is tracking-capitalism a matter of exploitation and the commodification of human labor and life, or a matter of something far more nefarious, indeed dreadful, to the extent that it cannot be named (i.e., ineffable or maybe even sublime, supplanting that which was at one point conceivable only via the natural world), perhaps even imagined?

Regardless of what we point to as the underlying causes of dread today, what we might be able to collectively agree on is the fact that there is, it seems at first glance, very little reason for hope. Perhaps we can relate to the gypsy in Spencer Holst’s (1971) postmodern short story “On Hope,” who has swum a mile out to sea to dispose of the necklace containing the ostensibly cursed diamond of hope, said to bring “misfortune” to whomever is in possession of it (p. 51). After the gypsy believes he has successfully rid himself of the inauspicious stone, the necklace falls on the fin of a sleeping shark, who swims to the surface to investigate. Just moments after he thinks he is in the clear, the gypsy finds himself in an unenviable position with a shark swimming directly toward him. The narrator declares, “that is where the story ends” (p. 54). Notably, in Holst’s story, before the shark devours the gypsy, the narrator metaleptically interrupts with the following line: “But I do not believe that result is as inevitable as it seems at first glance; that is, I believe there are several reasons,

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so to speak, for hope" (pp. 54–55). The narrator proceeds to describe three reasons why readers should not give up on hope:

1. I do not think a shark has ever been approached like this before, that is, by a man wondering whether the shark is a miraculous manifestation, or whether it is merely a figment of his own imagination. Such a man would smell different.
2. The man is a gypsy animal trainer.
3. The shark is now in possession of the necklace (p. 55).

Though many readers would naturally focus on a human's minimal odds of surviving a one-on-one encounter with a shark, especially a mile out at sea, the narrative intervention offers an important reminder of key details that make this an unusual case. For instance, readers are reminded that the gypsy is exceptionally skilled as an animal trainer so much so that he was able to train a monkey to steal the diamond of hope. Additionally, the narrator reminds readers that the outlook is perhaps more dire for the shark, rather than the gypsy, for it is in possession of the necklace notorious for bringing misfortune to its owner. Even though it alludes to outcomes that are perhaps unlikely (because under normal circumstances no human could outswim a shark), the story is a reminder not only that hope is an entailment of action and will, but also that it demands thinking beyond the realm of conventional reason and established temporal frameworks. Our book looks to language as a reason, so to speak, for hope.

Hope has always been critical to human survival. However, the surge of right-wing populism, racism, and ethnocentrism around the world in recent years spells hopelessness for many communities, including those whose backgrounds are subject to increased discrimination and precaritization. While for many in the world such developments may seem new, those in periphery contexts have managed survival in perpetual conditions of seeming hopelessness. One notable case is the favela communities of Brazil. Favelas are neighborhoods built by their own residents – usually on the outskirts of cities but sometimes also within urban areas, like Rio de Janeiro's hillside favelas. They were first formed when the then Empire of Brazil reluctantly abolished slavery in 1888 (Valladares, 2019). No form of redress was offered to former enslaved peoples and their descendants, and therefore they squatted on land and built their own homes and neighborhoods (Caldeira, 2017), who would come to be known as *faveladas/os*.[2] *Faveladas/os* were only subject to the benefits of a systemic public policy for housing and infrastructure more than a hundred

[2] We spent countless hours deliberating before deciding on the expression *faveladas/os*, which represents the feminine form *faveladas* and masculine form *favelados*. Throughout, we will use *faveladas/os* except when we are referring to primary or secondary material that makes explicit reference to one or the other (e.g., in Chapter 3 we discuss Marielle Franco's essay that concerns *faveladas* specifically). Though the expression *favelados/as* (with the masculine form preceding

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years later, when Luiz Inácio da Silva, known as Lula, created the Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento, or the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC) in 2007 (Oliveira, 2011). Yet *faveladas/os*, who are primarily racialized as Black, have endured chronic conditions of systemic racism. Further, unlike residents of central areas, they have been subjected to the "crossfire" (Menezes, 2015) between armed normative regimes: the State (i.e., the police) and "crime" (i.e., drug traffic and, in some favelas, *milícias*, groups of police officers who extort residents in exchange for services such as Internet, cable TV, and "security"). We draw on the case of the *faveladas/os* because they have not merely succumbed to the hopelessness embedded in the "crossfire" and the criminalization of their cultural and communicative practices, but have found creative and unexpected ways of surviving material and systemic inequalities. One key resource that *faveladas/os* have relied upon to hope is language, understood in this project as any symbolic resource with communicative intent that has the capacity to both reflect social realities and to enact them. Through language, *faveladas/os* have been able to recalibrate time as a purely ontological phenomenon and to articulate alternative conceptualizations of temporality conducive to hope. They have also been able to use language resources to engage in practices of translation, including creating new communicative registers, toward the establishment of socially equitable futures. In addition, they have been able to use language to engage in creative practices of scaling, making the project of hope discursively manageable and applicable to wider community contexts. Crucially, the use of new media and digital affordances has been key in *faveladas/os* political mobilization, denunciation of human rights violations and police abuse, and valorization of local modes of life and communicative

the feminine) is indeed more common, our usage of the alternative *favelada*s/*os* centers and acknowledges the critical contributions of women to the linguistic production of hope, as our readers will come to see in the pages that follow. And though this choice has the benefit of decentering the male subject, it is far from a perfect choice. Gender marking in Portuguese has been the object of heated political debates (Borba, 2019a, 2022; Borba & Lopes, 2018). In linguistics, a purely structural view might posit that the affix -o (as in *favelado*), unlike -a, is not a mark of gender but a neutral form (Câmara, 1970). This follows a similar pattern of the grammatical dynamics of gender marking in Romance languages. Yet Borba (2019a) and others have collected evidence that there are rationalizations of the use of -o as indexing masculine, rather than neutral, gender. To avoid this ideological connotation, options that feminist, trans, and other activists have suggested have been: -x (*faveladx*), -e (*favelade*), -a/-o (*favelada*/*o*), or -o and -a (*favelada* and *favelado*). We imagine, and hope to continue to contribute to the production of, a future where gender inclusive alternatives like *faveladx* or *favelade* are in wider circulation. At the present moment of writing this book, however, our interlocutors generally do not self-identify with these descriptors. We even considered, briefly, an all-inclusive label like *faveladas*/*e*/*os*/*x*, but worried that such a label would be too unwieldy and function not as a politically inclusive descriptor but instead as a kind of master signifier, if you will, as a kind of language for the sake of language, distracting readers from the content and message of the work. In other words, our decision is by no means a perfect one, but reflects our best attempt to be mindful of the temporal complexities and contingencies of enregisterment, which is itself never a perfect (or at least a predictable) process.

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practices. These instances point not only to how language can communicate hope but also to how it can produce the very conditions of hope. In this sense, this book is not just about the language *of* hope, but language *as* hope.

I.2 Hope as a Public Act

In this section, we will proceed by articulating the importance of a sustained inquiry on language as hope: what language can teach us about hope and how it can be conceived of as a resource for hope. To that end, it would be instructive to describe the importance of the study of hope more generally. A productive starting point might be found in Arjun Appadurai's (2013) *The Future as Cultural Fact*, in which he describes the need for more future-oriented scholarship. And while Appadurai is speaking primarily from his positionality as a cultural anthropologist, his offering of "imagination, anticipation, and aspiration" as "three notable human preoccupations that shape the future as a cultural fact" (p. 286) represents viable topical points for the study of hope in a broad range of fields. Imagination is addressed extensively in his earlier work, *Modernity at Large* (Appadurai, 1996). It was Benedict Anderson (1983), in *Imagined Communities*, who popularized the trope of imagination as a key process for individuals otherwise not intrinsically related to conceive of themselves as members of a unified national community. Anderson, in particular, historicized the emergence of "print capitalism," or the process of producing and distributing print materials such as novels and newspapers as commodities, as a precursor to the possibility of the nation as an imagined community. Through print capitalism, individuals who otherwise had no kinship, friendship, or even relationship could imagine themselves as belonging to a national collective. Appadurai would extend this thesis, describing how community identification in the era of globalization was not dependent on the territorial premises of the nation-state; individuals could instead produce belonging across space through what he described as the "production of locality" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 178).

Anticipation, meanwhile, is understood in relation to the "tension" between the "ethics of possibility" and the "ethics of probability" (Appadurai, 2013, p. 295). Practices of anticipation in accordance with the ethics of probability rely on another's failure or misfortune for personal gain, as is the case in the speculative algorithms of casinos, lotteries, or "catastrophe bonds," in which investors can serve to generate great profits in the event of a natural disaster occurring in a given period of time (p. 297). This view of anticipation, at least in Appadurai's conceptualization, provides an opportunity to understand what might be called a dialectics of hope. Viewing the future in terms of algorithms of probability, the driving force of investment and speculation, entails a treatment of futurity as a zero sum game in which one person's gain is another's loss and vice versa. To speak simplistically, consider for a moment

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a wager on the outcome of a sporting event that results in a payout, which invariably means that others will have a negative return, with the bookie, by design, almost always turning a profit. Consider also real estate investors who renovate and upsell properties that will drive up the value of homes in a given neighborhood, pricing out not only a majority of prospective buyers but also many homeowners in the community who bought their homes long ago and can no longer afford upkeep and property taxes. Anticipation, in other words, is an orientation to the future that results in gains for some (usually few) and losses for others (usually many).

The preoccupation with aspiration is perhaps the most pertinent to hope. Appadurai defines aspiration as a "navigational capacity," one in which even "poor people can effectively change the 'terms of recognition' within which they are generally trapped, terms which severely limit their capacity to exercise voice and to the debate the economic conditions in which they are confined" (pp. 289–290). Aspiration, then, does not presume the inevitability of the future as a mere extension of the present. Instead, it rejects that which is taken as a given in the present while negotiating if not demanding alternative arrangements in the future. Appadurai notes that the systematic study of humans and their response to past and present order has led to the codification of a binarized approach to futurity. More specifically, hope tends to be treated as "a product of moments of exception and emergency," based on the idea that the "future is not a routine element of thought and practice in all societies" (2013, p. 292). There is, in other words, something profoundly utopian but simultaneously quotidian about aspiration. Can we view the ordinary, as Kathleen Stewart (2007) writes, in relation to the "little fantasies" that "pop up" in everyday life (p. 48)? Is it possible, likewise, to view the ordinary and thus by extension aspiration, as "a drifting immersion that watches and waits for something to pop up?" (p. 95). We of course do not mean to treat aspiration as a passive process in which one is expected to sit around waiting for opportunities to simply "pop up," or to just "hope for the best," so to speak. Instead, hope is inherently practical, active and action-oriented, especially when viewed as "the political counterpart to the work of the imagination" (Appadurai, 2013, p. 293).

Appadurai's (2013) perspective on hope as a practical affect that engages temporality and the work of imagination in principled ways intersects with our approach to hope. The empirical realities that we discuss in this book suggest that hope is not a form of escapism in the face of a debilitating scenario. Rather, our engagement with those who have been dispossessed by the logics of capitalism teaches us that in the face of uncertainty – navigating for instance the conditions of police brutality and economic oppression – hope is a major form of practical reason enabling people to avoid despair. Through hope as a collective and communicative enactment, the *faveladas/os* that we have engaged in dialogue produce "'balanced judgement and measured insight'

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against 'desperate hope and desperate fear'" (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. xiv). Further, by reimagining temporality and other semiotic resources, they have been able to live livable lives.

In this book, we therefore embrace a practical or pragmatic approach to hope. Aristotle – who is credited with defining hope as a "waking dream" (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 26) – proposed in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that "acts that derive merely from optimism are not themselves courageous" (Lear, 2006, p. 112). A philosopher who accorded fundamental significance to empirical observation and praxis – and who inspired pragmatic accounts of social life such as those of J. L. Austin (1962) and Saba Mahmood (2005) – Aristotle strived to understand not just the semantic content of an action (e.g., being hopeful or courageous) but fundamentally the virtues and ethical investments that lead subjects to cultivate and embody that modality of action in their everyday lives (see Mahmood, 2005). Hence, realizing that hope can be a manifestation of courage, he stipulated that courage to act – the courage to cultivate and communicate hope – is different from optimism (Lear, 2006). Rather, cultivating hope is work – practical, collective, semiotic work.

We believe that building relations, engaging in dialogue, and fundamentally listening to those who do not live a life of comfort – for instance, those who do not experience the same comfort of not being routinely bothered by the police or the drug traffic as we do – may teach us about producing language as hope. Despite a bleak backdrop – e.g., the "crossfire" between police and the drug trade, systemic racism, and economic inequality – *faveladas/os* produce solutions for everyday life, mobilize themselves politically, produce art, and are active in the workforce (albeit under more precarious and informal conditions than residents of central neighborhoods). As Marielle Franco, a central figure in this study, proposed in her master's thesis on police "pacification" in favelas ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, the idea is to shift the focus away from seeing the subaltern as "needy" (e.g., of literacy or culture), which would require devising strategies of "social assistance" (Franco, M., 2014, p. 14). We read in Marielle's work that, academically, producing language as hope amounts to recalibrating our gaze and looking at "favelas and peripheries as places of production, better described as potency" (p. 14). She adds: "Even in the face of the reality of low investment by the state, residents have invented their various ways of regulating and resisting life: through arts, housing, mobility, encounters, etc." (Franco, M., 2014, p. 14).

Marielle invites us not to prefigure the subaltern as someone who "lacks" – culture, knowledge, or the future. She underlines the urgency of looking at what they *do,* and what we *can learn* from what they do. It is worth pointing out that Marielle is iconic of many authors and interlocutors we summon in this book – she was someone who was born in the favela and who moved across social spaces, including institutional politics and the university. Our point is to

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consider *faveladas/os* (and by extension, many peripheral subjects studied globally by sociolinguists) not as "informants" but as "authors" whose intellectual production has much to teach academia. In this sense, the epistemic stance that we pursue in this book is reflective of what Betsy Rymes (2020) has described as citizen sociolinguistics, which we now move to unpack next.

I.3 Citizen Sociolinguistics as a Sociolinguistics of Hope

If we are to take seriously the human capacity to hope, then we need to take seriously the capacities of human knowledge production beyond those who have historically been authorized or credentialed as legitimate agents of knowledge. We are referring, of course, to those with "formal" education in the form of diplomas from accredited institutions of higher education and a "formal" institutional affiliation in the form of a research or teaching position. Historically, individuals belonging to this elite community of researchers have treated those outside the academy as mere research "subjects" rather than true interlocutors, much less intellectual peers. Thinking beyond this narrow epistemological logic is what has inspired proponents of participatory action research (McTaggart, 1991). In this model, not only is the goal of research to effect real world social change, but research subjects are also involved as participants in the design and implementation of the work. Appadurai (2013) refers to this approach to the democratization of research in his theorization of "research as a human right," which demands a view of research as "a generalized capacity to make disciplined inquiries into those things we need to know but do not know yet" (p. 269). Illustrative is Appadurai's involvement with PUKAR, or Partners for Urban Knowledge Action and Research, a nonprofit grassroots community-based organization based in Mumbai that promotes research related to economic development and urban planning. This initiative invites a new conceptualization of "research":

> it is not only the production of original ideas and new knowledge (as it is normally defined in academia and other knowledge-based institutions). It is also something simpler and deeper. Research is the capacity to systematically increase the horizons of one's current knowledge, in relation to some task, goal, or aspiration. (p. 282)

Citizen sociolinguistics, or the production of language knowledge by nonlinguists, is an intriguing model for community participation in knowledge production, particularly in language research. The notion was initially conceptualized in the work of Rymes and Leone (2014) to encapsulate the ways people use new media language resources to make sense of language phenomena. It was described as the study of "people who use their senses and intelligence to understand the world of language around them" (p. 26). Rymes (2020) develops the notion of citizen sociolinguists in her book *How We Talk about*

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Language, noting that she was interested in "providing a process to explore social norms, not a statement of top-down language standards to be adhered to in all cases" (p. 2). As she elaborates: "Instead of looking to experts in the field of Linguistics for definitive diagnoses of language issues, I am suggesting that these institutionally centered voices are just one of many different interesting and personally invested views on language" (p. 2). The basis of citizen sociolinguistics is citizen science, involving "1) Inclusion of citizens in the scientific process; 2) Contributions to both science and the public; and 3) Reciprocality, that is, two-way communication between scientists and the public" (Golumbic, Orr, Baram-Tsabari, & Fishbain, 2017, p. 2). As Svendsen (2018) notes, citizen sociolinguistics thus "requires the inclusion of non-professionals in *doing* sociolinguistic research, in collecting data, in registering them, analysing and interpreting them relative to the level of citizen involvement and collaboration, the research questions and design of the CS-project" (p. 138, emphasis in original).

Our embrace of the citizen sociolinguistics model might appear, on the one hand, somewhat ironic given that *faveladas/os* have frequently been denied the rights of citizenship in Brazil. On the other hand, their claims to citizenship, and the fact that this was a condition that has historically been denied to them, makes our community-oriented approach to language knowledge all the more critical. Indeed, it is from this position of precarious citizenship that *faveladas/os* are able to disrupt expected intellectual (hierarchical) arrangements between the researcher and research "subject." Our interlocutors in Rio de Janeiro favelas, for instance, have devised a very critical stance to the traditional model of extractivist research whereby a scholar extracts data from "informants" and does "aquela coisa da academia," or "that academy thing" (Trajano and Medeiros, 2018, 22:15) with it – that is, does not engage in effective relations of solidarity, disappears without sharing the findings of the study, and so on. Renata Trajano and Thainã Medeiros, members of a favela collective of communication and human rights named Coletivo Papo Reto (Straight Talk Collective), collaboratively produced a dialogue in 2018 that exemplifies the uptake of many favela residents about prototypical hierarchic and extractivist research practices wherein they are positioned as mere sources of data. Thainã and Renata were on *Papo Reto Cast* – a podcast produced by the collective and primarily directed to *faveladas/os* – promoting a seminar held by Raízes Movimento, an NGO from the Complexo do Alemão favelas, aimed at debating and advancing a critical view on research about favelas. In a relaxed and playful style, not uncommon in the sociality and speech action in favelas (see Goldstein, 2003; Silva, 2022), the two *faveladas/os* critique epistemic, linguistic, and economic hierarchies that are often reinforced in interactions between middle-class researchers and peripheral residents. In the excerpt below, Renata and Thainã jointly illustrate some distinguishing traits of researchers that they want to challenge:

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Excerpt 0.1 Papo Reto Cast, Complexo do Alemão, 2018

RENATA: Então, essa parada é a galera que vem né, pá, faz contato, manda no inbox. "Oi, tudo bem? Como é que você tá?" Mas tipo aquela galera que faz a pesquisa [e escreve te explora pra caraca
THAINÃ: [e nós não sabe pra que que é o bagulho=
RENATA: =E nós não sabe pra que que é. Porque a pessoa não volta pra dar o retorno
THAINÃ: [e quando
RENATA: [quando volta=
THAINÃ : =É um negócio que nós não entende nada
RENATA: É aquela coisa da academia que pá e prose e aí às vezes muda sua fala que não foi aquilo que tu di::sse.

RENATA: So, this is about the people who come, you know, get in touch, send us an inbox message. "Hi, how are you?" But it's like that people who do research [and they write, they exploit you like hell
THAINÃ: [and we don't know the purpose of the stuff=
RENATA: =And we don't know what that is for. Because the person doesn't return here to give us feedback
THAINÃ: [and when
RENATA: [when they come back=
THAINÃ : =It's something we don't understand at all
RENATA: It's that academy thing that you do and then sometimes your talk changes and it's not what you sa::id.

(Trajano, R. & Medeiros, T., 2018, 21:45–22:20)

Irreverently, Renata and Thainã critique "aquela coisa da academia" or "that academy thing." In other words, they deride the researcher who "exploits (*explora*)" their time (usually without financially rewarding them for the time spent in interviews and other interactions). They also say that many times the researcher does not even explain the research topic ("nós não sabe pra que que é o bagulho / we don't know the purpose of the stuff") – neither before nor after the research is completed ("a pessoa não volta pra dar retorno / the person doesn't return here to give us feedback"). In this prototypical model, when the researcher actually does offer feedback, the findings are written in a register that is not accessible to *faveladas/os* ("É um negócio que a gente não entende nada / It's something we don't understand at all"). Renata also points out the control that researchers exercise over the record of their talk, transforming the entextualized discourse into units that *faveladas/os* do not recognize ("às vezes muda sua fala que não foi aquilo que tu disse / sometimes your talk changes and it's not what you said").

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While we are aware that to entextualize – to lift “a stretch of linguistic production out of its interactional setting” (Bauman & Briggs, 1990, p. 73) – is to produce a new text, Renata and Thainã’s reflexive activity in critiquing what is prototypically (or at least stereotypically) done with the entextualization of their speech (and of their time and generosity) is of utmost importance; and this for a few reasons. First, the two *faveladas/os* offer an important example of citizen sociolinguistic analysis. They use the semiotic resources at their disposal to “understand the world of language around them” (Rymes & Leone, 2014, p. 16). In their world of language, they indicate that it is not only ourselves as ethnographers who “invent the culture” of the native – to use Roy Wagner’s (1981) classic notion of interpreting in anthropology as inventing the other. They also point out that natives “invent” the ethnographer; that is, they situate us in their regimes of value and interpretation. And this leads to the second point of importance of Renata and Thainã’s comment: We believe that if critical sociolinguists are interested in understanding “social problems in which language plays a key role” (Moita Lopes, 2006, p. 16), we cannot disregard asymmetries that affect interactions whose textual portions will be subsequently entextualized as data. Indeed, in his discussion of methods in linguistics for “extracting” communicative units from the field, Blommaert (2013) concludes that power imbalances embedded in the pragmatics of data production affect what we offer as “results” in our research.

In the sequence of their dialogue, Renata and Thainã also critique citational practices in academia. Thainã says, “no final das contas aquela pessoa ela vai recortar o que a gente falou, vai misturar com um autor, geralmente um autor europeu que não sabe porra nenhuma de favela,” or “at the end of the day, that person will cut out what we talked about, mixing it with an author, usually a European author who doesn’t know a damn thing about the favela” (24:03–24:11). Yet they both offer a remedy for this non-valorized citational practice in favela activism. They suggest that to understand the favela, one ought to read “other philosophers” – favela intellectuals such as rappers Racionais MCs, funk composers Tati Quebra Barraco, MC Orelha, and MC Smith, or samba musician Bezerra da Silva. It is worth emphasizing that many *faveladas/os* and peripheral residents are also academic scholars, including authors who are fundamental to the sociolinguistics of hope we devise in this book (e.g., Franco, A., 2021; Franco, M., 2014, 2018; Lima, 2015; Souza, 2020). We believe that the least we can do here is to engage in more sustainable citational practices.

We read in Renata and Thainã’s reflexive model an echo of Appadurai’s view of research as a human right. At a most basic level, both *faveladas/os* advance an idea that if producing data is an interactional practice, then both scholars and citizens ought to be privy to the rights over what is produced. Fundamentally, they claim

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that producing academic knowledge involves financial resources, social distinction, and academic authentication, elements of the social world that impact our interactions with interlocutors and ultimately what we offer as "situated knowledge" in our research output. Note that Renata and Thainã bring attention to what might be called the "economics of research exchanges," analogous to Bourdieu's (1977) pioneering "The economics of linguistic exchanges." They discuss the time that they spend giving interviews, the usual lack of compensation for their gift, and even the risks of "subir e descer a favela . . . e o cara não paga nem uma água pra tu," or "going up and down the favela . . . and the dude doesn't even pay you a bottle of water." In a sense, Renata and Thainã invite us to rethink the conventional divide between the researcher and the layperson, and they do so by thinking more specifically in terms of wealth and poverty. What we are alluding to here is that the very idea of who is traditionally regarded as a legitimate researcher becomes a rather simple one when one considers how legitimacy is delineated according to access to wealth and resources. Scientific research, for instance, is dependent on millions of dollars of government grants or philanthropic endowments. Research is very much a matter of the rich getting richer, as researchers employed at the wealthiest institutions have not only the highest salaries, but also access to the most opportunities, which in turn lead to more extramural and intramural funding compensated through promotions, recognitions, and increased compensation. Further, though not always the case of course, even students with the privilege to attend the wealthiest and most "prestigious" universities tend to come from wealthier backgrounds. These students are in turn exposed to the latest developments in research by professors with access to the resources necessary to be at the cutting edge of research in their respective fields. While such observations should be painfully obvious, it is not uncommon for folks to assume that attending a "prestigious" or highly ranked university is indicative of being "smart." The discourse around who is fit for research then can be misleading because we are not accustomed to seeing those from disadvantaged backgrounds, like Thainã and Renata, as the beneficiaries and producers of research.

One way forward might be found in what Ngũgĩ describes as "poor theory." As he notes in his work on *Globalectics*, "Poor is used in the sense of appertaining to poverty, for even in a critical theory one does not want to give dignity to poverty by according it theory, but rather to accord dignity to the poor as they fight poverty, including, dare I say, poverty of theory" (p. 2). The possibility of learning from the poor is illustrated by Ngũgĩ through the example of South African poet and sculptor Pitika Ntuli, who makes art from waste. He describes his encounter with Ntuli:

> In parting, he gave me two quill-like shapes with tiny human heads at the tip. He had carved them out of elephant bones he had collected in the forest near his home in

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Kwazululand. They were no longer just bones. Storytellers, he told me. He knew I told stories. (p. 5).

To clarify, poor theory is only in part about learning through practices of unexpected resourcefulness by those on the peripheries, as it is only in part about finding ways of seeing value in that which has hitherto been undervalued if not treated as waste altogether. The value of poor theory, we would argue, is not merely in appreciating that which we readily discard but instead to reconsider our understanding of, or indeed assumptions about, the aspirations of those on the peripheries of society such as *faveladas/os* and many other interlocutors of global sociolinguists.

Appraising our assumptions vis-à-vis peripheral subjects' metadiscourses about their practices and aspirations is a critical task. Our colleague Adriana Facina (2021) writes that an interview that she and her research group carried out in 2012 with a young funk MC, Raphael Calazans, in the Complexo do Alemão favelas was fundamental to "confront our middle-class intellectualized gaze" (p. 3) about *faveladas/os* and their aspirations. In the interview, she asked the young Black artist "what was there of art and culture in that favela before the arrival of the Pacifying Police Units?" The group of researchers, of which Daniel is part, expected as a response "an inventory of groups and activities: funk parties, *pagode* concerts, graffiti collectives, dance and theater groups, etc. However, his answer pointed out the existence of a 'culture of survival,' based on a solidarity necessary for daily existence in the face of a precarity of rights" (p. 3). One of Calazans's examples was the *"gatos"* – improvised and illegal connections of essential services such as Internet, water, and electricity – which are for him part of solidarity practices that made the favela possible. Facina notes that the middle-class intellectualized assumption shared by her and the research group was that "their artistic creativity existed *despite* precariousness" (p. 3, Facina's emphasis). But the young MC "presented a logic in which art is built *from* an experience of scarcity that yields knowledge, aesthetics, and modes of social interaction that he dubbed 'culture of survival'" (her emphasis). His epistemic and artistic aspirations did not emerge *despite* but *from* precarity (see Deumert, 2022).[3] Adriana Facina's remarks about Calazans confronting our assumptions – whereby the young funk MC indirectly questions our referentialist expectations (about a repertoire of practices) by instead theorizing about what it is to produce art from precarious living conditions – further suggest the importance of fieldwork for continuously revising theories that usually undergird our presumptions.

On the basis of this engagement with sociolinguistic knowledge produced by lay citizens, our study of *favelada/o* languaging is on the one hand an attempt to

[3] We engage Deumert's (2022) work on the sociolinguistics of the specter in greater detail in Chapter 4 and the Conclusion.

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present a case study of how communities navigate a unique set of circumstances to produce hope. Simultaneously, it is the material for a broader theorizing of language *as hope*. In other words, the aspirational knowledge being identified and conceptualized in this project is an inherently reciprocal one as its local action is simultaneously a global action, which can be stimulating and instructive for not only sociolinguists but also broader publics.

I.4 Hope as Method for Uneasy Times

Writing about hope demands a methodology that is conducive to understanding its complexities and recognizing its possibilities. A productive methodological premise is perhaps to be found in Anand Pandian's (2019) *A Possible Anthropology: Methods for Uneasy Times*. Pandian acknowledges the field of anthropology's legacies of exploitation and colonial domination, and along with it the fetishization and exoticization of peoples coded as "different." The field, unsurprisingly, has developed a reputation of merely documenting the rituals, beliefs, conventions, and everyday routines and practices of people of a given cultural formation (e.g., "People from this culture worship this deity," "People from this part of the world value collectivism," "Every person on this island on this day of the year eats this food item in honor of a ritual and I, the ethnographer, am the only person in the English-speaking world who knows about it," etc.). As we grapple with the uncertainty of living in a world increasingly described as the anthropocene, the task of ethnography today, Pandian argues, is to imagine a "humanity yet to come" (p. 11). In order to achieve this, Pandian encourages ethnographers to embrace the unpredictable and the unknown as conditions of the human experience, which can in turn help to leverage the work of ethnography into imagining different futures. This is not to suggest that our orientation to hope is based on a wait-and-see model of futurity. Instead, we have actively embraced the unpredictable paths of knowledge that have emerged throughout our research process, learning from our interlocutors and fundamentally recalibrating our understanding of hope along the way.

Turning more explicitly to the question of hope, one of our primary inspirations is what Hirokazu Miyazaki (2004) has called "the method of hope." Hope, as Miyazaki suggests, is not merely a "subject" (p. 3), but a "methodological problem for knowledge and, ultimately … a *method* of knowledge deployed across a wide spectrum of knowledge practices" (p. 2, emphasis in original). This realization emerges from an ethnographic engagement with the Suvavou people in Fiji and their continued attempts to gain reparations from the government for their land. Though continued appeals have been unsuccessful in that they have not resulted in material returns, they enable a consideration of hope as method, distinct from the alternative of desire. Whereas desire

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"invites one to analyze it with its infinitely deferrable quality," hope invites a "radical temporal reorientation of knowledge" (p. 5). Significantly, for Miyazaki, hope is not merely a framework for making sense of the Suvavou people's continued appeals to territorial justice, but an approach to ethnographic knowledge production whereby conventional assumptions about what does or does not count as knowledge are not always applicable. Miyazaki's (2004) at once theoretical and empirical observation that hope lies in the "reorientation of knowledge" (p. 130) is echoed in a number of accounts of hope that we discuss in this book: from Ernst Bloch's (1986) pioneering suggestion of hope as a practical affect that reorients the subject from a wishful to an willful stance towards political life to Jonathan Lear's (2006) account of hope as a fundamental resource for the Crows' reorientation of their frameworks of intelligibility and temporality in the face of their being confined by the U.S. government into a reservation in the nineteenth century. In their active metacognitive work, the Crow devised a "radical hope," Lear (2006) explains, "radical in that it is aiming for a subjectivity that is at once Crow and does not yet exist" (p. 104).

This "radical … reorientation of knowledge" has led us into gauging a "method of hope" among *faveladas/os*. While we hope to make this method clear in the chapters ahead, we believe it is productive to unpack the reorientations of our own academic paths into crafting this project of studying language as hope. The research that resulted in this book can be traced to an ongoing collaboration dating back to 2014 on what we then referred to as the "sociolinguistics of hope." We were introduced by our common friend Sylvia Nam when Daniel was briefly visiting the University of California, Irvine, in the fall of 2014. What was supposed to be a quick lunch break turned into an ongoing conversation between Daniel and Jerry about overlapping research interests. Our interaction would soon turn into a shared agenda of understanding how subjects in different global contexts navigate or survive uncertainty, precarity, or violence predicated on the unequal economic and political arrangements of globalization by reimagining sociolinguistic resources. We initially imagined a comparative multi-site study as a direct response to key moments related to the question of hope as a political act. The fall of 2014 saw the emergence of the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong which, as an independent Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, was experiencing an encroachment of its universal suffrage rights. In the fall of 2016, Donald J. Trump, a real estate mogul with no experience in politics and a deep commitment to the principles of white supremacy and misogyny, was elected to the U.S. presidency. Trump's election represented a moment of impending hopelessness for many in the country, ranging from ethnic minorities, religious minorities, members of the LGBTQ community, undocumented immigrants, and citizens of the lower and lower-middle classes. That same year also saw the emergence of the Candlelight

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Vigil in South Korea, a series of protests against political corruption of then-president Park Geun Hye, the first woman president in the nation's history.

Yet on March 14, 2018, a major political catastrophe affected our conversations and refocused our study back to Rio de Janeiro. Marielle, the aforementioned queer Black scholar and progressive councilwoman, was assassinated. This event had a strong impact on Daniel's ongoing fieldwork in Complexo do Alemão, a group of favelas contiguous to the Complexo da Maré favelas where Marielle was born, because he had interacted with Marielle in activist circles and his interlocutors were themselves part of the mourning movement that was surfacing. The mourners' uncanny engagement with temporality along with their principled ways of narrating sociolinguistic inequalities compelled us to refocus our inquiry in order to better understand the temporal renarrations and sociolinguistic practices that were unfolding before our eyes. We witnessed, both locally and around the world, a mourning movement that refused to give in to despair by engaging with hope as a form of practical reason (Lear, 2006). In response, we decided to focus our collaborative inquiry on the Brazilian context in order to address this emergent recalibration of language and temporal resources towards hope.

In this book, we draw on empirical materials from the vibrant and globalized mourning movement for Marielle. This crime against Brazilian democracy has not yet been solved – today we know who perpetrated the murder, but not who commissioned it, nor their motives (Lucchese et al., 2022; Perry, 2022). The mourning movement – articulated mainly by Instituto Marielle Franco, an NGO created by her family, but also by a grassroot action of thousands of people around the world led especially by Black women – has taken center stage in Brazilian politics. Mourners have challenged biological temporality, singing that Marielle "lives" and is "present" among them. This book also draws on data from Daniel's ethnography with residents, teachers, artists, and activists from the Complexo do Alemão favelas, initiated in 2012, and from our collaborative research that has since 2016 yielded an archive of interactions in the online-offline nexus (Blommaert, 2019), including focus groups, interviews, and artistic and autobiographical materials in activist contexts in both Brazil and the United States.

Our collaborative research relies strongly on ethnography and some of its established forms of data generation, such as participant observation of interactions, audio and video recording, interviews, and transcription of recorded materials with the help of research participants. Indeed, our collaborators from favelas display a high reflexivity about the research process itself. Thanks to affirmative actions passed during Lula da Silva (2003–2010) and Dilma Rousseff's (2011–2016) incumbencies, many of our interlocutors in the field have themselves had access to more education, including graduate education and research. Their access to the university was also made possible through

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other forms of collaboration, such as Marielle's entrance into Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), a private research university, in 1999, prior to affirmative action; only in 2003 would the Brazilian legislature turn racial quotas for access to universities and public employment into law. Thanks to a grassroots preparatory course for favelados (see Duncan, 2021), Marielle passed the entrance exam at PUC-Rio and was able to receive a scholarship. Later, she completed a master's from Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Marielle was, in other words, a brilliant and ambitious scholar, and even in 2016, according to our interlocutors in the field, she was contemplating whether to apply for PhD programs or run for the city council, eventually deciding to pursue the latter.

Although not all of our interlocutors followed the same academic trajectory, in the past decade, *faveladas/os* in Rio de Janeiro have formulated a stance on knowledge that they call *nós-por-nós* (Souza, 2020; Fabrício & Melo, 2020), translatable in English both as "us-for-ourselves" (taking care of ourselves instead of waiting for external aid) and "us-by-ourselves" (relating our own stories and academic accounts). In section I.III, Thainã and Renata enact a *nós-por-nós* stance in their announcement of a seminar on research on favelas promoted by a local NGO, Raízes em Movimento. They display discomfort with outside researchers who do not valorize their gift, and they call attention to local intellectuals who would enact different citational practices in their production of knowledge about peripheries. Yet *nós-por-nós* also means they-themselves studying their practices. Our engagement with local forms of knowledge and scholarship produced by *faveladas/os*, alongside their critical uptake of social justice frameworks and modes of production of academic knowledge about favelas ("extractionist" rather than collaborative and mutually benefiting fieldwork) opens up a methodological approach that we envisage as innovative in scholarship about (and from) the Global South. Our methodological approach is therefore predicated on our listening to and collaborating with research participants, and fundamentally on our engagement with their uptake of problematic modes of production (such as approaching a *favelada/o* for an interview and writing a monograph on materials extracted from the field in a language/register that is inaccessible to those who helped generate the data and theory). This ethic of collaboration and knowledge production and distribution is fundamental to our conceptualization of *Language as Hope*.

I.5 Book Overview

Chapter 1 outlines a theorization of language as hope. Though our project draws primarily from the languaging of *faveladas/os*, a broader theorization of hope is necessary not only for us to make sense of such language practices but to ensure the applicability of our inquiry beyond our cases in point. We begin

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with an understanding of language not merely as a fixed language system to communicate reality as such, but as an inherently flexible and negotiable practice that can reconstitute realities, in the sense of "languaging" (see Li, 2018). We approach languaging in relation to various conceptualizations of hope, beginning with Bloch's (1986) pioneering account of hope as both an affect and a principle of explanation. As an affect, "Hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them" (p. 3). Temporally, hope orients people to the "Not-Yet-Being," towards expansion and potentiality. This view of hope is complemented with various treatments within the social sciences and in sociolinguistics more specifically. In so doing, we propose that those who must grapple with enveloping challenges predicated on regimes of violence and economic dispossession do not merely succumb to hopelessness but instead have found ways to recast temporality, engage in tactical cooperation, and reimagine sociolinguistic resources in and through their everyday languaging toward the production of hope.

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to advance the introduction and provide socio-historical context necessary to understand the complexities of language and hope in Brazil. While Brazil is one of the world's wealthiest nations it is simultaneously notorious for having one of the largest and rapidly increasing rates of class and income inequality in the world (Loureiro, 2020). In addition, while it is known for having the largest population of peoples of the African diaspora (Parra et al., 2003), it is also known for its longstanding history of anti-Black violence (Afolabi, 2009; Butler, 1998; Twine, 1997). Indeed, Brazil's culture of anti-Blackness came to be exacerbated under former president Jair Bolsonaro, who weaponized racist discourse for his political gain (Alfonso, 2020). Nowhere are the stratifications along social, economic, and racial lines more concentrated than in the favelas across the state. *Faveladas/os* are subject to the terror of paralegal militias, drug factions, intense poverty, and uneven access to public services needed not only for socioeconomic advancement but also survival. While the favelas, from this perspective, are spaces of seeming hopelessness, they are also locations of intense cultural production, everyday creativity, and most crucially, survival and hope. Critically, as we will demonstrate, the ways in which *faveladas/os* – and especially the activists from the three main collectives we study in this book: Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto – practice language and enact hope offering important lessons on the feasibility of hope into the twenty-first century.

The next chapter, "Hope in the Present," focuses on how hope demands an ever-shifting reorientation to time. We engage more fully with the case of Marielle Franco, an icon of hope for the dispossessed. We trace her spectral presence in the range of protests and demonstrations that erupted following her death, which featured mantras such as "*Marielle*, *presente*." We additionally

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analyze ethnographic accounts of women who were, in different ways, influenced by Marielle, online archives of speeches by Marielle and her family and colleagues, and news articles and social media material that circulated in the months following her murder. Additionally, we show how hope in Marielle's communicative practice had an important pedagogic dimension in that she led others in the cultivation of adequate virtues, affects, and ideologies for surviving Brazilian historical inequities and formations of violence. Some of the effects of this languaging of hope are evident in the fact that several Black women have been elected to different houses of Brazil's parliament. We thus illustrate how hope demands a collective reorientation to time – a disruption of the teleological time of progress, inverting taken-for-granted relations of causality. Temporality, in this sense, is "metaleptic" in that it does not necessarily refer to time as chronological, which limits our orientation to the "future" in a predetermined manner. In narrative theory, metalepsis has been defined as the "transition from one narrative level to another" (Genette, 1980, p. 234) or "a deliberate transgression between the world of the telling and the world of the told" (Pier, 2016, p. 1). Through this orientation to time, we are able to make sense of how Marielle, in spite of her death, is still *presente* in teaching others how to flourish, and more broadly, how the language of hope does not operate along the static coordinates of time as fixed and finite.

Chapter 4, "The Enregisterment of Hope," presents a treatment of hope via an engagement with the complex interrelationship between communicative resources and their emergent indexical values. Hope, in other words, as a language practice, is presented here as an entailment of sociolinguistic enregisterment. Language, after all, invariably operates along regimes of signification – that is to say, meanings and values associated with various registers are productions of language ideological stances. Meanwhile, our empirical cases point to the importance of reflexive practices in calibrating language and semiosis as hope in favelas. We offer an extended discussion of the *papo reto* (straight talk) activist register, an emergent translational activist register from the favelas that has been instrumental in recasting convoluted bureaucratic language in a manner that is legible to those who have not had access to extensive formal education and acculturation to mainstream political communicative conventions, which have historically been deployed to exacerbate socioeconomic inequities in Brazil. After a brief comparison to other historical forms of "straight talk," we outline some of the formal and discursive features that have come to be associated with *papo reto*, including directness, preference for objects of discourse associated to racial and socioeconomic inequalities, and suspension of face concerns. We afterwards analyze instances in which Marielle and other *favelada/o* activists have located spaces for *papo reto* in their activist work, disrupting the exclusionary language ideologies and normative regimes in Brazil.

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The fifth chapter, “Scaling Hope,” centers on the role of scaling in the enactment of hope. More specifically, we foreground how hope is not merely an abstract aspiration but also a principled, time-oriented pragmatic praxis. In order to do so, we showcase how hope can be meaningfully pursued and actualized when appropriately scaled through pedagogical work. Our illustrative cases in point in this chapter include Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto. We examine, for instance, the case of how Raízes em Movimento appropriates and rescales the trope of “circulando,” a policing practice premised on the criminalization of *faveladas/os*. We afterwards examine the case of artistic and organizational responses to the historical and contemporary silencing of Black voices in Brazil, examining the case of Favela Não Se Cala alongside the activist work of the Instituto Marielle Franco. We then look to the work of Coletivo Papo Reto who perform pedagogical work representing the transformative ethos of *papo reto* activist register. The work of these collectives highlights the teachable – scalable – dimensions of hope through sociolinguistic action, by which hope comes to be rescaled from mere abstraction toward a form of social change.

In the Conclusion, we outline a series of methodological and ethical considerations for scholars interested in researching the intersections of language and hope, particularly as they are practiced and manifested among marginalized and disenfranchised communities. As we showed earlier in this introduction, *faveladas/os* reveal a great deal of awareness of the extractive tendencies of field research. Their critical stance is in advancing an agenda for sociolinguistic scholarship that is reflexive to more responsible, sustainable, and dialogic practices vis-à-vis interlocutors’ agendas and ethical concerns. Further, our empirical cases throughout this book will, by attending to knowledge about language produced by everyday people, show the inherent capacities of everyday people to develop metalinguistic knowledge that is most impactful and indeed *hopeful*. We therefore emphasize the need to be mindful of alternative and unconventional forms of knowledge production toward an ongoing understanding of the ways in which language can lead to hopeful futures. In short, insofar that hope demands that we reorient our view of the future and temporality more broadly, an understanding of language as hope demands that we reorient our assumptions of what counts as legitimate knowledge about language.

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1 Language as Hope

"Can only those hope who can speak?"

L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (1953)

1.1 3,720:1

If the classic 1977 film *Star Wars: A New Hope* (Lucas, 1997) is a film about hope, then it might be said that the 1980 sequel feature, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (Kershner, 1980), is one of hopelessness. The Galactic Empire, which had been decimated in the former film, "strikes back" with a vengeance in the sequel, leaving the once upstart Rebel Alliance in states of disarray and desperation. If there is one recurring trope throughout the film, it is that the Rebel Alliance cannot seem to catch a break, facing one setback after another. Within the hopeless film, however, there are minor and at times intriguing instances of hope nonetheless. One such example is the moment when the film's protagonists are about to fly their malfunctioning spaceship the Millenium Falcon through an asteroid field in a last ditch attempt to escape enemy starfighters. C-3PO, the relentlessly cautious and annoyingly pessimistic droid, warns that "the possibility of successfully navigating an asteroid field is approximately 3,720 to one!" The pilot, Han Solo, simply offers a dismissive reply to C-3PO's panicked exasperation, "Never tell me the odds." Han Solo's response represents at first glance a refusal to acknowledge mathematical probability and thus the dire circumstances that he and his crew find themselves in. However, it also tells us something about the ways in which hope cannot only be found in language, but through language.[1]

[1] One might be tempted to argue that Leicester City's historic and improbable winning of the 2015–2016 Barclays Premier League Championship, which had been set by bookmakers at 5,000:1, is a real-life example of even greater odds being overcome. However, it has been argued that such extravagant odds were designated in a deliberately hyperbolic manner simply to tantalize bettors, with 2,000:1 or even 1,000:1 being a more realistic probability (Gaines, 2016). In other words, since sports betting is one of the few consistently documented forms of articulating probability in relation to the outcome of probable and improbable occurrences, it can be argued that the Millennium Falcon's ability to navigate the asteroid field despite the 3,720:1 odds is the most improbable outcome, at least in terms of what has been numerically scaled. Even so, Leicester executive chairman Richard Scudamore's comments in an interview following the title are somewhat relevant to our understanding of hope in relation to temporality, as will be

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The utterance of the probability (3,720:1) is a way of not only articulating, but more specifically speaking into being the reality of the situation. It is an instance of performative language (Austin, 1962) in that it makes certain, in very precise, mathematical, and probabilistic terms, the unlikelihood of their survival, an unlikelihood that was, prior to the utterance, though perhaps understood, ultimately and merely speculative. In other words, while common sense would lead one to presume that it is not a good idea to enter an asteroid field, there is something particularly discouraging about knowing the mathematical probability of survival, as it allows one to conclude without question that it is *in fact* not a good idea. However, if C-3PO's utterance is a way of actualizing the hopelessness of the situation, Han Solo's rejection of the utterance can be conceived of as a negation of the hopelessness, effectively reconstituting the situation: not necessarily to a hopeful one per se, but at the very least to one that is not nearly as hopeless as it once was. To be sure, one could argue that the refusal to acknowledge the odds does not make them simply untrue. And of course, though Han Solo and his crew do make it out of the asteroid field alive with only minimal damage to the Falcon, we cannot say that his articulated refusal of the odds is what enabled them to survive. Hanging in the cockpit of the Falcon, after all, is a small but conspicuous pair of dice, signifying the rogue pilot's knack for leaving things to chance.

A related scenario of refusal is perhaps found in Brazilian philosopher Danilo Marcondes's (1998) treatment of the Lewis Carroll (1895) parable "What the Turtle Said to Achilles." In the parable, Achilles and a turtle are discussing a classic theorem, and Achilles wants to accept a seemingly logical conclusion found in the Euclides Transitivity Principle:

A) Duas coisas que são iguais a uma terceira são iguais entre si.
B) Os dois lados deste triângulo são iguais a um terceiro.
Z) Os dois lados deste triângulo são iguais entre si.

A) Two things that are equal to a third are equal between themselves.
B) The two sides of this triangle are equal to a third.
Z) The two sides of this triangle are equal between (or to) themselves.

What the turtle does is not accept that Z is a logical conclusion of A and B. The turtle and Han Solo might be said to share the same mindset of hope, or perhaps even attitude to hope, if you will. Unlike Han Solo, though, she does not actually accept it, but she considers the mathematical possibility, placing an intermediate Z conclusion delaying her and Achilles reaching the Z as such. This is referred to as a regress to infinity, and the turtle actually critiques the whole paradigm of logical necessity by showing that when time is included,

discussed throughout this chapter: "If this was a once in every 5,000-year event, then we've effectively got another 5,000 years of hope ahead of us" (Duffield, 2016, n.p.).

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a logical necessity is not natural, but something only reachable at some point in time. One might then read, then, Han Solo's attitude as similar to that of the turtle. He seems to be including an intermediate temporal possibility to the logical necessity of minimal chances of survival. In terms of our approach to hope, he imagines language (and semiotic resources, including temporal and logical ones) otherwise, and in this sense he circumvents despair and keeps going.

Our point, in other words, is to foreground the role of language in shaping our orientation to a given present and the range of possible futures, including especially those that may seem unimaginable. This chapter then aims to present a theorization of language as hope. In order to do so, we proceed by describing our conceptualization of languaging, reflective of an understanding of the dynamic and ontologically constitutive outcomes of the deployment and circulation of communicative resources. We afterwards survey a range of philosophical, ethnographic, and sociolinguistic treatments of hope that we view as foundational to our general, though not always generalizable, approach to hope. In so doing, we offer a working definition of the phenomenon of languaging hope, understood as the performative production of conditions of hope via language. As we shall see, languaging hope represents, in effect, the fundamental theoretical core to the project of *Language as Hope*.

1.2 Languaging

Our conceptualization of language as hope demands an understanding of language as performative and more specifically as reconstitutive. Han Solo's reconstitutive language depicted above is reminiscent of the strategy of refusal in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (2003) description of disinterpellation. The theory of interpellation was popularized by Louis Althusser's (2001) work on ideology and subject formation, illustrated by his famous analogy of an individual being hailed from behind by a police officer and becoming a subject of the state the moment they accept the address and turn around.[2] Sedgwick (2003) meanwhile describes disinterpellation as a "nonce, referential act of a periperformative," analogous not merely to "I dare you," but instead to, "Don't do it on my account" (p. 70). As Sedgwick (2003) additionally notes, "Such feats are possible, are made possible by the utterance itself" which is

[2] Here is Althusser's (2001) influential description: "I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!' Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was *really him* who was hailed' (and not someone else)" (p. 118).

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itself bound to a series of "presumptive relations" (p. 70). Consider, after all, the paradox of both assuming the authority to issue a dare while simultaneously absolving one's accountability for its issuance. While we need not dwell on the question of disinterpellation at length for our purposes, it points to the role of language in subverting the expected order of things, whether we are talking about overcoming odds by simply refusing them, setting the terms of a dare into motion without actually issuing it, or, in accordance to our interests, doing hope by reconstituting not only the regimes of signification, but also temporality and the conditions of everyday life.

It is appropriate, therefore, to approach the issue at hand not as a phenomenon of language, but perhaps as one of languaging. Languaging, as opposed to classic Saussurean and Chomskyan alternatives such as "language's own order" (Saussure, 1986, p. 43) or the "normal use of language" (Chomsky, 1972, p. 11), invites us to foreground, in no subtle terms, the reconstitutive nature of language. Indeed, while alternatives such as the "immanence of language" or the "normal use of language" are derivative of a conceptualization of language as a "purified" (Bauman & Briggs, 2003), restrictivist (Agha, 2007), and independent grammatical system, languaging underscores the dynamic and transformative capacities of language. Miyako Inoue's (2004) notion of indexical inversion offers a productive means to outline our understanding of languaging. By historicizing the metapragmatic discourse around women's language in the Japanese context, Inoue has demonstrated how indexical orders (Silverstein, 2003) can be manipulated in accordance with ideological priorities. At the turn of the twentieth century, when modernizing efforts led to the creation of high schools for women, male educators condemned what they heard as a sign of corruption: "Schoolgirl speech," also known as "*teyo-dawa* speech" based on the frequent use of "*teyo*" and "*dawa*" verb endings, was deemed "unpleasant to the ears" (Inoue, 2004, p. 45) by the male observers. These commentators retroactively positioned their own perception of corruption, unpleasantness, and impurity as the foundation of women's speech. Inoue explained that a second order of indexicality (where signs are seen as having a "creative," "entailing" value) was inverted to being the first order of indexicality, or "the foundational or presupposed" value (p. 44). This inversion becomes more evident when examining the indexical shifts in the late twentieth century, and the booming economy that was accompanied by an increasing number of women joining the labor force. At this time, male scholars, writers, and educators focused their attention on the language spoken by the new professional women. The male observers mourned the ostensibly lost soft and elegant schoolgirls' language, indexed precisely by verb endings such as *teyo* and *dawa*. In other words, the once unpleasant traits of discourse were reindexicalized as proper "women's language," and as "ideal" (p. 50).

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Inoue's framework of indexical inversion lays bare the ways in which hierarchical social relations come to be naturalized as *a priori* products of necessity or nature. The fact that the "lost" elegance and softness of Japanese women's language had never existed as such serves as a reminder that temporality is not neutral or linear, but vertically stratified, multiple, and subject to contestation. While the indexing sign (e.g., a footmark on sand) and its indexed object (the foot that stepped on sand) are commonly understood as subject to a temporal succession based on a causality between the indexed and the indexing, inverse indexicality offers a way to view the former as a subsequent occurrence legible as a memory of the past. As Inoue (2004) writes, "The temporality encoded in a particular mode of indexicality produces, at an ideological level, a historical narrative, which, in turn, organizes indexical temporality" (p. 39). In addition to being key to understanding the dynamics of languaging practices, Inoue's analysis of the performative production of temporality through inversions and reinterpretations of indexes of time anticipates our discussion about the nonlinear, situated, and flexible dynamics of the temporality of hope, which is in turn premised, as we argue, on languaging.

Though there have been numerous theorizations of languaging over the years, perhaps A. L. Becker's (1995) is among the most commonly referenced. Becker's idea of languaging reflects the reality that a person "does not simply *use* language but is compelled, for one reason or another, to think carefully and repeatedly *about* it" (p. 3). He recalls a moment when reflecting on the function of the grammatical structure of a language and realizing how inconsequential it can in fact be:

> At that moment, as I was trying to remember the Burmese I thought I had once known, grammars and lexicons seemed beside the point, just things we do with languages, not things that are *somehow within* languages, not part of their being as languages. People like me *make* grammars and dictionaries – these artifacts are not in the minds of the users of languages. Grammars and dictionaries were not what was buried in my memory. This came to me with a force of a revelation. (Becker, 1995, pp. 3–4)

For Becker, the form of language matters less than its function, a function that is made possible by an approach to language that accounts for the (embodied and textual) memories it invokes and the contexts in which it operates. As Pennycook (2010) notes, by adopting this approach to languaging rather than language, "[R]ather than viewing grammar as a system of rules that maps abstract relations onto textual relations, we can view grammar in terms of time and memory, in terms of textual relations that accumulate over life" (p. 125). Languaging, put differently, signals an understanding of the orientation to temporality not possible through language as such alone.

Becker (2006) wrote that one of the sources from which he learned the concept of languaging was the work of Chilean biologist Humberto

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Maturana.[3] Maturana was known for his work on the "*biología del conocer*," or "biology of knowing," an approach to seeing our ontogeny as "habitualmente num modo de vida centrado em interações históricas, recorrentes, consensuais, recursivas e contingentes na linguagem" (habitually unfolding in a manner of living centered in interactions that are historic, recurrent, collaborative, recursive, and contingent on language) (Magro, 2002, p. 217). Maturana (1997) noted that words, gestures, and bodily postures do not make sense in isolation, but only in the "fluir de interações recorrentes que constituem um sistema de coordenações consensuais de conduta" (recursive flow of consensual and coordinated forms of conduct) (p. 168). Of fundamental importance for our theorization of languaging hope, Maturana formulated that the flow of human beings in language is also an emotional or affective one. Hope, we should note, has been primarily defined by philosophers as an emotion or affect – as a particular form of our being affected by and affecting others. Maturana (1997) added, "As palavras constituem operações no domínio de existência, como seres vivos, dos que participam na linguagem, de tal modo que o fluir de suas mudanças corporais, posturas e emoções tem a ver com o conteúdo de seu linguajar" (words articulate moves in the domain of existence of those who partake in language as living beings, such that the flow of their bodily changes, postures, and emotions is contingent on their languaging) (p. 168). In defining emotions as bodily dispositions for action, Maturana suggests that bodily life and languaging are mutually influenced: "O que fazemos em nosso linguajar tem consequências em nossa dinâmica corporal, e o que acontece em nossa dinâmica corporal tem consequências em nosso linguajar" (what we do in our languaging has consequences for our bodily dynamics, and what happens in our bodily dynamics has consequences for our languaging) (p. 168).

Becker and Maturana's pioneering approaches to languaging turn out to be fundamental to our understanding of the communicative enactment of hope; we learn from them that language is not a static thing, but part of a dynamic, collective, embodied, and affective flow of activities. At this point, a metaphysical voice could ask, if languaging in general and languaging hope in particular are part of a flow of different activities, how do we account for the singularity of languaging? Or else, how do we understand its essence in such a complex course? Here, Wittgenstein's later philosophy would be instructive to locate hope in the flow of semiosis. In *The Blue and Brown Books*, which he dictated to his class at the University of Cambridge and served as preparatory notes for the magnum opus of his later philosophy, *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein (1965) offered some critical remarks about the

[3] It is interesting that a likely source of languaging is the Department of Biology at the Universidad de Chile and not exactly a Department of Linguistics or Modern Languages; the concept thus seems to be transdisciplinary from the start (see Maturana, Mpodozis, & Letelier, 1995).

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activity of "expecting." He asked, "What happens if from 4 till 4:30 A expects B to come to his room?" (p. 20). In this thought experiment, Wittgenstein noted that very likely not a single "process or state of mind" happens in this interval, "But . . . a great many different activities and states of mind" (p. 20). He gave examples: "At four o'clock I look at my diary and see the name of 'B' against today's date; I prepare tea for two; I think for a moment 'does B smoke' and put out cigarettes; towards 4:30 I begin to feel impatient; I imagine B as he will look when he comes into my room" (p. 20). Wittgenstein noted that many other activities, both mental and practical, could take place in the interval – and yet it should be clear from the multiplicity of these activities that they cannot be reduced to a single sensation or state of mind. We can see a similarity in them, but this similarity does not amount to a fixed set of necessary and sufficient conditions. In his words, "If one asks what the different processes of expecting someone to tea have in common, the answer is that there is no single feature to all of them, though there are many common features overlapping" (p. 20). We now know that by saying the latter, Wittgenstein was teaching his students at Cambridge the concept of family resemblance – that is, the different activities that we call "expecting at so-and-so-interval" do not have a single essence, but instead have "a family likeness which is not clearly defined" (p. 20). Yet for our discussion of languaging hope, perhaps what is most salient in Wittgenstein's thought experiment is the following: subjects perform situated activities in the flow of language not because that activity may be essentially defined, but because in relying on "time, memory . . . and textual relations that accumulate over life" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 125), we are able to interpret and enact those activities as particular moves in languaging; expecting or hoping, for instance.

Recently, scholars in sociolinguistics have found it increasingly productive to adopt the concept of languaging to capture the dynamic realities of communication in society. One case in point is Alim's (2016) usage of "languaging race" to refer to the effort to "theorize race through the lens of language," toward an "understanding of the processes of racialization by highlighting language's central role in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of racial and ethnic identities" (p. 7). On the one hand, much of our description of languaging hope inevitably attends and must be accountable to questions of race. In many parts of the world, racialized populations tend to be subject to a disproportionate number of challenges resulting from systemic discrimination and violence. But, as we will see in the case of Brazil, racialized populations have found ways to be particularly resourceful in navigating conditions of hopelessness to produce hope, a point that will be elaborated on in the following chapter and throughout this book. But additionally, as we briefly discussed with regard to Wittgenstein's thought experiment, we are interested in language as a continual process of becoming, akin to hope rarely being a stable or predictable intention or static mental state. Our usage of languaging

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hope therefore is likewise aimed at theorizing hope through the lens of language: in what ways can hope be conceptualized and pursued via language? Languaging hope, we argue, is a crucial response.

Our usage of languaging is in many ways evocative of metapragmatic iterations such as polylingual languaging (Jørgensen, 2008) and translanguaging (Li, 2018), while also attending to the dynamics of indexicality (Inoue, 2004; Silverstein, 2003). While static renditions of the "speech community" or "language varieties" tend to focus on product (Blommaert, 2010), languaging and indexicality focus on effects. This is, as Pennycook (2010) indicated, more generally reflects a turn of attention towards discourse as practice that has led to novel understandings of time and space (see Blommaert, 2010; Hanks, 1996; Heller & McElhinny, 2017; Milani & Levon, 2016). The conventional variationist framework of sociolinguistics (Labov, 1972) has focused on differences among spoken language patterns based on regional differences or other demographic attributes. Within this paradigm, based on the empirical measurement, quantification, and documentation of language variation, time and space are treated as givens against the background of language use. Inversely, within the "practice turn," our sense of time and space is conceived as produced via language (Blommaert, 2010; Li, 2011). Claire Kramsch's (2005) description of this orientation to practice is instructive: a theory of practice "explores not the conditions that make the real world possible, but the conditions that make possible the very exploration of the real world. It is a reflexive form of knowledge on the conditions of possibility of the research itself" (p. 560). In studies of languaging, the -ing suffix suggests a recognition of the possibility that language in use does not necessarily abide by fixed grammatical norms, but that its pragmatic conventions are emergent via the practice of language. The capacities of -ing become salient in Li's (2018) theorization of translanguaging, which he described as a "*process of knowledge construction* that goes beyond language(s)" (p. 15). It is in this regard a "practical theory of language" that "comes out of practical concerns of understanding the creative and dynamic practices human beings engage in with multiple named languages and multiple semiotic and cognitive resources" (Li, 2018, p. 27). Though our focus here is not on *trans*languaging per se, this depiction of human communication as exceeding the bounds of language as such, invoking the availability of a range of other communicative resources, is nonetheless related to our understanding of languaging hope because, as we will see, languaging hope demands a fundamental reconsideration of the taken for granted expectations of communication as such. In order to proceed with our description of languaging hope, we will next discuss how scholarly fields such as philosophy, anthropology, and sociolinguistics have addressed hope in relation to language, and how such engagements inform our understanding of language *as* hope.

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1.3 Hope

Reviewing theories of hope as a category of cultural and psychological description, the anthropologist Vincent Crapanzano, in 2003, shared his astonishment in finding that "unlike desire, which has been a central focus in the social and psychological sciences, hope is rarely mentioned, and certainly not in a systemic or analytic way" (p. 5). Crapanzano's observation of hope as an undertheorized if not completely ignored category of experience and a meta-discourse, is curious given that hope has been described in philosophy as early as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (written between 335 and 322 BC; see Gravlee, 2000), and in Descartes's *Les Passions de l'âme* (published in 1649), not to mention its important place in diverse political, social, and religious formations in different historical sites. Crapanzano speculated on some reasons for this theoretical neglect. First, perhaps a supposedly ineffable condition of hope would have kept it away from scholars' interests in objective description. Yet Crapanzano (2003) himself countered that "[h]ope is certainly no more difficult to define than desire" (p. 5), an affect that has received far more attention than hope in academia. Second, perhaps associations between hope and piety would immediately spark a sense of rejection in "our determined secularism" (p. 5). Third, possibly crystallized views that "passivism and resignation [are] inherent in the notion of hope" might have diverted attention away from hope thus understood and towards contemporary "aggressive individualism or to a consumerism that cultivates an instant gratification that is at odds with the waiting time of hope" (p. 5). Whatever the reasons, Crapazano concluded in 2003, "Hope, however understood, has been ignored" (p. 5).

Writing the book *Hope without Optimism* more than a decade later, the literary critic Terry Eagleton (2015) made a similar assessment. He wrote that hope "has been a curiously neglected notion in an age which, in Raymond Williams's words, confronts us with 'the felt loss of a future'" (p. xi). While we begin by mentioning these diagnoses about the scarcity of theory and analysis of hope in fields such as social theory and literary criticism in the past decades, our point here is not to lament the historical lack of academic attention to hope. Actually, as we discuss below, the practice of hope has increasingly attracted the attention of social scientists, including sociolinguists. Our point is that the relatively marginal attention to hope invites the non-trivial observation that hope, as an epistemic object, tends to be dismissed as ineffable or spiritual rather than material, or even neglected as a useful concrete asset for thinking of interested human action, consociation, and metalinguistic imagination (see Borba, 2019a; Lempert, 2018). Against this view of hope as immaterial, as parasitic to, or even a distraction from serious linguistic-ideological problems, our approach, as we have indicated, is

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to focus on hope as a practical affect that is crucial for "ethnographic and other cultural and psychological descriptions" (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 4), especially for linguistic-ethnographic descriptions.

We imagine this theoretical review as having a political thrust inspired by works such as Raymond Williams's (2015) "Resources for a Journey of Hope," his (1980) "The Politics of Nuclear Disarmament," and Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny's (2017) dense critique of sociolinguistics and political economy in *Language, Colonialism, and Capitalism.* Through different epistemic paths and discourse strategies, these texts pursue not disinterested diagnoses but intellectual reimaginations and affective investments in suggesting alternatives to problems that would otherwise be seen as inevitable. Raymond Williams (2015) aimed to imagine the future through "a new politics of strategic advantage" (p. 195), a political strategy at once progressive and realist, hopeful and not optimist. In his critique of nuclear armaments, for instance, Williams recognized that hope was a key imaginative exercise in avoiding the paralyzing affect of despair, which emerges for example from a sense of the inevitability of the "laws of economy and laws of war" (p. 218). The critical task for Williams (1980) was precisely "making hope practical, rather than despair convincing, [just so we] resume and change and extend our campaigns" (p. 42). Heller and McElhinny bring the work of artists, environmental, indigenous and feminist activists, philosophers, and others to bear on their historical critique of inequities in capitalism and in scientific imaginations of language. They begin and end their book by engaging with artist Junot Diaz' reflection on radical hope, a form of "imaginative excellence" (Lear, 2006) that differs from blind optimism. Crucially, they invite their readers to practice the reimaginations of time predicated in hope, particularly through "walking backward into the future" (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 260), one that changes "as we reimagine language, land, love, and much more" (p. 260).

Our account of hope thus relies on linguistic-ethnographic as well as philosophical descriptions of hope as an entailment of language. In our own ethnographic work, we observe formations of hope primarily as "precipitates of interaction or interlocution" (Crapanzano, 2003, p. 6), that is, as language. Simultaneously, proceeding from an understanding of the performative and reconstitutive capacities of language, we also conceptualize language as a resource of hope. Yet we would like to emphasize upfront that like other social processes and metadiscursive formations, hope is not a "thing" – it is not an object with clear-cut boundaries which people would use, for instance, to operate with the future. While our analytic concern is with the work of hope in social formations where the dispossessed peoples of increasingly neoliberalized markets dwell, it is nonetheless productive to understand the general characteristics of hope as an affect that may be cultivated under

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certain conditions as people grapple with time, the sociolinguistic resources they hold, and the field of the struggle over these resources.

Hope as a Philosophical Problem

In this section, we will pursue some insights concerning the work of hope in philosophy, particularly in pragmatic (Blöser, 2019; Wittgenstein, 1953), Marxist (Bloch, 1986; Levitas, 1990), and anthropological (Lear, 2006) philosophies. Our goal, it should be said, is not to offer a single, universally applicable definition of hope. A pragmatic approach to hope – one that is neither universalistic nor relativistic – would precisely remind us that hope, like any practice, is not and cannot be universally and uniformly realized in all societies. As Blöser (2019) proposes in her pragmatic account of hope, "We hope in a great variety of ways" (p. 212). This entails that, conceptually, there may be multiple realizations of hope making it ultimately impossible to point to supposedly necessary and sufficient conditions for its expression in *all social formations.* Yet, while hope is irreducible, it is not undefinable. Blöser opposed the skeptic-relativist claim – for example one cannot understand what hope is; it is too diverse – by returning to Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein's famous proposal to understand language avoids the invocation of universal conditions to define concepts. For instance, using the conceptual category of "games," which includes "board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on" (§66), Wittgenstein (1953) reminded us that we do not need to resort to the foundationalist assumption that "[t]here must be something in common, or they would not be called 'games'" (§66). He rather proposed that "we *look* and *see* . . . family resemblances," that is, "similarities, relationships, and a whole series" of criss-crossing correspondences, as opposed to necessary and sufficient characteristics instantiated in every activity we call "game" (§66). Likewise, defining hope as a family resemblance concept entails *looking at* and *seeing* modes of responding to inequality and violence in the peripheries of Brazil and how these responses resonate within other contexts where inequities of capitalism stand out.

One of the most paradigmatic accounts of hope in philosophy is Bloch's (1986) *The Principle of Hope*. Bloch did not exactly attempt to locate hope within particular political formations, but instead looked at hope as a principle of philosophical explication. From the very beginning of his three-volume book, Bloch argued that as much as we "learn (to) fear," we can learn to hope: "It is a question of learning hope . . . Hope, superior to fear, is neither passive like the latter, nor locked into nothingness" (p. 3). For the German philosopher, hope makes people expand rather than contract: "The emotion of hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them" (p. 3). Bloch thus saw hope both as an affect – that is, as a mode of being affected or

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touched by the Other, by ourselves, and by the world and its events – and as a form of practical reason, that is, a "*directing act of a cognitive kind*" (p. 12). A Marxist philosopher, Bloch geared his reflection mostly toward transforming reality. The cognitive direction of hope therefore leads us to a "better world," to the anticipation of the future as a practical rather than a merely contemplative activity. In his words:

> Only thinking directed towards changing the world and informing the desire to change it does not confront the future (the unclosed space for new development in front of us) as embarrassment and the past as spell. Hence the crucial point is: only knowledge as conscious theory-practice confronts Becoming and what can be decided within it, conversely, contemplative knowledge can only refer by definition to What Has Become. (Bloch, 1986, p. 8)

This passage summarizes Bloch's embrace of practical utopia (as discussed below) and the pragmatic and agentive directionality he attributed to the temporality of hope. For Bloch, the temporality of hope is the future seen as "the unclosed space for new development in front of us," a future that may be acted upon on practical grounds. This temporal space of decision is opposed to a future seen as "embarrassment" and to a past "seen as spell" – a past that imprisons the future. Bloch's *The Principle of Hope* critiqued philosophical accounts that posit the past as "overwhelming what is approaching" (p. 8). His philosophical critique included Plato's theory of anamnesis, "the doctrine that all knowledge is simply re-remembering" (p. 8), and Freud's eternal return, the idea that individuals are psychically compelled to repeat traces of a primeval past. As opposed to the regressive account of the unconscious in psychoanalysis, Bloch appraised our potential for the "Not-Yet-Conscious," consisting of a series of "progressions" rather than regressions (p. 56). Thus, instead of concerning himself with the nightdreams that are the focus of psychoanalysis, Bloch was interested in "daydreams," that is, dreams of a better life, "by which life is pervaded and of which the figurative arts are full" (p. 8).[4]

The role of the "dream" figures prominently in Lear's (2006) description of the cultivation of hope as a pragmatic response to cultural devastation. Lear built on the case of the Crow people, a nomad, warrior, and hunting indigenous group who originally lived along the Yellowstone River Valley in the Midwest of the United States. The Crow were confined into a reservation in Montana by

[4] It is important to situate Bloch's critique of Freud in space and time. It is relatively common for socially oriented works to critique a presumed regressive and individualistic approach in psychoanalysis, and indeed there are psychoanalytic works that follow this trend. Voloshinov (1976), for instance, published a pioneering Marxist critique of Freud. Yet, in this chapter we draw on philosophical and anthropological works that do a different reading of psychoanalysis – namely, Lear's (2006) account of the interpretation of dreams as a form of cultivating hope among the Crow in the U.S., and Briggs's (2014) engagement with Freud in his discussion of the poetics of mourning among the Warao in Venezuela.

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the U.S. government at the end of the nineteenth century and subsequently experienced a breakdown in their way of life. Lear focused on the narration that the leader Crow, Plenty Coups, relayed to Frank Linderman, a friend of the group who rendered Plenty Coups's story into writing. Lear drew attention to the fact that Linderman "was unable to get Plenty Coups to talk about anything that had happened after the Crows were confined to a reservation" (p. 2). The footnote reads:

> Plenty Coups refused to speak of his life after the passing of the buffalo, so that his story seems to have been broken off, leaving many years unaccounted for. "I have not told you half of what happened when I was young," he said, when urged to go on. "I can think back and tell you much more of war and horse-stealing. But when the buffalo went away the heads of my people fell to the ground, and could not lift it up again. After this nothing happened. There was little singing anywhere. Besides," he added sorrowfully, "you know that part of my life as well as I do. You saw what happened to us when the buffalo went away" (Linderman, 1962, as cited in Lear, 2006, p. 2).

This passage revolves around the collapse of temporality and the system of cultural references of the Crow. Plenty Coups points out that after the buffalo went away – that is, after they were confined to a reservation and suddenly their nomad, hunting, and warrior way of life stopped to make sense – *nothing happened*. Using temporality as "a name for time as it is experienced in a way of life" (p. 40), Lear wrote that Plenty Coups (and other Crow members) witnessed the demise of a temporal framework: There was no longer a time *when* the buffalo would be hunted, a time *when* the warriors would plant sticks in preparation to battle the enemies, a time *when* they would move to a different part of the river valley.

In his discussion of the poetics of mourning among the Warao in Venezuela, Briggs (2014) reminded us that the "poetics of lament are crucial . . . in suggesting how mourners repeatedly [take] images from a shattered external world and imbue them with wholeness, immediacy, and a sense of the real" (p. 319). Thus, Plenty Coups's "witnessing of the breakdown of happenings" is reflected in the very poetics of his narrative by his refusal to speak of the time after the passing of the buffalo. As the ethnographic record has documented, in territories where populations face violence or political destruction, silence may be a sign of the victims' struggle to make sense of a shattered world by scaling the experience down to the ordinary (see Butler, 1997; Das, 2007; Silva, 2017). In other words, in his narration of the collapse of temporality, Plenty Coups, the designated mourner of the Crow, engaged the past strategically by breaking off his narrative and refusing to speak of the traumatic past, and instead narrating the vibrant time before things ceased to happen.

The hope that helped the Crow overcome despair and a massive disorientation caused by the consequences of confinement has an important sociolinguistic

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dimension. The Crow calibrated a varied sort of communicative practices, genres, and other resources that enabled them to cultivate the appropriate virtues and affects to survive the devastation and strive as a group, among them the interpretation of dreams. As a common habit of the Crow, Plenty Coups was sent as a young boy off to nature to dream. The dream Plenty Coups had on this quest would be pivotal in two different moments of his life: in his early years, as a prophetic vision that he would become an authoritative figure in the group, and after the passing of the buffalo as a resource for grappling with an order that had changed. In his dream, Plenty Coups dreamt of a "Buffalo-bull who he knows is a Person who wants him" (Lear, 2006, p. 65). The Man-Buffalo first showed Plenty Coups a feeble old man and young Plenty Coups felt pity for him. Then the Man-Buffalo showed him the Chickadee-person, a man who is frail yet strong of mind, and told young Plenty Coups that the Chickadee "is a good listener" who "never intrudes, never speaks in strange company, and yet never misses a chance to learn from others" (p. 70). The elders interpreted the dream as an indication that the "buffalo will go away forever," and read the feeble old man as Plenty Coups himself at a later age. The generic activity of cooperatively interpreting and recounting dreams was further nurtured to build up a practical reason in the aftermath of their subjective collapse. The tribe thus used Plenty Coups' dreams as resources to "struggle with the intelligibility of events that lay at the horizon of their ability to understand" (p. 68). The Crow also pursued other resources, like writing and formal education, as practical forms of rebuilding their cultural frameworks. Witnessing the death of an entire form of life, Plenty Coups strategically collaborated with his white friend in order to have the story of the Crow preserved in writing. Additionally, his dream-vision was recontextualized in later Crow efforts to implement formal education within the group. The future generations were stimulated to cultivate the Chickadee's virtue of active listening to learn from others by engaging in formal education.

Lear (2006) concluded that the hope that guided the Crow through an imaginative, cognitive, and temporal collapse caused by the "passing of the buffalo" – that is, by their confinement to a reservation by the U.S. government – was radical. Just as the elders interpreted the young Plenty Coups's dream as indicating that their traditional way of life was "coming to an end," they pursued novel resources – including education and a refashioning of temporality and collective interpretation of dreams – to imagine a possibility of survival. Lear suggests that this modality of hope was radical because it relied on modes of thinking and being that did not yet exist: "There would be ways of continuing to form oneself as a Crow subject – ways to flourish as a Crow – even though the traditional forms were doomed. This hope is radical in that it is aiming for a subjectivity that is at once Crow and does not yet exist" (p. 104).

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Engaging Ethnography: Temporal Communities of Hope

Lear (2006) frames his theorization of the Crow's survival of cultural collapse within anthropological philosophy. He justifies his epistemic choice in these terms: "I am not primarily concerned with what actually happened to the Crow tribe or to any other group. I am concerned rather with the field of possibilities in which all human endeavors gain meaning" (p. 7). Although the ethnographic and historical record from which Lear drew concerned itself with what actually happened to the Crow, Lear was instead interested in what *would* happen to a human group if, from a certain moment on, *nothing happened*. In this section, we will diverge from Lear's method and look at ethnographic approaches to hope that are concerned not with "what would happen if" a given problem occurred to a group, but rather "what happens when" a given problem emerges. Unlike Lear, Cheryl Mattingly (2010) locates her study on the practice of hope at the border zone where Black families caring for children diagnosed with cancer encounter health professionals at a Los Angeles hospital in a "philosophical anthropology." The noun phrase "philosophical anthropology" – where "philosophy" figures as the modifier instead of the head of the noun phrase – gives precedence to her interest in a situated, rather than potential or universal, description of human action. Mattingly (2010) explains her theoretical orientation in these terms:

> Philosophy is not required to do what anthropology does, namely to bring theoretical frameworks into conversation with the complexities of the "real world." So I have also found it important to render close descriptions of social events and situate them within broader historical landscapes, including individual, family, community, and cultural worlds. This close-to-the-ground attention to the everyday offers, as Clifford Geertz famously put it, "the sociological mind with bodied stuff on which to feed." (Mattingly, 2010, p. x)

Our point here, of course, is not to claim that philosophers of hope did not build their work on the real world, or that they relied on linear examples of realities that, empirically, are neither linear nor unified. Our interest in this section is in contrasting the imaginative exercise of a philosophy of hope to approaches that turn their "close-to-the-ground attention to the everyday." In other words, our interest is, to borrow an expression from Wittgenstein (1953), to bring the philosophical pursuit of hope down to the ordinary, or to the forms of dialogue that we as ethnographers may generate with those who experience the processes on the ground.

An example of how the comparative and situated activity of anthropology might complexify a philosophical view of hope is Bloch's (1986) treatment of the future in his account of the affect. For Bloch, hope lies in "the horizon of the future to be attained" (p. 131). This "not yet" is what gives the present its meaning – "It gives to the flow of the present specific space, the space of new,

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feasibly better present" (p. 283). In his philosophical account, this orientation to the "new" places "the past as the ante-room," and, through a Marxist dialectics, "gives reality its real dimension" (p. 285). Yet while at a given situation we may indeed hope for something that will happen in the future, in particular for something new that may overcome uncertainty or precarity from the past, the examination of empirical situations may locate hope in other renditions of temporality – in the immediate present, for example.

Perhaps echoing a Western ideology of linear time, Bloch (1986) indicated that the practice of hope lies "in the horizon of the future" (p. 131). But what should we say of hope in conditions where "time [is] without horizons or [with] very foreshortened horizons" (Del Vecchio Good et al., 1994, p. 856), as is time, for instance, for patients diagnosed with terminal cancer? Is there still any space for hope as a temporal practice? This is one of the questions underlying the work of Eleonor Antelius (2007), who studied a group of therapists and patients at a rehabilitation clinic for people diagnosed with severe brain damage in Sweden. Of four similar rehabilitation day centers in her fieldwork, this center – which she calls Boost – received the most acutely debilitated patients, both physically and verbally. Given the severity of their injury and their motor and verbal disability, the prospects for full recovery were either minimal or nonexistent. However, rather than hopelessness, Antelius found among most of the patients and especially among the therapists a reorientation of hope toward the present. The dominant narrative among therapists – cultivated in the context of the clinic but also in broader discourses of nursing as a practice of hope (Kylmä et al., 2001) – was that while the condition of many of the patients was certainly not going to improve, it might deteriorate if the daily rehabilitation work was not carried out. Rather than *transformative*, hope in this context was *conservative*: Physical and speech therapy were oriented to at least maintaining a condition that, without proper work, might worsen. Of course, this did not prevent some patients from hoping for a drastic transformation for the better; but such a transformation for most of them was out of reach, given the severity of their respective conditions.

Alongside this temporal imagination, patients cultivated small goals – which the therapists called "carrots" – so that they might perform immediate, local, and attainable actions daily to prevent a deterioration of their physical condition. For Boost patients, time seemed fixed and foreclosed, but this did not prevent a persistent, daily action aided by therapists. Some patients did sometimes surrender to despair, but a narrative plot prevalent among Boost therapists led the latter to motivate disheartened patients to pursue the small goals of daily physical therapy. In this context, Antelius (2007) suggests, hope must still be thought of in relation to time. But it is precisely time that needs to be reconceived here: instead of being about linear time – or about a teleological future – "hope is an opening of time" (p. 325). For therapists, opening or

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recalibrating time means, for instance, avoiding talk about a past prior to the injury (which could cause distress, given the patient's new condition). Further, it means avoiding discussions of a long term future and locating hope in the immediate present made up of "carrots," small actions that can help to preserve a physical condition seen as contextually satisfactory. We should note that hope here remains a modality of action: "Although action taken today might not bring about any positive change in the future, it will allow for no negative change" (p. 334). Antelius concludes that, instead of being about the (better) future, hope "in relation to people with severe disabilities needs instead to be about the present and about achievements, right here, right now" (p. 339).

Kroskrity (in press) also takes issue with universalizing theories of hope. Revisiting his five-decade ethnography with members of the Village of Tewa in Arizona and looking more closely at their moral call for action during the COVID-19 pandemic, he suggests that the hope driving actions to preserve Tewa culture and language is "conservative" rather than "prospective." In contrast to the Crow's "radical hope" – the hope for the emergence of a Crow subjectivity that did not exist yet – Kroskrity argues that the Tewa are "motivated to use their Indigenous traditions, including their distinctive language, in the present in order to bring about a future good life" (p. 29). Whereas the Crow were pressed to invent a radically new way of life because their traditional life had stopped making sense, the Tewa have preserved their traditional ways of life, including their linguistic ideologies of compartmentalization and purism, which have served the purpose of ensuring their survival as a group. Aimed at preserving a past to bring about a good present and future, the Tewa have aimed their actions not at the "novum" or "not yet" theorized by Bloch as the core of hope, but "at actions that would ensure they never have to confront a 'not anymore'" (p. 30; see also Lempert, 2018).

As we discuss later in this book, the movement of mourning for Marielle Franco predicates the participants' hope in the present – an opening of time that reinscribes Marielle as politically and morally present even if biologically no longer among mourners. Our ethnographic case, like Antelius and Kroskrity's cases, differs from philosophical renditions of the temporality and universality of hope. Yet while anthropology has a considerable record of ethnographic critique of philosophical universalization – as, for instance, in the critique to the universality of speech act theory by Rosaldo (1982) and Cicourel (1987) and the ethnographic revisions of Gricean inferences by Ochs Keenan (1976), Haviland (1997), and Hanks (2002) – the discipline has more to offer to our understanding of hope than situated critique of philosophical models. Mattingly's (2010) rendition of a "temporary [and] tenuous" (p. 216) community of hope at a children's hospital that receives chronically ill Black patients in Los Angeles is a case in point. Mattingly bridges medical anthropology and narrative theory in examining what she

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calls the paradox of hope: "Biomedicine offers no cure. For many children, the prognosis is bleak. Thus cultivating a hopeful stance is paradoxical; it involves an ongoing conversation with embittered despair. To hope is to be reminded of what is not and what might never be" (p. 4). Even though her interactions in the hospital with patients, family members, and health professionals revealed that, paradoxically, "hope is on intimate terms with despair" (p. 3), she perceived among Black caregivers a narrative work focused on cultivating hope, even in the face of a prognosis that is "bleak" (p. 3). Mattingly found that even as Black family members navigate systemic inequalities, poverty, and structural racism, their narrative and semiotic work was grounded in avoiding despair. She suggests that narratives told by families connect "small scale dramas – particular historical events as experienced by particular historical actors in particular contexts – to larger social histories" (p. 217). Interlocutors like Andrena – the mother of Belinda, a child diagnosed with cancer who would eventually die – offer a good example of the "tactics," in de Certeau's (1984) sense, that peripheral subjects employ to navigate long standing inequities. In Andrena's case, these tactics were also crucial to circumvent a sense of abandonment by the oncologist who treated Belinda. Even though her daughter did not survive, Andrena became active in local volunteer cancer organizations and eventually created her own foundation to raise funds to support parents with severely ill children. Andrena sought to advise parents in similar situations about basic everyday issues that were however ignored by clinicians and policymakers alike. Additionally, Andrena's elder daughter pursued nursing training and eventually went on to work "at the same hospital where Belinda had been treated and Andrena volunteered" (p. 220).

Mattingly's (2010) conclusions about the practice of hope are manifold. They range from the importance of cultivating appropriate narratives for avoiding despair, to the complex connections between large-scale social problems including structural racism, and the micro-practices of care in everyday life. But fundamentally, in aid of our ensuing empirical examination of strategic cooperations between *faveladas/os* and subjects from other social groups, Mattingly's argument about the "practice of creating communities in clinical borderlands" (p. 36) is particularly instructive. The use of the word "borderland" in Mattingly's ethnography goes beyond the idea that borders in the contemporary world are porous. It refers to "*practices* that bind people together who otherwise wouldn't belong together . . . It designates that flexible space in which healing is carried out, not only by health professionals, but also by patients and families" (p. 7). In her work, border spaces such as the hospital lobbies are privileged as sites of encounters across racial, economic, and cultural divides. These encounters involve frictions, hierarchies, and power, but they are also provisional spaces where hope is built: on the one hand,

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histories of the construction of medicine as a social force and the trajectories of racialization of Black people produce hierarchies and other patients as racially different; on the other hand, the collective practices of care for the sick demand "creating borderland communities between clinicians, patients, and families" (p. 216). Mattingly concludes that the "cultivation of hope depends upon the politics of this relational work, however temporary, however tenuous" (p. 216).

Another relevant ethnographic approach to hope and the making of community is Stefania Pandolfo's (2018) depiction of a "spiritual community of pain" (p. 7). Pandolfo carried out fieldwork in a psychiatric hospital in Morocco, and observes practices of psychic healing in both the psychiatric context (concerned with the *psyche*, the Greek word for the soul that became the focus of Western medicine) and Islamic spiritual practice (concerned with the *nafs*, the Islamic rendition of the soul). Pandolfo addresses the intersection of colonialism and psychic suffering in Morocco, and follows the spiritual work invested in healing a condition that one of her interlocutors, a Qur'anic therapist, called "soul choking." In Pandolfo's (2018) words:

> "Soul choking" describes in his words a crippling of the ethical faculty, a disablement of the soul fostered in existential and political trauma, in the confrontation with evil, and in the illness of melancholy as it leads to suicide. This is how he describes the experience of despair among the youth, crushed by the political violence of the state and the mass pull towards undocumented migration. (p. 8)

From this description, it is possible to understand that the imams that Pandolfo was in dialogue with are at once spiritual leaders and observers of the political and colonial situation in Morocco. She identifies a similarity between the work of some imams and the type of healing that Frantz Fanon pursued in the context of French colonialism in Algeria. Fanon had diagnosed a similar situation of "soul choking" among his patients in the psychiatric hospital, whose symptoms were at once psychic and political. As a psychiatrist and political activist, Fanon perceived a disruption of culture in places where the colonial enterprise had advanced. For example, in "Racism and Culture," a lecture delivered to Black artists and writers, Fanon (1964) described the "agony of culture," a "destabilization" of Indigenous reference systems under colonial domination that is similar to the "disablement of the soul" (p. 34) described by the Qu'ranic iman. In Fanon's (1964) words:

> The setting up of the colonial system does not of itself bring about the death of the native culture. Historic observation reveals, on the contrary, that the aim sought is rather a continued agony than a total disappearance of the pre-existing culture. This culture, once living and open to the future, becomes closed, fixed in the colonial status, caught in the yoke of oppression. (p. 34)

"Culture in agony" is also a form of death in life experienced by subjects living under colonialism. Notice that Fanon contrasted the opening of cultural

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time (the "culture . . . once alive and open to the future") and the fixity of colonial oppression. Pandolfo (2018) comments that an "undead" culture is "a culture that Fanon sees as incapable of performing its work, 'the work of culture,' *Kulturarbeit* (parallel to *Traumabeit,* the 'dream-work'), which Freud had seen as the condition of possibility of human fellowship, in the sublimation of unconscious drives into symbolic and spiritual creations" (pp. 7–8). Overcoming this state of mummification, in Fanon's terms, involves a recognition of the conditions of oppression that make the work of culture fail. Identifying his experience alongside the suffering of the people of Algeria, where he lived in his late years, Fanon found that "the people dispersed and undead found a novel cohesion in [their] suffering, a spiritual community of pain, which became a rampart of the Algerian revolution" (Pandolfo, 2018, p. 7). Challenging the border zone between life and death (where they remained "dispersed and undead"), subjects under French colonialism nevertheless reconfigured their individual suffering by identifying in other companions some traces of their own suffering and thus forming a "spiritual community of pain" (p. 7). Pandolfo points out that both the Qu'ranic therapist and Fanon pursued a diagnosis of the colonial situation that would enable them to lead others into resisting it. The imam suggested a "pedagogy of imagination" that is at once a spiritual cure and "a necessary shock, towards the reanimation of the soul" (p. 8). Fanon further imagined a "leap" as "the creative offspring of a realization of loss, an interruption that is also a fugitive coming to life, one that resists hardening into an identity" (p. 8). Against the paralysis and silence caused by colonial fixity, Fanon's imagining of this leap is also a form of imagining the practice of hope. In this sense, Pandolfo quotes these lines from his *Black Skin, White Masks*: "I am not a prisoner of History . . . I must remember at all times that the real leap (*véritable saut*) is bringing invention into existence" (Fanon, 1952, as cited in Pandolfo, 2018, p. 8).

Crucially, the temporal communities of hope that we addressed in this section – the village of Tewa, the border community at the rehabilitation center and the hospital, the Algerian and Moroccan spiritual communities of pain – are cultural formations that collectively resist despair through reimagining semiotic resources – for example, language compartimentation and preservation, recasting of action into the present, strategic cooperation, a leap to reinvention – and through enacting more or less provisional, more or less cohesive, more or less spiritual forms of attachment. Ethnography and contextual reading are necessary to understand their historical situationality and their political promises. In the next section, we will turn to sociolinguistic accounts of hope.

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Hope in Sociolinguistics

The academic field of language in society has increasingly made visible the word "hope," both as a research topic and as a "reorientation of knowledge" (Miyazaki, 2004, p. 16) within the area. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic devastated the world, spawning uneven effects across a global spectrum of race, class, geographic region, gender, and sexuality. Given a crippling and uncertain scenario, scholars themselves have pursued resources to propel different modes of knowing, feeling, and relating to others. A few months after the World Health Organization declared the spread of the virus a pandemic in March 2020, the editors of *Open Anthropology*, a journal that thematically groups articles from the American Anthropological Association journals, centered their July 2020 issue on hope. In their editorial, Sallie Han and Jason Antrosio (2020) were explicit about the reasons for choosing this topic: "We have chosen 'hope' as the theme of the July 2020 issue of *Open Anthropology* because collectively we are living in times that feel rather desperate" (n.p.). In December 2020, Mie Hiramoto, Rodrigo Borba, and Kira Hall, the editors of *Gender & Language*, a journal that intersects studies of gender, sexuality, and sociolinguistics, dedicated their editorial to "Hope in the Time of Crisis." They were unequivocal in explicating a view of hope as practical affection: "Hope, as an affective agency fuelling forms of refusal, carries the potential to change established gender orders. Hope is not an elusive, immaterial feeling; it is tangible in the ways people harness the strength to act" (p. 352). As in *Open Anthropology*, *Gender and Language* editors not only framed hope as an affective practice, but also emphasized it as an epistemic stance that can reconfigure the very ways we think about knowledge. With this in mind, in this section we will draw from some recent works in the field of language in society that explicitly call for refocusing matters in the field, in particular by balancing, juxtaposing, or confronting broader structural dynamics of domination to the work on the ground of subjects engaged in resisting and surviving the patterns of inequality we observe.

Particularly central to our inquiry is the fundamental sociolinguistic account of hope in Monica Heller and Bonnie McElhinny's (2017) critical history of sociolinguistic scholarship and its entanglements with the conditions of late capitalism. They have offered an avenue to advance our understanding of philosophical takes on hope, such as Bloch (1986) and Lear (2006), by embedding metadiscourses of hope in the actual production of value in contemporary economic arrangements. By locating aspirations of hope in the bearings of language in social processes, Heller and McElhinny tell a reticulated story of how a specialized field like sociolinguistics has been produced in tandem with the emergence of the welfare state in the postwar period, out of the need to handle linguistic diversity in schooling, and other policy preoccupations. The

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increasing dismantling of the welfare state since the 1990s has also presented challenges for the field, and especially for the responses of social groups to the consequences of neoliberalism's policies and cognitive frameworks that led to rising inequality and the dissolution of policies of redistribution, in addition to the incarceration of dispossessed populations, urban violence, among other problems. Hope, for Heller and McElhinny (2017), is located in metadiscourses that respond to the disjunctures of the existing neoliberal governance across nation-state boundaries. Like the Crow metadiscourse of hope, these responses might involve new forms of "thinking about time, about place, and about personhood" (p. 228). While the structures of feeling (Williams, 2014; see also Park, 2015) in current geopolitical arrangements have fostered hatred against groups such as immigrants, sexual minorities, and racialized populations, grassroots movements and their coalitions have also searched for "forms of solidarity independent of state boundaries" (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 234), for "new possibilities of a democratic cosmopolitanism" (p. 234), and especially for "recapturing the commons" (p. 252), in other words, those terrains within commodified regimes that may provide more horizontal, less hierarchical forms of belonging, engaging, and flourishing. For Heller and McElhinny, alternative forms of projecting, describing, and using language are the core of these possibilities of reimagining the terrains, temporalities, and semiotic regimes where those who are most affected by political-economical inequalities may be able to strive.

A very direct call to adjust the focus of attention in studies of language in society is found in Bonnin's (2021) essay, "Discourse Analysis for Social Change: Voice, Agency, and Hope." In it, he unpacks an ethnographic scene that, as seen from the perspective of his theoretical review of "voice" (Agha, 2005; Bakhtin, 1986; Bonnin, 2019) and "agency" (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Hayles, 2012; Pennycook, 2018), points to the salience of the method of hope among those experiencing the effects of economic inequality. Bonnin recounts a scene from an interview with Ana, a woman who had worked for the Buenos Aires subway for twenty-five years. Ana offered him a well-humored response about her participation in building the subway union. Rather than focusing on categories of oppression such as the strenuous workload and even restrictions impeding their use of the bathroom, Ana provided an example of how workers mocked "supervisors and rulebooks alike" (p. 70). One of the rules imposed on subway workers in 1994 was that they could only drink *mate* with the *bombilla* (a drinking straw). Ana says that in 1997, as the workers had become bolder, they went about hiding the *bombilla* when the supervisor approached: "When we saw him coming, we would hide it. He would say 'you're drinking *mate*,' and we'd reply 'but without a *bombilla*!' (*laughs*)" (Bonnin, 2021, p. 69). In his analysis, Bonnin illustrates not only the complexity of voices that Ana embeds into her utterance, "the voices of the rulebook, of

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the supervisor and of the workers who collectively reinterpret institutional regulations – literally – in order to resist them" (p. 70), but also how Ana, "a spokesperson for the group" (p. 70), and union workers temporally built agency through engaging semiotic resources such as creativity, collective work, and humor. From 1994 to 1997, workers went on to "propose not simply to disobey the regulation, but to act on it – on its literal text – collectively, by combining objects, words and actions to generate an alternative interpretation" (p. 72). In the face of such an interactional text, Bonnin's position is that the typical interest of critical language studies in dimensions such as "the denunciation of linguistic inequality, of dominant ideologies, of racism, of sexist discourses" (p. 75) should not eclipse the production of voice, agency, and hope among those who experience inequality on the ground. As usually a drive to denounce inequalities accompanies critical work in sociolinguistics, Bonnin pointed out two limits to using academia as a platform for such work. The first has to do with the reach of our publications: we tend to write for our peers in outlets that are unlikely to be read by (or afforded access to) the stakeholders in the realities we seek to critique. The second limit has to do with focus: "If we only privilege the analysis of practices of social control, ideological domination, discursive hegemony, sociolinguistic orders or dominant ideologies, we block our perception, and even our own imagination, to those voices that act for change" (p. 75). Bonnin's conclusion resonates with similar ones in studies on agency, resistance, and hope (e.g., Awayed-Bishara, 2021; Charalambous, Charalambous, Zembylas, & Theodorou, 2020; Milani, 2022; Mahmood, 2001, 2005; Moita Lopes, 2020; Rampton, Charalambous, & Charalambous, 2019), as well as our own perception of the agentive, non-melancholic, and proactive stance of *faveladas/os* when faced with the dynamics of social domination. In this regard, Mattingly's (2010) words about the frictional interplay of structure and agency are as critical as they are blunt: "Reality needs to be exposed as a space of possibility and not only of imprisonment or structural reproduction. Despite the immense power of oppressive social structures, reality is not summed up by their existence" (p. 39).

Miguel Pérez-Milans and Guo (Grace) Xiaoyan (2020) provide an interesting reading of the dialectics of agency and structure that turns out to be applicable to our orientation to languaging hope. Ethnography becomes all the more pertinent to their study because they observe a form of communicative practice and structure of feeling – religion – that in secular discourses, including within academia, is readily conflated with uncritical adherence to domination on the part of pious subjects (see Asad, 2003; Mahmood, 2005). In their ethnography on returnees to China who had converted to Christianity, Pérez-Milans and Guo critique the binary view that associates secularism with "values of rationality, reason and impartiality" (p. 204) and religion with the opposite of modernity (i.e., "backwardness, irrationality, emotion and bias"

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[p. 204]) as they instead attempt to see what claims and justifications their interlocutors found in religion "amid neoliberal pressures for professional success" (p. 199). In contrast to the image of the "successful" returnee in China – that is, someone who attained higher education at a prestigious school in the West and obtained one of the most prestigious jobs back in China – the profiles of Pérez-Milans and Guo's interlocutors didn't meet the standards of the "outstanding" student who climbs up the market ladder in China through "prestigious talent-attraction schemes" (p. 198). Their interlocutors on the ground found that such "schemes were out of reach for them," and additionally had to cope with "a strong sense of isolation and overwhelming stress in coping with family and societal expectations for them to succeed academically and professionally" (p. 199). Such pressures and anxieties about professional "success" are well known and documented in the literature on the political economy of language (e.g., Del Percio, 2018; Flubacher & Del Percio, 2017; Heller, 2011; Martín Rojo, 2018; O'Regan, 2021; Park, 2021; Urciuoli, 2010). What makes this study singular is that, as Bonnin (2021) and Mattingly (2010) suggested, its participants do not surrender to the "romance" of power and structure decoupled from the work on the ground of precarized subjects who tend to be semiotically erased from corporate and academic renditions alike. In other words, Pérez-Milans and Guo sought to identify hope as a "technology" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 181) that their subjects build within religion – which allows them to simultaneously produce a discourse register and a space "to build social relations of solidarity with others" amidst a "general state of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with their experiences at university and work" (p. 200) – while at the same time attending to how both this space and register "(dis)enable . . . larger structures of inequality" (p. 200). Pérez-Milans and Guo handle the irreducible tension between structure and agency through a dialogue with interlocutors who feel inequality in their daily lives. The result is an epistemic effort to make visible "practices, experiences, feelings and subjectivities of those who seem to fall behind the official accounts of successful return" (p. 199) and, we should add, of those whose voices also fall behind some scholarly accounts.

The complex relationship between language and temporality that guides our work is a key them in Branca Fabrício's (2022) work, which draws on renditions of temporality from Afrodiasporic traditions and Brazilian popular music to outline a general orientation in sociolinguistics for "hopeful futures" amidst "the sound of the past and the fury of the present" (p. 1). Fabrício recontextualizes a Yoruba saying that goes, "Exu matou um pássaro ontem com uma pedra que arremessou hoje," or "Exu killed a bird yesterday with a rock he threw today" (p. 2). She intertwines this nonlinear view of time where the interpretation of the past is modified by actions in the present with lyrics that became emblematic of the struggle against Bolsonaro's far-right agenda: "Já

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não posso sofrer no ano passado. Tenho chorado demais, tenho chorado pra cachorro. Ano passado eu morri, mas esse ano eu não morro . . . Revide," which translates approximately to "I can't keep suffering for what has happened. Enough bleeding, enough crying. Last year I died, not this year . . . Tomorrow cannot be the same old yesterday with a new name . . . Fight back" (p. 2). In 2019, a few months after Bolsonaro's inauguration, these verses were performed by Emicida, a leading rapper in Brazil, Majur, a non-binary trans singer, and Pabllo Vittar, a drag queen artist, in a concert featured in the Netflix documentary *AmarElo: É Tudo Pra Ontem*, released in English as *AmarElo: It's All for Yesterday.* They quickly became a symbol of strategic alliances of racial, economic, and sexual minorities against the conservative offensive that has attempted to crush Brazilian democracy. These lyrics echo different voices, including the original verses of Belchior, an artist born in Ceará, a state stigmatized as inferior in the country's political and economic geography. Fabrício foregrounds these alternative ways of interpreting time, life, death, and sociality to think about the 2021 sociolinguistic scholarship on gender and sexuality. In the face of a pandemic that took millions of lives, Fabrício was particularly interested in asking "how colonial yesterdays and futures were reimagined with the stones thrown at the current gloomy timespace" (p. 3). In arguing that "there is only hope on a tightrope" (p. 13), she gauges the indeterminacy, friction, and multiplicity predicated in "agentive responses" to colonial, racist and heteropatriarchal reminiscences (p. 20). Through unsettling, crystalized views of time and space – for instance, by "moving southward" and seeking alternative alliances "beyond the traditional circuits of knowledge" – the works she revises project time, space, gender, sexuality, and language otherwise.

Finally, the last text that inspires our orientation to languaging hope returns us once more to the Brazilian context: Borba's (2019b) empirical analysis of a collective of activists in Rio de Janeiro that confronted hate speech by calibrating a "method of hope." Building on Miyazaki's (2004) ethnographic argument that hope should be seen less as a subject and more as a method of reorienting and uniting knowledge and one's stance on the future, Borba studied how the collective *À Esquerda da Praça* (*To the Left of the Square*) reoriented their collective action in 2015, when a stationery store in Praça São Salvador, a square in an upper-middle class neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, was vandalized with slurs in graffiti linking queer people to Dilma Rousseff, who at the time was facing impeachment proceedings. By connecting nonheterosexuals and the left with corruption, the vandalism simultaneously shunned them from the public space. For Borba, temporality was differently predicated in the iterations of hate and in the reinscriptions of hope. Borba (2019b) writes that hate recycles the past: it is "past oriented; it encapsulates an encroached history of citations that produces semiotic vulnerability and by

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doing so materializes in the here and now macrosociological discourses" (p. 177). Instead of walking back into the past with additional hate speech, the activists reclaimed the square by spray-painting on the same wall two hands holding one another with rainbow beams emerging from them. The activists explored the indexical potential of language to reorganize a wounded past and propel action into a more affirmative future. This situated approach to language in relation to temporality is central to our understanding of languaging hope, a phenomenon that we intend to engage in fuller detail in the pages that follow.

1.4 Conclusion: Languaging Hope

In this chapter, we have harnessed extant theories of languaging and hope in order to outline the theoretical premises guiding our conceptualization of languaging hope. To summarize, we situated our examination of hope in a view of language as *languaging*. In other words, we embrace a communicative perspective that we believe is useful to explain the semiotic action of socially and historically situated subjects who reflexively move through laminated practices saturated with power and inequality. As conceived in the pioneering works of Becker (1995) and Maturana (1997), and in contemporary theories on the dynamics of indexicality and metapragmatic iterations of languaging such as polylingual languaging (Jørgensen, 2008) and translanguaging (Li, 2018), languaging is a useful framework to describe the communicative enactment of hope; we learn from these theories that language is neither static nor bounded but intertwined with a dynamic, collective, embodied, and affective flow of activities. We then revisited theories and analyses of hope as affect, practice, and method in the academic fields of philosophy, anthropology, and sociolinguistics. While philosophical approaches of hope such as those of Bloch (1986) and Lear (2006) offer key elements to understand the communicative, practical, temporal, and collective dimensions of hope, we have found that ethnographic analyses of hope – such as those of Antelius (2007), Mattingly (2010), and Kroskrity (in press) – point to a situated dimension of both the practice and temporality of hope, which invalidates universalizing assertions like "hope is necessarily about the future." In addition, we focused on the critique that has been leveled in anthropology and sociolinguistics at works that observe dynamics of domination, inequality, and suffering without examining the on-the-ground action of subjects who survive these practices. Joel Robbins's (2013) discussion of the "suffering slot" in anthropology has become emblematic of this critique. In his words, "Today, it is hard to miss the importance of work on suffering. But it is also possible to spot a number of lines of inquiry that, while each still somewhat small or even marginal in themselves, may be poised to come together in a new focus on how people living in different societies strive to create the good in their lives" (Robbins, 2013, p. 457). Our theoretical review

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thus privileged works that attend to the dynamics of power and symbolic domination alongside practices of production of agency, voice, and hope. Seen from this perspective, hope turns out to be a method of "reorienting the direction of knowledge" (Miyazaki, 2004, p. 12) not only for the communities we observe, but for our own epistemic critique of scholarly works that invisibilize the production of more livable and ethical lives by those who strategically recast temporality, engage in tactical cooperation, and reimagine sociolinguistic resources in and through their everyday languaging.

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2 "País do Futuro" and Present-Day Communities of Hope

"Class- and race-hatred, those poison plants of Europe, have not yet taken root in this country."

Stefan Zweig, *Brazil, Land of the Future* (1941)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief outline of the state of inequality in Brazil and Rio de Janeiro, and with it the conditions that precipitate if not demand hopeful futures, here and now. In *The Method of Hope*, Hirokazu Miyazaki (2004) offered a productive heuristic for approaching hope not merely as a topic of study, but also a method for future-oriented action, while simultaneously cautioning against assumptions around the modularity and generalizability of hope across geopolitical contexts. Yet, given that the ethnographic and analytical cases that inform our inquiry emerge from Brazil, it is necessary to familiarize readers with the histories and current state of affairs with respect to violence and precarity in this context. Most importantly, we also aim to highlight the vibrant political activity and resistance to stigma and criminalization emerging from these present-day communities. As should be evident by now, our focus will be on the *faveladas/os* of Brazil. Though this is a very specific demographic group that is tasked with navigating a disproportionate amount of violence and precarity, a broader overview of the Brazilian context is productive to understanding how the conditions of favela life came to be in the first place.

2.2 Brazil as Icon of the World's Future

Brasilien, Ein Land der Zukunft is the title of a book published in 1941 by the Jewish-Austrian writer Stefan Zweig. Released simultaneously in multiple languages, including Portuguese as *Brasil, país do futuro* and in English as *Brazil, Land of the Future*, the book is based on trips Zweig made to the country in 1936 and 1940. Zweig (1941) portrayed Brazil for the foreign reader as a "scenically beautiful" tropical country, with "numerous unexplored

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possibilities" and "destined undoubtedly to play one of the most important parts in the future development of our world" (pp. 1–2). The text was designed to be an indirect critique of Hitler's hate politics against Jews and other minorities back in Zweig's European homeland. Influenced by an ideology that we will discuss elsewhere and throughout – the presumed idea that Brazil is a "racial democracy" (Almeida, 2019) – Zweig (1941) surmised, rather idealistically, that no other country would have better solved the problem of peaceful coexistence among people, "despite all the differences of race, class, color, religion, and creed" (p. 7). In the face of the racist "mania that has brought more disruption and unhappiness into our world [Europe] than any other," he wondered why Brazil was not "the most strife-torn, most disintegrated country on earth" (p. 7). To his own surprise, Zweig reported witnessing that all races in Brazil,

> the Portuguese who conquered and colonized the country; . . . the native Indian who from immemorial times inhabited the whole region; . . . the millions of Negroes imported from Africa during the slave days; and the millions of Germans, Italians, and even Japanese who have arrived since as settlers . . . live in the fullest harmony with one another. (p. 7)

Echoing another contested liberal ideology in Brazil – that of *mestiçagem* or miscegenation (Munanga, 2004) – Zweig was amazed by what he perceived as "the principle of a free and unsuppressed miscegenation, the complete equalization of black and white, brown and yellow" (p. 8).

Despite the apparent racial harmony and the promise of a congenial future, Zweig's book and his own relation to Brazil would soon prove to be full of contradictions. In 1941, months after the book's publication in New York, the author came to Brazil with his wife Lotte Zweig to seek refuge from Nazi persecution. And while *Brasilien, Ein Land der Zukunft* received support from Getúlio Vargas, the Brazilian president at the time, Vargas was himself a dictator who ideologically sympathized with Nazi Germany, all the while maintaining pragmatic relations with the United States and the United Kingdom (Schwarcz & Starling, 2018). Other contradictions would soon emerge, such as Stefan and Lotte Zweig's suicide a year after the book's publication – a clear contrast between their idealization of the land of the future and what they narrated to be the "obscurantist forces in the world," whose defeat they "did not have the patience to wait for" (Carvalho, 2006, p. 31). Zweig had also romanticized a "racial harmony" that in practice did not hold. Brazil was a country that had been founded first on a hierarchy of Europeans and Indigenous people; indeed, since 1500 when they first invaded the land, the Portuguese had violently enslaved or killed various Indigenous peoples. It is estimated that Brazil had been home to about five million inhabitants – a diverse population with sophisticated forms of life, community, and, for

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some groups, cities, such as the multicentric plaza towns in the Upper Xingu region in the south Amazon (Heckenberger et al., 2008). Before 1500, Indigenous groups spoke between 600 and 1,000 languages (Storto, 2019). Today, this population is approximately 900,000 people and 154 languages (Storto, 2019), numbers that simultaneously signal the deleterious effects of colonization and the survival of Indigenous peoples, whose multinaturalist philosophy – a philosophical system that posits that flora and fauna have the same culture as humans, their difference being that they inhabit different natures (Viveiros de Castro, 1998) – and conceptions of the earth not as a place to be developed but *re-enveloped* (i.e., reunified with indigenous ancestral values, see Xakriabá, 2019) have proven to be fundamental to (global) environmental efforts.

In 1538, the Portuguese were the first to buy and transport slaves to the Americas (Goulart, 1975; Marques, 2019). Brazil, thus, is not only the first place that instigated the transatlantic slave trade, but also home to the longest and largest human trafficking operation to the Americas. In addition, it is known for having the largest population of peoples of the African diaspora (Parra et al., 2003), and for its longstanding history of anti-Black violence (Afolabi, 2009; Twine, 1997), as will be discussed later. Although slavery was formally abolished in 1888, traces of a society founded on racial hierarchy, inherited privilege, and violence would persist through the Brazil that Zweig encountered in the 1930s to this day. Despite Zweig’s well-intentioned utopian exercise in imagining a tropical future, to some critics the book would become a “piece of propaganda” with wide reach for international and domestic publics alike (Carvalho, 2006). Indeed, “*Brasil, país do futuro*” is part of a collective Brazilian imagination that endures today, figured in everyday talk and transmuted into several cultural and political artifacts, including lyrics of rock songs widely sung by the youth in the 1990s, soap operas, and films.

In fact, narratives of Brazil as a land of a utopian and harmonious future are older than Zweig’s. Brazilian historian Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco suggested that the very fictional island of Utopia, which Sir Thomas More idealized in the sixteenth century as the place of a perfect society, has a direct connection to Brazil (Melo Franco, 2000). Elaborating on this link, Lucia Nagib (2007) explains that, for Melo Franco, “More’s Utopia is a fictionalized account of the island of Fernando de Noronha,” (p. 8) located in northeastern Brazil. More reportedly learned about Fernando de Noronha from his correspondence with Amerigo Vespucci, the first known European to visit the island. Vespucci described the island as “blessed with abundant fresh water, infinite trees and countless marine as well as terrestrial birds . . . so gentle that they fear not being held in one’s hands” (as cited in Nagib, 2007, p. 8). Nagib commented that More projected this condition of justice and social peace to a territory that

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is at once perfect and, for that reason, impossible: the island of Utopia, which translates as both "good place" and "no place." In Nagib's (2007) words:

> An essential aspect of Utopia is its impossibility. The word, invented by More, brings together the Greek term *topos*, or "place," and the combination of two prefixes, *ou*, which is negation, and *eu*, meaning "good quality." Thus "utopia" signifies both "good place" and "no place," an ambiguity aimed at camouflaging More's plans of social change designed for his own country, England. Originally a practical project, Utopia was eventually universalized with the meaning of the impossible dream of an ideal society, whose very perfection makes it unfeasible. (p. 9)

We would venture to say that the ambivalence of a future simultaneously projected as a "good place" and a "no place" – in Zweig and More's scaling up of the future of Brazil to a larger humanity – indexes the very background that our interlocutors in the field have to deal with on a daily basis. This background has at least two overtones. The first is that Zweig's idealizations about a racial and natural harmony yielding a potentially perfect society, in fact guide perceptions (in Brazilian middle classes and beyond) about a purported "cordiality" in Brazil (Buarque de Holanda, 2019). As we discuss below, this cordiality would indicate friendly relations between people across the spectrum of race and class, making Brazil a supposedly "good place" for inter-class and race relations. But this is constantly contradicted by the rates of racial inequality and anti-Black violence, indicating that this "good place" is, in fact, a "no place," a discourse construction under dispute. Jennifer Roth-Gordon (2017), in her study of race and sociolinguistic relations in a favela and an upper-middle class space in Rio de Janeiro, provides empirical evidence of this ambivalence. She cites, as an example the Brazilianist historian Thomas Skidmore, who summarized the impossibility of Brazilian utopia in the following terms: Brazil's "ultimate contradiction is between [its] justifiable reputation for personal generosity ('cordiality') and the fact of having to live in one of the world's most unequal societies" (as cited in Roth-Gordon, 2017, p. 4).

The second overtone is that such aspirations of a supposedly "racially harmonious," miscegenated, and therefore non-racist country – signaled by Zweig as a model for the future of humanity – in fact legitimize racial domination in (upper) middle-class discourses and other spaces of whiteness in Brazil. Historically, the ideologies of *mestiçagem* – the construction that people from different colors and social classes would engage in nonviolent relations and form *famílias mestiças* – and cordial racism – a cultural norm through which "individuals downplay racial differences that might lead to conflict or disagreement, politely 'tolerating' blackness but not discussing it directly" (Roth-Gordon, 2017, pp. 166–167) – have served to maintain a system of inherited hierarchies and privileges that founded Brazil as a nation. Our point here is that the activists we engage in dialogue in the three main collectives in

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our field – the Instituto Raízes em Movimento, the Instituto Marielle Franco, and the Coletivo Papo Reto – project the time of this utopia (in the sense of "no place") in a different way. Much of the discursive action of these collectives, including the *papo reto* activist register discussed in Chapter 4, stands against this idealization of Brazil as supposedly racially harmonious, miscegenated, and where races peacefully coexist. These collectives, particularly the Instituto Marielle Franco and the mourning movement for Marielle, do not focus their action so much on the future (although a notion of an attainable and practical future is obviously part of their agenda), but on the *present*. Despite her death, by way of their chief motto, "Marielle, *presente*," Marielle is narrated metaleptically as *presente*, as belatedly enacting through them the collective action for social justice that she had envisioned during her lifetime. Favelas are also narrated in these collectives as places of the present; not as imaginary places of a supposedly harmonious future, but as territories where people survive and reinvent life despite the scenario of precariousness that has historically marred Black, indigenous, and poor populations in Brazil. Thus, *Brasil, país do futuro*, in Zweig terms, would at most be a background against which favela activists as territories of the present rise. As spaces of survival, creativity, and resistance, these territories are rewritten by their residents as "*espaços do aqui e agora*," spaces of the here and now.

2.3 Spaces of the Here and Now amid Longstanding Inequities

In this section we outline an overview of the state of inequality in Brazil. Economic inequality, as well as high rates of violence (particularly anti-Black violence, domestic violence against women, and violence against LGBTQ people), are conspicuous features of Brazil. Our objective, of course, is not to provide an exhaustive account of Brazil's political economy and historical inequalities. Rather, it is to present an outline of data on inequalities that impact life in favelas and that are contextually brought about by favela activists.

Socioeconomic Inequities

Geographically, Brazil is known to be the fifth largest country in the world, with a territory larger than Australia, India, and the continental United States. Its 2022 population of more than 215 million people makes it the seventh most populous country in the world. As noted above, it also has the largest Black population of the African diaspora: in 2019, 56.1% of Brazilians self-declared as Black, 46.7% as White, and 1.1 % as Asian and/or Indigenous (IBGE, 2022). Brazil's economy is generally among the top ten in the world if measured by

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gross domestic product,[1] though it has also been historically one of the most unequal economies (Garmany & Pereira, 2019). The *World Inequality Report of 2018*, a study led by Thomas Piketty and other economists, pointed out that Brazil at the time was "the democratic country with the highest concentration of income in the top one percent of the pyramid" (Canzian, Mena, & Almeida, 2019, n.p.). The study also highlighted that "Brazil has consistently been ranked among the most unequal countries in the world since data became widely available in the 1980s" (Alvaredo et al., 2018, p. 139). In 2015, for instance, "the richest 10% of Brazilian adults – around 14 million people – received half (55%) of all national income . . . while the bottom half of the population, a group five times larger, earned between four and five time less, at just 12%" (Alvaredo et al., 2018, p. 139). In the first quarter of 2021, Brazil reached its highest Gini coefficient of inequality in history: 0.64.[2] In 2020, amidst the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, the poorest sectors of the population saw their income decrease by 33%, while the 10% richest had a decrease of only 3%. Yet in the same year, "The stock market hit record highs, and commodity prices drove up measures of economic growth" (Tornaghi, 2021, n.p.).

This scenario of economic inequality is hierarchized along the coordinates of race and gender. In a study on the evolution of income metrics vis-à-vis the race of workers between 1986 and 2019, Rafael Osorio (2021) presented some significant data. While there have been changes in people's racial self-declaration and advances in Black representation in politics and other social sectors – thanks to affirmative action policies in the progressive governments of the Workers' Party (2003–2016), and especially the activism of the Black movement (Gomes, 2017) – "racial income inequality persisted almost untouched in Brazil" (Osorio, 2021, p. 23) in this period nonetheless. If compared across social classes, the economic disparities between Black and White Brazilians are alarming, as between 1986 and 2019, the average income of the former remained double the average income of the latter. In 2018, only 22% of the richest 10% in Brazil self-identified as Black. Among the poorest 10%, however, Black people constituted almost 80%. Gender also exacerbates the general scenario of inequality we have outlined here. A survey by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, IBGE) on the role of men and women in the country's labor force indicated that while 73.7% of men over the age of fifteen held a formal job, only 54.5% of women did (Rodrigues, 2021). Another index measured by IBGE was the difference in wages between men and women: "In 2019, women received, on average, 77.7% of the

[1] According to data from the World Bank, Brazil's GDP in 2021 was the world's 12th highest.
[2] The Gini index ranges from 0, a mark of perfect equality, to 1, representing complete inequality.

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amount earned by men. The inequality reaches greater proportions in the functions and positions that ensure the highest earnings. Among directors and managers, women received 61.9% of the income of men. The percentage was also high in the group of science professionals and intellectuals: 63.6%" (n.p.).

Black women occupy the lowest income stratum in Brazil. In 2016, for example, a study by the Centro de Pesquisa em Macroeconomia das Desigualdades (Center for Research on Macroeconomics of Inequalities, MADE) found that "60.5 percent of domestic workers were Black women . . . and 4.5 percent were Black men, while only 2.5 percent were White or Asian men" (Bottega et al., 2021, p. 3). The MADE researchers compared the demographic makeup of this profession to the profession of film director in the same year. Of the 142 feature films released in Brazil that year, "None of them were directed by a Black woman and only three by Black men" (Bottega et al., 2021, p. 3). According to the MADE economists, in the years 2017 and 2018, although Black women made up the largest demographic segment, they "received only 14.3% of the national income" (p. 2). That amount is less than what was earned by White men in the richest 1% – that is, 0.56% of the country's total population – who claimed 15.3% of the national income (p. 2). These economic inequalities are aggravated by factors that disproportionately affect Black Brazilians: police violence, less access to employment and policies of income generation, and Brazil's regressive taxation policy. The MADE researchers point out that "the Brazilian tax system serves as an important instrument for perpetuating Brazilian racism, mainly because it focuses in a relevant way on consumption, proportionally taxing more the poor (mostly Blacks), but also exempting, or taxing in a modest way, an array of incomes and assets belonging to the elite (mostly Whites)" (Bottega et al., 2021, p. 11). The researchers conclude that Brazil needs to "incorporate an anti-racist agenda as a fundamental axis of economic policies" (p. 11), and we would add also as a fundamental axis of public security, in view of the data, history, practices, and policies of (in)securitization that we will present below.

(In)securitization, Policing, and Anti-Black Violence

Researchers in sociolinguistics and security studies have drawn attention to the dynamic correlation between communicative practices and (in)securitization, that is, the "practice of making 'enemy' and 'fear' the integrative, energetic principle of politics by displacing the democratic principles of freedom and justice" (Huysmans, 2014, as cited in Rampton & Charalambous, 2019, p. 79; see also McCluskey & Charalambous, 2021; Rampton, Silva, & Charalambous, 2022). In this section, we present a general background of urban violence to discuss policies and practices of (in)securitization, such as

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policing and mass incarceration, that disproportionately affect the lives of Black Brazilians and *faveladas/os*. The levels of violence in Brazil across time have been appalling. Data from the Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública 2022 indicate that homicides in 2021, while having dropped by 6.5% from the previous year, victimized 47,503 people in Brazil (a rate of 22.3 per 100,000 inhabitants) (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2022, p. 14). This is approximately three times the rate of the United States, another country notorious for its high rate of homicide and gun violence (CDC, 2022). Homicide victims in Brazil are disproportionately Black (77.9%), between 12 and 29 years old (50%), and men (91.3%) (FBSP, 2022, p. 14). Globally, Brazil's homicide data are also staggering. Brazil has 2.7% of the world's population but accounts for 20.4% of world homicides. From an economic perspective, data from Brazil's Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA) and the Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança show that violence costs 6% of Brazil's annual GDP, equivalent to the country's investment in public education (IPEA, 2019).

Opinion polls indicate that fear of violence is one of the country's worst problems (Mesquita Neto, 2011). Given the rise of authoritarian populisms worldwide (and especially given the rise of Bolsonaro to the presidency in 2018, with an agenda of arming the population and killing "*bandidos*" or "bandits") the Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança and the Datafolha Institute have, since 2017, been conducting the "Violência e Democracia" (Violence and Democracy) opinion poll, interviewing 2,100 people so far – a sample of different demographic groups statistically mirroring Brazil's socioeconomic diversity. The purpose of the survey is to measure (and intersect) the degree of confidence in democracy, adherence to authoritarianism, and fear of violence (in its different manifestations, from urban violence to gender, domestic, and political violence). In the 2022 edition, the poll indicated that the "fear of being murdered has grown considerably from the first survey in 2017: the number went from 74.9% of respondents to 82.5%" (Sodré & Lima, 2022, p. 62). And although the 2022 survey pointed to Brazilians' identification with democracy (the propensity to democracy index was 7.25 on a scale of 0 to 10), "The propensity to support authoritarian positions is higher among people who are greatly afraid [of violence] . . . while among those with less fear such propensity is [lower]" (Sodré & Lima, 2022, p. 64). Yet, although this poll showed that fear of violence is something that affects different social classes in Brazil, the rates of actual victimization to violence are unequally distributed.

The exceedingly higher figures of violence in areas with higher Black populations point to the increased vulnerability of this demographic group, especially Black men, to violence (Alves, 2018). Black men are also disproportionately more likely to be victimized by police violence and neoliberal policies of criminalization of poverty, such as mass incarceration (Borges, 2019;

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Padovani, 2019; Wacquant, 2017). Importantly, Brazil has the third largest prison population in the world (Borges, 2019). The prison population in Brazil grew by 575% between 1990 and 2014, and in that final year 75% of prisoners were young Black men, 67% of them having received basic education (Soares Filho & Bueno, 2016). Mass incarceration and policing as social control of poverty thus disproportionately target Black Brazilians. Yet understanding why Black men in Brazil tend to be the preferred target of police violence requires a brief historical contextualization of policing as (in)securitization – in other words, as "a practice not of responding to enemies and fear but of creating them" (Huysmans, 2014, p. 3). In 1964, Brazil suffered a coup d'état that established a military dictatorship for twenty-one years. In 1985, a process of redemocratization began, with the declaration of a democratic constitution in 1988, also known as "Constituição Cidadã," or "Citizen's Constitution," replacing the authoritarian constitution promulgated in 1967 by the military. Although Brazil in 1988 "drafted one of the most advanced and sophisticated constitutions in the world . . . declar[ing] fundamental rights – such as the right to not be subjected to torture, as well as the right of women to be equal to men under the law" (Goldstein, 2013, pp. 55–56), it made very few changes to the role of the armed forces and the police in security. This has to do with the force that the military has exerted in Brazilian politics (Leirner, 2020). In the past decades, several attempts to reform the police (including demilitarizing police forces and enhancing the accountability of police agents) were blocked by the lobbying of the armed forces and the military police in the national congress (Ambrosio, 2017; Zaverucha, 1998). Even though the 1988 constitution eliminated articles related to "national security," it maintained the status of the armed forces as the main actors in the defense of the State and its institutions, thus keeping the main organ for ostensible policing, the Polícia Militar or military police, under the aegis of military rule.[3]

Instead of military notions of national or internal security, the 1988 legal discourse adopted the concept of "public security," but did so "in an ambiguous and imprecise way" (Mesquita Neto, 2011, p. 34). As Mesquita Neto aptly observed, it is not clear in the Citizen's Constitution whether "public security primarily concerns the protection of the State, the government, or the citizens" (p. 35). Legally and practically, it is as if the democratic transition hadn't been fully accomplished inasmuch as the textual ambiguity is instantiated in the police's *military* approach to citizens. Established in 1970 during the authoritarian regime, the military police are considered an auxiliary force to the army, "and have a very centralized organization, similar to the Army's organization"

[3] Brazil also has non-military police forces, such as the Polícia Federal, responsible for border-control and investigation of federal and transnational crimes, and the Polícia Civil, a non-uniformed force responsible for local criminal investigations.

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(p. 249). The military status of the police reflects authoritarian practices widely held in the army and in Brazilian society. Police officers are trained according to strict military codes of hierarchy and rituals of humiliation, with the intention that their practice aims at internal security. The rationale behind internal security is that "the armed forces and the police are organized to protect the State against political enemies and social movements, and to repress social and political conflicts rather than ... maintaining the law and public order or protecting the citizens" (p. 250). In pursuing the authoritarian principles of internal defense and protection of the State, the police have historically "resorted to the use or threat of violence, particularly against underprivileged citizens and groups of Afro-Brazilians or mestizos" (p. 253).

One of the outcomes of the failure to reform the police toward democracy is that Brazil today has one of the most lethal police forces in the world (Caldeira, 2000; Mesquita Neto, 2011), and police violence disproportionately affects favela residents. This scenario has become worse since the 2018 election of Jair Bolsonaro, a retired army captain who appealed to different groups for his conservative Christian agenda but above all for his law-and-order discourse. Bolsonaro retired from the military at the age of thirty-three because he had conspired to harm the image of then-army minister Leonidas Pires Gonçalves via a bombing (see Carvalho, 2019; Silva, 2020). After retiring, he became a city councilor (1989), and then a federal deputy (1990–2018) with an almost nonexistent record of legislative bills. Yet he gradually consolidated himself as a cartoonish politician for his racist, homophobic, and misogynist stance, and for his public defense of torture, the military dictatorship's regime of exception, and the *milícias,* groups of military officers who compete with the drug trade to control favelas, illegally extorting residents in exchange for "security." In the executive, Bolsonaro reinforced his discourse of exception against "*bandidos*" (a category that, for Bolsonaro, included Black people and left-wing sympathizers), issued decrees increasing the population's gun ownership, and pursued reforming laws to reinforce the violent action of the police. An example of the latter was the PL 882/2019 bill, proposing to extend the "excludente de ilicitude," or "exemption of illegality," in the penal code (Norberto, 2022). The proposal would allow police officers to bypass punishment if they committed murder "em decorrência de escusável medo, surpresa ou violenta emoção," or "due to excusable fear, surprise or violent emotion" (as cited in Norberto, 2022, n.p.). Interpreted as a broad license to kill, the bill was rejected by the parliament. In the first two years of his administration, however, the number of homicides caused by police reached historical records. In 2019, the police murdered 6,357 people, an increase of 3% compared to 2018 (FBSP, 2019), and in 2020, this number rose again, reaching 6,416 deaths, the highest number since this data was first recorded in 2013 (FBSP, 2020).

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The spatiality of violence is all the more crucial as homicide rates may drastically vary depending on where one lived. The State of Rio de Janeiro’s police force is one of the most violent in Brazil. In 2019 and 2020, Rio’s police were responsible for 1,810 and 1,239 killings, respectively. These numbers are excessively high, especially when compared to other countries that are not in a declared civil war. The police in the United States, whose population is twenty times larger than that of Rio de Janeiro, in 2019 and 2020, respectively, killed 999 and 1,020 people (Washington Post, 2020, 2022). In the city of Rio de Janeiro, in 2016, catchment area of the 15th Police District, which covers upper-middle class neighborhoods such as Gávea, Jardim Botânico and Lagoa, recorded four homicides (1.64/100,000 inhabitants); in the 21st Police District, which serves the Complexo da Maré favelas, this figure rose to seventy-six homicides in the same year (27.75/100,000 inhabitants) (O Globo, 2022). Brazil’s Public Security Forum (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública), which systematizes such data, concluded that in Brazil, social rights are “regulated by social markers of difference (race, class, gender, sexuality, age, disability)” (Rede Brasil Atual, 2021, n.p.). The higher impact of urban and police violence on Black Brazilians and residents of favelas indicates that, in practical terms, violence against these minorities is socially legitimate, “As if Black youths and the poor did not have the right to non-discrimination, to life and to physical integrity . . . While civil, social, and political rights are formally recognized in the letter of the law, there is an immense abyss between legal formality and the effectivity of rights in practice” (Rede Brasil Atual, 2021, n.p.).

Although proposals for more democratic security and policing exist in Brazil – such as the Latin American movements for *segurança cidadã* (citizen security) that, in resisting dictatorial rule in the 1970s, advanced an understanding of security in democratic rather than authoritarian terms – their effective implementation has encountered difficulties due to the aforementioned power of the military and conservative lobbies.[4] Further, ethnographies such as

[4] Fernando Carrión (2009) defines the Latin American notion of “citizen security,” as opposed to “public security,” in the following terms: “La seguridad ciudadana no es sinónimo de seguridad pública, aunque en la práctica se las confunda conscientemente, al extremo de buscar neo enemigos (pandillas, narcotráfico, tratas), construir lógicas de combate (estigmas, guerras, ausencia del derecho) y producir un discurso ambivalente ante la población. . . . Mientras la seguridad pública busca la defensa del orden público estatal frente a un enemigo interno (amenaza) y tiene un marco institucional nacional con características represivas (Policía, Justicia y cárcel), la seguridad ciudadana se refiere a la necesidad de mantener y potenciar las relaciones interpersonales en el marco de la ley y la cultura, expresadas en el respeto al derecho ajeno bajo la norma . . . Allí radica la condición ciudadana de la seguridad: los derechos y deberes individuales y colectivos de la población en el marco de un Estado que debe garantizarlos. (Citizen security is not synonymous to public security, although in practice they are deliberately confused, to the extent of seeking new enemies [gangs, drugs, and human trafficking], building combat logics [stigmatization, wars, states of exception] and producing an ambivalent discourse

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Caldeira's (2000) study of urban violence and segregation in São Paulo have pointed out that part of the difficulties in reforming the police have to do with the support of part of the population, "Who have been passionately opposed . . . to controlling police abuses . . . and reform[ing] the justice system" (p. 209). In Rio de Janeiro, the Pacifying Police Units (UPPs), a proposal that at first seemed to resemble community policing, initiated in 2008 (Menezes, 2015; Menezes & Corrêa, 2018). Before *pacificação*, or pacification, most favelas did not have permanent policing, and police raids conducted in order to confront the drug trade tended to victimize many people. One of our interlocutors in the field, while critical of the idea of pacifying the territory through policing rather than investment in education, culture, work, and income, told us that "it's better to have some form of police than the usual violent raids that leave behind a violent trail of dead black men." When Daniel arrived in Complexo do Alemão to start fieldwork in 2012, the first UPPs were being deployed in the neighborhood. The public aim of pacification was to promote permanent policing in favelas and to remove weapons from the retail drug trade. New police officers were hired, with the alleged expectation that policing would be moved away from authoritarian practices and toward a model of "proximity policing" (Muniz & Melo, 2015; Menezes & Corrêa, 2018; Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012). Although community policing was at least laterally reflective of the initial design of this experiment, the connections of pacification to real estate, media, military, and government investments prior to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Gaffney, 2015; Grassiani & Muller, 2019; Silva, Facina, & Lopes, 2015), in addition to the historical anti-Black police violence that we described above, soon signaled the distance between this policing model and the citizen security that progressives in Latin America aspired for (Batista, 2011; Facina & Palombini, 2017). In practice, the new police officers worked in the same military institution as the former ones. Further, alongside an often conspicuously aggressive treatment of Black folks and *faveladas/os*, during pacification the police had to accommodate their relations – which have not only been confrontational, but also featuring "agreements and political exchanges" (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019, p. 531; Telles & Hirata, 2007) – to the retail drug traffic in favelas. The case studies that we will discuss in Chapters 4 and 5 document metadiscourses of favela activists in response to police pacification prior to and during the

for the population . . . While public security seeks to defend state public order against an internal enemy [threat] and has a national institutional framework with repressive characteristics [police, justice, and prison], citizen security refers to the necessity of maintaining and fostering interpersonal relations within the framework of law and culture, as expressed through respect for the rights of others under the law . . . Therein lies the citizen condition of security: the individual and collective rights and duties of the population within the framework of a State that must guarantee them.)" (p. 10).

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mega-events in Rio de Janeiro. These metadiscourses, associated with socio-linguistic and digital strategies of denouncing police abuses and human rights violations, point to the potent "counter-securitization" in Rio de Janeiro's favelas (Fridolfson & Elander, 2021; Rampton, Silva, & Charalambous, 2022) – that is, resistance to securitization as the exceptional use of force against an enemy through tactics that may ultimately move security to a more democratic ground.

After the Olympic games and the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, both in 2016, Rio de Janeiro and Brazil experienced a serious political and economic crisis. Since then, police pacification has been underfunded and nearing its end. Alongside Bolsonaro's election to the federal executive in 2018, Wilson Witzel, a former judge, was voted in as the governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro with a strong agenda of "penal populism" (Pratt, 2007). When elected, Witzel notoriously announced that during police raids in favelas, the police would kill anyone carrying a rifle. In his words: "O correto é matar o bandido que está de fuzil. A polícia vai fazer o correto: vai mirar na cabecinha e . . . fogo! Para não ter erro," or "The correct thing to do is to kill the criminal who is carrying a rifle. The police will do the right thing: they will aim at the little head and . . . fire! So there is no chance of error" (as cited in Witzel, 2018). In his first year in office, Witzel became popular for mediatized performances of penal populism. For example, in May 2019, he was filmed inside a civil police helicopter during an operation, in his words, "para dar fim à bandidagem," or "to put an end to criminality" (Maciel, 2019, n.p.). From there, police officers fired ten shots at a tent in a peripheral hillside that they imagined harbored drug dealers, but was actually a (luckily empty) pilgrimage stand for evangelicals. After Witzel's impeachment over corruption charges in 2020, Claudio Castro, his vice president, took over as Rio de Janeiro's governor and was reelected in 2022 for a four-year tenure. Like Witzel, Castro has reinforced violent police action. In just under a year leading the Rio de Janeiro executive and its police, Castro has been at the forefront of three of the five largest police massacres in Rio de Janeiro's entire history. In May 2021, the police killed at least twenty-eight people in a raid in the Favela of Jacarezinho. One police officer was killed at the beginning of the raid, which possibly explains the high number of killings by the police, potentially as revenge for the deceased officer (Fishman, 2021). In May 2022 in Complexo da Penha, a favela contiguous to Complexo do Alemão, the police killed twenty-four people in a single operation. Finally, a raid in July 2022 in Complexo do Alemão left seventeen people dead, including one police officer. Ignoring principles of police intelligence (Proença Júnior & Muniz, 2017), these raids function as a message to (digital) audiences who in Bolsonarismo are constituted as committed to the tropes of penal populism (Pratt, 2007) and attacks on an "enemy" (Huysmans, 2014) as a means to security.

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All in all, this scenario clearly points to a model of necropolitics – "politics as the work of death" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 16) – that informs policing as a central agent of (in)securitization in Brazil. However, our aim here is not to detail this dystopian scenario for its own sake, but fundamentally for its status as a background against which life is taken by activists and residents as "emergência" (emergency and emergence) in favelas. For this reason, it is important to note that this necropolitical model has been resisted by many agents in Brazil, including the collectives we engage with in the following chapters. Yet before we detail their enregistered and digital action, it is important to summarize another normative armed agent that disproportionately impacts life in favelas – "o mundo do crime," or "the world of crime."

2.4 "Mundo do Crime"

In 1999, Luiz Antônio Machado da Silva, a leading sociologist from Rio de Janeiro, offered an important interpretative key to the ordering of violence in Brazilian cities. As we have discussed, in the mid-1980s and 1990s, violent crime escalated considerably in Brazilian urban centers, becoming a salient marker in everyday conversation and politics (Adorno, 2013; Caldeira, 2000; Zaluar, 2004). Machado da Silva (1999) opposed an institutionalist interpretation of the rise of violent crime – namely, violent crime as an effect of a not-fully-institutional state, especially with Brazil on a course of redemocratization after the end of the military dictatorship in 1985. This vision, predicated on the idea of a state still undergoing institutional development while facing "technical, legal and financial obstacles affecting police procedures and the administration of justice" (Machado da Silva, 1999, p. 115), explained neither the *ordered* nature of crime – violent crime emerging as "organized" – nor the internal logic of the "mundo do crime" or "world of crime" – the moral and conceptual baseline undergirding dispositions for action in this sphere, something that would not take the logic of the state into consideration. Thus, in his pioneering key, Machado da Silva (1999) proposed organized crime to be "a social reality with its own logic . . . which works with a certain independence in relation to other problems and social phenomena" (p. 115), such as the organization of the state itself. An example of this alternative logic was the emergence of the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC; Capital First Command), São Paulo's major faction. Following abuses such as the massive killing of 111 inmates by the police after a rebellion in the Carandiru House of Detention, nationally known as "Massacre do Carandiru," prisoners created the PCC to "extinguish the climate of constant war" among the incarcerated and to protect themselves from the "system" (Biondi, 2016, p. 35). The PCC would soon gather prisoners and criminal agents out on the streets together into a "brotherhood" (Feltran, 2018), mediating the business of drug trafficking and

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other illegal activities and establishing its own ethic. Machado da Silva (1999) suggested that the “world of crime” is “a form of organized social life, that is . . . a complex of forms of conduct that does not take public order as reference” (p. 121). In its Wittgensteinian (1953) sense, a form of life is grounded on ethics and on regulated modes of action. Addressing the urgency to understand this form, Machado da Silva (1999) posed for social scientists studying violence the challenge of explaining this ethical sphere – that is, “to discover how the agents of violent crime formulate the justifications for their behavior and which cultural meanings they express” (p. 121).

Ever since Machado da Silva proposed the hypothesis that violent crime may coexist with another different normative regime, the state, and may not refer to the modes of conduct of public order, several ethnographies have confirmed his thesis, albeit with modifications. Various empirical works, including Biondi (2016), Feltran (2020), Galdeano (2017), Hirata (2018), and Menezes (2015), have demonstrated that the “world of crime” has become an “instance of authority” (Galdeano, 2017, p. 58) for peripheral residents, achieving a legitimacy in these territories that coexists, in a tense and conflictive way, with the legitimacy of the state. In São Paulo, for example, the coexistence of and mutual relationship between these normative regimes go beyond the borders of the peripheries, and affect life more broadly. In a text about his fifteen years of ethnographic research in the peripheral district of São Paulo’s Sapopemba, Feltran (2015) commented that he learned

> that we do not have only one justice system, nor only one law operating in São Paulo. That we do not have a democracy, nor a dictatorship, nor do we live in neoliberal totalitarianism, but that we have all of these regimes coexisting, depending on the segment of the population that is observed and the different situations that are presented to them. (Feltran, 2015, n.p.)

Understanding that “crime” and “state” are distinct normative spheres that variably affect the population, Feltran (2012) explained that in the peripheries of São Paulo, the PCC has implemented its own informal “justice system.” This is a mechanism to regulate and control the illicit markets of drugs, car dismantling, robberies, and the like. In this structure, which also regulates the moral dispositions of its members, homicide is no longer the key to conflict resolution, but rather debates among “brothers” who form the armed collective. Thus, “The boy who previously had to kill a colleague for a R$ 5 (US$ 1) debt in order to be respected among his peers, now cannot kill him anymore: he must turn to the PCC to claim reparation for the damage” (Feltran, 2012, p. 241). This new ethic of crime interrupted a cycle of revenge that would have spawned other killings – the colleague’s brother could have tried to avenge him, and so on. Feltran (2012) argued that the reduction in homicide numbers in São Paulo since 2001, boasted by the state government as an achievement of its public

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security policy, has resulted less from the mass incarceration implemented by the state than from measures and strategies adopted by the PCC. The result of the “crime policy,” Feltran (2012) argues, was a reduction of 70% of murders in São Paulo between 2001 and 2011.

In the Northeastern state of Ceará, a pacification agreement between rival factions in 2015 and 2016 significantly reduced the number of homicides in the state. In that period, intentional violent deaths in the state were reduced from 46.4 to 39.8 people per thousand inhabitants – the second largest reduction in the country (FBSP, 2017). Barros et al. (2018) explained that the brief “pacification” consisted of “proibição do ciclo de vinganças e práticas de homicídio entre grupos locais” or “prohibiting the cycle of revenge and homicide practices between local groups” (p. 118). In this brief peace arrangement, the politics of crime in Ceará, according to the authors, found support from “groups that operate in the illegal drug and arms markets on a national scale” (p. 118), such as São Paulo’s PCC and Rio de Janeiro’s Comando Vermelho (Red Command). Competing for space and legitimacy, government policies and crime policies, according to Feltran (2012), have differentially governed life and death in urban territories, operating as normative regimes that people experience, also differentially, in their daily lives.

It is important to mention that organized groups making up the “world of crime” also have a “paramilitary side” (Manso, 2020, p. 11): the aforementioned *milícias*. Operating primarily in the peripheries of Rio de Janeiro, *milícias* are groups of active or former police officers, firefighters, soldiers, and other agents that compete with drug factions for the territorial control of favelas. The favelas that are our main focus of this book, Complexo do Alemão and Complexo da Maré, are not under the influence of *milícias* because drug factions are the main agents of the “world of crime” in these territories. A study by the Grupo de Estudos dos Novos Ilegalismos (Group of Studies of New Illegalisms) at the Universidade Federal Fluminense claimed that the *milícias* challenge the state by controlling 57% of the entire geographical area of Rio de Janeiro (Grupo de Estudos dos Novos Ilegalismos, 2020). The study estimated that the *milícias* control more neighborhoods than drug gangs: 2.1 million of Rio’s inhabitants (or 33% of the population) live in areas under the influence of *milícias*, while 1.5 million (or 23.37% of the population) inhabit areas dominated by Comando Vermelho (Red Command), Terceiro Comando (Third Command), and Amigos dos Amigos (Friends of Friends) – Rio’s three main drug factions (Satriano, 2020). Like drug commands, *milícias* are “true businesses” (Machado da Silva, 2008, p. 25). In other words, “In addition to charging for protection like the mafias, they monopolize a number of important local economic activities (alternative transport, trading gas cylinders, distribution of the signal from stolen cable TV, etc.)” (p. 25). Although criminal factions such as the PCC and Comando Vermelho have been

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extensively studied in academic literature, the paramilitary side of crime is relatively novel as a research object (see Couto & Beato Filho, 2019; Manso, 2021). In his comments about an emerging phenomenon, Machado da Silva (2008) posited that *milícias* “constitute a new type of domination by force of favelas which is less morally rejected than the domination of drug gangs. Under their intervention, residents experience a sense of personal security that disguises the coercions that they suffer” (p. 25). More than a decade after Machado da Silva presented his impressions on *milícias*, today it is evident that the agents of “coercions” are an additional source of repression in favelas and another actor in Brazilian politics.

In 2008, Marcelo Freixo, a progressive deputy with Marielle Franco as a cabinet member and main connection to the favelas, presided over a commission of inquiry in Rio de Janeiro’s state parliament to investigate *milícias*. The commission led by Freixo identified that *milícias* recycled old practices of “taking justice into one’s own hands,” such as the death squads described by Scheper-Hughes (2006), and had reorganized themselves as private security agents. Caldeira (2000), for example, documents that, in São Paulo, the (upper-)middle classes responded to the spike of urban violence in the 1980s by building fortified enclaves, such as gated communities and shopping malls, to segregate themselves from “crime.” Written almost a decade after Caldeira’s study, the parliament investigation report led by Freixo identified the proliferation of this segregationist model of securitization, which in part enabled the formation of *milícias* as agents offering security in peripheral neighborhoods. In the report’s terms, “The increase of violence, beyond that related to the illegal commerce of drugs, has yielded an obsession for security in the middle classes, which today translates into gated communities and the enthusiastic adherence to shopping centers, seen as oases of security” (ALERJ, 2008, p. 257). The legislators added that gates and barriers limiting car access had proliferated in the streets, as had offers of private security

> to business owners and residents . . . in an informal and almost always illegal way. Under the responsibility of public security professionals, the famous “*bico* [side job]” is used to provide a complementary income to the very low salaries paid by the state. (ALERJ, 2008, p. 257)

And the cycle of violence in this logic of private security feeds back on itself:

> The lack of control over illegal private security has reached such a point that situations have been reported where police officers are formally called in by residents and businessmen . . . to curb violence and end up being informally hired by the community to provide security services. And the more this service grows, the more practices of “*justiçamento* [taking justice into one’s own hands]” occur . . . (ALERJ, 2008, p. 257)

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Following the conclusion of the investigations into the relations between *milícias* and state agents, the parliamentary commission of inquiry in Rio de Janeiro requested the indictment of "225 politicians, police officers, prison guards, firefighters, and civilians" and presented proposals to confront *milícias* (Freixo, 2022). However, since 2008, these paramilitary groups have increased their scope of activity in Rio de Janeiro – today *milícias* also dispute the illegal drug trade (Soares, 2022) – as well as their influence in politics. As we will discuss in Chapter 3, Ronnie Lessa, the gunman who fired the shots that killed Marielle and her driver Anderson Gomes, is a *miliciano* (a *milícia* member). At the time of Marielle's murder, Lessa, a former police officer, was working for a *milícia* known as Escritório do Crime (Crime Office), led by Adriano da Nóbrega, a former member of BOPE (Batalhão de Operações Especiais; Battalion of Special Operations), the military police's elite squad. Nóbrega had been close to the Bolsonaro family since his military days and on to his time as leader of Escritório do Crime (Filho, 2022). For example, in September 2005, Bolsonaro's eldest son, Flávio, then a state deputy in Rio de Janeiro, awarded Nóbrega with the Medalha Tiradentes (Tiradentes Medal), typically bestowed by the Rio de Janeiro parliament "to personalities who . . . have rendered services to the state of Rio de Janeiro, to Brazil, or to humanity" (as cited in Manso, 2020, p. 48). But Nóbrega was given the medal while serving a preventive sentence in prison for the crimes of murder, kidnapping, torture, and extortion (Manso, 2020, p. 49). The award to Nóbrega was part of the Bolsonaro family's strategy to valorize torture and exceptional policing, an agenda that, in the midst of political and economic crisis, coupled with the strategic action of the global far right in digital groups, helped elect Jair Bolsonaro to the presidency and Flávio to the senate in 2018. But the connection to Nóbrega went beyond a public homage. Flávio employed Nóbrega's sister and mother in his office for several years, and investigations indicate that both women were part of an additional corruption scheme known as "*rachadinha*," whereby people were hired by the Bolsonaro family political cabinets and, without working, returned up to 90% of their salaries (Barreto Filho, 2020). Fabrício Queiroz, responsible for articulating the hiring of "ghost" employees and intercepting the portions of returned salaries, was also working for the *milícias*, and had been a friend of Bolsonaro since their time in the army (Manso, 2020). Given the close relations between the *milícias* and the Bolsonaro family, influential in the national executive, senate, and other houses of parliament, we can say that in Brazil the relationship between the "world of crime" and the state is not only one of dispute, but also of "agreements and political exchanges" (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019, p. 531).

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2.5 Favelas

In the previous sections, we described a broad state of inequality that disproportionately impacts the lives of Black Brazilians and *faveladas/os*. We also described the dispute (and cooperation) between “crime” and state as normative agents in Brazil, which takes place most conspicuously in favelas and peripheries, while assuming other forms elsewhere (e.g., the historical intersections between the Bolsonaro family and *milícias*). As we will discuss in Chapter 4, the dispute between armed agents in favelas tends to produce silence and fear among residents. Several ethnographies have documented a “code of silence” in peripheries (Eilbaum & Medeiros, 2016; Leite & Oliveira, 2005; Menezes, 2015; Savell, 2021), which contextually may be instantiated as a “perennial concern about the consequences of everyday acts,” including comments about armed agents (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019, p. 541). Based on a year-long ethnography in two pacified favelas, Cidade de Deus and Santa Marta, Palloma Menezes (2015) explains that residents render this tense scenario as the experience of living in a “*campo minado*” or “minefield” (p. 34). This is how a *favelado* from Cidade de Deus described the situation in an interview:

> The resident is oppressed. Look, if you live here, if you’re raised here, just because you’ve become friends with a police officer, just because you’ve given him a glass of water, the traffickers oppress you. If you’re a resident that has lived here for I don’t know how many years and got used to the drug trade and helps the dealers, the police officer will oppress you. So, you are trapped, because you have to be in the middle of everything and everyone, but not let yourself be taken by any of them. You have to be like a lamppost, you have to stay still and intact. (as cited in Menezes, 2015, p. 377)

As the resident chronicled, the perception of territorial confinement with legal and extra-legal armed agents tends to restrict favela residents’ comments about these competing agents. In its recontextualization, a comment could be “contaminated” (e.g., be taken by the police as belonging to “crime” or by a dealer as denouncing the drug trade) and potentially yield violent effects for residents. Having “to be like a lamppost . . . still and intact” is an image that evokes a narrowing, rather than expansion, of the expression of positions in territories where the *“fogo cruzado*” (i.e., “crossfire,” or the dispute between normative regimes) most conspicuously takes place. In terms of Hannah Arendt’s (1958) philosophy, the code of silence is the opposite of politics, which she understands as the public negotiation and manifestation of “speech.” Arendt famously said that “violence begins where speech ends” (Arendt, 1994, p. 308). Our main interest in this book is precisely to investigate the sociolinguistic practice of individuals and collectives that variably project political conditions for speaking, as if following Arendt’s principle of politics depending on verbal action. The collectives that we engage in dialogue attempt to build

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discourse conditions to expand speech, while opposing the "code of silence" and other semiotic mechanisms that stifle *faveladas/os*. As these collectives also counter a historically produced stigma about the favela, we believe it is important to revisit discourses on the very invention of the favela in the nineteenth century, and the historical construction of the favela as a problem. Unpacking the sedimentation of this discourse will be key to understanding the collectives' work of semiotic differentiation (Gal & Irvine, 2019).

The Invention of the Favela

Following the Brazilian monarchy's reluctant abolition of slavery in 1888, former enslaved people and their descendants were forced to seek their own means to survive. In Rio de Janeiro, the solution found by many of them was to occupy hillsides. The emerging neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro were then called favelas, in reference to "Morro da Favela," or Favela Hill, a monarchist settlement in the state of Bahia that resisted the newly proclaimed republic in 1889. Brazil's military waged a campaign against the camp, resulting in the country's deadliest civil war, also known as Canudos War (1895–1898). Some of the "soldiers returning from the war settled, with the tolerance of the army, on Morro da Providência," a hill in downtown Rio de Janeiro that also came to be called, "in allusion to the military campaign in Bahia, Morro da Favella" (Gonçalves, 2013, p. 44).

The literary work *Os sertões* (*Rebellion in the Backlands*), written by Euclides da Cunha and first published in 1902, was fundamental to the popularization and, consequently, the presupposition of the idea of (Morro da) Favela as an anti-modern territory, located in the midst of a modernizing Brazil. This book crystallized the opposition between the coast as a synonym of development, and the backlands as epitome of a pre-modern past. Newspaper chroniclers in Rio de Janeiro, then the capital of the republic, rapidly invoked Euclides da Cunha's work to describe the favelas that were emerging in post-slavery Rio de Janeiro. Licia do Prado Valladares (2019) exemplifies this process of textual mediation of stigma by citing a chronicle by João do Rio, published in the newspaper *Gazeta de Notícias* in 1908. Entitling it "Os livres acampamentos da miséria" (The open camps of misery), João do Rio reports his visit to Morro de Santo Antônio, "Which had become a favela, like Morro da Providência, during the last years of the nineteenth century." In João do Rio's own words:

> I had the idea that Morro de Santo Antônio was a place where poor workers gathered while awaiting housing, and the temptation arose to attend the serenade. . . . The hill was like any other hill. A wide, poorly maintained path, on one side revealing, in layers that spread out ever, the lights of the city . . . I followed [the people] and came upon another world. The lights had disappeared. *We were in the country, in the backlands, far from the*

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city. The path that snaked down was sometimes narrow, sometimes wide, full of troughs and holes. On either side, narrow houses, made of planks from wooden crates, with fences indicating yards. The descent became difficult. (as cited in Valladares, 2019, p. 20)

The author continues:

How did that curious village of indolent misery grow up there? It is certain that today it shelters perhaps more than 1,500 people. The houses are not rented, they are sold . . . The price of a normal house is 40–70 *mil réis*. All are built on the ground, without regard to depressions on the lot, with wood from crates, sheet metal, and bamboo. . . . *One had, in the luminous shadows of the starry night, the studied impression of the entrance to the village of Canudos* or the acrobatic idea of a vast, multiform chicken coop. (as cited in Valladares, 2019, p. 20)

The chronicle “The open camps of misery” is significant because it denounces a historical accumulation, and betrays the textual mediation of this accumulation: João do Rio reported that his visit to Morro Santo Antônio struck him with “the studied impression of the entrance to the village of Canudos.” João do Rio’s scalar activity – in other words, his work making sense of the hilly neighborhood and measuring it in relation to other magnitudes – was thus mediated by communicable discourses (Briggs, 2005). Drawing from his work on ideologies of language and medicine, Charles Briggs (2005) puns on the medical concept of communicable diseases (i.e., affections that spread from one person to another) and proposed that discourses, while spreading across social spaces, project and legitimize ideologies of language, social processes, and persons in the world. Thus, João do Rio’s modes of predicating “another world,” the favela, as a location of “indolent misery . . . a vast, multiform chicken coop” was an early indication of the communicable construction of the favela as a “problem.” Further, João do Rio’s drawing from Euclides da Cunha’s naturalist and modernist account of Canudos provided his narrative with historical and scientific authority. As the medical field is often an important ground for modernist discourses, João do Rio also denounced the “filth” of these social spaces (“vast, multiform chicken coop”), while combining this sanitary comment with *faveladas/os*’ seeming aversion to the lights of modernity (“The lights had disappeared,” “luminous shadows of the starry night”). “The open camps of misery” is but one example of durable discourses in Brazil that conflate favelas and Blackness with bestiality, misery, and pre-modernity.

The favela became a problem in the discourses of doctors, engineers, and politicians following its invention in literary and journalistic rhetoric greatly influenced by Euclides da Cunha’s rendition of Canudos as a community without state rule whose members have a “[m]oral behavior that the observer finds revolting” (Valladares, 2019, p. 100). In the 1920s, “The first major

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campaign against [what came to be termed as] 'aesthetic leprosy'" was launched (Valladares, 2019, p. 104), and French urban planner Alfred Agache would take up this notion in the 1930s in his plan for "renewal and beautification of the city of Rio de Janeiro" (Valladares, 2019, p. 104). Valladares (2000) also documented favelas' first appearance in a legal document in 1937, with the publication of the Building Code, which "prohibits the creation of new favelas, but for the first time recognizes their existence, making itself available to manage and control their growth" (p. 12). In the following decades, favelas gradually became cemented in hegemonic discourses as a problem of public health and urban aesthetics. In 1949, the first census of favelas was conducted, consistent with Foucault's (2007) notion of governmentality as the nexus of knowledge and power. The 1960s saw the beginning of Brazilian social science research on favelas; around the same time, researchers from abroad began traveling to Brazil to study favelas (e.g., Bonilla, 1961; Leeds, 1969), and political initiatives such as the Peace Corps, an organization that aimed to consolidate an anti-communist agenda in poverty-stricken territories (Sigaud, 1995), began providing so-called assistance to favelas (Valladares, 2019, p. 41).

From the "Language of Rights" to the "Language of Violence"

Until Brazil became a node for transnational drug trafficking in the early 1980s, the favela problem was treated either through segregation – several favelas were removed from the hills in central Rio and moved to the urban periphery (Duncan, 2021, p. 20) – or ostensible inclusion through rights and citizenship – something strongly influenced by the struggle of social movements and Catholic grassroots work in these territories during the military dictatorship (1964–1984) and the redemocratization that followed. But as transnational drug trafficking established its retail branch in favelas, these spaces came to be seen as the source of the urban violence that increased in the 1980s. Machado da Silva (2010) explains that this is the point of inflection whereby favelas would no longer be narrated through the "language of rights" but instead through the "language of urban violence":

> Nesse momento, o perigo imputado a elas deixa de ser uma questão urbanística, relacionada ao fortalecimento de uma categoria social em franco processo de incorporação socioeconômica e política. As favelas passaram a ser vistas ... como o valhacouto de criminosos que interrompem, real ou potencialmente, as rotinas que constituem a vida ordinária na cidade. Em resumo, como efeito da consolidação da *violência urbana,* modificaram-se profundamente os conteúdos que, na perspectiva dominante, definem as favelas como um problema urbano. Sem qualquer intervenção de sua parte que justificasse essa revisão, os moradores

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foram criminalizados justamente quando pareciam bem sucedidos no esforço de participar do debate público. (p. 297)

At this point, the danger attributed to [favelas] ceased to be an urbanistic issue, related to the strengthening of a social category that was undergoing a process of socioeconomic and political incorporation. Favelas came to be seen . . . as the stronghold of criminals who interrupt, really or potentially, the routines that are the basis of ordinary life in the city. In short, as an effect of the consolidation of urban violence, the contents that, from the dominant perspective, define favelas as an urban problem were profoundly modified. And without any intervention on [the] part [of the upper classes] to justify a revision, residents were criminalized just when they seemed to have succeeded in their efforts to participate in the public debate. (p. 297)

If social movements had been able to advance rights for *faveladas/os* at the end of the dictatorship and the beginning of the democratic opening, in the 1980s, favelas began to be stigmatized in hegemonic discourses as responsible for the violent criminality that increasingly occupied the agenda of news media and everyday talk. Machado da Silva (2010) adds:

Criminalizados e desqualificados como *cidadãos de bem*, os moradores sofrem um processo de silenciamento pelo qual se lhes dificulta a participação no debate público, justificando a truculência policial e . . . “policialização das políticas sociais.”

Criminalized and disqualified as *good citizens*, residents undergo a process of silencing through which their participation in public debate is made difficult, justifying police brutality and . . . the “militarization of social policies.” (p. 298)

Machado da Silva thus raised an important correlation: namely, favela residents are not only excluded from the moral construction of the “*cidadão de bem*” or “good citizen,” but also treated as a “problem” of “security.”

Ethnographically, we have found evidence of the historical force of these stigmatizing discourses at the core of the idea that favelas are a problem to be securitized. For example, in 2013, Daniel participated in a focus group with young residents from Vila Cruzeiro, a favela contiguous to Complexo do Alemão. The group was gathered by Verissimo Júnior, a high school teacher and founder of Teatro da Laje (Rooftop Theater), a theater collective that aimed at projecting an positive view of favelas. The following excerpt illustrates a moment in the debate when participants were talking about police *duras*, a slang term that designates harsh approaches to policing, both communicatively and physically. Luan, a young Black man from a middle-class neighborhood, had asked participants to comment on *duras* they had experienced or heard about. The conversation seems to summarize the description above of the stigma against *faveladas/os* and some of its effects:

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Excerpt 2.1 Focus Group, Grupo de Estudos Culturais, Vila Cruzeiro, 2013

1	LUAN	(2s) só ele? ninguém mais? [tem mais alguém que queira comentar?
2	DANIEL	[parece que a polícia não quer que as pessoas riam (.)
3		não pode ter alegria ((some people laugh))
4	LUIZA	todo mundo é suspeito=
5	LUAN	((*Luan laughs*)) =é [verdade
6	LUIZA	[na comunidade, se é homem é suspeito, se é mulher é
7		objeto sexual, [é assim que é enxergado=
8	DANIEL	[uhum
9	MARIO	=mas é assim a [visão
10	LUIZA	[é:: a mulher passa, "ah, é
11		gostosa, é safada"
12	FABIANA	você tem que aguentar tudo calado, [você tem que aguentar tudo calado
13	LUIZA	[é um objeto sexual, "aquela mulher não vale
14		nada," se for jovem é um suspeito
15	MATEUS	se passa com uma [blusa maior
16	VERISSIMO	[se for jovem, então=
17	LUIZA	=se for jovem, então=
18	MATEUS	=é [cracudo
19	LUIZA	[vai ser um
20		traficante, ou um usuário (.) com certeza, é um projeto
21	MARIO	isso
22	LUIZA	um vagabundo ou sei lá o que eles vão te chamar

1	LUAN	(2s) only him? no one else? [is there anyone who would like to make a comment?
2	DANIEL	[it seems like the police don't want people to laugh (.)
3		you can't have fun ((some people laugh))
4	LUIZA	everyone is suspect=
5	LUAN	((*Luan laughs*)) =that's [true
6	LUIZA	[in the community, if it's a man it's suspect, if it's a
7		woman it's a sex object, [that's how it's seen=
8	DANIEL	[uh-huh
9	MARIO	=but that's their [view
10	LUIZA	[yeah:: a woman

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Excerpt 2.1 (cont.)

11		walks, “ah, she’s hot, she’s slutty”
12	FABIANA	you’ve got to bear it all quietly, [you’ve got to listen quietly
13	LUIZA	[it’s a sex object, “that woman is worthless,” if it’s
14		man it’s a suspect
15	MATEUS	if a guy has a long [shirt
16	VERISSIMO	[yeah, if it’s a young person, then=
17	LUIZA	=if it’s a young person, then=
18	MATEUS	=he’s a crack [addict
19	LUIZA	[it’s
20		going to be a dealer, or a drug user (.) for sure, it’s a project
21	MARIO	right
22	LUIZA	a vagrant or God knows what they’re going to call them

The youths, Verissimo, and Daniel collectively described stereotypical comments on signs of identity and language of *faveladas/os*. After Luan solicited further responses to his question about *duras* in favelas, Daniel jokes about the police not wanting people enjoying themselves in favelas (lines 2–3), and Luiza comments that in the favela, especially if one is male, one is likely “a suspect,” or if one is a female, she may be framed as “a sex object,” identifying potential victims of police or gender violence, respectively. In her examples, Luiza was very likely iterating the essentialist moral opposition between “*cidadãos de bem*” and “*bandidos*,” at the core of securitizing discourses. As Feltran (2011) comments, “*bandidos*” does not name only “those practicing acts considered illicit, but, in many situations, also those who look like *bandidos* in the social stigma . . . that is, young people, residents of peripheries and favelas, who dress in such a way, who carry such objects, who speak in such a way, in addition to their families and networks of close relationships” (p. 316). The young focus group participants demonstrate the referential flexibility of the term *bandidos*: Mateus says that “if a guy a long shirt, he’s a crack addict” (lines 15–18), and Luiza declares that “if it’s a young person, it’s going to be a dealer, or a drug user . . . or a vagrant” (lines 19–20).

In line 12, Fabiana addresses “the code of silence” more prominently: in the midst of the collaborative depiction of stigmatization and *duras*, she says that “you’ve got to bear it all quietly, you’ve got to listen quietly.” Yet, as we are

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concerned with the practical method of hope whereby activists and residents reorient knowledge (Miyazaki, 2004), this focus group itself, promoted by Verissimo Júnior, a teacher with a clear progressivist agenda, may be seen as a participant framework where the code of silence and the denial of political participation for *faveladas/os* is reoriented. Collectively, the youth in the focus group unpack the stigma while participating in an event advancing more affirmative views of the favela. As participant frameworks are not isolated events but nodes of discourse chains (Agha, 2007), the critical semiotic constructions in the above conversation could, through further semiotic work, travel to other events (Bauman & Briggs, 1990) and contribute to the construction of alternative ideological perspectives (Gal & Irvine, 2019) to the criminalizing discourses we have discussed. This kind of semiotic work is foundational to the collectives we focus on in this book, which we present below.

2.6 The Collectives

Instituto Raízes em Movimento

The Instituto Raízes em Movimento (Roots in Movement Institute) is an NGO formed by Complexo do Alemão residents in 2001. The activists in this collective work on two fronts: "knowledge production" and "communication and culture" (Instituto Raízes em Movimento, 2016). On the former front, Raízes has created the Centro de Estudos, Pesquisa, Documentação e Memória do Complexo do Alemão (Complexo do Alemão Research, Documentation and Memory Center, CEPEDOCA), responsible for fostering research about Complexo do Alemão (necessarily involving researchers from favelas), documenting the existing knowledge about Complexo do Alemão and other favelas, and developing courses and events that facilitate the construction of knowledge about favelas. On the communication and culture front, the collective has promoted various courses, events, and cultural strategies to stimulate cultural production in the favela and more expansive forms of dialogue between *faveladas/os*. Raízes has also partnered with universities, NGOs, and various institutions to promote courses on history and memory of favelas and documentary production. Faveladoc, for example, is a workshop on documentary filmmaking for young *faveladas/os* that culminates in the making of a documentary on a topic of interest to the favela, such as the impact of the megavents, as seen in "Copa pra Alemão ver," or "World Cup for the Gaze of Germans" (see Instituto Raízes em Movimento, 2014), and AfroBrazilian religions in "Quando você chegou, meu santo já estava," or "When you arrived, my saint had already been here" (see Faveladoc, 2019).

Raízes has also been our main collaborator in the field. Since 2012, Daniel's field visits have been mediated by Raízes activists, who

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enthusiastically welcomed the research project "Cultural mapping of cultural production and literacy practices in 3 favelas of Complexo do Alemão, RJ." Written by Adriana Facina (Museu Nacional, UFRJ), Adriana Lopes (Instituto de Educação, UFRRJ), and Daniel, the research project lasted from 2012 to 2015, and enabled his participation in various activities hosted by Raízes in Complexo do Alemão. Daniel has continued his interaction with activists, residents, and other researchers in Complexo do Alemão, and since 2021, Raízes activists have collaborated with Daniel and Jerry's current project, including through transcription and discussion of data and theory with us. Much of the data analyzed in this book was generated in activities promoted by Raízes, including Circulando: Diálogo e Comunicação nas Favelas – an annual event that combines an open-air fair and discussions at the seat of Raízes on Avenida Central in Complexo do Alemão (or online, during the restrictions for physical meetings during COVID-19) – and the "Vamos Desenrolar" course, a series of talks and conversation circles involving residents, activists, and researchers. Communicatively, in line with the enregisterment of *papo reto* that we discuss in Chapter 4, the initiatives of Raízes em Movimento have aimed to "estabelecer o diálogo, a conversa, o 'desenrolo' com todos os presentes que queiram se pronunciar," or "establish dialogue, conversation, the '*desenrolo*' [the unroling of the lines of talk] among all those present" in the events (Instituto Raízes em Movimento, 2016, n.p.). In other words, Raízes is an institution promoting participation frameworks and conditions for communicative practices that, in defiantly speaking to "point," challenge the "code of silence," cordial racism, and inequalities narrated above.

Instituto Marielle Franco

As we discuss in Chapter 3, in 2018, our work with favela activists was crucially impacted by the assassination of Councilor Marielle Franco. A personal friend of Adriana Lopes and Adriana Facina and part of the extended network of activists connected to Daniel, Marielle Franco was born in Complexo da Maré, a group of favelas contiguous to Complexo do Alemão. As we write this book, over four years after her assassination, the person or the group who commissioned the murder of Marielle and her driver Anderson Gomes is still unknown. This tragic event has been crucial to Brazilian politics far beyond the progressive sectors where Marielle built her influence. Under Bolsonaro, Brazil's far right invoked Marielle's figure as an icon of the "perversion" of the left, the enemy against which Bolsonaro's conservative, anti-gender, and anti-communist crusade gathers traction (see Cesarino, 2020; Silva & Dziuba, 2023). On the left, Marielle appears as a figure of present immanence (Silva & Lee, 2021; Khalil, Silva, & Lee, 2022). As part of the

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transnational movement of struggle for justice that has emerged following Marielle's murder, her family – namely, Anielle Franco (her sister), Luyara Franco (her daughter), Monica Benicio (her partner), Marinete da Silva (her mother), and Antônio Francisco da Silva Neto (her father) – established the Instituto Marielle Franco. In line with the sociolinguistic imaginations and metaleptic temporality that we are dedicated to describing throughout this book, the declared mission of the Instituto is to "luta[r] por justiça, defende[r] sua memória, multiplica[r] seu legado e rega[r] suas sementes," or "fight for justice, defend [Marielle's] memory, spread her legacy, and water her seeds" (Instituto Marielle Franco, 2022, n.p.).

The Instituto Marielle Franco has been active on several fronts in politics and education. Some of its main initiatives have included advocating for anti-racist agendas in education and politics, facilitating the interaction of activists throughout Brazil and across the world, strengthening the candidacies of Black women, and protecting elected representatives and candidates against gender-based political violence. An example of the Instituto Marielle Franco's activity in the political field is the study "Violência política de gênero e raça no Brasil em 2021" ("Political Violence of Gender and Race in Brazil in 2021"; see Instituto Marielle Franco, 2021). In the face of the vulnerability of the Black female body in politics, a team of female researchers gathered data about threats and violence against Black women in politics, and interviewed eleven Black female legislators who had been targets of violence. In line with hope as practical reason and action, the study mounted evidence of online and offline threats to female politicians, and recommended lines of action to curb it. On the educational front, the Instituto Marielle Franco produced the graphic novel *Marielle Franco, Raízes* (*Marielle Franco's Roots*). Resulting from Anielle's expressed need to find a discourse genre to tell more effectively "Marielle's story to the children and young people she was teaching," the book "was written, drawn, colored and designed by a team of 100% Black professionals" (Instituto Marielle Franco, 2021, n.p.). In addition to being distributed to teachers and students through the Institute's collaborative networks, the material has can be downloaded for free from the Internet. In short, the Instituto Marielle Franco is another example of a crucial agency for literacy and the enregisterment of Afrodiasporic political signs in contemporary Brazil.

Coletivo Papo Reto

During the *Vamos desenrolar* training course promoted by Adriana Facina and Raízes em Movimento in 2013, Daniel met Raull Santiago, a Complexo do Alemão activist whose sociolinguistic digital practice we describe in

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Chapter 5. A year later, alongside other local Black activists, Raull would create a collective named after one of the main speech registers described in this book: Coletivo Papo Reto (see https://coletivopaporeto.org). The activists from this *coletivo* have expanded the notion of *papo reto* as a straightforward register of talk that opposes the indirectness of cordial racism and other social and economic inequities by articulating this communicative practice with digital and political affordances. The approximately thirty members of the collective have organized digital channels to denounce human rights violations in the Complexo do Alemão. For instance, the collective has maintained several social media groups with users strategically placed throughout the neighborhood, allowing residents to map security in the neighborhood: these instant-messaging groups have mapped shootings in real time, circulated images and videos of potential human rights violations, and provided evidence for possible denunciations of police abuse. Coletivo Papo Reto's activists have also marshaled the affordances of other digital platforms to monitor violence in Complexo do Alemão and communicate with broader publics. Politically, the collective has teamed up with other collectives and institutions in Complexo do Alemão – such as Raízes em Movimento and Voz das Comunidades – and NGOs and foundations in Brazil and abroad – such as Witness and Brazil Foundation – to promote security for the Complexo do Alemão residents, counter the “war on drugs” and other neoliberal policies that transform social inequality into incarceration and seclusion, offer affirmative discourses about *faveladas/os*, build alliances with other peripheries in Brazil and South America, and offer material opportunities for labor, education, and entertainment in the favelas.

2.7 Conclusion

It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that Brazil, historically and in its contemporary form, is a state that is premised on and constituted by the dehumanization of certain kinds of life. In this chapter, we have tried to draw a general picture of economic inequalities that, intersected with other markers of differentiation such as policing, precarization, and access to labor and education, point to the durability of Brazil's constitution as a country founded on authoritarianism and racism. Significant rights have been achieved by minorities since the country's redemocratization started in 1985 and throughout the social democratic governments of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994–2002), Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010), and Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016), especially with social movements as agents of change under these administrations. But Brazil is in the process of recovering from a democratic and institutional decline following the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff and the rise to

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power of Bolsonaro. Brazil has been back on the hunger map (Carmo, 2022), and policies such as arming the population and increasing violent raids in favelas have been pointing to a bleak prospect.

Although we have tried to bring data to substantiate different dimensions of inequality in Brazil, our systematization is far from complete. Problems such as violence against Indigenous people, LGBTQI+ people, women, and other minorities are also conspicuous. For the reader who is not yet familiar with Brazil, the picture of inequality and violence illustrated above might contradict a common impression held both inside and outside Brazil of “generosity” and “peaceful coexistence” across races and social classes. In 1936, Sergio Buarque de Holanda, in *Raízes do Brasil (Roots of Brazil)*, tried to render into sociological terms Brazil’s notion of “cordiality,” a dimension of the stereotypical view that is widely held about Brazil as a “good place” for the integration of difference. *Raízes do Brasil* was written upon Buarque de Holanda’s return from two years (1929 and 1930) working as a journalist in Germany, with repurposed notes from his attempts to explain Brazil to a German audience. In his account of Brazil’s historical formation, Buarque de Holanda refers to “cordiality” as the imperative to turn public relations and public institutions into familiar ones – into *cor-dial* ties, that is, bonds belonging in the “*cor*” (“heart” in Latin). The Brazilian trope of the “cordial man,” for Buarque de Holanda, wears a social mask of “familiarity, hospitality, and generosity” (p. 346), and in part explains the contradiction between the state of violence we described and the appearance of “generosity” in Brazil (see Roth-Gordon, 2017). Since the 1990s, scholars have studied the contradiction between racial violence and apparent generosity under the rubric of cordial racism (Turra & Venturini, 1995). In everyday talk, cordial racism is expressed by “a superficial politeness that disguises discriminatory attitudes and behaviors” (Pacheco, 2011, p. 137), for instance by explicitly denying the presence of racism in Brazil, or by affectionately addressing a Black person while indirectly contesting their rights and dignity. Ronaldo Sales Jr. (2007), a Black legal scholar, says that cordiality “reduces social relations to personal, informal and private relations. [It is a norm] of differentiation that leads to . . . familiar and amicable ties. Cordiality is, therefore, an expression of authoritarianism” (p. 104).

This general portrait of systemic inequalities and racism disproportionately affects the lives of Black Brazilians and *faveladas/os*. In addition, in this chapter we described a situated scenario of (in)securitization (Rampton & Charalambous, 2019) that has unfolded in various ways, including through exceptional policing and the dispute (and occasional cooperation) between so-called crime and state as normative regimes in Brazil’s peripheries. Given the Bolsonaro family’s relationship with *milícias*, the paramilitary side of the “world of crime,” there are indications that the dispute and agreements between crime and state also spread to non-peripheral spaces. Our main objective in

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presenting this landscape of inequality, racism, and silencing was to delineate to our readers that hope for our interlocutors means, in the first place, not giving in to despair – an affect one would expect resulting from this backdrop. Further, the individuals we have interacted with, and especially the ones participating in the three main *coletivos* studied in this book – Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto – rely on a number of resources, including affordances of enregisterment and digitalization, to reorient the historical silencing of *faveladas/os*, the indirectness of "cordial racism," and the liminal situations of violence stoked by the dispute between crime and state. Working on different scales – from popular communication to employment and income generation, and to formation and protection for Black politicians – these collectives exemplify concrete sociolinguistic moves being taken in the present to reorient an unequal past.

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3 Hope in the Present

> "Por onde passar, pode dizer que Corisco estava mais morto que vivo. Virgulino morreu de uma vez, Corisco morreu com ele. Por isso mesmo precisava ficar de pé, lutando sem fim, desarrumando o arrumado, até que o sertão vire mar e o mar vire sertão."
>
> Glauber Rocha, *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* (1964)[1]

3.1 The Time of Einz

In 2015, multiple media outlets released reports of Matheryn Naovaratpong, nicknamed Einz, a two-year old girl in Thailand who was cryogenically frozen following her death from brain cancer, making her the youngest person in history to have undergone that procedure. The story was impactful enough to later be featured in a 2018 Netflix documentary titled *Hope Frozen*. Cryonics, the practice of freezing and storing a human body until a moment in the future when medicine will have developed the technology to resuscitate it, hinges on the distinction between quackery and singularity. Cryonics might be dismissed as quackery in the sense that virtually no treatment exists as scientifically feasible in peer-reviewed science journals. While it is not uncommon for there to be disagreements, both large and small, among the global medical community in terms of best care and treatment practices, in the case of cryonics there appears to be consensus over it being pseudoscience at best. However, the practice simultaneously represents a potential instance of technological singularity. If the anthropocene, as postulated by the late Nobel Prize winning atmospheric chemist Paul J. Crutzen, is an epoch beginning in the late eighteenth century characterized by the irreversible environmental impact on the Earth caused by human activity (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000), the singularity might be reflective of an indeterminate moment in the future when technological advances will have had an irreversible impact on social life. In other

[1] "Wherever you go, you can tell that Corisco was more dead than alive. Virgulino died at once, Corisco died with him. That's why Corisco needed to stay on his feet, fighting endlessly, messing up the neat and tidy, until the backlands turns to sea, and the sea turns into backlands." Glauber Rocha, *Black God, White Devil.*

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words, in the same way that we can, at present, only speculate what such a singularity would entail, we cannot say for certain whether, in the future, technology will have advanced to the point where a dead body could in fact be brought back to life, and perhaps less so at what specific point in time.

While the documentary featuring Einz is called *Hope Frozen*, we would like to contend that our orientation to hope differs from the one adopted by Einz's family, and adherents of cryonics and other similar technologies that demand a suspended belief in the indeterminate if not indefinite future. We do not mean to merely reiterate Blöser's (2019) proposition, discussed in Chapter 1, that peoples and societies "hope in a great variety of ways" (p. 212). Instead, our account of hope depends not on a deferral of action while waiting for a moment in time, but on an engagement with time that treats it metaleptically rather than simply ontologically fixed (e.g., there are twenty-four hours in a day, or seven days in a week). As our empirical cases will show, time can be reimagined via the strategic and principled use of language. In order to illustrate what we mean, we focus on the case of councilwoman Marielle Franco, including her assassination and her legacy of hope, itself dependent on a metaleptic orientation to temporality. While revisiting accounts of metalepsis as transgression of narrative universes (Genette, 1980), and as the reorganization of temporality that enables the belated and citational constitution of the subject (Butler, 1997), we demonstrate the construction of Marielle as an "absent present" (Deumert, 2022) icon in contemporary Brazilian politics. By analyzing writings and speeches alongside narrative accounts of women who knew and were inspired by her, we illustrate how hope is not something that one waits upon to occur in the future, but instead something that can be demanded in the present.

3.2 Marielle Franco

Marielle was a queer Black woman from the Complexo da Maré, a group of favelas that houses some 130,000 people. As discussed in Chapter 1, while the Complexo da Maré is subjected to some of the lowest social indexes in the city, it is also a location of intense cultural production and everyday creativity (see also Duncan, 2021; Souza, 2020). Since the mass protests demanding political change that took to the streets of Brazilian cities in 2013, some analysts (e.g., Nobre, 2020; Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019) have framed Marielle as an icon of progressive political novelty. As a Black woman, she embodied the marks of a dispossessed population. Further, as a sociologist who designed policy for almost a decade working as an aide to progressive deputy Marcelo Freixo, Marielle knew that precarity in favela life was reflective of what Sharryn Kasmir (2018) describes as a "well-worn feature of capitalism" (p. 7), whereby large segments of people are rendered as "excess workers" (p. 5).

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Born in 1979, Marielle entered politics by joining Freixo's cabinet, and for a decade was the connection between him and the favelas. In addition to devising human rights policy, Marielle and Freixo confronted *milícias* (see Chapter 2). In 2016, Marielle decided to run for the city council. She competed with few financial resources in a grassroots campaign, and received 46,502 votes, the fifth highest vote tally for any councilmember, making her the only Black Brazilian out of seven women elected for the fifty-one council positions. On the evening of March 14, 2018, a year after the beginning of a successful term in office, Marielle and her driver Anderson Gomes were assassinated in an ambush. After leaving a debate at Casa das Pretas together with Anderson and her assistant Fernanda Chaves, Marielle was hit with at least four shots to the head. Anderson was fatally shot in the back and Fernanda was the lone survivor. The assailant, former military sniper Ronnie Lessa, used a highly accurate HK MP5 submachine gun, commonly employed by Rio's elite police forces and not easily acquired by ordinary criminals (O Globo, 2018). Soon after Marielle's passing, a movement of mourning and solidarity grew fast, reaching many locations in Brazil and around the world. Thousands of people gathered in Rio de Janeiro and most major Brazilian cities to mourn her death and demand justice. Aided by technologies of digital communication, the mantras "Marielle, presente! (Marielle, present!)," "Marielle vive (Marielle lives)," and "Marielle é semente! (Marielle is a seed!)" traveled from the street protests to different parts of the world.

At present, there is still considerable uncertainty surrounding Marielle's death. It is not yet known who commissioned the murder, much less their motives. Even under pressure from international human rights bodies and the family's activism, the investigation has encountered several flaws, attempted obstructions, and false testimonies. During Bolsonaro's presidency, Marielle's family opposed the federalization of the case, mainly due to Bolsonaro's repeated dismissal of Marielle's assassination as an "average" crime, his family's continued "close relationship with the *milícia* suspected of killing Marielle" (Filho, 2019), and especially his attempt to pack the federal police with his sympathizers (Phillips, 2020a). Besides, Lessa was coincidentally a neighbor of Bolsonaro and had appeared in pictures next to the president (Greenwald & Pougy, 2019). As noted in Chapter 2, Bolsonaro's family has over the years cultivated political and financial ties with Adriano da Nóbrega, the head of the Crime's Office, a *milícia* that, according to Rio's prosecutors, is possibly connected to the case. Yet Nóbrega himself was suspiciously assassinated by the Bahia police in February 2020 while in hiding (Phillips, 2020b). To clarify, our focus is not an investigatory inquiry (i.e., an effort to speculate on who commissioned Marielle's murder). The point here is to understand how communities continue to hope when an icon of hope is murdered and no longer present in the physical world. As we shall see, through the strategic use of

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language, givens such as temporality and presence can be recalibrated toward hopeful action in the present.

3.3 Language and Spectrality; Or, Toward a Postmortem Linguistics

As discussed in Chapter 1, Bloch (1986) understood hope as both an affect and a principle of explanation. As an affect, "Hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them" (p. 3). Temporally, hope orients people to the "Not-Yet-Being," towards expansion and potentiality. Bloch also locates hope in forms of cooperative sociality. For him, docta spes, *educated hope*, is not an "expectant emotion . . . but the participating, co-operative process-attitude, to which consequently, since Marx, the open becoming [is] no longer sealed methodically and the Novum no longer alien in material terms" (p. 146). As we discuss later, while Marielle and her movement engaged with hope in a practical, participating, and cooperative manner, their grappling with temporality differs from Bloch's modernist vision of time. In other words, whereas Bloch insisted on hopeful action being oriented towards a teleological future, Marielle herself, and later her mourning movement, projected time in ways that do not conform to a future seen as chronological progress. Marielle's performance of hope was also distinct from Bloch's dismissal of the weight of the past in that she simultaneously knew the effects of slavery in Brazil, and looked back at the history of survival and creativity of the Black women who opened space for her. Moreover, her mourners have located hope not in a linear future to be aspired for, but in the "present" (see Antelius, 2007). That is, since Marielle's tragic death, their chanting of the mantras "Marielle, presente" and "Marielle vive (Marielle lives)," along with their fight for justice, have grounded Marielle's performance of hope in the present of political action. We call this projection of time "metaleptic temporality."

Metaleptic temporality lays bare the fact that, in its multiple realizations, hope does not necessarily refer to time as chronological, which would limit our orientation to the future in a predetermined manner. In narrative theory, metalepsis has been defined as the "transition from one narrative level to another" (Genette, 1980, p. 234), or "a deliberate transgression between the world of the telling and the world of the told" (Pier, 2016, p. 1). Metalepsis may entail a character in a novel who leaves the world of the "told" and enters the world of the "telling" by joining the reader through metanarration, as in the case of Charlotte Brontë's Shirley who tells the reader that "You and I will join the party" (Ryan, 2001, p. 89), or vice versa, as in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* whose narrator "leaves" a character named Fanny (Fludernik, 2003, p. 385). Metalepsis can also operate through other mediums, as we see for example in Woody Allen's film *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, where the character Tom Baxter exits the screen and meets Cecilia, a spectator who had repeatedly

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been to the cinema to watch the movie (see Civitarese, 2010). Genette (1980) wrote that this transgression of narrative levels or temporal universes "produces an effect of strangeness that is either comical or fantastic" (p. 235).

However, while the extant protests that reinsert Marielle into the time of the living produce a residual effect of a "fantastic" performance, their principled engagement with temporality goes beyond performing the uncanny. In narrative theory itself, as Fludernik (2003) contended, "Metalepsis in many instances need not actually be literally treated as an ontological contradiction (and therefore transgression), but could be regarded as an imaginative transfer into the impossible in parallel with authorial . . . memory of dialogues and thoughts in the past" (p. 393). The mourners' metaleptic narration of Marielle as present among them thus refers to a transgression of a taken-for-granted order of time, and to a broader belated constitution of themselves as subjects (Butler, 1997). Butler (1997) engaged metalepsis beyond its transgression of narrative layers as a belated temporality embedded in citational practices. For instance, while the subject who utters "I am" cites a formula that precedes their existence as an individual, the uttering of "I am" – a form of citation – metaleptically produces the subject as the originator of the formula; the subject is "temporarily produced as the belated and fictive origin of the performative" (Butler, 1997, p. 49). The example of metalepsis as embedded in citationality is thus representative not only of the metaleptic orientation to temporality that we adopt in this book but more specifically to the fact that enregistering hope is contingent on the transgression of chronological time.

The transgression of chronological time in this manner may seem at first glance beyond the purview of the study of language in society as such. After all, is it possible to study human communication if the subject position of the speaking agent is flexible and indeterminate? Ana Deumert (2022) presents an interesting paradox in the study of historical linguistics, or language change over time – namely that the human subject need not be accounted for as a physical presence. Proceeding from this paradox that historical linguistics is always already concerned with the non-ontological, Deumert proposes that we take seriously the possibility of the non-physical being as an agent in communication. Even contemporary theories related to translanguaging (see Chapter 1), which emphasize the resourceful and beyond code-bound conceptualizations and practices of language, do not take us far enough, according to Deumert, in that they still "assum[e] the presence of a sovereign subject" (p. 4). Drawing on Nyamnjoh's (2017) theory of incompleteness along with Pennycook's (2018) and Wee's (2021) theory of posthumanist linguistics, Deumert (2022) thus proposes a sociolinguistics of the specter, one that "unsettles ideas of sovereign agency and emphasizes our complex interconnectedness with the social and

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material world, with past-present-future, with effects that are brought about by other-than-human voices and actions" (p. 4).

We find the trope of spectrality to be particularly applicable to make sense of the utterance of the absent-present figure and, like Deumert, think Derrida's (1994) description of spectrality in his critique of the so-called Marxist condition pertinent to the case of Marielle and her posthumous sociolinguistic legacy. As Derrida (1994) wrote:

> Today, almost a century and a half later, there are many who, throughout the world, seem just as worried by the specter of communism, just as convinced that what one is dealing with there is only a specter without a body, without present reality, without actuality or effectivity, but this time it is supposed to be a past specter. (p. 47)

While Derrida was concerned specifically with the specter of Marx, through the invocation of his *presumed past* through the figure of the specter, this trope can help us think beyond the assumption that what is past is in fact past and, likewise, that what is ontologically present is more present than that which is merely past. Consider, in other words, what would happen if we were no longer able to presume that that which is past was never an "actuality or effectivity" in the first place. Derrida (1994) further noted the following:

> Which Marxist spirit, then? It is easy to imagine why we will not please the Marxists, and still less all the others, by insisting in this way on the spirit of Marxism, especially if we let it be understood that we intend to understand spirits in the plural and in the sense of specters, of untimely specters that one must not chase away but sort out, critique, keep close by, and allow to come back. (p. 109)

The Marxist spirit is bound to a condition of dual temporality that is inherently contradictory, understood in the present only ever as if it had been actualized in the past, even if it had not ever been or will never have been.

Specters, whether they be linguistic or bodily ones, are not entities that can be merely conjured. Here is Derrida (1994) again:

> To haunt does not mean to be present, and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept. Of every concept, beginning with the concepts of being and time. That is what we would be calling here a hauntology. Ontology opposes it only in a movement of exorcism. Ontology is a conjuration. (p. 202)

The "concept" in question here is a being only ever capable of speech in as much as it is "living." Analogous to how, as Deumert posited, historical linguistics can be practiced without living beings, living language resources too can exist and circulate in spite of an ontologically living essence. If we accept the premise that specters, being both ontological and not, can readily take on different forms, then Marielle's language practice cannot be reduced to conventional epistemological positions of language in society, if anything because the being of such language did not terminate with the end of Marielle's "being," but has reoriented

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itself along alternative temporal coordinates beyond a model of linear progression. Like Hamlet's father's spectral influence on his quest for justice, the presence of Marielle has been continuously invoked by protesters, and has been very much felt in national politics, for instance, in the fractalization of her legacy in the mandates of Black women elected to the federal and state legislatures in 2018, to city councils in 2020, and to federal and state legislatures in 2022. Marielle's spectral presence has also been central to the conservative right, as Bolsonaro and his sons in politics continuously referenced her as symbolizing the corruption of the agendas of gender equality, police reform, and feminism (see Cesarino, 2020; Silva & Dziuba, 2023). In the following sections, we will demonstrate how Marielle and her movement realized these features of temporality through their languaging.

3.4 "A Emergência da Vida"

Following the soft coup that in 2016 ousted Dilma Rousseff – a former guerrilla member tortured during the last military dictatorship (1964–1985), who later became an important minister in the government of former metalworker Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010), succeeding him as Brazil's first female president – Marielle Franco (2017), in an essay titled "A Emergência da Vida para Superar o Anestesiamento Social frente à Retirada de Direitos: O Momento Pós-Golpe pelo Olhar de uma Feminista, Negra e Favelada," wrote about the "'*emergência da vida*' *nas favelas*" (p. 91). The phrase would be translated by Jamille Pinheiro Dias, Katrina Dodson, and Deise Faria Nunes as "'the emergency of life' in favelas" (Franco, M., 2018, p. 136) in an English-language version titled "After the Take-Over: Mobilizing the Political Creativity of Brazil's Favelas" in *The New Left Review* following Marielle's murder. Marielle dedicated her text to emphasizing the protagonism of Black women (a major demographic group in Brazil, i.e., 27.8%) in that political moment (see Khalil, Silva, & Lee, 2022). We noted briefly in Chapter 2 that the term "emergência" in Portuguese translates in English both as "emergency" and "emergence" – and indeed Marielle seems to explore both senses of *emergência*. That is, for Marielle, favela residents, and in particular Black women, who are the majority in favelas, were experiencing a state of emergency in the face of the deposition of a progressive woman from the presidency – but at the same time they were not passive beings in the face of the coup, as they have always made life *emerge* in the face of the precarious material conditions that have historically marred favelas. The following paragraph, where Marielle elaborates on the prominence (and promise) of the Black *favelada*, is telling:

> The life trajectories of these women – particularly black and mixed-race women, who make up the majority – are driven by an instinct for survival, for themselves and their

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families. They build networks of solidarity focused on sustaining lives and reinforcing dignity. While they bear the brunt of Brazil's unequal social formation, they are also the ones who produce the means for transforming it, expanding mobility in every dimension. In this sense, they will be most sharply penalized in the current context, while at the same time they are centrally positioned to resist. The term 'survival' here goes beyond the maintenance of life – even in the face of the growing wave of femicides in Brazil (in 2015, two-thirds of the victims were black). Survival also involves housing conditions, food, health, clothing, schools, working lives, means of transport, access to culture; it goes beyond any purely economic definition to include the multiple dimensions of life. Today, these bodies in the peripheries are the principal site of exploitation and control imposed by the capitalist order – replacing the 'industrial body'. In this context, black women from the peripheries, especially the favelas, can be key instantiations for democratic advance, co-existence with difference and overcoming inequality. (Franco, M., 2018, pp. 138–139)[2]

The emergency/emergence of the Black *favelada* is, for Marielle, a state of survival – and she is explicit in not framing survival as mere "maintenance of life," but instead as material and cultural flourishing, "beyond any purely economic definition to include the multiple dimensions of life." The essay contends the following:

[T]he right-wing takeover, the feeling of a lack of horizons, an absence of perspective, feeds the sense of pessimism, the refusal to think beyond tomorrow. In these conditions, it's all the more important for the left to register the achievements of Black and *favelada* women and their transformative potential. (Franco, M., 2018, p. 137)

Marielle not only acknowledged the widespread hopelessness that emerged from the right-wing takeover, characterizing it as "the refusal to think beyond tomorrow," but further asked her readers to reassess the true power of the *favelada* burdened by the fight against economical dispossession, or what Silva (2009) refers to as the "artificial authority" (p. 215) of the state (i.e., its militarized occupation of the favelas). But Marielle inverts the indexicality of this first-order narrative of domination by urging a different consideration: the Black *favelada* is uniquely positioned to disrupt the foundations of the juridico-political order of the state in spite of and indeed through her marginal positionality.

Acknowledging the plasticity of indexicality (Inoue, 2004) is productive to understand how, in Brazil, the state sustains its social domination and coherence through a temporal regiment premised on the exclusion of certain individuals, such as the Black *favelada,* from the political sphere. One might be tempted to view Marielle's entry into politics as potentially signaling a new order whereby the Black *favelada* is always already a political agent despite the state's "temporalizing" (Inoue, 2004, p. 40) attempts to relegate her to the

[2] This and the following quotes are from the English translation, "After the Take-Over" (Franco, M., 2018).

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margins. However, as Franco (2018) writes: "A considerable number of *faveladas* view political participation with some distrust. They are unlikely to be in touch with those who can access state institutions – seen by the majority as belonging to undifferentiated ranks of the political elite" (p. 138). Marielle's writing inverts established relationalities to scrutinize ideological and historical narratives themselves; namely, the *favelada* as either unfit for political participation or even outside the boundaries of political representation. Notably, until Marielle's election, the minimal representation of the Black *favelada* in the realm of the political assumed the legitimacy of a certain hierarchy whereby the state and the margin remained ideologically and materially separate. What Marielle challenged is thus an indexical order that presumes a certain linear progress built upon the invisibilization of the Black *favelada*, who is subsumed to withhold the separation, inhabiting the margins and accessing the state only from the backdoor.

Of course, Franco (2018) did emphasize that *favelada* women "are not defined by impoverished passivity – contrary to their representations in mainstream discourse and media" (p. 137). She centers both the struggles and the capacities of Black *faveladas,* and disrupts the temporal regime whereby such "representations" both pathologize and patronize their existence while delimiting their potential. As Marielle elaborates, Black *faveladas*

> have succeeded in making changes at a neighborhood level that make powerful claims as new sites for the popular imagination and for social relations. In their engagement in everything from the arts to social and political practice in the marginalized districts, the presence of these women resonates through the city. (p. 137)

Marielle's disruption of scale (Blommaert, 2010; Carr & Lempert, 2016) is immediately striking – contributions at the "neighborhood level" are rescaled as able to "resonate" beyond, "through the city." More specifically, Marielle (2018) disrupted an already established historical narrative in which favela residents are confined to a spatial margin, a point which she addresses elsewhere in her speech:

> It is worth emphasizing that the peripheries and the favelas are part of the city – not separate from it. What distinguishes them from the other districts is the way the residents in these communities organize themselves, beyond the low public investment in their lives. (p. 137)

For Marielle, the Black *favelada*'s modes of existence cannot be uncoupled from her spatiality, and her actions are particularly capable of effecting change because they redefine the state from within its margins. However, this transgression of scale is not merely spatial, but also temporal. The latter is enacted through a rejection of a series of premises – the favela as separate from the city and therefore unworthy of public investment, and the favela as incapable of

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political organization because of the "low public investment in [its residents'] lives." The agentive attributes afforded to the favela are, in this sense, a move beyond their representational "been-ness" toward a capacity for organization that is, because inconceivable according to the extant political order, beyond ontological time.

Marielle's temporal interruptions are evident in her reflective characterization of the motivating force behind her political performance. Before an audience of activists and social scientists in the third Seminário Feminista (3rd Feminist Seminar) held at the Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Políticos at the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, she recounts a moment of bewilderment upon being hailed by a security guard who did not recognize her as she entered the municipal building:

Excerpt 3.1 Marielle's Speech at the Third Seminário Feminista, IESP/UERJ, May 12, 2017

a gente precisa também desvelar essa casa (.) então quando eu falo que a gente chega, aí chega um bando de mulher preta, um bando de mulher trans, chega mesmo com bermuda (.) pra você ter ideia eu já fui barrada na casa (.) era uma segunda ou um sexta feira que não tinha plenário, sei lá o quê (.) eu tava de bermuda e:: rasteira, e aí (.) é a hora que a gente vê o processo da carteirada ou da não carteirada que foi o meu caso, mas do quanto que esse lugar é hierárquico, personalista (.) porque aí o segurança: "ou! ou! ou!" ((ela reproduz o olhar de estranhamento de quando foi interpelada pelo segurança)), aquela coisa assim (.) aí não acreditei né, aqueles dez segundos, aí eu voltei e olhei (.) e aí homem negro, né? colega, o irmão (.) aí acho que é importante a gente dizer e se colocar no mundo e nessas relações, aí eu voltei e (.) "não acredito que já estou aqui há dois meses e você não me reconheceu (.) ah mas tudo bem, a gente qualquer dia desse vai fazer uma oficina com os seguranças para vocês entenderem que não pode tratar ninguém assim" (.) aí eu já fui ficando, "não pode tratar ninguém assim, quem é vereadora nem quem não é," "não, vereadora," "não precisa pedir desculpa, é porque eu não entendi (.) tinha que ter identificado? você tava gritando por quê? você não me reconheceu? não quero que você trate as pessoas desse jeito"

we also need to expose that house (.) because when I say that we arrive, there comes (with us) a gang of Black women, a gang of transsexual women, who arrive wearing shorts (.) just so you know, I've already been barred in the house (.) it was a Friday without a plenary, I was wearing shorts and yeah::: flip flops, and (.) that's when we see the process of flashing the badge ((displaying authority)), or not flashing the badge in my case, but how hierarchical that place is, personalist, because the security guard ((gutturally uttered)): "Yo! Yo! Yo!" ((she reproduces her look of surprise when she was questioned by the security guard)),

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Excerpt 3.1 (cont.)

something like it (.) and I didn't believe it, those ten seconds, then I came back and looked (.) and he was a Black man, right? a colleague, a brother (.) I think it's important for us to speak and to position ourselves in the world and in those relations, then I went back and said (.) "I can't believe I've been here for two months and you didn't recognize me (.) well, anyway, sometime we will do a workshop with the security guards just so you understand that you cannot treat anyone like this" (.) and I was getting, "you can't treat anyone like this, whether it's a councilwoman or not," ((he responded)) "no, councilwoman," "you don't have to apologize, it's because I didn't understand it (.) did I have to identify myself? what were you yelling about? You didn't recognize me? I don't want you to treat people this way"

This is a temporal consideration for Marielle not simply because her presence in parliament for two months failed to afford her recognition or because she spent a full "ten seconds" to process the implications of the harassment. Instead, it is temporal because her arrival in the political space has revelatory power to reimagine the political structure. If the guard's misrecognition is symptomatic of a system that does not recognize Marielle as a Black *favelada* stateswoman, her arrival is a transgression of the parliamentary optics: an insistence that she *appears*. In other words, Marielle's mere presence in the parliamentary setting challenges its constitution along racial lines. She rejects "flashing the badge," a sign of the entitlement and display of authority of white councilmembers and their aides, and this refusal is intertwined with her insistence on appearing on different grounds. Even her arrival, a *fait accompli*, signals an ongoing procedure, indexical not of a past event, but of an unfolding present beyond what the established ideological and political narrative concedes. Marielle added, "We understand that this diversity of bodies in the city needs to be positioned in a mandate that is said to be collective, popular, broader than the [individual] figure." Therefore, the act of arrival itself, for Marielle and for the select group of politicians comprising Black women, women of color, and gender nonconforming persons, is a form of contestation of the same exclusionary structures of domination that segregate them.

Further, to an audience of social scientists, in her speech Marielle produced an ethnography of a space of power that she occupied differently. She described the space and time of the chamber, a "hierarchical, personalist place" where the time of racial domination makes itself present even through a Black security guard, as bound up with racism, sexism, and homo-lesbo-transphobia. Yet simultaneously she projected her *chegada* (arrival) as temporally and spatially collective. Marielle often referenced herself as "we," her rationalization being

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that not only did she not arrive alone in the halls of government (there were the voters she represented and her female cabinet), but also that her embodied presence stood for her *ancestrais* (i.e., Black women who came before her), alongside present-day minorities, including queers, Blacks, and *faveladas/os*. Elsewhere in the speech at the feminist seminar, she explained:

Excerpt 3.2 Marielle's Speech at the Third Seminário Feminista, IESP/UERJ, May 12, 2017

a partir dos corpos e do lugar da resistência (.) de estar hoje na câmara municipal, não- não a minha identidade, não a minha vida Marielle, tenho muita tranquilidade . . . de que ali está, na minha- nossa perspectiva . . . não é pela minha vida (.) a relação é mais ampla, é o lugar do coletivo

from the bodies and the place of resistance (.) of being in the city chamber today, (it's) not- not about my identity, not about my life Marielle, I have confidence that . . . there in the chamber it's not my- our perspective . . . it's not about my life (.) the relation is wider, it's the place of the collective

We believe that Marielle's hesitation in using *minha* (my) to explain her perspective indexes the importance of a collective voice in her politics. Indeed, Marielle did say that she was confident her presence indexed a "we." Further, morphologically, the councilwoman projected this collective presence in the parliament through an innovative use of the term *mandato* ("cabinet") as *mandata* ("feminine cabinet"). In line with grassroots movements that add feminine or gender-neutral inflections to otherwise masculine, ostensibly unmarked words in Portuguese (Borba, 2019c), Marielle neologistically applied the gender morpheme -a to the word *mandato* which has no feminine correlate. The *mandata* was composed mostly of women, including a transwoman, Lana de Hollanda, whose presence at the seminar Marielle frequently referenced as part of this collective and diverse arrival: "E aí a gente chega naquela casa, não é Lana? E não chega sozinha," or "And then we get to that house, right, Lana? And we don't arrive alone."

In this section, our remarks about the temporal, pragmatic, and grammatical strategies marshaled by Marielle point to her challenge to taken-for-granted indexical relations in Brazilian politics. As we discuss in the next section, while mainstream officials in Rio and Brazil have engaged in singling out a white, male, heterosexist, racist, and LGBTQ-phobic individuality and political community as the referents of politics, Marielle had long been working to unsettle the assumed temporal and indexical relations in the political field.

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3.5 "Não Serei Interrompida"

We continue our discussion by looking at how Marielle herself recast time during her brief stint in public leadership. Excerpt 3.3. is from her last speech in the city hall, on International Women's Day in Brazil, March 8, 2018, six days before her murder. During her address, Marielle was repeatedly interrupted by men. Given her sympathy for linguistic ideologies that rationalize male interruptions to women in conflictive contexts as attempts at domination (West & Zimmerman, 1983), Marielle not only displayed a metapragmatic awareness of the small insults under way, but also positioned the interruptions on the scale of gender inequality, economic redistribution, and the memory of the dictatorship in Brazil. Of note is how Marielle responded to her interruptions:

Excerpt 3.3 Marielle's Last Speech at the Câmara dos Vereadores, Rio de Janeiro, March 8, 2018

MARIELLE: inclusive nesse momento onde a democracia se coloca frágil, aonde se questiona se vai haver processo eleitoral ou não, aonde a gente vê todos os escândalos em relação ao parlamento (.) falar sobre as mulheres que lutam pela (.) outra forma de fazer política no processo democrático é fundamental (.) inclusive em tempos onde a justificativa da crise– ((um vereador coloca uma rosa no púlpito, e Marielle o cumprimenta enquanto é interrompida))
[tudo bom vereador?

COUNCILMAN: [feliz dia das mulheres=

MARIELLE: =obrigada (.) aonde a justifica– a justificativa da crise, a precarização, a dificuldade da vida das mulheres é apresentada, mas com muita dificuldade real(.) tempo da escola (.) aonde estão as vagas da creche apresentadas pelo gover– pelo prefeito Marcelo Crivella que iria ser (.) ampliada, aumentada? aonde que tão as educadoras e os educadores (.) que não foram chamados nos concursos? (1.2) como ficam as crianças nesse período de intervenção? (1.4) enfim– ((o vereador Italo Ciba se aproxima do púlpito, trazendo uma rosa)) [não vem me interromper agora né?

ITALO: [é rapidinho ((entrega uma rosa)) tô fazendo minha parte no seu dia=

MARIELLE: =mas homem fazendo homice (.) meu Deus do Céu (.) obrigada Italo=

ITALO: =Deus [te abençoe

MARIELLE: [amém brigada (.) brigada aos vereadores (.) como eu falei antes e falava na Fiocruz no dia de hoje (.) as rosas da resistência nascem do asfalto (.) a gente recebe rosa mas a gente vai tá com o punho cerrado também, falando do nosso lugar de vida e resistência con::tra (0.8) os mandos e desmandos que afetam nossas vidas né? ((aplausos e urros na plateia)) até porque não é uma questão do momento atual e:: vereador na (.) última semana em que eu falava sobre o processo de violência sofrido pelas mulheres no carnaval me questionava da onde eu tirava os dados apresentados (.) as mulheres quando saem às ruas na manifestação ↑do oito de março daqui a pouco na Candelária (.) fazem porque (.)

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Excerpt 3.3 (cont.)

entre 83 países, o Brasil é o sétimo mais violento (.) e aí volto a repetir (0.5) dados da Organização Muni- Mundial de Saúde (.) esse quadro segue piorando, aumentando 6,5 por cento no último ano, por di::a são 12 mulheres assassinadas no Brasil (.) o último dado que a gente tem do Estado do Rio de Janeiro figuram de [13 estupros por dia]

MAN IN AUDIENCE: [Viva Ustra!=] ((uma referência a Carlos Brilhante Ustra, um torturador na ditadura militar))

MARIELLE: =essa é (.) a relação (.) com a violência contra as mulheres ((ela foca a atenção ao autor do elogio ao torturador na plateia)) a gente tem um senhor que está defendendo a ditadura e falando alguma coisa contrária, é isso? eu peço que a presidência da casa, no caso de maiores manifestações que venham atrapalhar minha fala, assim proceda como a gente faz (.) quando a tribuna (.) interrompe qualquer vereador (.) não serei interrompida, mão aturo interrompimento dos vereadores dessa casa e não aturarei a interrupção de um cidadão que vem aqui e não SABE ouvir a posição de uma mulher ELEITA, presidente da comissão da mulher dessa casa ((aplausos da plateia))

MARIELLE: including at this time when democracy stands fragile, when we wonder if there will be elections or not, when we see all the scandals affecting the parliament, (.) to speak about women who fight for (.) another way of doing politics in democracy is fundamental (.) including at times when the justification of the crisis– ((a councilman places a rose on the podium, and Marielle greets him while being interrupted)) [how are you councilman?

COUNCILMAN: [happy women's day=

MARIELLE: =thank you (.) when the justifica– the justification, the precariousness, the hardship of women's life is presented, but with much real hardship(.) the schooling time (.) where are the daycare units promised by the gover– mayor Marcelo Crivella that would be (.) amplified, enhanced? where are the male and female educators (.) who weren't hired? (1.2) how will children fare in this time of federal intervention? (1.4) anyways– ((councilmember Italo Ciba approaches the pulpit, bringing a flower)) [you're not interrupting now, right?

ITALO: [it won't take long ((he hands her a flower)) I'm doing my part in your day=

MARIELLE: =but it's a man behaving as a man (.) my dear God (.) thank you Italo=

ITALO: =God [bless you

MARIELLE: [Amen thank you (.) thanks councilmembers (.) as I said before and I said at Fiocruz today (.) the roses of resistance blossom in the asphalt (.) we receive roses but we will fight with tight fists too, by speaking from our place of life and resistance aga::inst (0.8) the order and counter-orders affecting our lives, right? ((applause and roars in the audience)) actually this is not a question from today and:: a councilmember (.) last week when I spoke about the violence suffered by women in carnival was questioning me about the data I presented (.) women when they go out in the streets for protesting ↑like

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Excerpt 3.3 (cont.)

March eighth later in Candelária (.) they do so because (.) in 83 countries, Brazil is the seventh most violent (.) and I repeat (0.5) data from Muni- World's Health Organization (.) this picture is getting worse, growing 6.5 per cent last year, every da::y it's 12 women murdered in Brazil (.) the last data we have from the state of Rio de Janeiro point to
[13 rapes a day]

MAN IN AUDIENCE: [Go Ustra!=] ((a reference to Carlos Brilhante Ustra, a torturer in the military dictatorship))

MARIELLE: =this is (.) the relation (.) to the violence against women ((she stares at the man in the audience who shouted the torturer's name)) is there a gentleman who is defending the dictatorship and contradicting me? I ask that the presidency of this house, in this case of a manifestation that disturbs my speech, follow the ritual (.) when the tribune (.) interrupts any councilmember (.) I won't be interrupted, I won't stand any interruption from any councilmembers in this house and I won't stand the interruption of a citizen who comes here and does not KNOW how to listen to an ELECTED woman, and president of the women's commission in the house ((applauses from audience))

Studies of talk in interaction tend to treat interruption in conversation as an infringement on one's speaking rights (see Bilmes, 1997; Hutchby, 2008). While not every instance of interruption necessarily indexes symbolic domination or triggers conflict – for instance, interlocutors may be building the conversation with great involvement and effusiveness (Tannen, 1994) – we need to take into account the specificities of interaction, like its historical conditions, intertextual links, and power inequities, to appraise the effects of interruptions. Besides, it is fundamental to rely "on displayed participant orientation to interruption" to address what kinds of violations or mutual involvements are taking place (Bilmes, 1997, p. 507). Therefore, it is important to consider that this conversation was located in an institution made up of a majority of men, with a predominantly conservative profile. Further, Marielle was the only Black woman among the city councilmembers. Hence, her metapragmatic comments and orientation to overlaps in talk indicate her framing the interventions as interruptions, aimed at rescaling them onto the ground of struggle for economic redistribution and identity recognition (Fraser, 1995).

Sequentially, the three interruptions point to different ways in which Marielle reinscribed chronotopes (Bakhtin, 1981), images of space, time, and person, into political action. In the first interruption, Marielle is taken by

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surprise when a councilman approaches the tribune. Upon realizing that the councilman was bringing her a flower, she responds by simply making recourse to phatic and polite resources ("How are you councilman?," "Thank you"). However, at the second interruption, Marielle displays noticeable irritation. As we learned in our interviews with Marielle's friends, the ambience in the city council was markedly sexist and homophobic. Thus, the gesture of handing flowers to the few female councilmembers was not without the summoning of a sexist history. Simultaneously, the males' gestures carried an ironic ambivalence, as Marielle had been involved in argumentative clashes with conservatives in the house. On realizing that Italo Ciba was approaching the pulpit with a flower, Marielle immediately reacts: "You're not interrupting me now, right?" She then wittily frames the interruption in the field of sexism, "But it's a man behaving as a man." To his uttered Christian farewell, she responds with the terms of her own Catholic formation ("Amen"), and when Ciba departs, she rescales his gesture onto the field of gender struggle and economic redistribution: "The roses of resistance blossom in the asphalt (.) we receive roses but we will fight with tight fists too." Spiritedly, Marielle projects small and ambivalent interruptions from the space-time of interaction to the broader field of societal inequities.

While Marielle cites numbers of violence against women, a man from the audience interrupts her by cheering Carlos Brilhante Ustra, a colonel who tortured and killed several dissidents during the military regime. After invoking the terms of decorum in the city council, Marielle framed the interruption as invoking a dictatorial past against which her struggle had been opposed. Citing the terms of democracy and of women's struggles, she exclaims, "I won't be interrupted." As is the case with any performative utterance, "I won't be interrupted" exceeds the time and space of its pragmatic context (Butler, 1997), specifically exceeding the terms of conversational interruption. In Marielle's biography, her enunciations deliberately surpassed her own individual activity and present time, as was the case when she uttered, "My trajectory and my individual condition cannot be only an individual condition [for long before] this mandate of a year and a few months, other black women had paved the way, and others will have to come," in the debate in the Casa das Pretas, minutes before she was murdered. Indeed, Marielle's transtemporality would shape the movement of mourning and struggle that emerged from her death, as can be seen in the citation of "não serei interrompida," or "I won't be interrupted," within the "Marielle Franco's Stairs," in São Paulo (Figure 3.1), or in the slogan "Marielle não será interrompida," or "Marielle will not be interrupted," being wielded by an activist in a protest (Figure 3.2).

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Figure 3.1 Escadão Marielle Franco (Marielle Franco Stairs).

Figure 3.2 "Marielle não será interrompida (Marielle Will Not Be Interrupted)."

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3.6 "Marielle Vive"

The election of Marielle's staff members to Rio's parliament in 2018 and 2022, along with the election of other Black women to other houses of parliament, have been referred to as "germinação das sementes de Marielle," or the "germination of Marielle's seed." In the protests for a fair investigation, phrases like "Marielle is a seed," and "Marielle, present" point to a reconfiguration of temporality in the aftermath of her assassination. This is evident in the chant "Marielle is a seed," which had rapidly expanded in massive protests in Brazilian cities and social media. Figure 3.3 is a rendition of the chant in a cartoon published by Quinho the morning following her murder. It simultaneously indexes Marielle's multiplying action and precipitates the germination of her posthumous political influence. These chants are thus reflective of the ways in which Marielle's movement has given continuity to hope through language.

Marielle's friends and other progressives agree that Marielle iconized the racial and economic traits of a large portion of Brazil's population. Imani, Marielle's close friend and a member of her advisory board, told us: "Marielle carried on her body the marks of what ought to be said and how that should be said." Imani added that Marielle also indexed the vulnerability of non-whites to armed violence:

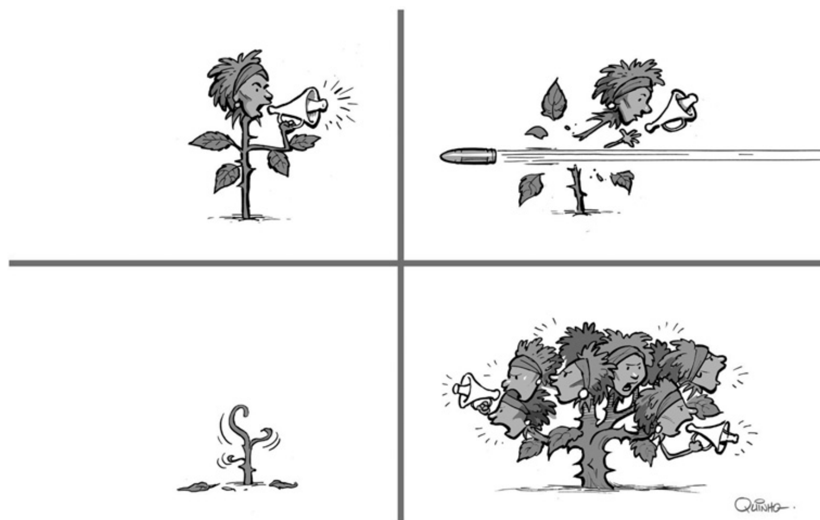

Figure 3.3 "Marielle é semente! (Marielle Is a Seed!)," by Quinho Cartum.

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Excerpt 3.4 Interview with Imani, Marielle's Advisor, Rio de Janeiro, September 29, 2018

isso que acontece com tantas pessoas nas favelas cariocas (.) não foi diferente com a Marielle que veio de uma favela carioca (.) ela:: só pôde ter talvez uma grande visibilidade de tudo de bom que ela fazia quando ela tombou (.) quando ela morreu, ela virou mais uma estatística nessa guerra que não é nossa (.) e que não é guerra, é genocídio, é:: quando ela tombou né? mas ela não tombou para acabar, tombou para virar semente

what happens to so many people in Rio's favelas (.) was no different with Marielle, who also came from a favela in Rio (.) she:: was only able to have a great visibility for the amazing things she did when she tumbled down (.) when she died, she became an additional number in the statistics of a war that is not ours (.) and that it's not war but genocide, yeah:: when she fell, right? but she didn't fall to disappear, she fell to become a seed

Note that Imani equates the tragic dimension of Marielle's biography with the precariousness felt by the Black and peripheral populations in Brazil. She then couches this equation in a temporal domain. In her mourning narrative, Imani says that "[Marielle] didn't fall to disappear, she fell to become a seed," and that Marielle "was only able to have a great visibility for the amazing things she did when she tumbled down." In other words, Marielle turned out to inhabit a time that is no longer the time of the living, but the epic time of heroes or martyrs. This extrapolation of Marielle's biological time and its embedding in the living present is a key instantiation of metaleptic temporality. The "fantastic" effect (Genette, 1980) of talking about Marielle in the present time is often referenced by activists. Talíria Petrone, a friend of Marielle who became a federal deputy in 2018 and was reelected in 2022, produced an interesting metalinguistic rationalization about the notion that "Marielle lives" in her reflection on Marielle's influence on the election of Black women and other minorities to the federal parliament:

Excerpt 3.5 Talíria Petrone, Interview for Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (PSOL), May 5, 2019

a figura dela aqui em Brasí::lia (.) se mostra cada vez mais potente, mais forte mais necessário, embora tenham matado seu corpo (.) quando a gente chega ali embaixo no plenário que é . . . expressão (.) do que é o Brasil colonial, é o fazendeiro, é o representante da banca::da da bala, que tem o mesmo motivo que esse fazendeiro

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Excerpt 3.5 (cont.)

(.) é o banqueiro e isso remete aos tempos da colonização né? (.) e acho que a bancada ((do PSOL)) na sua diversidade regional, na sua diversidade:: de cor, na sua diversidade:: de gênero . . . reflete um (.) enfrentamento (.) ao que é esse parlamento majoritário (.) e isso é Marielle (.) em muita medida sim (.) não porque Marielle vive:: porque pra mim não vive (.) lembrar que Marielle não vive é muito importante pra entender a gravidade do momento (.) Marielle foi assassinada e isso é a expressão de uma democracia jovem (.) incompleta e que retrocede, sabe? que expressa uma mudança de regime (.) mas as lutas que Marielle encampava tão aí expressas na diversidade da bancada do PSOL, no enfrentamento que a gente tem feito a esse governo que é a expressão do retrocesso democrático que tem saudade da ditadura que quer jogar no lixo a memória, a verdade e a justiça

her figure here in Brasi::lia (.) is increasingly powerful, stronger and more necessary, although they have killed her body (.) when we get down there in the plenary which is . . . the expression (.) of what colonial Brazil is, it's the farmer, the representative from the bullet cau::cus, who is related to this farmer (.) it's the banker, and this all dates back to the times of colonization, right? (.) and I think that the ((PSOL)) caucus in its regional diversity, in its diversity of color, in its diversity of gender . . . reflects a (.) confrontation (.) to this majority parliament (.) and this is Marielle (.) to a great extent yes (.) not because Marielle li::ves because for me she does not live (.) to remind ourselves that Marielle does not live is very important to understand the gravity of the moment (.) Marielle was murdered, and this is the expression of a young democracy (.) incomplete and backward, you know? that expresses a regime change (.) but the struggles that Marielle had been leading are expressed there in the diversity of the PSOL caucus, in the confrontation that we have done to this government that is the expression of the democratic setback, that has *saudade* ((nostalgia)) for the dictatorship, that wants to throw away memory, truth, and justice

Noteworthy is Talíria's use of the present tense to explain that the diversification of the PSOL caucus "é" ("is") Marielle. Although she hastened to remind us that Marielle "does not live" biologically, Talíria invokes metaleptic temporality to emphasize that Marielle is nevertheless "increasingly powerful, stronger and more necessary" in Brasília. Talíria adds that the current racial, regional, and gendered diversity of the PSOL caucus stands in contradistinction to the backward time of the conservative caucuses, who are "the expression of the democratic setback," who express *saudade*, or nostalgia, for the dictatorship, who reiterate the "times of colonization."

Other interviewees also invoked this clash between the present of transformation and the past of colonialism. Luanda, a middle-class human rights activist and friend of Marielle, says that Marielle "pointed to change, to transformation." In 2008, Luanda participated with Marielle in the writing of

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the bill "Funk é cultura" or "Funk music is culture," which aimed at decriminalizing funk and recognizing it as a cultural expression. In Luanda's words, she was "novel:" she took the "funkeiros" youth to the state parliament's plenary, "A place that does not normally welcome them as audiences, much less as leaders." Moreover, Luanda noted, Marielle "points to another temporality because she is radically different from the oligarchy that has always constituted Brazilian politics. This oligarchy is white, macho-oriented, heteronormative, and Marielle defied all that." The mourners' metaleptic chanting of "Marielle, presente" has meant that, notwithstanding her premature death, Marielle's cause is still ongoing. As Talíria and Luanda put it, the present time means an openness to the disenfranchised from the Brazilian economic wealth – the ninth world's GDP and yet one of the most unequal economies. As Marielle herself wrote in her master's dissertation, neoliberal policies in Brazil aimed at the poor have increasingly moved away from a redistributive state and towards a "penal and police state" (Franco, M., 2014).

The metaleptic time of mourning points to the present and the future as simultaneously utopic and with concrete aspirations: Talíria mentions the accomplished diversity of the PSOL caucus, and Luanda speaks of the youths from the favelas, who in 2008 were brought by Marielle to Rio's state parliament to attend a voting session. In addition to seeking to redress colonial iterations of the past like the penal state (Wacquant, 2009), the metaleptic time of hope is also gregarious and semiotically propelling. Imani articulates this collective and metapragmatic dimension of the time of hope in spiritual terms:

Excerpt 3.6 Interview with Imani, Marielle's Advisor, Rio de Janeiro, September 29, 2018

IMANI: para mim é muito difícil falar sobre Marielle no passado porque eu sinto ela aqui (.) o tempo todo (.) eu sinto ela pre::sente apesar de inclusive espiritualmente eu acho que a gente tem que parar de falar "Marielle presente!" porque né? (.) [ela precisa ir, ela precisa descansar]
DANIEL: [claro, claro (.) precisa (.) Luanda falou]
IMANI: mas é muito difícil para mim, porque ela tá literalmente muito em nós:: né? ela se fez corpo, ela se fez presença, se fez comunhão, ela tá contando o mundo

IMANI: it's very hard for me to talk about Marielle in the past because I feel her here (.) all the time (.) I feel her pre::sent even if in fact spiritually I think we should stop saying "Marielle present," because (.)
[she must go, she needs to rest.
DANIEL: [right, right (.) she must (.) Luanda said]
IMANI: but it's very difficult for me because she is literally very much among us, right? she made herself body, she made herself presence, she made herself communion, she tells the world

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The notion that Marielle "literally . . . made herself body, . . . made herself communion" is especially significant in that both Marielle and Imani had their initial political formation in the base movements of the Catholic Church. As is the case with different modern secular formations (Mahmood, 2005), the secularism of the activism of Imani, Marielle, and other militants in Rio is also predicated in religious terms. For Imani, in addition to this spiritually corporeal and gregarious dimension, the metaleptic temporality of the mourning over Marielle is also sociolinguistic: "She tells the world," and thereby offers a lexicon to debate current problems.

3.7 Conclusion

The work of mourning has led these activists, many of whom now occupy parliamentary spaces, to realize that Marielle and her activist priorities are now materializing in a sprawling political action. Talíria, for example, says that "the majority of Brazilian women have Marielle's face," and adds that most mothers of people who are victimized by violence in Brazil "are women like Marielle." Hence, the key to transforming this suffering is "the occupation of spaces of power," along the lines of the hope taught by Marielle, "in collective and subversive ways." In spite of her grief, Talíria stated that the "result [of her friend's assassination] was the opposite of those who wanted to silence Marielle;" the murder "stoked a sense of urgency that led to the biggest uprising of Black women in occupying all spaces in Brazil." Indeed, as the Instituto Marielle Franco notes in a study of Black women in politics, "Marielle Franco's election in 2016 . . . became a symbol of the occupation of politics by Black women, peripheral, favela, and LGBTQIA+ populations. Her assassination influenced a historic increase of candidacies of Black women, who have been considered Marielle's seeds" (Instituto Marielle Franco, 2021, p. 16). Marielle's spectral political presence is still felt today in the Brazilian social landscape, including through her "seeds" in institutional politics. Some examples of these seeds include three of her parliamentary aides being Black women who have since been elected to the state parliament in Rio de Janeiro – Renata Souza, Monica Francisco, and Danielle Monteiro – in addition to other Black and trans women who have been elected to other houses, including the federal chamber.[3] Marielle has

[3] In October 2022, Talíria Petrone was reelected for the federal chamber, and Renata Souza and Danielle Monteiro for Rio's state legislature. While Marielle's former aide Monica Francisco was not reelected, the number of Black women elected to Brazilian legislative houses has significantly increased since Marielle's murder. In 2022, Brazil had the highest number of Black women elected to the federal parliament (Cassela, 2022), as 91 out of 513 seats were occupied by Black women, including Erika Hilton, a trans Black woman from São Paulo who self-identifies as a seed of Marielle Franco.

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thus been a crucial metaleptic figure for contemporary Brazil – as one of our interlocutors told us, she survives and narrates the present, even if posthumously and vicariously. Thus, we can make the case that, not only metaleptically, but also practically, Marielle is *presente*, in contemporary Brazilian politics but also beyond, as an icon of hope.

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4 The Enregisterment of Hope

Na escuridão da noite
meu corpo igual,
bóia lágrimas, oceânico,
crivando buscas
cravando sonhos
aquilombando esperanças
na escuridão da noite.

Conceição Evaristo, "Meu Corpo Igual."[1]

4.1 Take *Once* Daily

There is an urban legend in which a man overdoses and dies from his prescription medication, having misread the instruction on the label, "take once daily." According to the story, the man speaks Spanish and, lacking proficiency in English, reads "once" as the Spanish word for eleven and proceeds to take not just one pill a day but eleven. The story, being an urban legend, likely has no basis in truth, of course, and for a number of reasons. Most obviously, if the man were to not know what "once" was in English, he likely would not know the meanings of the adjacent words, "take" and "daily." Besides, one need not be a pharmacist to infer that eleven pills a day is an unrealistic dosage. This anecdote may seem at first glance irrelevant in a book about language and hope in the Brazilian context, not least because such a misreading could not have occurred if it were a speaker of Portuguese, where eleven is *onze*. Yet, the incident, even if fictional, is a reminder that in the real world, language can be for some individuals or communities a matter of life or death.

The precarity of life with respect to language was evidenced globally through the 2020 murder of George Floyd by then Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin, which sparked a wave of protests throughout the United States and around the world. In a tragic moment of recurring

[1] "In the darkness of the night / my equal body / floats tears, oceanlike, / sieving searches / nailing dreams / quilombo-gathering hopes / in the darkness of the night." Conceição Evaristo, "My Equal Body."

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anti-Black hate, criminalization, and dehumanization by law enforcement, Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for several moments in an effort to detain him until Floyd was dead. When questioned for being under the influence, Floyd noted that "I ain't do no drugs." Chauvin would later claim he thought Floyd said "I ate too many drugs." One might be tempted to argue that Floyd's use of double negation, a common feature in African American English (AAE), rendered the possibility for Chauvin to misinterpret what he was saying in the moments before his death. Floyd's fate, in this regard, is somewhat evocative of Rosa's (2016) concept of "languagelessness." Distinct from ideologies of language standardization, which merely "stigmatize particular linguistic practice perceived as deviating from perspective norms" languagelessness describes the language-ideological positions that "call into question linguistic competence – and, by extension, legitimate personhood – altogether" of racialized populations (p. 163). In Floyd's case, it is not that his use of AAE rendered him illegitimate and thus disposable by law enforcement; rather, Chauvin attempted to suggest that Floyd's usage of AAE produced a legitimate misinterpretation and a scenario in which a drug-induced suspect had to be forcibly restrained. Of course, the point would be moot, as it turned out Chauvin was in fact fabricating the misinterpretation. Indeed, one can't help but draw comparisons to the 2014 murder of Eric Garner, who declared "I can't breathe" in an audible manner while being held in a chokehold by then New York Police Deparment police officer Daniel Pantaleo. In Garner's case, the usage of a pathologized version of language was not broached as a contributor to his demise, and in both cases, how they spoke or what they spoke was not able to save their lives.

If language can be for some a matter of life or death, is it possible, then, to speak of hope as a phenomenon of enregisterment – that is, as a phenomenon intertwined with the historical binding of communicative forms to their indexical values (e.g., images of person, social organization, social time and social space)? Chauvin, after all, tried to claim that a mere mistranslation in his mind of Floyd's speech was the culprit, not the sheer dehumanization of Black life. Could we propose, then, that the enregisterment of certain speech styles can produce for those from the peripheries an opportunity for hope? This chapter offers a treatment of hope as enregisterment through an extended engagement with *papo reto*, or "straight talk," an emergent register that in favelas has been instrumental in recasting convoluted bureaucratic language in a manner that is legible to those who have not had access to extensive formal education and acculturation to mainstream political communicative conventions, which have historically been deployed to exacerbate racial and socioeconomic inequities in Brazil (see Roth-Gordon, 2017). We analyze instances in which activists have located spaces for the *papo reto* activist register in various spaces, including the official political discursive realm, disrupting a range of exclusionary language

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ideologies. The chapter will also draw on other empirical materials that showcase further pragmatic operations of the *papo reto* activist register in the participation frameworks we have ethnographically observed: directness, suspension of face concerns, referential practice of singling out objects of discourse related to racial and economic inequality, and indexically valued tropism (i.e., production of analogues across register repertoires, cf. Agha, 2015). As we shall see, the *papo reto* activist register has emerged as a particularly apt mode of challenging racism and other modes of systemic inequities in Brazil and can thus be viewed as an important linguistic resource for the enactment of hope.

4.2 *Papo Reto* Activist Register

As it has been enregistered and appropriated in activist circles of Rio's favelas, *papo reto* is recognized as a speech style in defiance of socioeconomic inequities, and as a contextual register it may be deployed as a signal of liminality and interactional conflict. In Portuguese, the slang phrase *papo reto* translates into English roughly as "straight talk." In her preface to Claudia Giannotti's (2016) book about production of news by and for residents of peripheries, Renata Souza (2016), a member of Marielle's *mandata* and now a state deputy, offers a definition of *papo reto* that underlines the dimension of directness in *papo reto* activist register. Souza writes that the book "dá o 'papo reto' sobre a comunicação dos trabalhadores, dos favelados. Um papo reto, sem curva ou reticência, é aquele que forma e informa sem 'mimimi', que vai direto ao ponto de interesse: a luta pelo direito à vida e à voz" (it "gives the '*papo reto*' about the communication of workers in favelas. A *papo reto*, without curves or reticence, is that which forms and informs without victimization, which goes straight to the point of interest: the fight for the right to life and voice") (p. 14). Souza's succinct definition does the language-ideological work of assembling tropes (curves, reticence, form[ation], inform[ation], rights, life, voice) that are organized in at least two pragmatic clusters (referential practice and directness of mode) and bound together through linguistic ideology to express a recognizable register. For her, *papo reto* as a referential practice is both performative and constative (Austin, 1962), that is, it respectively "forms and informs." *Papo reto* thus invokes the "right to life and voice" of *faveladas/os* by being direct, that is, by iconically avoiding curves and reticence.

It is worth pointing that (in)directness of mode does not inhere in language but rather comes to be viewed as such vis-à-vis language-ideological work. Wierzbicka (1985) argues that "terms such as 'directness' or 'indirectness' are much too general, much too vague to be really safe in cross-cultural studies, unless the specific nature of a given cultural norm is spelled out" (p. 175). Silverstein (2010) goes so far as suggesting that we abandon directness and

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indirectness as theoretical categories, as both doctrines "are descriptive and theoretical dead-ends for comprehending cross-culturally how people use the semiotic resources of language" (p. 351). Our account of "directness" in *papo reto* activist discourse is not about looking for inherently grammatical features of directness but about spelling out a "cultural norm," as Wierzbicka (1985) suggests. After all, *reto* in Portuguese means "straight," or "nonoblique" as in *linha reta* or "straight line." Souza thus draws from the visual representation of a straight path and metapragmatically explains that *papo reto* is direct as it does not stray from the point of interest. Further, for many of our interlocutors, "o papo é reto" (talk is direct), as it referentially does not refrain from singling out economic, racial, and other societal inequities and does so through enregistered emblems of favela lifestyles, such as the centrality of Blackness, laughter, and informality (see Goldstein, 2013).

In the activist circles that operate at the periphery of Rio de Janeiro, as well as in other participant frameworks beyond Rio de Janeiro where the *papo reto* activist register is disseminated – including rap and funk music concerts, social movement meetings, political training courses for leaders and residents, and the growing parliamentary activity of people emerging from favelas – *papo reto* is an enregistered trope that indexes a speaker animator who is an activist or favela resident (or aligns with this role) and who often metadiscursively signals an attitude of defiance toward the normative speech register, legitimated by elite institutions, known as *norma culta*, or standardized Portuguese (Signorini, 2002; Faraco, 2008). As a register (Agha, 2007), that is, a set of recognizable features of discourse that, "by virtue of such recognition, become effective ways of indexing roles and relationships among sign-users in performance" (p. 80), *papo reto* is a composite of nonstandard phonolexical and syntactic constructions that pragmatically indexes identities and social relations belonging in the favelas. Like other registers and cultural styles from the favelas, it also travels to other varieties of Portuguese, and Marielle was especially skilled in combining characterological features of standardized "bureaucratic talk" and those of *papo reto*. This combination lays bare the value of *papo reto* as a metapragmatic framing in discourse. The phrase "*Vou te dar um papo reto*," or "I will give you a straightforward talk," indicates that one will render the conversation in the simplest and most direct way (Facina, 2009). When it is used as a metapragmatic framing within an interaction, *papo reto* thus translates terms of state bureaucracy or other commodified registers into more tangible and everyday tropes.

We should emphasize up front that the *papo reto* activist register has similarities with other enregistered formations of "straight talk," both inside and beyond Brazil, past and present. One of these other metadiscursive formations of straight talk include *dugri* speech commonly used by Sabras (Jews born in Israel). Katriel (1986) describes dugri as an "antistyle" contrary to "the

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passive spirituality of Diaspora Jews as well as the elevated rhetoric of the early Zionist visionaries" (p. 25). As Katriel (1986) argues, "[t]he Sabras sought to dissociate themselves from both of these images: neither prayers nor word-spun visions were to be their fare, but rather actions, fact-creating deeds" (p. 25). This being said, Dugri speech is broader than *papo reto* as the former is also an attribute of a person (e.g., "he is *dugri*," i.e., he is sincere); but with reference to the speech event, *dugri* talk and *papo reto* involve the same sense of assertiveness and sincerity, which challenge common expectations about face-work, in other words, they both involve norms of directness and sincerity that may threaten common concerns of politeness that "protect" the face of interactants (Katriel, 1986, p. 11). To a lesser degree, *papo reto* also has parallels with the *vertu* speech style enacted by the political activists in the French Revolution, used to authenticate "the new state and the groups that competed for its control" (Outram, 1997, p. 142). As Outram (1989) argues, the revolutionaries' forms of embodied political action – discourse, clothing, and bodily postures – were designed for "authenticity, simplicity and transparency to the gaze of others," and ostensibly counteracted the exclusionary embodied styles of the Ancién Regime, seen as indexing "artifice, display, and disguise" (p. 156). Marielle drew from these characteristics of assertiveness and contrast to convoluted speech that *papo reto* respectively shares with *dugri* talk and the French revolutionary speech styles. She was born in the favela and knew that upper-class registers may inhibit the poor from gaining access to material resources. She often framed bureaucratic talk as privileging groups from wealthier areas who have access to standardized Portuguese, university degrees, and other public resources. She wrote that the notion of "public" in hegemonic discourses about the favelas often has the "marks of (. . .) use of force and repression, especially by means of police action" (Franco, M., 2014, p. 14). For her, this view "reinforces the predominant belief of favelas and peripheries as locations of absence and deprivation" (p. 14). Instead, Marielle portrayed favelas as "locations of production (. . .) and potency, where residents, notwithstanding the reality of low investments by the State, have invented their diverse forms of regulating and resisting life" (p. 14).

Admittedly, the metadiscourse of *papo reto* has also been appropriated by the far right in Brazil, as Bolsonaro and his allies have often rationalized talking to the point without concern for politeness (see Silva, 2020). Indeed, as Susan Gal (2019) suggests, registers may act as graftings – interdiscursive processes whereby a register taps into recognizable pragmatic operations, repertoires and authority of competing registers, "implanting onto them ways of speaking that convey meanings opposed to the institution's values" (p. 450, see also Borba, 2022). While we have identified that the metapragmatic label *papo reto* is sometimes used by Bolsonarist politicians and activists to name their (or their leader's) public appearances – such as Gabriel Monteiro, a pro-Bolsonaro

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policeman, who hosts a series of interviews on YouTube called "Papo Reto com Gabriel Monteiro," or "Straight Talk with Gabriel Monteiro," – we are not concerned with these interdiscursive graftings in this project. While Monteiro's parodies of, and interdiscursive engagements with, favela speech activism are the kinds of moves that readily occur within processes of enregisterment, our interest here lies in describing a sociologically specific and semiotically distinctive register of *papo reto*, whose demographically locatable circuits of discourse authentication, training, and circulation specify both (*a*) the features (noted above) that make the register empirically identifiable (and performable by activists), and (*b*) the stereotypic indexical values that make performances of these features construable as acts of political resistance by those marginalized or oppressed in a country under democratic decline (see Agha, 2007, pp. 190–232; Borba, 2019a; Junge et al., 2021).

Ultimately, the *papo reto* activist register is associated with different yet interrelated pragmatic effects: it indexes belonging in or sympathy for *favelas*. When used in situations of interpersonal conflict, it may contextually suspend expectations of face and, through directness, reconfigure interactions to more participatory grounds. Its referential practice (Hanks, 1990) usually singles out objects of discourse related to racial or economic injustice, and the speaker is opposed to them. In its work of differentiation from upscale registers, it exhibits a "indexically valued tropism" (Agha, 2015, pp. 323–326), that is, at least some of its repertoire units may be perceived by users socialized in *papo reto* as a form of analogy or translation of tropes across phonolexical register repertoires. Further, in a participation framework signaled as *papo reto*, users recognize the co-occurrence of this style with other enregistered speech and semiotic styles for surviving racism and Brazil's dire economic inequality, hence *papo reto* is linked to stereotypical "semiotic values" (Agha, 2007, p. 186) for these users. These different pragmatic effects are grouped together as "the same thing, again" (Gal, 2019, p. 452) and as indexing coherent types of personae and social relations (Agha, 2007) – that is, as a *sociolinguistic register* – through enregisterment, that is, through a sociocultural process that includes (1) the socialization of register users into participation frameworks that relatively stabilize the register's denotational and indexical values and (2) the metapragmatic work of institutions and discourses that reflexively produce criteria, norms, and evaluations for its discursive organization and situate it in the stratified terrain of a society. Gal (2019) explains that enregisterment "is the assembling and conventionalization of register contrasts via a language-ideological process that orients the expectations and perceptions of participants" (p. 453). This chapter is thus invested in explaining the ideological work embedded in people's use and uptake of certain language forms and pragmatic moves as indexing a *papo reto* activist register. Further, it looks to some multiple modes through which those who identify with *papo reto* employ this

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dynamic semiotic resource in different arenas of political action toward the demand for hope.

To exemplify one of such forms of resisting violence and stigma through semiotic activity, we examine a video clip where the *papo reto* activist register produces important pragmatic effects. Shot in Morro do Adeus, one of twelve Alemão favelas, "AmarElo" is sung by Emicida, one of Brazil's leading rappers, along with Pablo Vittar, a drag queen singer, and Majur, a nonbinary trans Black singer. Written by Emicida, the song's lyrics "speak of hope, positivity, and overcoming – or bypassing – the hardships of life through faith in oneself" (Facina, 2021, p. 12). Released just months after Bolsonaro's inauguration in 2019, the clip rapidly became a symbol of resistance as it thematizes the "common experience for many Brazilians of living under threat" (Facina, 2021, p. 12). It counterposes despair and hopelessness – iconized, in the opening two minutes and 50 seconds, by a phone call from a depressed young man on the verge of suicide – to the work of hope and a sympathetic view of the peripheral condition. In "AmarElo," *papo reto* contextually emerges as a response to previous experiences of suffering. Below is a fragment of the song that may be characterized as a token of *papo reto* and that ends by referencing the register itself:

Excerpt 4.1 Lyrics of Emicida's "AmarElo" (2019)

Sem melodrama, busco grana	No melodrama, I'm after money
Isso é Hosana em curso	God's plan in sight
Capulanas, catanas	Capulanas, katanas
Buscar nirvana é o recurso	Nirvana is the goal
É um mundo cão	It's a hell of a world for us,
Pra nóiz perder não é opção, certo?	losing is not an option, right?
De onde o vento faz a curva	When the wind takes a turn and you least expect
Brota o papo reto	we'll find the truth

These verses display some of the key features of the *papo reto* activist register. First, metadiscursively, Emicida – who acts, in Goffman's (1981) terms, as speaker author, principal, and, alongside Majur and Pablo Vittar, animator – sings that "De onde o vento faz a curva, brota o papo reto." A literal translation of the verses would read: "*papo reto* flourishes where the wind bends/takes a turn." That is, the "direct" register of conflict resolution in favelas emerges in response to "curves" (i.e., hardship but also avoidance of sorting out problems).

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Second, at the lexical but also at the grammatical, prosodic, and deferential levels, the *papo reto* activist register tends to exhibit an indexical valued tropism (Agha, 2015) that works by producing (partial) analogues between semiotic items valued in favelas and those attributed to a purported "standard," such as politeness and circumlocution (often rationalized as "curves"). In this sense, Emicida's production team's translation of "brota o papo reto" or "*papo reto* emerges" as "we'll find the truth" points to this analogical tropism. To "speak the truth" or "to speak of reality," common phrases that repeatedly emerge from our fieldwork, generally amounts to producing analogues of lexical or other pragmatic units (such as politeness) from other registers into nonstandard varieties or locally valued speech forms of conduct. Thus, the Portuguese verses oppose *papo reto*'s pragmatic moves (such as being "direct" and informal) and repertoires to the wind's "bend," alongside a rationalization that *papo reto* is straightforward, without "roundabouts" or "melodrama." Third, the pronoun *nós* or "we" is graphed as "nóiz," thus combining the epenthetic vowel /i/, indexical of nonstandardized Portuguese, and a conspicuous graphic alternant /z/, as a further mark of peripheral identity. In short, Emicida's multimodal text relies on metapragmatic operations of *papo reto* activist register that often, but not always, co-occur: being direct; opposing "convoluted" forms of speech that deviate from the point of interest, especially through indexical analogues associated with peripheral speech; and indexing peripheral belonging, including through conspicuously using tropes of slang (Agha, 2015; Roth-Gordon, 2009) or other pragmatic forms associated with nonstandardized varieties and speech conduct. In other words, Emicida's verses "speak to the point" – they oppose criminalization and despair while valorizing a queer, trans, Black, and *favelada/o* ethos.

4.3 The Dynamics of Speaking and Silencing in the Favelas

As we discussed in Chapter 2, in Brazilian peripheries it is common that the armed management of everyday life is disputed by the police, drug traffickers, and, in some favelas, *milícias*. As indicated earlier, alongside an often conspicuously aggressive treatment of periphery residents, the police have had to accommodate their relations to the retail drug traffic in favelas, which has not only been one of confrontation, but also of "agreements and political exchanges" (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019, p. 531; Telles & Hirata, 2007). Between 2012 and 2016, Daniel came to understand the dynamics of silence and speech that had taken shape in the favelas. Being mindful of this dynamic is important because the *papo reto* activist register that we describe occurs when it is "safe" to speak. For a resident, talking about violence – with outsiders or even with neighbors – may be potentially dangerous, as they are

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constantly watched by both the police and drug traffickers. Our interlocutors are mostly human rights activists and artists who are somehow an exception to this rule. They are connected to broader networks that may offer them protection and legal aid. But even activists are not immune to scrutiny of (and violence from) the police and drug traffickers. Tatiana Lima (2021) reports that "the vulnerability of Rio de Janeiro human rights defenders, in their confrontation to urban and institutional violence, has reached a peak, especially after the assassination of councilwoman Marielle Franco" (n.p.). This background of tension has been studied by Palloma Menezes and colleagues (Menezes, 2015; Menezes & Corrêa, 2018; Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019). Based on fieldwork in two "pacified" favelas – Santa Marta and Cidade de Deus – Menezes explains that the dynamics of speech and silence during "pacification" was largely shaped by "investigation strategies" (Dewey, 1938, cited in Menezes, 2015). Experiencing a new dynamic of policing where the police would be permanently present and coexisting with the drug trade, residents resorted to investigative strategies for surviving the "minefield" – an expression that refers to "an imperative of constant anticipation in daily life in 'pacified' favelas" (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019, p. 542). These anticipations had the following features. First, they refer primarily to when and how to talk – for instance, when to avoid talking about the police or drug traffic. Second, anticipations involved producing rumors or "informal news" about a new scenario of policing, mapping changes in the territory, and seeking stability in a situation of uncertainty (Menezes, 2014). Third, anticipations relied on using technologies of surveillance at hand – for instance, to film a potential illegal police action and use the images as evidence for pressing charges. Machado da Silva and Menezes (2019) conclude that these anticipations, "contrary to Goffman's brilliant analyses, were not subject to the risk of 'losing face' (Goffman, 1967), but rather of losing one's own life" (p. 542). In other words, for Goffman, everyday face-to-face interactions involve managing the potential threat of harming the face of others and ourselves. And this is why we constantly seek to protect our (and our interlocutor's) face, for instance through polite discourse. In principle, for favela residents, an imminent threat in the "minefield" is losing not one's face but one's own life, since the police could in theory criminalize any resident's utterances as belonging to the drug trade – or the drug trade could frame any such resident as a "snitch."

The remaining case studies that we discuss come from interactions with individuals who have suffered or witnessed such embedding of one's utterances into adverse frameworks. Like Menezes's anticipatory strategies, *papo reto* activist register is also a communicative strategy for surviving "crossfire" and other inequities. Yet *papo reto*'s avoidance of violence differs from the pragmatics of anticipation. People often "dão um papo reto" or "give a straight

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talk" – that is, they are direct, suspend expectations of face, and/or translate affirmative tropes – when it is safe to confront the interlocutor. For example, in 2015, M.C. Smith, a funk singer born in Complexo do Alemão, told us that he had recently witnessed an aggressive police reprimand. A resident was barbecuing with neighbors on the sidewalk, with samba music playing loudly from his speakers. A police officer approached him, saying: "E aí, federal, se você não desligar essa porra, vou dar um tiro na sua caixa" or "Hey, *federal* [i.e., the resident], if you don't turn that shit off, I'm going to shoot your speaker." M.C. Smith responded to the policeman: "Por que ele não pode escutar a música dele? Em que situação estamos vivendo? Uma nova ditadura" Uma opressão só pros pobres?" or "Why can't he have fun listening to his music? What situation are we living in? In a new dictatorship? But a dictatorship only for the poor? An oppression only for the poor?"

M.C. Smith gave a *papo reto* to the policeman, that is, he used tropes associated with social justice – namely, the critique on the disproportionally aggressive police approach to *favelados* – alongside "blunt," nondeferential, and straightforward questions. These co-occurring features produce the impression of *papo reto* for those acquainted with this activist register. Yet reports of such confrontations with the police are rare. Indeed, M.C. Smith is a famous singer and has resources for self-protection that other residents lack. However, M.C. Smith's talk itself was criminalized in 2010. Interpreting that some of his lyrics as belonging to the subgenre *proibidão* – or forbidden funk, which spells out the dynamics of the "world of crime" – "incited crime," a judge ordered his arrest alongside other artists (Palombini, 2013). They remained in prison for fourteen days, until the Supreme Court accepted a petition for habeas corpus claiming that their arrest had violated free speech protections (Palombini, 2013). This empirical case suggests that, at the barbecue scene, M.C. Smith was in a more favored position than the harassed resident in giving a *papo reto*. If we look elsewhere, though, we can approach an understanding of the range of social functions produced by *papo reto*.

4.4 "A Língua que Tavam Tentando Me Impor"

To continue with our description of *papo reto*, we explore how Marielle, in a talk at Casa das Pretas, explained how the speech style could be deployed in unequal interactions to assertively demand access to language resources. She recalled a conflictive situation during her college education, when she and her colleague Luana were the only two Black Brazilians in the entire major of sociology at a private university. Marielle said that she engaged with *papo reto* to demand that her professor assign texts written in Portuguese for her class:

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Excerpt 4.2 Excerpt from Marielle's Speech at Casa das Pretas, March 14, 2018

na época eu arrumei uma briga com um professor porque tinham bibliografias em inglês. Óbvio que a conjuntura era diferente, a vivência era diferente, a imposição e o que estava em disputa ali também (.) não tinha uma nuvem negra perguntando quantos professores e professoras negras havia (. . .) enfim, a carta, o movimento que a gente fez, ainda nesse momento com relação à língua que tavam tentando me impor, e hoje quando eu te ouço falar Aline, eu tenho uma bolsa na Cultura Inglesa (. . .) há dois anos e poucos eu estou penando com o inglês e acho que a gente tem que ocupar e saber todos esses– o *feminist movement* (.) é– todos os termos e trabalhar e rascunhar no inglês mesmo pra ocupar esse espaço (.) não subverter a nossa cultura mas conseguir ocupar esse lugar.

at the time I got into a fight with a teacher because he had assigned a bibliography in English. Obviously the situation was different, the experience was different, the imposition and what was in dispute there too (.) there was not a dark cloud asking how many black teachers were there (. . .) anyway, the letter, the movement that we made, at that moment regarding the language they were trying to impose on me, and today when I hear you speak Aline, I have a scholarship at Cultura Inglesa ((an English course)) (. . .) I've been struggling for two years to learn English, and I think we have to occupy and know all these– the *feminist movement* ((in English)) (.) yeah– all the terms and to work and draft them in English really to occupy this space (.) I'm not saying we should subvert our culture but to manage to occupy this place.

Making recourse to *papo reto* in this context meant rescaling the default language of Brazilian academia from English into Portuguese (Silva & Signorini, 2021), so that underprivileged students like herself could access the debate. But note that the movement was not static, as Marielle adds that a decade later, she finally had access to education in English. However, in this second political moment, the very access to this commodified idiom became part of *papo reto*. As Marielle puts it, this linguistic resource may allow transnational alliances, which does not simply mean distinction but primarily collaborations that yield the occupation of other spaces.

Imani, a close friend of Marielle's, emphasizes the pragmatic value of *papo reto* as a form of translation. As she told us, the advisors were often irritated by the fact that Marielle would not cite in debates all the items from economic surveys her team produced: "She would go to a debate on economics, we would work hard to write a three-page survey, and Marielle would use only one paragraph. We were outraged." Imani adds, "And the amazing thing was that she spoke only a paragraph and was cheered." Imani's rationalization about

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Marielle's conversational performance is that she "connected with people; people saw themselves in Marielle, they felt they were participating." In other words, Marielle's *papo reto* did not only mean using nonstandard analogues to upscale register repertoires; nor did it simply mean the collaborative access to other linguistic resources such as English or the linguistic bureaucracy; it meant that all this could be performed by a Black, lesbian woman from the favela, who in performing these translations and collaborations exceeded her speech at a time when individuals like her do not normally occupy decision-making spaces. For Imani, "Marielle carried on her body the marks of what ought to be said and how that should be said."

M.C. Carol, a singer and songwriter of funk music, offered us rationalizations about the pragmatics of Marielle's (and Talíria Petrone's) *papo reto*. In an interview, she describes the impression she had of Marielle and Talíria in a 2018 meeting, when they tried to encourage her to enter politics. A resident of the favela Preventório, M.C. Carol had already been poetically embedding *papo reto* in her lyrics, translating matters such as the critique of Portuguese colonialism or male domination into registers accessible to favela youths. She told us that Marielle and Talíria defined their *papo reto* along these lines: "Cara, você tem que ir, você tem que bater o pé na porta," or "Dude, you have to go, you have to try kicking the door open." Here, *bater o pé na porta* (kicking the door open) means being assertive, straightforward, and determined, thus forcing one's way into the field of political domination. In relation to the style of *papo reto*, M.C. Carol recalls that Marielle said "eu chego com meu turbante, salto, você tem que entrar, a gente tem que ocupar," or "I arrive in the meeting with my headband and high heels, you've got to enter, we have to occupy." It could therefore be said that Marielle's recourse to *papo reto* had a fundamentally aesthetic dimension: embodied, direct, and most significantly, *directed* toward the inclusion of Black women and social progress.

4.5 "Ah, Você Tá Incomodado com Seu Privilégio?"

For Marielle, *papo reto* was far more than a resource for challenging the hegemony of English in institutional contexts. If we recall from our discussion of Marielle's case earlier in this book, she actively disturbed influential power structures in Rio de Janeiro for her defense of Black women, LGBTQI+ rights, economic redistribution, and especially her agenda on public security, which included tackling *milícias*. In short, Marielle's *papo reto* political style was a source of discontent for the White male majority of the political establishment (Silva & Lee, 2021; Khalil, Silva, & Lee, 2022). Her former aide and now state representative Renata Souza made the explicit association between Marielle's defiant linguistic style and her

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assassination. In her book *Cria da favela* or *Born in the Favela*, Souza (2020) writes that Marielle was killed for "raising her voice" (*erguer a voz*): "It is evident that by 'raising her voice' [talking back] – a phrase by bell hooks that symbolizes our transition from objects to political subjects – Marielle Franco challenged the power of the male white elite with ties to the Brazilian *milícias*" (p. 11). Souza thus describes *milícias*'s uptake of Marielle's use of *papo reto* activist register as contributing to her femicide. As the enregisterment of style is not a bounded and isolable pattern of semiotic activity but rather an "emergent patterning ... of co-ocurrent styles" (Agha, 2007, p. 186), Souza also connects Marielle's defiant speech to other Afrodiasporic stylistic models of language and personhood, such as bell hooks's (1989) notion of talking back as part of Black women's conversion from "objects to political subjects" (p. 15).

At the third Seminário Feminista at the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, an event we discussed in Chapter 3, Marielle reported to the participants a conflictive debate in which she reframed the interaction to *papo reto*. She had been invited to discuss city economics along with other councilmember, Leandro Lyra, at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro or the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro also known simply as PUC-Rio. In her speech at this decidedly upper-class space, Marielle told the audience that she had to "give a *papo reto*" to Lyra, a White male economist trained at Rio de Janeiro's elite Instituto Nacional de Matemática Pura e Aplicada (IMPA) graduate school of mathematics, who had refused to recognize the economic effects of Brazil's regressive taxation on the poor. Marielle's signaling that she would from that moment on use some features of *papo reto* as a counter to Lyra's technical economic talk indicates that *papo reto*, like most registers, is a "contextual register of speech" (Agha, 2015, p. 311). For a user, a fundamental metapragmatic knowledge about a register, in Agha's terms, is to know that usually that particular register is not used all the time; in the case of the register of slang, for instance, "to know a slang is to know that it is appropriate only on certain occasions. In this sense slang is a contextual register of speech, and, like every other register, effective competence in the register includes knowledge of when not to use it" (p. 311). Marielle's authoritative competence in *papo reto* therefore included a competence in deploying it when "necessary," in this case when her political adversary produced a metapragmatic attack (Jacquemet, 1994) by using characteriological tropes associated with "standard" political talk (such as parliamentary politeness, cordial racism, and avoidance of discourse topics potentially controversial for one's ideological position, such as "racial inequality" in Lyra's discourse). Here is Marielle's description of the contextual use of *papo reto*:

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Excerpt 4.3 Marielle’s Speech at the Third Seminário Feminista, IESP/UERJ, May 12, 2017

eu vim com debate das mulheres, o debate das empregadas domésticas, de quem é o trabalhador e a trabalhadora, aí apresentei (.) e aí quando ele foi falar, ele entrou num debate irônico (.) aí eu falei: “é fácil, né, Leandro, citei ele (.) é fácil ser homem branco é:: e tá na PUC e dizer que todo mundo é taxado de manei::ra igual (.) e não falar de toda sonegação (.) e não falar das grandes empresas,” enfim (.) fiz essa fala, na tranquilidade, no conteú::do (.) e aí ((Leandro em seguida falou)) “é:: porque já falaram até de homem branco,” aí eu tive que levantar literalmente (.) levantei na mesa, assim (.) falei, “falaram não, Leandro, quem falou fui eu,” é porque, ainda mais sendo vereador né? parece que você mantém assim- você tá xingando mas é assim: “excelência” ((ela fala sorrindo, para imitar o uso de honoríficos enquanto se xinga alguém na câmara)), não vai fazer ((esse papo convoluto)), galera, na boa, não vai, aí eu falei: “falaram não, eu tou na mesa, tou debatendo,” mas aí (.) a casta do direito, “você está interrompendo,” e eu falei: “estou interrompendo sim porque ele foi irônico e eu me permiti o direito de interromper,” porque eu tou do lado dele, porque ele não faz referência à pessoa: “Marielle fez uma referência a mim enquanto homem branco, eu não sou, eu sou sei lá” (.) eu falei: “por quê? isso é xingamento?,” não entendi, “ah, você tá incomodado com seu privilégio? tá assumindo teu problema da branquitude?”

I presented the women’s debate, the domestic workers’ debate, I explained who is the male and female worker (.) and then when he was speaking, he started an ironic debate (.) then I said: “it’s easy, isn’t it, Leandro? I quoted him (.) it’s easy to be a white man and yeah:: to be at PUC and say that everyone is taxed e::qually (.) without talking about all the tax evasion (.) and without talking about the big companies” anyway (.) I made that speech, with tranquility, with con::tent (.) ((and then Leandro said)) “we::ll someone spoke even about white man,” then I literally had to stand up (.) I stood up at the table, like this (.) I said, “someone spoke, no, Leandro, I’m the one who said it,” it seems like ((in parliament)) you keep- you have to curse like this: “your excellency” ((she mocks the use of honorifics when councilmembers are cursing others)), he’s not going to this ((convoluted talk)), folks, for good, he’s not, then I said, “someone spoke, no, I’m at the table, I’m debating,” but then (.) the law caste, “you’re interrupting,” then I replied: “I’m interrupting because he was ironic and I allowed myself the right to interrupt him,” because I’m next to him, why can’t he reference the person: “Marielle referenced me as a white man, which I’m not, I don’t know what I am” (.) I said, “why? Is that a curse?,” is that a slur? I don’t understand it, “oh, are you bothered by your privilege? are you assuming your problem of whiteness?”

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Marielle reports that, initially, she "made [the] speech with tranquility, with content." That is, her initial conversation was not in *papo reto*. Yet upon hearing Leandro's impersonal reference to her ("someone even spoke about white man"), Marielle decides to rescale her talk to the *papo reto* activist register. She first signals the public about her suspension of parliamentary deference: "Then I literally had to stand up, I stood up at the table, like this. I said, 'Someone spoke, no, Leandro, I'm the one who said it.'" Uncomfortable with Leandro's ideological work of making herself invisible, Marielle intentionally displays several layers of face suspension: she interrupts Leandro; she "literally [stands] up at the table"; and she deliberately avoids parliamentary politeness, namely, by refusing to use the honorific pronoun *Vossa excelência* (your excellency) – a politeness marker commonly used by councilmembers in their public address to fellow members. While explaining to the audience that councilmembers use *Vossa excelência* even when cursing other members, she reassured them that she would have not allowed Leandro protect himself in the guise of parliamentary politeness: "He's not going to do [this convoluted talk], folks, for good, he's not."

In addition to suspending face concerns, Marielle rescales Leandro's misrecognition of his own condition into the speech level of progressive identity politics. In her rationalization of the metapragmatic conflict, Marielle suggests that her appeal to *papo reto* meant denaturalizing Leandro Lyra's White, male, upper-class condition. She asks her adversarial colleague, "Why [are you bothered that I call you a white man]? Is that a slur? I don't understand it. Oh, are you bothered by your privilege? Are you assuming your problem of whiteness?" At this point, Marielle's rescaling of the interaction to *papo reto* means that she was confronting not just parliamentary politeness but also "cordial racism" (Turra & Venturi, 1995). As discussed in Chapter 2, *cordial racism* is a specific manifestation of racial domination in Brazil. To be racially cordial means to "downplay racial differences that might lead to conflict or disagreement" (Roth-Gordon, 2017, p. 3). Under cordial racism, race relations are brought into private or humorous spheres (Sales Jr., 2007), while speaking publicly about racism or racial inequality is forbidden. Thus, Marielle's comment that Leandro was appalled about her reference to his being a White man indicates that he perceived a violation of the requirement to remain racially "cordial." Through the *papo reto* activist register, she challenges this imperative to remain silent about racial domination; simultaneously, she brings to the surface Leandro's indexical attempt to speak with an unmarked voice, "from nowhere," which for her conceals "privilege" and further legitimizes inequality. Later in the debate she explains to her audience that "Leandro is a PhD student in mathematical economics at IMPA, but he reads economic data without reading the reality." Significantly, Marielle adds that alongside his unproblematizing of whiteness, the refusal to *papo reto* undergirds the modus

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operandi of Leandro's caucus in the city council, which has supported Bolsonaro, known for his open defense of white supremacy. In Marielle's words: "[it's] a modus operandi that is proper to whiteness, that doesn't relay the *papo reto*, that won't sort out the questions and the polemics."

4.6 *Fogos Virtual*

We now examine a typical metapragmatic move in the *papo reto* activist register: the production of partial lexicogrammatical analogues across registers (Agha, 2015). We explored earlier the case of M.C. Smith questioning a police officer in *papo reto* by rendering human rights discourses into blunt, direct questions with wording that indexes enregistered forms from the favela. Marielle, in confronting Leandro Lyra, somewhat similarly refused to abide by the metapragmatic norm of "cordial racism" and instead invoked a confrontational stance and a lexical repertoire associated with racial justice. It might be said that M.C. Smith and Marielle both engaged with "lexicogrammatical tropism across register boundaries" (Agha, 2015, p. 320) by specifically rewording units from repertoires of other registers and metapragmatic stances (such as being polite or remaining silent in the face of societal/racial injustices) into lexicogrammatical semiotic forms recognized as belonging in *papo reto*. Here, we draw from a 2015 interview with Mariluce Mariá and Kleber Souza, partners from Complexo do Alemão who have become recognized in the neighborhood and beyond (see Maia, 2017; Silva & Maia, 2022). Their activism includes a remarkable ability to mobilize residents through digital media. They use digital communication technologies to monitor police wrongdoing and to map violence. During the interview in 2015, they called their social media posts informing residents about gunshots *fogos virtual*, or virtual rockets. As a further mark of their *papo reto* stance, the name of their strategy was relayed to us in the nonstandard: *fogos virtual*. Unlike standard Portuguese, which marks number agreement through plural inflexion of all lexemes in the noun phrase (e.g., *fogo-s virtuai-s*), nonstandard Portuguese nonredundantly inflects only the first element with the plural morpheme /-s/ (*fogo-s*) while omitting it in subsequent lexemes /-Ø/ (*virtual*-ø). As they explained to us, virtual rockets are a strategy of communicating the state of security to residents, embracing a trope whose basis is a pun on the rockets that used to be set off by drug traffickers to signal that the police were entering the favela.[2]

[2] In 2015, raids were less common, as the police were permanently patrolling in the territory. Yet more recently, under Claudio Castro, a Bolsonarist leading the executive of Rio de Janeiro, violent raids have become more frequent. As we discussed in Chapter 2, under their leadership, the Rio de Janeiro police have conducted some of their deadliest raids in history.

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As virtual rockets are resources for protecting residents from crossfire, they bear a family resemblance to *papo reto*. Virtual rockets are as cleverly concise as *papo reto*: their point of interest is warning residents about an immanent moment of insecurity. An interaction between Kleber Souza and Mariluce Mariá describing the phenomenon of "*fogos virtual*" presents a metapragmatic explanation of their *papo reto* activist discourse:

Excerpt 4.4 Mariluce Mariá and Kleber Souza Talking at the Museu Nacional de Antropologia (UFRJ) about *fogos virtual*, May 14, 2015

MARILUCE MARIÁ: porque a gente virou fogos virtual, assim, "tá dando tiro aqui, melhor subir por outro luga::r," "olha, não sobe por aqui que tá dando tiro," "cuidado com não sei ao::nde" é:: sempre tinha que dar uma opção para pessoa voltar pra casa, nossa preocupação era mais essa (.) e aí começou, depois da Copa, então ((escalou))

((7 min 5 sec. minutes omitted))

KLEBER SOUZA: então, o que a gente faz? a gente consegue alcançar as pessoas tanto dentro da favela como de fora da favela, por que que a gente consegue? porque a gente usou a linguagem que as pessoas entendem (.) a gente busco::u uma linguagem que está ao alcance- não adianta eu falar lá que, ah:: "nós vamos fazer a desmilitarização da polícia," ninguém vai <u>entender nada</u>, entendeu? a gente sabe da importância desse tema, sabe da importância do conhecimento teórico, mas lá as pessoas não têm esse conhecimento, muitas pessoas são desprovidas e eu sei disso (.) têm dificuldade de fala, dificuldade de escrita, dificuldade de entender a linguagem até, às vezes, que vem em algumas páginas que a gente sabe que quer ajudar o Alemão lá e eu não critico (.) e por que a gente se sobressai sobre essas páginas tudo? porque a gente quer falar aquilo que é:: o Gregório, lá do bar, <u>entenda</u>, que nunca foi numa escola, ele tá no nosso XXXX [plataforma de mídia social] o tempo todo, o cara comprou um <u>celular</u> pra ficar no <u>nosso XXXX [plataforma de mídia social],</u> é inacreditável um <u>negócio desse,</u> é você ser parado na rua e a pessoa falar assim, "olha, sabe aquele dia que você postou que tava tendo tiro lá na Praça do Cruzeiro? <u>eu não peguei a Kombi, vim andando pelo beco, entendeu, mas eu não peguei a Kombi</u> e a minha colega falou que passou o maior perrengue lá na (.) Praça do Cruzeiro, a Kombi parou, não teve como subir, foi um tiroteio imenso, tal, tal, tal" [. . .] e as pessoas vinham, sabe? fazendo os mais diversos tipos de pedidos inbox pra gente como se a gente fosse (.) <u>uma voz que ela não tem,</u> a gente tem pedido aqui desde (.) remédio pra dor de cabeça até uma casa (.) no XXXX [plataforma de mídia social]

MARILUCE MARIÁ: e já conseguimos casa também ((risos na sala)) a gente só não consegue pra gente porque a gente não pede pra gente, mas já conseguimos já, já sim

KLEBER SOUZA: é, é uma história muito forte essa história, me emociona bastante

MARILUCE MARIÁ: lembra aquele barraquinho de madeira que tem lá nas Palmeiras? Então, a pessoa foi e apadrinhou a meni::na (.) a Alessandra, e (.) queria dar a casa pra família dela morar [. . .]

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Excerpt 4.4 (cont.)

KLEBER SOUZA: nós conseguimos, para você ter uma ideia, com esse XXXX [plataforma de mídia social] (.) chegar até Stanford, nós conseguimos chegar é:: nos principais jornais do mundo, todos os correspondentes, todos os correspondentes dos jornais do mundo, a gente não fala inglês, não escreve inglês, os caras se comunicam com a gente pelo:: pelo Google Tradutor, a gente fala pra eles, correspondentes de todos os jornais do mundo mesmo, nós estamos até com um agora do Japão, que veio, teve ontem lá na favela, vai voltar, já teve várias vezes já na favela com a gente, ele falou que não tem confiança de entrar em favela nenhuma do Rio de Janeiro, só entra com a gente lá do Complexo do Alemão, o Tafumi, é:: e agora a gente conseguiu muitas e muitas e muitas coisas, acho que, talvez, se a gente fosse presidente do Brasil a gente não conseguiria (.) pra você ter ideia (.) um diretor da Casas-Lojas Americanas entrou em contato com a gente uma vez, sem se identificar, e falou, "não conheço vocês, não sei quem vocês são, para mim, não me importa, mas o que eu vejo aí é verdade, eu quero doar para aí 500 cestas de natal"

MARILUCE MARIÁ: we became virtual rockets, I mean, "there's shootings here, you'd better take another rou::te!," "look, don't come up here, there's shooting," "careful about that street!" yeah:: we had to always give options for the person to go back home, our main concern was this (.) then, after the World Cup ((it escalated))

((7 min 5 sec. minutes omitted))

KLEBER SOUZA: so, what do we do? we can reach people both inside the favela and outside, why do we get to do it? because we used the language that people understand (.) we tried to use a language within people's reach- it's no use saying, "we are going to demilitarize the police," no one will understand it, you see? we know the importance of this theme, we know the importance of theoretical knowledge, but people there don't have this knowledge, many people are deprived, and I know this (.) they have difficulty in speaking, difficulty in writing, and even difficulty in understanding the language of some webpages that we know want to help the Alemão, and I don't criticize them (.) and how do we get to differentiate ourselves? because we go on saying in a way that li::ke Gregório from the bar, who's never been to school, understands it, he's on our XXXX [social media platform] all the time, he purchased a smart phone to be on our XXXX [social media platform], it's unbelievable, sometimes you're stopped on the street by someone who says, "hey, do you remember that day that you were posting about the shootings at Praça do Cruzeiro? I didn't take the van, I came walking through the alleys, you know, I didn't take the van and my friend said that it was very messy at the (.) Praça do Cruzeiro, the van stopped, there was no way go get on it, then there was the shooting and such" [. . .] so a lot of people came, you know? They were making requests to us as if we had (.) a voice that we actually don't have, some people ask us everything from (.) a headache pill to a house (.) on XXXX [social media platform]

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Excerpt 4.4 (cont.)

MARILUCE MARIÁ: but we actually once got a house ((laughter in the room)) we didn't get one for ourselves because we don't ask for us, but we've got one, yes

KLEBER SOUZA: yes, it's a beautiful and moving story

MARILUCE MARIÁ: do you remember that wooden shack in Palmeiras? Someone sponsored the gir::l, Alessandra, and (.) wanted to give her family a house [. . .]

KLEBER SOUZA: just so you have an idea, with this XXXX [social media platform] (.) we were able to reach Stanford, we could reach hmm::: the main newspapers in the world, all correspondents, all correspondents from the newspapers in the world, we don't speak English, we don't write in English, the dudes talk to us through hmm::: Google Translator, we speak with them, correspondents from all the newspapers in the world, we have one now from Japan, who came, he was yesterday in the favela, and he's coming back, he's been many times with us in the favela, he said he's scared of going to any favela in Rio de Janeiro, but he enters the Complexo do Alemão with us, his name is Tafumi, hmm::: and we've got so many and many things that we think that if we were perhaps president of Brazil we wouldn't get them (.) just so you know, once a director from Casas-Lojas Americanas once got in touch with us, without identifying himself, and said: "I don't know you, but it doesn't matter, I see that you speak the truth, I want to donate these 500 family food baskets"

At least three aspects of their calibration of *papo reto* through indexically valued tropism are worth unpacking in this excerpt. First, Kleber suggests that a key metapragmatic strategy in *fogos virtual* is the "use of a language within people's reach." Following this comment, he adds that other social media profiles have not achieved the reach of virtual rockets because Complexo do Alemão residents have, in his terms, "difficulty in writing . . . in reading [and] in understanding the language of some webpages that we know want to help the Alemão." Note that Kleber invokes one of the terms identified by Silverstein (1996) in his characterization of the ideology of monoglot standard – the assumption that users of nonstandard varieties would not do the best denotational work of pairing word and referent, hence their cognitive inferiority – but at the same time he says that he "[doesn't] criticize [residents] for that." Pragmatically, to facilitate the dissemination of virtual rockets, Mariluce and Kleber therefore produce analogues across register repertoires. Thus, they are able to say "it's no use saying, 'we are going to demilitarize the police,' no one will understand it, you see?" That is, virtual rockets partially work through calibrating messages within nonstandard lexicogrammatical analogues, "within people's reach." We should add that their calibration of messages from one register to another goes beyond the mere transfer of

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denotational content originally enunciated in the standard into its indexical "equivalent" in *papo reto*. This indexically valued tropism is "transformative" in the sense that it builds on indexicality's layer of entailment (Silverstein, 2003), that is, performativity: the transference of language from merely referential to the productive and ontological. Silverstein says that translating stands for "inherently transforming . . . cultural material in the source text that has indexically entailing potential realized in context" (p. 95). Thus, Mariluce and Kleber calibrate their *papo reto* activist discourse in such a way that "Gregório at the bar" understands it – and changes his conduct (Kleber says that "Gregório purchased a smart phone to be on [their] XXXX [social media platform]"). Other entailing/performative effects of *papo reto* are exemplified here as well: some people reported being protected from crossfire by reading their messages on social media; one person was given a house, and 500 families were helped with food baskets because of their mediation work; the couple made their translating practice reach international newspapers and even Stanford University, where Mariluce talked about her social work (see Souza, M., 2014).

Second, their translation activity on social media evidences the fundamental aspect of relaying (Gal, 2018) in enregisterment. As Gal explains it, "a register acts as a 'relay,' triggering uptakes across arenas recognized by participants as institutionally distinct" (p. 12). As registers exist in circulation, relaying is crucial to their growing or shrinking across semiotic encounters (Agha, 2007). In terms of Kleber and Mariluce's ethnopragmatics, the efficacy of *papo reto* is directly dependent on multiple uptakes, each indexing a particular arena of social action. For instance, in line with *papo reto*'s major association with protection from violence, residents' uptake of virtual rockets helps them navigate Complexo do Alemão under safer conditions. Alongside the cultural understanding that *papo reto* is a language resource for fixing long-standing inequities, the uptake of institutional actors like Lojas Americanas, a large department store in Brazil, may entail aid to residents. Further, the uptake of international news correspondents and universities facilitates the relaying of the *papo reto* activist register beyond Brazil. In this arena of circulation, *papo reto* activist register grows as an enregistered emblem of protection from crossfire, redress for necessity, and recognition of ethical and affective dispositions of *faveladas/os*.

Third, this interaction signals a diachrony. In the conversation turns, sequentially, Marluce says that they *became* virtual rockets; Mariluce and Kleber both point to pragmatic effects that have *emerged* from their communicative practice in social media; Kleber comments on the *growing* audience of their *papo reto* – both in the neighborhood and in global arenas. That is, they are not speaking of a static feature of their discourse – an already existing and fixed register – but of a process of becoming, more specifically the ongoing process

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of enregistering *papo reto* as a particular association of semiotic values with signs (Agha, 2007, p. 80). The becoming of their discourse into an authoritative arena of *papo reto* becomes all the more evident in Kleber's comment on voice: "So a lot of people were doing requests to us as if we had a voice that we actually don't have." *Voice* here, we might say, figures to stand for authority and communicative reach. Kleber seemingly doubts that their *papo reto* has such an authoritative pragmatic efficacy – which would otherwise allow them to meet people's demands with "everything, from a headache pill to a house" – but Mariluce immediately repairs his comment by joyfully saying that, indeed, they "actually once got a house" (to which everyone in the room responds with laughter).

4.7 Conclusion

The *papo reto* activist register, we might say, has been undergoing the process of enregisterment toward meaningful social change and stands for, by extension, a compelling instance of the *enregisterment of hope*. In this chapter, in particular, we have described the *papo reto* activist register as an assemblage of metapragmatic operations and distinctive pragmatic effects grouped together as a "register" – that is, "a repertoire of performable signs linked to stereotypic pragmatic effects by a sociocultural process of enregisterment" (Agha, 2007, p. 80). It has come to be recognized in social circles in Brazil as a type of talk from the peripheries that performs different yet interrelated operations: it may be deployed as a metapragmatic marker of liminality through which the speaker announces that the talk will be rescaled into a "direct" frame. Contextually, it entails suspension of face concerns and recourse to a speech level that displays alignment with favela lifestyles. Its favored referential practice is about singling out objects of discourse relating to racial, economic, and other societal inequities. As a register of slang, it often exhibits cross-repertoire tropism through lexicogrammatical analogues recognized as nonstandard or as breaking from a metapragmatic habitus associated with the upper classes. Of course, as we saw in the case studies, a speaker does not necessarily need to perform all these pragmatic operations to produce *papo reto* activist discourse. Ultimately, though, its utterances exhibit a co-occurrence style with other enregistered speech forms and semiotic practices in Black activist circles in Rio de Janeiro and other cities in Brazil, and thus *papo reto* constitutes an enregistered style of enacting hope for people acquainted with this register and potentially beyond these participation frameworks.

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5 Scaling Hope

> . . . En aquel Imperio, el Arte de la Cartografía logró tal Perfección que el mapa de una sola Provincia ocupaba toda una Ciudad, y el mapa del Imperio, toda una Provincia. Con el tiempo, estos Mapas Desmesurados no satisficieron y los Colegios de Cartógrafos levantaron un Mapa del Imperio, que tenía el tamaño del Imperio y coincidía puntualmente con él. Menos Adictas al Estudio de la Cartografía, las Generaciones Siguientes entendieron que ese dilatado Mapa era Inútil y no sin Impiedad lo entregaron a las Inclemencias del Sol y los Inviernos. En los desiertos del Oeste perduran despedazadas Ruinas del Mapa, habitadas por Animales y por Mendigos; en todo el País no hay otra reliquia de las Disciplinas Geográficas.
>
> Jorge Luis Borges, "Del rigor en la ciencia" (1946)[1]

5.1 Los Angeles as a Problem of Scale

The late French philosopher Jean Baudrillard's (1994) essay on "Simulacra and Simulations" offered an unusual and memorable thesis on Disneyland based on his visit to "Los Angeles" in the 1970s. After experiencing the theme park, he would go on to argue that Disneyland is a mere "simulacrum" of Los Angeles, operating as a land of fantasy that masks the reality that it is in fact the real world outside of Disneyland that is fantasy.[2] Baudrillard's thesis was reflective of typical postmodern theory popular throughout the second half of the twentieth century, guided by a shared interest in subverting the established order of things. But there is actually an inadvertent subversion of the established order

[1] " . . . In that Empire, the Art of Cartography reached such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied a whole City, and the map of the Empire a whole Province. In the course of time, these Disproportionate Maps were found wanting, and the Colleges of Cartographers elevated a Map of the Empire that was of the same scale as the Empire and coincided with it point for point. Less Fond of the Study of Cartography, Subsequent Generations understood that such an expanded Map was Useless, and not without Irreverence they abandoned it to the Inclemencies of the Sun and of Winters. In the deserts of the West, tattered Ruins of the Map still abide, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in the whole Country there is no other relic of the Disciplines of Geography." Jorge Luis Borges, "On the Exactitude of Science."

[2] We are referring, of course, to Baudrillard's (1994) description of Disneyland being "presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and the to the order of simulation" (p. 12).

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of things that occurs in Baudrillard's text, which is his mislocation of Disneyland in Los Angeles. It is scarcely a secret that Disneyland is actually located in Anaheim, which is in the County of Orange, not even the County of Los Angeles, much less the City of Los Angeles. Of course, this distinction perhaps only matters when scaled to the level of the immediate or the local. For one visiting from France or even another part of the United States, Disneyland, which is approximately 12 km from the southeasternmost boundary of Los Angeles County and 37 km from the southeasternmost boundary of the City of Los Angeles (i.e., Los Angeles "proper," if you will), might as well be in Los Angeles. Scale, in other words, is what makes the distinction matter.

The County of Los Angeles, even without Disneyland, is vast. It has an area of nearly 2,000 km and a population that surpasses 10 million people, which represents over a quarter of the population of the entire state of California. Naturally, an area this large is expected to have considerable demographic diversity but also, less expectedly, climate diversity. Indeed, Los Angeles contains one of the more unusual and intriguing features of the natural world: the microclimate. We are likely aware of various climates of the world and the extremity of their variation, from the rainforest to the desert to the tundra to the polar ice cap. A microclimate, meanwhile, is an area within a larger climate in which atmospheric conditions differ from the immediately surrounding area to the extent that, effectively, a miniature ecosystem exists within another. Microclimates are actually a rather common phenomenon, as they can be the result of something as common as a mountain range that functions as a barrier to elements that would otherwise provide respite. One such case is the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. While the greater Los Angeles area is known to have mild if not favorable weather year round, in the case of the San Fernando Valley, referred to as simply "the Valley" by locals, the temperature can be notably warmer compared to other parts of the region. For one, any valley region is typically warmer because of lower elevation. In the case of the San Fernando Valley, the Santa Monica Mountains to the west prevent the coastal winds from the Pacific Ocean from reaching the region. Similar to how Disneyland represents a very particular rendition of "Los Angeles," the San Fernando Valley being a microclimate results in a very (atmospherically) particular rendition of "Los Angeles." Consider, for a moment, if one were to visit Los Angeles but only experience the weather of the San Fernando Valley – their experience of "Los Angeles" weather would be remarkably different from another who spent time elsewhere in Los Angeles. Scale, again, comes to be a salient factor in shaping our experience with the material world.

We offer scale as a heuristic for conceptualizing the degree to which something matters in a given context and how various things, whether language resources or ideological positions, can be transplanted across contexts in strategic manner to ensure their relevance and applicability. By taking this

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position, we align our work with what E. Summerson Carr and Michael Lempert (2016) have described as the "pragmatics of scale," or the call to "take a critical distance from given scalar distinctions, whether our own or others', and focus instead on the social circumstances, dynamics, and consequences of scale-making as social practice and project" (p. 9). In this chapter, we propose that a particularly instructive practice of scalar work is to be found in the grassroots pedagogical practices of *faveladas/os*. In the pages that follow, we engage with the work of various activists representing the main collectives described throughout this book: Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto. By doing so, we foreground the teachable dimensions of hope in the sociolinguistic action of these collectives. As we shall see, through such semiotic work, hope comes to be rescaled from mere abstraction toward a form of social change.

5.2 Scaling Hope through Pedagogical Practice

A logical place to begin our description of scaling hope through pedagogical practice is the work of Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire (1921–1997), who places concrete utopia at the center of his philosophy of education. In fact, dream and utopia are precisely the focus of his first sentences of *Pedagogia da Esperança* (1992), or *Pedagogy of Hope* (1994), a book that was intended as a commentary to his acclaimed *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (1972), first published in English as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). This is how Freire opens *Pedagogy of Hope*:

> Quando muita gente faz discursos pragmáticos e defende nossa adaptação aos fatos, acusando *sonho* e *utopia* não apenas de inúteis, mas também de inoportunos enquanto elementos que fazem necessariamente parte de toda prática educativa desocultação das mentiras dominantes, pode parecer estranho que eu escreva um livro chamado *Pedagogia da Esperança: um reencontro com a pedagogia do oprimido.* (Freire, 1992, p. 1)

> We are surrounded by a pragmatic discourse that would have us adapt to the facts of reality. *Dreams*, and *utopia*, are called not only useless, but positively impeding. (After all, they are an intrinsic part of any educational practice with the power to unmask the dominant lies.) It may seem strange, then, that I should write a book called *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (Freire, 1994, p. 1)

For Freire (1994), hope is an essential part of the struggle for a more just world; similar to Ernst Bloch (see Chapter 1), Freire sees hope as an affect that requires practical action: "as an ontological need, hope needs practice in order to become historical concreteness" (p. 2). In Portuguese, Freire (1992) puns on the word "*espera*" or "waiting," which shares the same root with "*esperança*" or "hope," and says that there is no "*esperança*" in "*espera pura*"

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(p. 15) or “sheer waiting or passive expectation.” In other words, only in active participation can we achieve hope.

In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, written in Chile during his exile by the Brazilian dictatorship, Freire (1972) outlined two language ideologies for pedagogy: the “banking” concept of education, based on a referentialist construction of language (see Bauman & Briggs, 2003) at the base of alienation in capitalist societies, and dialogical education, a performative view of the educational dialogue as “um ato de criação e recriação (an act of creation and re-creation)” (p. 38), centered on the affect of love as a mode of disalienation. Freire recasts the dynamics of oppression predicated on the banking concept of education, that is, the view that education is “o ato de depositar, de transferir, de transmitir valores e conhecimentos (the act of depositing, transferring, transmitting values and knowledge)” (p. 67). Freire advances an educational dialogic praxis centered on overcoming the psychic intrusion of oppression. Dialogic education leads the oppressed into recognizing their “‘consciência servil’ em relação à consciência do senhor’ (‘servile consciousness’ vis-à-vis the consciousness of the master)” – that is, it fosters in the oppressed a recognition of their transformation into “quase ‘coisa’ (almost a ‘thing’)” (p. 40) and their dependence on the bond of oppression (the same recognition holds for the oppressor, as Freire’s quote below suggests). “Amor,” or “love,” for Freire is an affect that yields dialogue and radical disalienation. Further, the mutual recognition of the bonds of oppression must necessarily give way to an objective transformation of oppressive relations:

> O opressor só se solidariza com os oprimidos quando o seu gesto deixa de ser um gesto piegas e sentimental, de caráter individual, e passa a ser um ato de amor àqueles. Quando, para ele, os oprimidos deixam de ser uma designação abstrata e passam a ser os homens concretos, injustiçados e roubados. Roubados na sua palavra, por isto no seu trabalho comprado, que significa a sua pessoa vendida. Só na plenitude deste ato de amar, na sua existenciação, na sua práxis, se constitui a solidariedade verdadeira. Dizer que os homens são pessoas e, como pessoas, são livres, e nada concretamente fazer para que esta afirmação se objetive, é uma farsa. (Freire, 1972, p. 40)

> The oppressor only is solidary with the oppressed when their gesture goes from mushy, sentimental, and individual to a gesture of love for the oppressed. When the oppressed are no longer an abstract appellation and become concrete men and women, wronged and robbed. Cheated in their voice, and therefore in the sale of their labor, which means that they have been sold. Only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis, there will be true solidarity. To say that men and women are people, and as people they are free, while doing nothing concretely to make this utterance an objective one, is a farce.

In his ethnography of a dispossessed group of Fijians, the Suvavou people, who have reclaimed ancestral land, Miyazaki (2004) argues that hope is a method of “reorienting the direction of knowledge” (p. 12). Freire’s critique

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of the banking concept of education and his proposal of a dialogic method of education is in this sense similarly a radical reorientation of knowledge. For Freire, this hopeful reorientation is grounded on practice and entails a reimagining of language resources. In other words, Freire first unpacks the banking metadiscourse – an individualistic and referentialist linguistic ideology that imagines the access to and performance of language in purely representational terms. For example, in the excerpt above, discourses of oppression, including banking education, regard "the oppressed as an abstract category" – that is, fundamental aspects of their indexicality as "persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labor" are erased (for an account of erasure in language ideology, see Gal & Irvine, 2019, pp. 20–21). Freire then reorients this dominant discourse by imagining an alternative linguistic ideology – a dialogic education where subjects risk "acts of love" or situated dialogue. This alternative linguistic ideology thus reaffirms the "indexical potential of language" (Borba, 2019b, p. 167), that is, this reorientation moves the oppressed away from a purely representational domain and towards a dialogic praxis, where their social belonging becomes indexical of situated and concrete relations of injustice.

The possibility of hope as being realized through pedagogical work comes to be salient when understood in relation to different approaches to "utopia." If we return briefly to Bloch's theorization of hope vis-à-vis utopia, intriguing is Ruth Levitas's (1990) commentary that Bloch places hope in the field of practical utopia, as opposed to abstract utopia, which is akin to mere wishful thinking. She explains that, for Bloch, abstract utopia is "fantastic and compensatory. It is wishful thinking, but the wish is not accompanied by a will to change anything" (pp. 14–15). Instead, concrete utopia is "anticipatory rather than compensatory" (p. 15). In addition to anticipating the future, concrete utopia also aims at effecting it. Concrete utopia requires practical and pedagogic work, and therefore Bloch thinks of the concrete work of hope as *docta spes*, which Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight, Bloch's English-language translators, render as "comprehended hope" but Levitas translates as "educated hope." As an adjective, the Latin word "*doctus (fem. docta)*" means "clever, learned, trained." As a participle of the verb "*docere*," it means "having been taught, instructed." Levitas's translation thus best captures the pedagogical sense of educating oneself and others to hope, which pervades both Bloch's philosophy and the ethnopragmatics we describe in this book.

"Educated" hope, then, is a form of practical hope grounded in the ethical cultivation of sensibilities and dispositions necessary for the "intelligence of hope" (Bloch, 1986, p. 146) – a collective and practical attitude toward becoming. Bloch adds that the work of hope "requires people who throw themselves actively into what is becoming, to which they themselves belong" (p. 3). Yet this imaginative work of "throwing" ourselves into which we belong

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differs from mere idealism or escapism. In this regard, Bloch's (1986, p. 3) differentiation between enervating and provocative daydreams is significant:

> Everybody's life is pervaded by daydreams: one part of this is just stale, even enervating escapism, even booty for swindlers, but another part is provocative, is not content just to accept the bad which exists, does not accept renunciation. This other part has hoping at its core, and is *teachable*. (p. 3, emphasis added)

Educated hope thus results from practices of cultivating certain embodied dispositions to *act* – directed to concrete utopia, which "is not simply a 'correct' version of abstract utopia, but a praxis-oriented category characterized by 'militant optimism'" (Levitas, 1990, p. 18). And this cultivation of hope, it is worth repeating, is teachable.

Another aspect of Bloch's theorization to which we would like to draw attention concerns the forms of collective sociality that hope entails. As we commented above, Bloch is critical of the Platonic principle that knowledge is anamnesis, that is, the idea that knowing is remembering something that is already inscribed in an ideal instance to which we have access through sensible means. For Bloch, this theory prevented the emergence of the "being sui generis of a Not-Yet-Being" (p. 140). For Bloch (1986), whatever the essence of being may be, it resides in the temporal mode of hope: "Essential being is not Been-ness; on the contrary: the essential being of the world lies itself on the front" (p. 18). As Levitas (1990) explains, the front or Novum, for Bloch, is "that part of reality which is coming into being on the horizon of the real" (p. 17). Educated hope is thus a practical form of action that does not get petrified in the face of the past, but instead opens itself to participating with others toward becoming, toward the front. The following excerpt is instructive:

> And predominant [in *docta spes*, educated hope] is no longer contemplation, which for centuries has only been related to What Has Become, but the participating, co-operative process-attitude, to which consequently, since Marx, the open becoming is no longer sealed methodically and the Novum no longer alien in material terms. (Bloch, 1986, p. 146)

This passage situates hope in collective and cooperative forms of sociality. Doing hope is thus processual and participatory. It is open to emergent forms of action that arise from evaluating lived reality and imagining practical lines of change. Bloch is ultimately interested in understanding how a logical task such as doing philosophy may open up paths for social intervention and community building. In this regard, his grappling with Engels's inversion of Kant is significant for the task of collectively educating ourselves and others into the daydreaming of hope: "transformation of the supposed Thing in Itself into the Thing for Us" (Bloch, 1986, p. 249).

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In brief, we learn from Paulo Freire and Ernst Bloch that the practical work of hope does not rest in *pura espera*, or sheer waiting, but in a concrete, participatory, and collective work of educating bodily sensibilities, forms of talk, and other semiotic practices towards hope. Notwithstanding their differences, Freire's pedagogy of hope and Bloch's educated hope are both a means of reorienting knowledge, temporality, and semiotic resources – and especially means of teaching others and ourselves on how to perform these reorientations. Such reorientations, as we have suggested above, are ultimately a matter of scale. Consider, for a brief moment, the "Map of the Empire" in Jorge Luis Borges's short story, "Del Rigor en la Ciencia" or "On Exactitude in Science." The map, having been constructed at 1:1 scale of the Empire, turns out to be so large that it is effectively "*Inútil*," or "Useless." Hope, likewise, runs the risk of being "Useless" if it is not situated and practical, as we suggested in Chapter 1. Here, we focus on pedagogical hope as one way of scaling and thus actualizing hope as a form of action-oriented practice. In the same way that a map can only be not "Useless" – and ideally useful – if it is able to re-present a terrain so that it is conceivable to its viewers (scaled). Likewise, hope, as a pedagogical practice, takes something that is otherwise "merely" utopian – for example, an aspiration suspended into the indefinite future – and rescales it into the concrete. This type of pedagogical and scalar work, enacted ultimately through the resourceful deployment of language by favela grassroots activists and organizations, punctuates the possibility of language as hope.

5.3 *Circulando* against the Police State

In 2013, Instituto Raízes em Movimento (see Chapter 2) hosted a series of events in Complexo do Alemão, including one called *Circulando – Diálogo e Comunicação nas Favelas*, or *Circulating – Dialogue and Communication in Favelas*. *Circulando* featured a combination of debates inside the Institute's premises and an open-air fair, with music and artistic performances on the Central Avenue in Complexo do Alemão. In linguistic-ideological terms, the event represented an effort to promote a reorientation of knowledge about the favela, which is evident in the very strategy of naming the event after a police-specific terminology conventionally used against *faveladas/os*. "*Circulando!*" is a term often used by police officers to disperse people gathering in the streets, given the police's alleged task of preventing "idleness" and "vagrancy." At several events in fieldwork where activists occupied the streets of Complexo do Alemão, Daniel and his colleagues witnessed the implicit politics of "*circulando.*" Although the police did not actually use the jargon in such situations where *faveladas/os* and activists were gathering on the streets, the ostensive police presence was an indirect sign of "*circulando.*"

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We may trace the origin of the usage of "*circulando*" in this manner back to the very creation of the police as an institution of modern administration at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Michel Foucault historicized the birth of the modern notion of police in his 1977–1978 lectures at the Collège de France that became known as *Security, Territory, Population* (see Foucault, 2007). While in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in Europe and in the territories Europeans were colonizing, the word "police" referred to "a form of community or association governed by a public authority" (Foucault, 2007, p. 312), after the 1600s, European thinkers and bureaucrats started to refer to something completely different through this word. For example, in 1611, Turquet de Mayerne, in his utopian treatise *La Monarchie aristodémocratique*, attempts to give form in French to notions emerging at the time concerning the place of the police in government – in particular the notion that had already emerged in Germany of *Polizeistaat*, police state, or government administration as policing. For Maynerne, unlike other governmental institutions like "justice, the army, and finance" (p. 321), the police would be responsible, among other ends, for the education of people and their professionalization. Fundamentally, the police were supposed to control the movement of people and goods. The police were supposed to make sure that people worked, had an "occupation," and therefore avoided "idleness" and "vagrancy" (p. 325). Foucault points out that in the projects of Maynerne and other thinkers and bureaucrats at the time, "the space of circulation [emerges as] a privileged object for police" (p. 325). He adds that by:

> "circulation" we should understand not only [the] material network that allows the circulation of goods and possibly of men, but also the circulation itself, that is to say, the set of regulations, constraints, and limits, or the facilities and encouragements that will allow the circulation of men and things in the kingdom and possibly beyond its borders. (p. 325)

As currently used, "*circulando*" might seem to iterate the pedagogical and linguistic-ideological imagination of policing as biopolitical "administrative modernity" (Foucault, 2007, p. 321). Yet in Brazilian cities, the police's dual role as an institution to "civilize" and "control circulation" is unevenly played. In (upper-)middle class neighborhoods, the police are remarkably less hostile to residents. Crowds on the streets of upscale neighborhoods are hardly dispersed through "*circulando*." Activists from Complexo do Alemão thus reclaim the particular sense of "*circulando*" as an injunction against *faveladas/os* and reorient it into a different direction. For example, in Chapter 2 we discussed approaches and data on disproportionate police violence against *faveladas/os* and Blacks that point to policing in peripheries not only as modern biopolitical power, but above all as a kind of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003) directed at portions of the population seen as "enemies." Given the associations between

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violent state action and necropolitics, the Complexo do Alemão activists resignify *circulando* as both festive circulation in the streets and the emergence of life (see also Chapter 3). These two senses of *circulando* are embedded, for example, in the invitation to the 2014 *Circulando* event that Instituto Raízes em Movimento posted on social media:

> Imaginem uma rua inteira ocupada com expressões variadas de arte e cultura para serem apreciadas e apropriadas pelo público. São oficinas, grafiti, exibição de filmes, intervenções urbanas, muita música e por aí vai. Desta vez o projeto vem com duas performances de rua que vão movimentar, em alto nível, a integração com os presentes "circulantes":
>
> 1. De novo teremos a participação da ORQUESTRA VOADORA puxando o bonde com um cortejo que vai arrastar o povo subida à cima pela Central, até chegarmos ao palco principal;
> 2. O Coletivo de Artistas Anônimos – Bonobando apresentará a performance teatral "Finge que nada tá acontecendo," de própria autoria. Tudo no meio da rua, interagindo totalmente com o ambiente natural das coisas e do momento.
>
> É PELA VIDA que o CIRCULANDO vai acontecer. Vem com toda força para demonstrar suas angústias pelo atual momento que passa o Alemão, mas também compartilhar os valores mais verdadeiros que o favelado carrega na essência.

> Imagine an entire street occupied with a variety of expressions of art and culture to be appreciated and appropriated by the public. There are workshops, graffiti, film screenings, urban interventions, music, and so on. This time the project comes with two street performances that will greatly stimulate an integration with the "circulating" audience:
>
> 1. Once again we will have the participation of ORQUESTRA VOADORA, leading a parade that will bring people up Avenida Central until we reach the main stage;
> 2. The Coletivo de Artistas Anônimos – Bonobando will present the theatrical performance "Pretend that nothing is happening," which they themselves authored. Everything in the middle of the street, fully interacting with the natural environment of things and the moment.
>
> It is FOR LIFE that CIRCULANDO is going to happen. Come with all your strength to demonstrate your anxiety about the current moment that Alemão is going through, but also to share the most truthful values that favela residents carry in their essence.

This invitation evokes the practice of hope as scale. It is worth noting that favela collectives centrally engage with Paulo Freire's legacy of popular education. Following the coup that installed a military dictatorship in Brazil in 1964, Freire went into exile in different countries. Yet it was probably his experience with adult literacy and popular movements in Chile between 1964 and 1969 that proved to be the turning point in his thinking (Holst, 2006). Alongside his experience leading literacy circles with peasants and following grassroots struggles for land reform, Freire wrote in Chile *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Compared to previous works such as *Educação como prática*

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da liberdade, or *Education: The Practice of Freedom* (Freire, 1965), which was "informed by a liberal developmentalist outlook" (Holst, 2006, p. 243), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* indexes a Marxist inflection in his philosophy (Roberts, 2000). From the experience with the popular classes in Chile, Freire places emphasis on the dynamics of the social and psychic intrusion of oppression in the oppressed – and on education as a mode of scaling (i.e., rethinking and resocializing) that builds on the suffering experienced by the oppressed.

The statement, "Come with all your strength to demonstrate your anxiety about the current moment that Alemão is going through, but also to share the most truthful values that favela residents carry in their essence," might be said to summarize this form of aforementioned scaling discourse. In other words, Raízes em Movimento simultaneously builds on a moment that provokes anxiety (that is, the human rights violations in favelas ahead of the mega-events in Rio de Janeiro) and projects the event as opportunity to celebrate *faveladas/os*' values, posited as "essential" or iconic to their identity. The invitation scales hope as an expansive and propulsive affect through particular sociolinguistic strategies, such as the use of the indexical "*circulantes*" (i.e., circulating audience or people), which both singles out the people invited to the event and performatively summons them as people who move around the neighborhood, possibly unafraid of harsh policing. The invitation also marks the term VIDA, or LIFE, in capital letters, conspicuously signaling their emphasis on the politics of life (as opposed to necropolitics). Besides, against a view of favelas as places that "lack" culture and other forms of symbolic capital, the invitation lists multiple artistic performances and installations, thus portraying *Circulando* as a vibrant artistic event. Fundamentally, *Circulando* is one of the many initiatives in favela collectives that project an educated hope by fostering participation frameworks for the cultivation of habituated embodied sensibilities. The social media invitation to the 2014 Circulando, for example, places emphasis on habituated emotions such as strength, joy, aesthetic pleasure, and an expansion for life, as opposed to the anxiety wrought by oppression. Such emotional stances, made attainable through scalar work, are representative of the aspirations fundamental to the Instituto Raízes em Movimento's pedagogical hope.

5.4 "Favela Não Se Cala"

In this section we focus on a grassroots pedagogy that responds to the dynamics of speech and silence in favelas that we alluded to in Chapter 4. While Machado da Silva and Menezes (2019) and other scholars in the sociology of violence in Brazil point to a widespread fear on the part of favela

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residents in speaking about the normative regimes that dispute the government of peripheries – the State and the “world of crime” – activists build on the historical silencing of Blacks and project alternatives to the fear of speaking up. Ethnographically, we have observed that in activists’ responses to silencing, the affect of hope seems to coexist alongside anger – something that Ana Deumert (2021) has noted in Black activism in South Africa, particularly as anger is enacted through the medium of sound and music. This enraged hope, so to speak, varies from the dynamics of resignifying trauma through its repetition (Birman, 1991; Butler, 1997; Freud, 1920) to a pedagogy of talk that does not necessarily repeat the traumatic scene but rewrites it in other terms. We focus on the case of how the image of Anastácia – a Black enslaved woman represented in a 1839 painting by Jacques Arago being tortured with the Flanders Mask (see Figure 5.1) – was surfaced and resignified in the 2013 *Circulando* event and in Anielle Franco’s 2021 master’s thesis (see Franco, A., 2021).

First, we must reconsider the circumstances surrounding the year 2013, in particular the removals of favelas ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. In a debate at the 2013 Circulando about a documentary produced by activists in South Africa, André Constantine, a member of the

Figure 5.1 Castigo de escravo (Punishment for Slaves) by Jacques Arago (1839). Museu Afro Brasil (São Paulo).

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Figure 5.2 André Constantine: Favela não se cala (Favela Does Not Shut Up).

Favela Não Se Cala (Favela Does Not Shut Up) collective, wore a t-shirt with the image of Anastácia displayed above the name of the collective (see Figure 5.2). Following the screening of *Dear Mandela,* a documentary directed by Dara Kell and Christopher Nizza about the legal struggle fought by the Abahlali social movement to resist evictions of township residents ahead of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, André and other activists debated the comparatively similar situation experienced by *faveladas/os* in Rio de Janeiro. Bandile Mdlalose, an Abahlali member portrayed in the documentary, and the director Dara Kell were also present at the event. In the years leading up to 2013, the narrative of the "Olympic legacy" (Broudehoux, 2007, 2016), promoted by the real estate market, corporate media, and the public sector, was widely disseminated as justification for profound urban transformations in Rio de Janeiro, such as changes in road networks, the new experiment of police "pacification," and enforced family evictions (Barreira, 2013; Magalhães, 2013; Silva & Fabrício, 2021). Data from Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Housing Secretariat show that between 2009 and 2014, more than 20,000 families were removed from their homes (Faulhaber & Azevedo, 2015). Several favelas were completely or partially removed, such as Favela do Metrô and Vila Autódromo. Faulhaber and Azevedo (2015) describe the recurring scenes they saw in favelas that were subject to evictions for the mega-events:

> Wherever you go in a favela that has been partially or totally removed, or those that are under siege by the municipal administration, the scene is always the same. Amongst the

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debris of an unequal dispute, with the government and the private companies on one side, and, on the other side, the residents, the remains of demolished houses signal a scene of devastation. It is possible to see the psychological and bureaucratic onslaughts, linked to the unconstitutional decrees of expropriation, judicial orders which are so often questionable, and attempts to divide the residents with individual pledges of compensation . . . (pp. 11–12)

In the face of evictions and other urban transformations resulting in suffering for *faveladas/os*, André Constantine participated in the debate representing the favelas of Babilônia and Chapéu Mangueira, both located on hillsides near Copacabana. In linguistic-ideological terms, it is interesting to note that the very name of the collective that André helped create, Favela não se cala, builds on a particular imagination of language as hope. Named as a denial of silence, the collective rescales the background of stifling and silencing Blacks in Brazil that we have been documenting in this book. This background is iconically rendered in André's t-shirt displaying Anastácia being subjected to the use of the Flanders Mask. Grada Kilomba (2010) explains that this was a "*mask of speechlessness* (. . .), a very concrete piece, a real instrument, which became a part of the European colonial project for more than three hundred years" (p. 16, emphasis in original).[3] Kilomba adds that

the mask was used by *white* masters to prevent enslaved Africans from eating sugar cane or cocoa beans while working on the plantations, but its primary function was to implement a sense of speechlessness and fear, inasmuch as the mouth was a place of both muteness and torture. (p. 16, emphasis in original)

That is, this "real instrument" – "a very concrete piece" – had a threefold use: to dominate, to impede nourishment, and to suppress speech. Significantly, André's t-shirt combined the name of the movement, Favela não se cala, with this image of domination and silencing, echoing, we might say, Freud's (1920) old teaching that trauma must be overcome through its narration in proper enunciative conditions (see also Birman, 1991). Drawing on Derrida's deconstruction as well as Freudian psychoanalysis, Judith Butler (1997) analogously suggests that "repetition" may be a strategy for displacing the performative force of injurious words and images. Thus, a series of intervals exist between Anastácia's actual plight in her lifetime, Arago's portrayal of her wearing the speechlessness mask, and Favela não se cala's recontextualization of her image. These intervals between "instances of utterances," Butler (1997)

[3] Heller and McEllhinny (2017) discuss the role of another material symbol of constraining speech, *le symbole*, used in France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries "to stop children from speaking Breton, Occitan, or other regional varieties in class" (p. 94). The *symbole* was a wooden object shaped and sized like a clog, which could be wrapped in a rope and hung around the neck of the offending child. Like the Flanders Mask, the *symbole* had a function of censoring and "disciplining body, mind, and tongue" (p. 94). Heller and McElhinny use the *symbole* as a metaphor for linguistic disciplining within colonialism and nationalism.

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maintains, "not only make (. . .) the repetition and resignification of the utterance possible, but show how words might, through time, become disjoined from their power to injure and recontextualized in more affirmative modes" (p. 15). Indeed, this work of resignification through recontextualization seemed to be at stake in André's intervention in Circulando. Notably, he combined affordances not only from the work of resignification, but from a whole corporeal and affective ensemble of semiotic resources to explain and enact the Favela não se cala's educated hope.

As he spoke, André hit his own chest with closed fists. The force and frequency of the blows echoed the hybridization of self-sacrifice and courage embedded in previous accounts in the debate, such as Bandile's narration of her arrest during the demonstrations against evictions in South Africa. André's bodily performance was accompanied by the outlining of a critical perspective about capitalist interests in Rio, which at the time had turned some urban areas into construction sites for the mega-events. Thus, the activist pointed out that the "militarização fascista" ("fascist militarization") – that is, the installation of Pacifying Police Units and other military actions in favelas ahead of the mega-events – was "atrelada ao processo de gentrificação e remoção em favelas" ("tied to the process of gentrification and removal in favelas"). André thus critiqued the commodification of the right to housing, as well as the "privatização do sistema penitenciário" ("privatization of the prison system") and the strategic role of the police in capitalism.

From his perspective, the commodification of the city is felt in favelas through the historical "guerra contra o pobre, o negro, o habitante de senzalas" ("war against the poor, Blacks, and former enslaved people"). This war, for André, is instantiated in the privatization of the prison system, which, driven by profit, facilitates incarceration, and strengthens organized crime, since the "mãe desesperada que roubou um litro de leite é colocada numa cela junto de uma gerente do tráfico e uma dona de boca de fumo (desperate mother who stole a bottle of milk is put in a cell next to a drug trafficking manager and the owner of a point-of-sale for drug users"). We can observe here his uptake of the role of the police in capitalism:

> No capitalismo não tem outra polícia. Ela vai servir aos interesses do grande capital pra reprimir qualquer insurgência popular. É pra isso que serve a polícia. Quem a polícia mata desde a época do Império? Ela foi criada pra defender a coroa e matar os escravos e os negros. Coisa que ela faz muito bem até hoje.

> In capitalism there is no other police. It will serve the interests of big capital to repress any popular insurgency. That's what the police are for. Who have the police killed since the time of the empire? It was created to defend the Crown and to kill slaves and Blacks. Something that it does very well until today.

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For André, the silencing of Blacks is something that unfolds at the intersection of capitalism and policing as a strategy of control. Thus, in his words, the police "serve aos interesses do grande capital pra reprimir qualquer insurgência popular" ("serve the interests of big capital to repress any popular insurgency"). Like the Flanders Mask, a hybrid of economic domination, organic impediment to eating, and stifling of speech, the contemporary artifacts of capitalism, such as the police and the prison, are hybrids of the commodification of the city, policing, and silencing the poor. Such hybrids are part of a material whole – and, like any practice of hybridization, they can be purified or situationally circumscribed (see Bauman & Briggs, 2003; Latour, 1993). At one point in the debate, as he discussed the regime of language (Kroskrity, 2000) embedded in Favela não se cala's educational practice, André's engagement with Paulo Freire's grassroots pedagogy became evident:

> Me identifiquei muito com aquele jovem [retratado no filme] porque o Favela não se cala tem essa praticidade de ir até as favelas e tentar organizar. Não chegar como uma referência que vai dar luz ou dar as diretrizes, mas tentar consolidar a organização orgânica já existente. Porque o trabalho de base tem que ser bem explicado, bem posto porque senão vira paternalismo.

> I strongly identified myself with that young man [portrayed in the film] because Favela não se cala has this practice of going to the favelas and trying to organize [people]. We will not arrive as a reference that is going to enlighten or set the guidelines. Instead, we try to consolidate the organic structure that already exists. Because the grassroots work has to be well explained, well organized. Otherwise, it turns into patronage.

Iterating the Freirian dialogical educational method, the movement does not go to the favelas to *convey* knowledge ("Não chegar como uma referência que vai dar luz ou dar as diretrizes," "We will not arrive as a reference that is going to enlighten or set guidelines"). Instead, it seeks to *build* knowledge on the basis of dialogical processes already underway in aid of "consolidar a organização orgânica já existente" or "consolidat[ing] the organic structure that already exists." Favela não se cala, therefore, does not take a paternalistic stance that would aim to suppress existing mobilizations, but rather tries to "consolidate" dialogical, collective and organic processes that are already underway. We might be able to conclude through André's remarks and embodied performance that Favela não se cala operates through a regime of language and education that works alongside specific modes of imagining language and learning. More specifically, the movement resignifies a historical silencing of Blacks and other minorities through iterating Anastácia's iconic image that at once indexes stifling of speech, deprivation of nurturing, and impediment to political mobilization. André hybridizes this resignification with an "enraged hope" (instantiated, for instance, in his hitting of the chest while

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speaking), and a critical vision of gentrification and policing as Rio de Janeiro manicures itself in order to host mega-events at the detriment of its most vulnerable citizens.

5.5 Instituto Marielle Franco: Scaling Enraged Hope into an Otherwise Present

In 2021, another activist, Anielle Franco, would advance a different position vis-à-vis trauma. In her master's dissertation about the legacy of Marielle and the political and educational work of the Instituto Marielle Franco, Anielle references the Flanders Mask as an icon of the historical silencing of Black women. Anielle Franco (2021) acknowledges that "é impossível falarmos de feminismo negro, sua criação e surgimento, sem citarmos racismo e silenciamento" ("it is impossible to speak of Black feminism, its creation and growth, without citing racism and silencing") (p. 33). Further, she builds on Grada Kilomba's (2010) citation of the Flanders Mask as simultaneously being about a historical trauma and "sobre quem pode e deve, e quem tem o poder de falar" ("about who can and must, and who has the power, to speak"). But contrary to the resignification that we noted in André Constantine's repetition of the traumatic image, A. Franco (2021) points to another temporality that is emerging, thereby requiring a different semiotic strategy: "Grada Kilomba [2010] . . . traz . . . em seu livro a foto retrato da mulher negra escravizada conhecida como 'Escrava Anastácia'. Porém, já passamos da fase de esperar alguém nos dizer quando podemos ou não falar" ("Grada Kilomba [2010] . . . brings . . . in her book the picture of a Black enslaved woman known as 'Escrava Anastácia'. However, we are past the stage of waiting for someone to tell us when we can and cannot speak") (p. 35). Equivalently to Marielle's (and later her mourning movement's) embedding her chegada na câmara dos vereadores (arrival in the City Hall) into a different form of inhabiting the presente (present time), Anielle refuses to build the present as resignifying the traumatic Mask through repeating it: "já passamos da fase de esperar alguém nos dizer quando podemos ou não falar" ("we are past the stage of waiting for someone to tell us when we can and cannot speak"). Put differently, we are past the time of iterating the wearing of the Mask, however critically, as resignifying it.

To support her temporal claim of inhabiting the present otherwise, Anielle builds on metalepsis, enraged hope, and on a radically different rendition of Anastácia. She begins by metaleptically grounding the work of the Instituto Marielle Franco on the struggle of the "mais velhas, nossas referências" ("the elder Black women, our references," p. 32). Thus the "luta imensurável . . . [as] dores, gritos, e ranger de nossas ancestrais" ("immeasurable struggle . . . [the] pains, cries, and creaks of our ancestors")

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is metaleptically present in the struggle of current Black female activists. An important ancestor that Anielle brings to bear on her claim is Conceição Evaristo, an important senior Black fiction writer in Brazil. Anielle cites an interview in which Conceição Evaristo elaborates on the possibility of collectively shattering the Mask:

Aquela imagem de escrava Anastácia (aponta pra ela), eu tenho dito muito que a gente sabe falar pelos orifícios da máscara e às vezes a gente fala com tanta potência que a máscara é estilhaçada. E eu acho que o estilhaçamento é o símbolo nosso, porque a nossa fala força a máscara. Porque todo nosso processo para eu chegar aqui, foi preciso colocar o bloco na rua e esse bloco a gente não põe sozinha (Evaristo, 2017, cited in Franco, A., 2021, p. 35)

That image of Escrava Anastácia (she points to her), I have said many times that we know how to speak through the perforations of the mask, and sometimes we speak with such power that the mask is shattered. And I think that the shattering is our symbol, because our talk forces the mask. In all of our process to get here, it was necessary to put the carnival *bloco* on the street and this *bloco* we cannot do alone.

Conceição Evaristo evokes an image of speaking through the holes of the mask (i.e., she projects resistance as emerging through the gaps of power), but she also asserts that the embodied action of Black women can be so strong that the mask may be blown into pieces. The ancestor of Anielle and Marielle is here simultaneously tapping into the "gaps" of power (something that we may read through the lens of resignification in Butler (1997)) and suggesting strategies for completely destroying the mask that impedes Black women from speaking in politics (which differs from resignification). Evaristo also elaborates on embodied action and affects such as forceful (as in physically strong) action and collective joy. While speaking forcefully suggests "anger," the metaphor of "colocar o bloco na rua" ("putting the carnival *bloco* on the street)" – a tradition that animates the most important street party in Brazil, where Blacks bear a remarkable presence – demonstrates that joy is also an important affect for creating another "presente."

In addition to building on Conceição Evaristo's account of the mask, Anielle elaborates at length on the affect of anger in her alternative to the work of resignification. In addition to ancestors like Evaristo, Anielle draws on Audre Lorde's (1981) metadiscourse of anger. In Anielle's (2021) words, "A raiva de que fala Audre Lorde, para mim, tem sido motor, combustível, tudo que me move e pulsa dentro de minha alma, além dos meus objetivos concretos" ("The rage that Audre Lorde talks about, for me, has been engine, fuel, all that drives me and pulses within my soul, beyond my concrete goals") (p. 35). She points out that, for Black feminists, being "angry" is part of propelling action in the face of injustices experienced daily. At the same time, she also considers that this affect requires to be balanced with other strategic moves – which she

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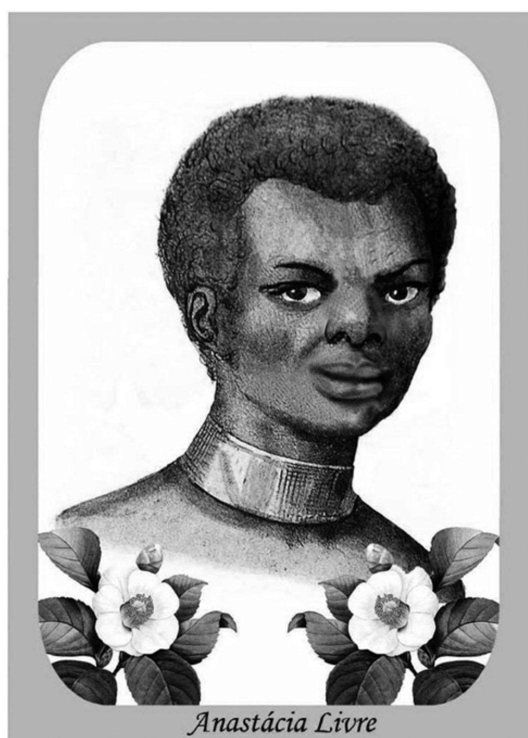

Figure 5.3 Anastácia livre (Anastácia Freed), by Yhuri Cruz.

summarizes with the phrase "equilíbrio entre a raiva e a razão é, então, um exercício diário" ("balancing anger and reason is, then, a daily exercise") (p. 35).

Finally, Anielle provides further indexes of her critique of repetition as resignification as she agrees with Evaristo about "estilhaçar máscaras [como ato] necessário para nossa sobrevivência" ("shattering masks [as an act] necessary for our survival") (p. 35), and brings to her work an image that Yhuri Cruz produced featuring Anastácia freed, unmasked, and surrounded by flowers (see Figure 5.3). Echoing the *nós-por-nós* (we for/by ourselves) stance whereby *faveladas/os* refuse to be represented or described by others (Fabrício & Melo, 2020), Anielle says that the image of "Yhuri Cruz . . . reforça a ideia de que não há ninguém melhor do que nós mesmas para lutar e falar de nossas próprias feridas e conquistas" or "Yhuri Cruz . . . reinforces the idea that there is no one better than ourselves to fight and talk about our own wounds and achievements" (p. 36). Yhuri Cruz, Anielle, and Conceição Evaristo refuse to talk about Anastácia as enslaved and as impeded by the mask of silencing. They

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manifest not wishing to repeat the terms of the injury to resignify it – after all, they are "past the stage of waiting for someone to tell [them] when [they] can and cannot speak." The image of "Anastácia livre . . . estilhaçando as mordaças do silenciamento" or "free Anastácia . . . shattering the gags of silencing" (Franco, A., 2021, p. 36) thus projects a novel habituation for speaking, and another form of educated hope. This novelty is embedded in a movement for political change of which Marielle is an important spectral agent. Fundamentally, Black women projecting change neither work alone nor ignore the strength and anger of the elders they bear with them. Comparing our data from the 2013 Circulando and Anielle's 2021 dissertation, we may say that we see a shift in how hope is scaled – no longer through repeating injurious signs with the intent of resignifying them, but through pursuing other signs, other ways of speaking, and other forms of habituated action. In the next section, we will look at ways in which the *nós-por-nós* stance and novel forms of scaling hope in Complexo do Alemão have impacted the very frameworks of securitization in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil.

5.6 Coletivo Papo Reto and the Digitalization of Hope

In the previous sections, we pointed to a chronological change: Anielle in 2021 refused to iterate a symbol of silencing of Blacks, the Flanders Mask – a sign of trauma that André Constantine exhibited in a resignified form in 2013 at the Circulando. In this section, we build on a collective from Complexo do Alemão that emerged in 2014 and that has been another fundamental agent in the novel forms of scaling hope that we have been documenting in this book. Coletivo Papo Reto has marshaled affordances from digitalization and enregisterment to project hope collectively in Complexo do Alemão as practical reason against the police state, the "crossfire" between police and traffic, and the historical downgrading and criminalization of Blacks in Brazil. We begin this section by describing the participation of Raull Santiago, one of the creators of Coletivo Papo Reto, in a 2013 ten-week training course prior to the collective's creation and that may be seen as a chain of participation frameworks in which the *papo reto* activist register (which we discussed in Chapter 4) was taught to activists, artists, and residents. This was also the event where Daniel met Raull. Promoted by the National Museum for Anthropology, Professor Adriana Facina, and NGO Raízes em Movimento, the 2013 training course "Vamos desenrolar" took place in Complexo do Alemão and included classes on public policy, health, racism, policing, income generation, and other fundamental topics for favela activism. "Vamos desenrolar" may be roughly translated as "Let's unroll or disentangle the talk/the topics of interest." *Desenrolar* in Portuguese is a slang term for sorting ideas out. Literally, *desenrolar* means unwinding something (e.g., a cord) that has been rolled up. So *desenrolar* in

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the training course puns on unwinding the line of talk (*papo*) just so it can be straight (*reto*).

In addition to actively participating in the workshop sessions, Raull performed a dramatic reading of a poem of his at the closing of the training course. Before reading the poem, Raull presented it as part of the "vivências que eu escrevo . . . fica meio na linha do RAP" ("life experiences that I write . . . it's kind of along the lines of RAP"). Below is the poem that was read by Raull:

Excerpt 5.1 Raull Santiago's Poem That Was Read at the "Vamos Desenrolar" Training Course, November 29, 2013

Portuguese	English
Sociedade de consumo ou cidade partida?	Consumer society or split city?
É dentro dessas leituras que eu início a rima.	Within these readings I begin the rhyme
Maravilhosa? Cês acham que tá, essa cidade?	Wonderful? Do you think it is, this city?
Na moral, político é que faz publicidade.	Honestly, politicians are those who advertise
Só aumenta, inventa, aliena e fode.	They only boost, invent, alienate and fuck up
E manda UPP pra conter,	And they send the "pacifying" police to contain,
Pra acalmar dá BOPE.	To calm down, they give BOPE.
Parece até George Orwell, *1984*, como um grande irmão,	It's like George Orwell's *1984*, like a big brother,
Cercando por todos os lados.	We're surrounded from all sides.
Mensageiro da chacina,	The messenger of slaughter,
[. . .]	[. . .]
Seu pensamento crítico rapidamente aliena	Your critical thinking becomes alienated
E dentro do desespero, cai na montagem da cena.	Desperate, you fall into the montage of the scene.
[. . .]	[. . .]
Sai disso, tentar a sorte é o marketing do azar,	Get out, playing the lottery is marketing of bad luck,
não é assim que tua vida vai mudar.	this is not how your life will change.
O papo é reto e fala de realidade,	The talk is straight and talks about reality, but for good fiction, read *The Scarlet Plague*.
mas se quer ficção boa, lê *A Praga Escarlate*.	

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Excerpt 5.1 (cont.)

Deu ruim, se liga no que eu vou te falar.	If it's bad, listen to what I'll tell you.
Deu ruim, não tenho papa na língua pra travar.	It's bad, I'm outspoken and my tongue won't be stopped.
Não dá mais pra ser otário, alienado e bobo,	There is no use in being an idiot, alienated, and foolish,
Aplaudindo o discurso de quem ferra o povo.	Applauding the speech of those who hurt the people.
Nessa cidade sangrenta, violência dá ibope.	In this bloody city, violence is popular.
Dogmática e sofrida é a história do pobre.	Dogmatic and painful is the story of the poor.
Direitos humanos garantem o direito à vida,	Human rights ensure the right to life,
segurança, educação [. . .]	safety, education [. . .]

This poem spells out the pragmatics of *papo reto*. While we have concerned ourselves with detailing this pragmatics in Chapter 4, we believe it is important to unpack traces of it in this poem as this literacy event represents an early node in Raull's sociolinguistic imaginations – which have been central not only for the digital and performative work of Coletivo Papo Reto but also for broader (trans) national cooperation in aid of resisting (in)securitization and necropolitics in favelas (see Rampton, Silva, & Charalambous, 2022). In poetic terms, Raull's verses oppose a condition of repression and alienation to the liberating illocutionary force of *papo reto* and human rights. Denotationally, his verses tell that favela residents are being watched by Big Brother and the state's security apparatuses; further, they are confined by the police and alienated by the "system." As in Plato's allegory of the cave, residents may "fall into the montage of the scene." To see the actual scene – that is, the reality of social justice – the resident needs a *papo reto*.

Parsing the intertextual links between this poem and the discourse of other activists we have been concerned with (and who have collaborated with Raull) is important for displaying the rhizomatic work of resistance (Deumert, 2019) to policies of (in)securitization in favelas and the effects of the "crossfire" between State and "crime" in these locations. As we have been documenting, the *papo reto* activist register is a crucial – but not the only – language game for projecting more livable forms of life and forms of talk in favelas. As enregisterment is about indexical signs in circulation, Raull's outspokenness is clearly an interdiscursive response to the fear of speaking (about violence) that was brought up to Daniel several times in the field. Daniel repeatedly heard from

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other researchers in the field that many of their interlocutors refused to talk about the police or the drug traffic to them – a clear anticipation of potential violent effects tied to the potential entextualization of their talk (see Menezes, 2015; Savell, 2021). Partly protected by the visibility that activists hold in the favela, but partly out of courage, Raull in these verses refuses to abide by the pragmatics of anticipation (Machado da Silva and Menezes, 2019), whereby residents tend to opt for silence when the subject is armed violence, and decides instead to defiantly "raise his voice," like Marielle, Anielle, and other activists. Along these lines, Raull metapragmatically comments that *papo reto* is unimpeded by fear: "If it's bad, listen to what I'll tell you / It's bad, I'm outspoken and my tongue won't be stopped." Further, Raull's verse "O papo é reto e fala de realidade" or "The talk is straight and talks about reality" embodies a sense of speaking directly and denotationally singling out objects of discourse related to tropes of social justice. Emically, this idea of "being direct" and "speaking the truth" oppose upscale registers, such as the language of State bureaucracy and "standard" Portuguese (especially as it is imagined and put to use as facilitating whites' maintenance of privilege, see Lopes & Silva, 2018; Roth-Gordon, 2017). As we saw in Chapter 4, other activists, such as Renata Souza (2016), describe *papo reto* along similar lines of directness and referential preference for objects of discourse related to racial and economic inequities (i.e., "truth") – and in Renata's case, through her current parliamentary action, *papo reto* is further embedded in institutional political talk. Like Marielle Franco, Raull suspends expectations of politeness and, before an otherwise formal situation with an audience that included nonfavela residents and activists, partially unknown to him, says that politicians only "aumenta[m], inventa[m], aliena[m] e fode[m]" or "boost, invent, alienate and fuck up." The similarities between Raull and other activists' renditions of *papo reto* are as much a fact of interdiscursivity as they point to the "coherence of indexical and other compatible signs one with another in the flow of discourse," a defining characteristic of enregisterment for Silverstein (2016, p. 38).

Silverstein's (2016) remark about the coherence of indexical signs in the flow of discourse reminds us of the rhizomatic and networked dimension of enregisterment. Indeed, we have tried to show above how Raull's words are also the words of others (see Bauman, 2004). Yet in line with the diachronic shift that we discussed earlier in this chapter, the emergence of Coletivo Papo Reto points to another aggregate and networked change we have noted in grassroots activism in Rio de Janeiro. We refer to the digital dimension of activism, which has enabled *faveladas/os* with affordances that have been consequential for identity politics and (in)securitization. To tailor digital and enregistered affordances into advancing a human rights agenda, denouncing police abuses and producing data about shootings, in 2014, Raull partnered with other activists, including Raphael Calazans, Renata Trajano, and Thainã Medeiros, whom we engaged in dialogue

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Figure 5.4 "Quem faz o papo reto acontecer (Who Makes the Straight Talk Happen)."

with in this book, and create the Coletivo Papo Reto. Figure 5.4 displays some of the members of the collective. Clockwise from top left are: Lana Souza, Raull Santiago, Renata Trajano, Thainã Medeiros, Ananda Trajano, and Bento Fábio. At the center of the image, the caption reads, "Quem faz o papo reto acontecer," or "Who makes the straight talk happen." Interestingly, in this image, the activists are wearing a t-shirt with a dictionary entry (created by the collective) about the *papo reto* register. Described as "gíria popular" (popular slang), the parodic dictionary entry taps into a prototypical genre of language standardization and defines *papo reto* along lines that include "aquele aquela que se posiciona de maneira objetiva, . . . atitude de quem não enrola . . . [e] aqueles e aquelas que não são fãs de canalhas" or "A person who positions himself or herself objectively . . . an

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attitude of someone who doesn't deceive ... Those who are not fans of scoundrels."

We now turn to an excerpt of a talk by Raull at the 2019 Perifa Talks – an event dedicated to income generation, political organization, and cultural production in peripheries promoted by Agencia Solano Trindade and Radio Mixtura in São Paulo – that unpacks the formation of Coletivo Papo Reto. This festival took place in Campo Limpo, a peripheral district in São Paulo, and therefore Raull was speaking to a public that included *faveladas/os.* Evident in Raull's speech is the diachronic change in activism facilitated by digitalization:

Excerpt 5.2 Raull Santiago Speaking at Perifa Fest, São Paulo, December 14, 2019

a principal política pública que chega para nós, o amplo investimento ainda é o da violência contra o nosso povo vindo como discurso de política de segurança, uma segurança pública que não inclui a nós moradores e moradoras de favelas como pessoas que têm o direito à garantia de segurança mas são vistos como inimigos de uma ideia de segurança pública que na prática é privada (.) tem quem paga (.) e aí nessas construções eu comecei a perceber que (.) a violência só crescia no Complexo do Alemão (.) por mais que a gente tentava denunciar, a gente era criminalizado (.) se as pessoas se juntavam para fazer um protesto em uma via de acesso a- a- (.) a imprensa vinha, discursava que aquele protesto era a mando do crime organizado, a polícia era a única voz final a falar sobre aquele momento, nunca era a nossa voz como a voz final, como a voz central de algo, e aí nada dava certo (.) só que depois quando a gente começou acessar internet e ter a possibilidade de ter melhores equipamentos, como um bom celular, eu comecei a tentar registrar isso o máximo possível, então a gente se juntou e começou a monitorar, vamo acompanhar a violência, vamo acompanhar como isso acontece dentro do Complexo do Alemão (. . .) nesse processo de tentar acompanhar a violência, surge esse grupo de pessoas aqui, são uns projetos que eu faço parte que se chama Coletivo Papo Reto (.) o Coletivo Papo Reto ele surge no Complexo do Alemão com intuito de (.) ser papo reto, ou seja, falar de violência, falar que a gente vive de nós para nós primeiramente, e depois de nós para fora, ou seja, organizar as pessoas a não aceitarem que a principal política pública pro preto pro pobre pro favelado pra pessoa que vive na nossa realidade seja a violência do Estado como a regra

the main public policy that comes to us, the main investment is still violence against our people, coming as a security policy discourse, a public security that doesn't include us, favela residents, as people who have the right to the guarantee of security, but are seen as enemies of an idea of public security that in practice is private (.) with someone paying for it (.) and then, in these constructions, I began to notice that (.) violence was only growing in Complexo do Alemão (.) no

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Excerpt 5.2 (cont.)

matter how hard we tried to denounce it, we were criminalized (.) if people got together to make a protest in an access road to- to- (.) the press would come, and say that the protest was orchestrated by organized crime, the police were the only final voice to speak about that moment, it was never our voice as the final voice, as the central voice of something, and nothing worked out (.) but then, when we started to have access to the internet and to have the possibility to have better equipment, like a good cell phone, I started to try to record this as much as possible, so we got together and started to monitor, let's follow the violence, let's follow how this happens inside Complexo do Alemão . . . in this process of trying to accompany the violence, this group of people emerges here, these are some projects that I am part of that are called Coletivo Papo Reto (.) the Coletivo Papo Reto emerged in the Complexo do Alemão with the intention of (.) being *papo reto* (straight talk), that is, to talk about violence, to talk about how we live from us to ourselves first, and then from us to the outside, that is, to try to organize people to not accept that the main public policy for the Blacks, for the poor, for favela residents, for the people that live in our reality, is state violence as the rule

As Raull explains, the Coletivo Papo Reto emerges in 2014 with an agenda of counter-securitization – tactics of resistance and contestation that oppose the logic of securitization as exceptional use of force and surveillance justified by the alleged threat of perceived "enemies" (Fridolfson & Elander, 2021; Rampton, Silva, & Charalambous, 2022). David Nemer (2022) has written, in *Technology of the Oppressed: Inequity and the Digital Mundane in the Favelas of Brazil*, how faveladas/os from the "Território do Bem" or "Territory of Good" in Vitória utilize digital tools, whether computers in LAN houses or personal mobile devices, to "render livable the extremely inequitable and uncertain technological environments they find themselves in" (p. 51). In our case, we are interested in how faveladas/os appropriate digital resources to counter-securitize the favela towards human rights – the Coletivo Papo Reto, for one, has devised a strategy lying at the nexus of language ideology, digitalization and resistance to security as exception. In Excerpt 5.2, Raull first formulates a critique of Rio de Janeiro's security policy as one that is based on producing "enemies" – *faveladas/os*, Blacks, the poor, and so on. He simultaneously addresses the basic violation of human rights in Rio's securitization – that is, *faveladas/os* "are not include[d in Rio's security] as people who have the right to the guarantee of security" – and the question of private interests in policies such as "pacification," which included business interests ahead of the 2013–2016 mega-events which we discussed above. The collective's main rationale to counter (in)securitization based on enmity, human rights violations and transnational business has been to tailor digital

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affordances and language use itself. Raull thus points out that "analogical" protests (that is, protests before the popularization of smartphones) against police brutality had been framed by the media as traffic-sponsored manifestations. Access to digital technologies, we want to emphasize, indicates an important shift in activism. And while sociolinguists, political scientists, and other analysts point out that digital technologies have been also instrumental to far-right political groups, who harness digital affordances to challenge democracies worldwide (Blommaert, 2019; Cesarino, 2020, 2022; Cesarino & Nardelli, 2021; Maly, 2019; Stolee & Caton, 2018), we believe that our documenting in this book of the use of digital technologies by favela activists, including Mariluce and Kleber (Chapter 4) and Coletivo Papo Reto, points to digital action as also being fundamental for the grassroots advancing of human rights. We may say that life at the online-offline nexus (Blommaert, 2019) is a field of disputes. Thus, in Raull's terms, before their having access to digital gadgets and especially their work in organizing social media messenger groups to circulate information and visual evidence about violence in the community, the main authoritative renditions of their manifestations were the corporate media and the police's: "the press would come, and say that the protest was orchestrated by organized crime, the police were the only final voice to speak about that moment, it was never our voice as the final voice, as the central voice of something, and nothing worked out." Yet the Internet and digital affordances ("a good cell phone") have helped activists countering the mischaracterization of their political action. Fundamentally, Raull explains that they have used digital technologies to "record [police abuse] as much as possible, so we got together and started to monitor, let's follow the violence, let's follow how this happens inside Complexo do Alemão." In addition to their digital monitoring of violence, the Coletivo calibrated *papo reto* as an authoritative arena for the *nós-por-nós* (we by/for ourselves) stance that has been emerging in favelas.

As we are concerned in this chapter with the practice of scaling, it is important to note that the Coletivo Papo Reto's monitoring of violence in Complexo do Alemão (i.e., When and where are shootings happening? Are they originated by the police or drug traffic? What are the violations of human rights at stake? etc.) was further rendered into a multilayered influence in the debate on public security in Rio de Janeiro. First, an initial dimension of their collecting of evidence and data about shootings was within the community itself. To map shootings in Complexo do Alemão, the collective strategically created social media messenger groups with up to eighty participants – some of them recurring in different groups, to facilitate the spread of information. Thus, elsewhere in his talk at Perifa Fest, Raull explains: "if in one of the groups, a person says, 'Oh, there is a shooting in Alvorada', we immediately go to other groups: 'Hey, did anyone hear a shooting?', and someone says, 'Oh, I heard, it's here in Alvorada in that corner' . . . We take this information, go to Facebook

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and post it, 'Hey everybody, shots are being fired in Alvorada.'" This dynamic organization of groups allows for an effective geographical coverage of live information about shootings in Complexo do Alemão, and provides several fact-checking possibilities. Second, Raull and the other activists noted that they had enough data on shootings and police raids that helped them "pautar a política pública [de segurança] . . . lá no batalhão e no político" ("set the agenda of the public policy [of security] . . . at the battalion and among politicians"). Raull exemplifies that with the data that they were able to gather over a course of months, they could eventually "ir no batalhão e ir lá no político e dizer, por que tá tendo operação 7 horas da manhã? o que que isso constrói? você sabia que não teve aula hoje? você sabia que acertou transformador? o comércio não pôde abrir e perdeu o seu produto?" ("go to the battalion and the politician and ask: Why is there a raid at 7am? What is the benefit of this? Did you know that there was no class today? Did you hear that [the shots] hit the transformer? That local trading could not open and their produce got rotten")? Third, Raull scales up the reach of their digital action – beyond the battalion in the neighborhood area – into influencing the agenda of public security. In his words:

Excerpt 5.3 Raull Santiago Speaking at Perifa Fest, São Paulo, December 14, 2019

porque pela primeira vez quando a gente começou a divulgar essas imagens, a gente conseguiu pautar não só o significado de segurança pública no Rio de Janeiro (.) mas também o significado da Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora, que era vendido pro mundo e para o restante do Brasil (.) como a solução da segurança do nosso país (.) só que uma segurança de fora para dentro, a militarização da pobreza e o controle violento como política pública

because for the first time when we started to publicize these images, we managed to influence the agenda not only about the meaning of public security in Rio de Janeiro (.) but also the meaning of the Pacification Police Unit that was sold to the world and to the rest of Brazil (.) as the solution to our country's security (.) but a security from the outside in, the militarization of poverty and violent control as public policy

Raull's claim about the influence of a favela collective on security policy is telling. Obviously, triangulating his narrative and situating it in a broader field of disputes is necessary. Hence, it is important to be mindful that in the

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years that Bolsonaro led the federal executive (2019–2022) and Bolsonarist governors Wilson Witzel (2019–2020) and Claudio Castro (2020–present) administered Rio de Janeiro, the field of security has been increasingly radicalized toward penal populism, rising police violence, and the strengthening of *milícias* (groups that Bolsonaro and his sons have always openly defended) as yet another agent challenging the government of peripheries. Nevertheless, the digital and enregistered action of activists and residents figures as an important counterpoint to this necropolitical scenario. The partnership of Coletivo Papo Reto with other collectives and institutions, including Witness, a New York City-based NGO invested in helping "human rights defenders use video to expose injustice" (Witness, 2021), has been fundamental in the Coletivo's quest of advancing a more democratic agenda of security. Through its resources and networks, Witness has provided the Coletivo with "resources surrounding safety and security" of their members (Witness, 2017, n.p.). Further, they have aided the connections between Papo Reto activists and "teams of allies including activists, public defenders, and lawyers, to critically consider how to use visual documentation for advocacy, protection, and evidence" (Witness, 2017, n.p.).

Another activist who has helped "scaling up" these grassroots forms of mapping shootings and (in)security into broader arenas is Cecília Olliveira, a Black journalist working for the Intercept Brazil. In 2016, Cecília created the Fogo Cruzado (Crossfire) digital platform. Informally known as "Waze do pipoco" (the Bang Bang Waze), this digital app combines the digital affordances and sociolinguistic imaginations we have documented in this section with further resources for "enfrentar a violência armada, promover a transformação social e salvar vidas," or "confronting armed violence, promoting social transformation and saving lives" (Fogo Cruzado, 2022, n.p). Currently available in the cities of Recife and Rio de Janeiro, the Fogo Cruzado app allows users to insert information of shootings and other dimensions of armed violence, providing users with crucial information about insecurity throughout the city. It also provides experts and others with an open source database that has been more accurate than the data offered by official state agencies (Filgueiras, 2017). During fieldwork, Daniel has met with Cecília in different activist circles, including the 2016 Circulando. We want to highlight that Cecília, herself a human rights activist, is in dialogue with these grassroots practices of mapping (in)security in the territory and sociolinguistically portraying favelas in more affirmative terms. While of course not all residents are "progressivists," most of them have strategies for mapping (in)security in the territory, for instance by spreading rumors and using digital technologies (Menezes, 2015). In explaining where the idea of the Fogo Cruzado app came from, Cecília says that it was a strategy by Complexo do Alemão residents that first prompted her to think of a systematic way to

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document shootings and other data on gun violence (see Filgueiras, 2017). For example, in 2015, she noticed that while the Instituto de Segurança Pública (Public Security Institute), which collects the state crime data, did not have a systematic survey of shootings, the employees of a fast food eatery in Complexo do Alemão told her in an interview: “Today, there has been a hundred days without any shootings in Alemão.” Cecília discreetly inquired about how they had reached that number, and discovered “that they were doing a sort of informal count of confrontations in the favela, writing them down on a sheet of paper” (cited in Figueiras, 2017). Cecília also soon began to follow reports of armed conflict like those of Coletivo Papo Reto on social media. Aided by institutions like Amnesty International and the Update Institute, Cecília repurposed these different methods of mapping security into a digital platform. In half a decade, the data gathered and analyzed by Fogo Cruzado has made the Institute an influential agent in the debate of public security in Brazil. Cecília and other members of Fogo Cruzado have been invited to discuss data on (in)security in different social spaces and institutions, including Brazil’s Supreme Court (see Supremo Tribunal Federal, 2021). In a moment of democratic and institutional collapse under Bolsonarism in Brazil, the sociolinguistic and political action of Cecília and the Fogo Cruzado team toward a more democratic policing and security policy has been all the more important. Further, the fact that Cecília scales the activism, forms of talk, and language ideologies of agents like Coletivo Papo Reto, Mariluce, Kleber, and other activists into broader digital and political arenas points to the efficacy and potential for change in the sociolinguistic struggle we have documented in this book.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have described how favela activists and grassroots organizations have engaged in the practice of hope, that is, the semiotic work of situating despair as “background” or “condition to be acted upon” while reorienting communicative resources for building material conditions aimed at individual and collective flourishing. More specifically, we have focused on scaling hope as a pedagogical practice. Our case studies document how the three collectives that we more closely focus in this book – Instituto Raízes em Movimento, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Coletivo Papo Reto – produce participation frameworks where an educated and embodied hope is variously nurtured, inhabited, and projected. For instance, we looked at Circulando: Comunicação e Diálogo nas Favelas, an annual street fair and series of debates promoted by the Instituto Raízes em Movimento, as a key participation framework for the circulation of ideas and people in the favela. While opposing the police state and the police jargon *circulando* as an injunction against *favelados/*

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as congregating in the streets, Circulando gathers residents, activists, and visitors to advance alternative views of politics, culture, and art and calibrate authoritative forms of talk and regimes of language. We also compared the politics of resignification (Butler, 1997) – that is, the repetition of a sign against its original injurious purposes – in the 2013 Circulando and in Anielle's master's dissertation. Anielle rejects the use of an injurious image – the Flanders Mask or the mask of speechlessness – as iconic of the silencing of Blacks. If seen chronologically, the interval of 2013–2021 is indexical of important shifts in favela activism: Anielle's rejection of resignification points to a critique to metadiscourses of survival and precarity, and the strengthening of metadiscourses of hope. Another major shift is conspicuous: the increasing digitalization of favela activism. We thus focused on Coletivo Papo Reto, a collective formed in 2014 by activists in Complexo do Alemão who harness affordances from digital technologies and the *papo reto* activist register in aid of using video, image, and data as counter-securitization while propelling a more affirmative view of Blacks and favela lifestyles. In short, the police state, the historic necropolitics targeting favelas, and the dispute between normative armed regimes (the State and "crime") tend to render *faveladas/os* silent (Machado da Silva & Menezes, 2019). Favela residents are therefore constantly "anticipating" (Menezes, 2015) how to use their talk publicly due to the risk of "losing one's life" – which appears to be at the core of Marielle Franco's assassination. However, we have documented here how collectives like Coletivo Papo Reto, Instituto Marielle Franco, and Raízes em Movimento attempt to create enunciative conditions for fearless speech and for the chained authentication of the *papo reto* activist register – as a whole, these institutions also provide a network for ensuring that the *papo* (talk) of activists and residents is *reto*, straight to the point. Their networked, rhizomatic, and enregistered action has also been able to challenge a necropolitical security policy in one of the world's most unequal countries.

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6 Conclusion

Doing Hope, Researching Hope

In this book, we have drawn from a number of theorizations and empirical cases to discuss how people variously engage with practical reason and grapple with semiotic resources at their disposal to enact hope in their communicative practice. And while we have alluded to various ethnographic works on hope as situated practice, we chose to look at *faveladas/os* and their struggle for redress of the historical inequalities in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil. Hope emerges as a situated practice not only of reorienting knowledge (Miyazaki, 2004), but also of reorienting temporality and the resources of language. Obviously, temporality – or "time as it is experienced within a way of life" (Lear, 2006, p. 40) – and language itself are part and parcel of knowledge as a hyperonym for situated practices of knowing, feeling, and inhabiting the world with others. Yet we emphasize the reorientations of both temporality and language because these forms of reinvention are very conspicuous in our empirical cases. For instance, Ernst Bloch (1986), a leading philosopher who wrote one of the most comprehensive treatises on the subject of hope, indicated that "[h]ope, this expectant counter-emotion against anxiety and fear . . . refers to the furthest and brightest horizon" (p. 75). As we discussed in Chapter 1, where we lay out the premises of our theoretical orientation to hope, Bloch and other authors have variously defined hope as an affect oriented to the "horizon of the future to be attained" (p. 131). Yet as we discussed in Chapter 3, for Marielle Franco and the mourning movement that surfaced following her tragic assassination, the horizon they have hoped for is not the indefinite future to be attained. As illustrated in the case studies of Chapter 3, her mourners' hope lies not in a linear future to be aspired for but in the "present." Through mantras that include "Marielle, presente" and "Marielle vive," alongside a collective fight for actions to be carried out in the present circumstances of Brazil's democratic collapse under Bolsonarism, they invoke the specter of Marielle and her embodiment of the Black woman to ground their activism in the present of political action. They narrate Marielle as spectrally *presente* with them, and project the time and space for political change as right now, right here. This metaleptic narration of Marielle – that is, this narration through the "transgression of narrative universes" (Genette, 1980) – is widespread in current Brazil, and its weight goes beyond the progressivist circles where Marielle has been

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influential. For progressives, Marielle has been a figure of present immanence, yet for the white supremacist movement that Bolsonaro has amplified, Marielle has been continuously narrated as a symbol of the Black gendered body whose life is not mournable but whose phantasmatic presence is a continuing threat (see Alves & Vargas, 2020; Fanon, 1969). Further, the narration of Marielle as a fundamental "absent presence" (Deumert, 2022) in this mourning movement – and by extension in a sizable portion of one of the world's largest democracies – points not only to hope being contingent on situated and metaleptic time. As we discuss below, it is a piece of evidence we mount to debate, alongside Deumert (2022), the "naïve empiricism that has shaped sociolinguistic work over the decades" (p. 2).

The second reorientational work that concerns our empirical cases is language itself. At its most basic grammatical and textual levels, language is inherently adaptive (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Verschueren, 1999). Yet we have privileged a particular dimension of reorientation – namely, the analogical and translational work across register formations that is often involved in enregisterment (Agha, 2015). These analogies – that is, "structural calques or partial analogues," in our case, across slang lexemes and those attributed to a "standard" – are not neutral (Agha, 2015, p. 324). Through language ideology, users transform "facts of morphosyntactic or phonolexical difference into facts of sociological difference" (p. 324). In Chapter 4 and throughout the book we looked to the *papo reto* activist register as a fundamental language practice through which *faveladas/os* rescale repertoires, pragmatic features, and models of personae to a "speech level" that is recognized as belonging to the favela. For instance, in our discussion about the *fogos virtual* fired by Mariluce and Kleber as warnings for residents about the "crossfire" between traffic and the police and simultaneously as affirmative forms of describing the favela, we pointed to Kleber's engagement with the reorientational work of *papo reto*. In Kleber's words, on social media: "a gente consegue alcançar as pessoas tanto dentro da favela como de fora da favela, por que a gente consegue? porque a gente usou a linguagem que as pessoas entendem . . . a gente buscou uma linguagem que está ao alcance . . . não adianta eu falar lá que . . . 'nós vamos fazer a desmilitarização da polícia,' ninguém vai entender nada, entendeu?" or "we used the language that people understand . . . we tried to use a language within people's reach . . . it's no use saying, 'we are going to demilitarize the police,' no one will understand it, you see?" As much as the risks of shootings emanating from the dispute between "crime" and state are a present and pressing issue for *faveladas/os*, reorienting language in ways that others in the community readily understand is a fundamental pragmatic feature of *papo reto*. We have given a central importance to this reorientational communicative practice in this book not only because "ser *papo reto*," or "being *papo reto*," was a trope that Daniel often heard in his visits to Complexo do Alemão and

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other favelas in Rio de Janeiro. Rationalized as a general attitude of "ser direta/o," "ir direto ao ponto e desenrolar a conversa sobre desigualdades raciais e sociais," and "não ser fã de canalhas," or "being direct," "going straight to the point in sorting out racial and social inequities," and "not being fan of scoundrels," the activist register *papo reto* is also central in this book because, for the favela activists we have engaged with, it is a fundamental language game to survive the "crossfire" and participate politically in one of the world's most unequal countries.

An example for the simultaneous communicative and political effects of the *papo reto* activist register is the *Fogo Cruzado* digital app, informally known as "waze do pipoco" or the "Bang Bang Waze" (Fogo Cruzado, 2022). Devised by Cecília Olliveira, a Black journalist working for the Intercept Brazil, this digital app scales up grassroots forms of mapping shootings and (in)security that we document in this book. Mariluce and Kleber and the Coletivo Papo Reto activists marshal social media networks to provide residents with crucial information about areas where shootings and other events are taking place. As we discuss in Chapter 5, with the data they have produced through the sharing of texts, videos, and images about incidents, they have been able to challenge the violent policing of Complexo do Alemão. Through alliances with human rights institutions such as Amnesty International and the Update Institute, Cecília and the Fogo Cruzado activists have been able to tailor this digital app to offer live information about shootings and rescale hope from an abstract utopian aspiration into a pedagogically actualizable action. In explaining where the idea of the Fogo Cruzado app came from, Cecília says that it was a strategy by Complexo do Alemão residents that first prompted her to think of a systematic way to document shootings and other data on gun violence (see Filgueiras, 2017). Currently available in the cities of Recife and Rio de Janeiro, the Fogo Cruzado app allows users to insert information of shootings and other dimensions of armed violence, providing users with crucial information about insecurity throughout the city. It also provides experts and others with an open source database that has been more accurate than the data offered by official state agencies (Filgueiras, 2017). In fact, in just a few years, the data gathered and analyzed by Fogo Cruzado has made the Institute an influential counter-securizing agent in the debate on public security in Brazil. Cecília and other members of Fogo Cruzado have been invited to discuss data on (in)security in different social spaces and institutions, including Brazil's Supreme Court (see Supremo Tribunal Federal, 2021). In spite of the threat of democratic and institutional collapse as a result of Bolsonarism in Brazil, the sociolinguistic and political action of Cecília and the Fogo Cruzado team aimed at realizing a more democratic policing and security policy has come to be all the more important. Further, the fact that Cecília scales the activism,

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forms of talk, and language ideologies of agents like Coletivo Papo Reto, Mariluce, Kleber, Marielle, and other activists into broader digital and political arenas point to the efficacy and potential for change in the sociolinguistic struggle we have documented in this book.

While the individuals, activists, and collectives that we have dealt with in this book have identified creative ways to use language toward the enactment of hope variously, including in the present, much work is left to be done. And if we are to be serious about pursuing such work, it is important to reiterate here that one of the most persistent challenges to the continued research of hope is of our own creation: the critical distrust of the research enterprise as such by vulnerable populations as a result of exploitative tendencies by researchers, a long-standing problem alluded to in Anand Pandian's (2019) work, as we described in the Introduction. One of the more obviously problematic cases of such research specific to the Brazilian context might be Claude Lévi-Strauss's (1961) depiction of the indigenous Nambikwara people in *Tristes Topiques*. Lévi-Strauss recounts a moment when he attempts to give the Nambikwara "a writing lesson" (p. 287). According to Lévi-Strauss, "[t]hat the Nambikwara could not write goes without saying. But they were also unable to draw, except for a few dots and zigzags on their calabashes" (p. 288). In a public gathering including Lévi-Strauss, the Nambikwara chief, and several members of their tribe, the chief, having been provided a pencil and a notepad just moments before, draws some "scribbled lines" (p. 289) on a piece of paper and, Lévi-Strauss, believing that he is reaffirming to the audience their leader's purported aptitude for this new skill, listens as the chief pretends to read for "two solid hours" (p. 289). Lévi-Strauss, by playing along with chief, believes that he has done the chief and perhaps all the Nambikwara people in attendance, a favor. Yet, as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2012) asks, "among the three parties, who is playing with whom?" (p. 66). Ngũgĩ proceeds to remind us that the man who was ostensibly so readily duped by the anthropologist is in fact the chief of the Nambikwara:

> Whatever the marks he puts on paper, it cannot surely be for the sole purpose of impressing his people with his knowledge, for they know, and he knows they know, that he cannot write and read any more than they can. (p. 66)

But perhaps even more compelling is another observation by Ngũgĩ:

> If the chief were in a position to describe the same encounter, he would tell a very different version of the event. At the very least he would not describe it as a writing lesson, nor would he confuse the gift of paper and pen with the gift of writing and therefore conclude that writing had come to his people. (p. 66)

The fact that research participants might have a different take on their encounter with researchers is something that is rarely discussed. How are we to

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presume, in other words, that our interlocutors have had a positive (or even neutral!) experience by participating in research?

Also, by extension, how are we to presume that what they have shared with us what they actually mean? Was the Nambikwara chief actually being played by Lévi-Strauss? Or was Lévi-Strauss, the renowned anthropologist that the Nambikwara chief likely could not care less about, simply a nuisance and the chief simply performing the gesture of having "learned" how to write so he could go on with his life? We are reminded here of Partha Chatterjee's (2004) description of *Dhorai Charitmanas*, a novel by Bengali writer Satinath Bhaduri, which portrays a moment of conflict between two ethnic groups: the Ramayana and Dhangars. As Chatterjee writes, for the Ramayana, "their general strategy of survival, perfected over generations of experience, is to stay away from entanglements with government and its procedures" (p. 10). Following an incident of neighborly conflict in which one of the neighboring Dhangars sets fire to a Ramanyana house, the protagonist of the novel, Dhorai, "understands and tells the police that he had seen nothing and did not know who had set fire to their house" (p. 11), reflective of an ambivalence toward institutional forms of intervention, along with a recognition that such forms of support are merely short-term resolutions, insignificant in the light of the need to establish a collaborative and ultimately unofficial community ethic. It is important to note that Marielle herself, as an elected political official, would likely not have endorsed a unilateral rejection of the political order. Of course, in her "A Emergência da Vida" essay she does acknowledge that "a considerable number of favelada women view political participation with some distrust" (Franco, M., 2018, p. 138). She adds that "[t]hey are unlikely to be in touch with those who can access state institutions – seen by the majority as belonging to the undifferentiated ranks of the political elite" (p. 138). This being noted, Marielle does not outright reject the value of political participation. Their political participation is not limited to officially sanctioned avenues: for instance, through their artistic practice "the presence of these women resonates through the city" (p. 137). In addition, "[t]hey build networks of solidarity focused on sustaining lives and reinforcing dignity" (p. 137). And while there is much to be gained by enacting change through extant conduits of political participation, the reality is that many *faveladas/os* view research as performed by scholars from outside the favela with a great deal of skepticism, and for good reason. In the Introduction, we presented an excerpt of an interaction between favela activists Thainã and Renata on their podcast, *Papo Reto Cast*, in which they call out the exploitative tendencies of academic researchers. Here we present the next few moments of their interaction:

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Excerpt C.1 Papo Reto Cast, Complexo do Alemão, 2018

THAINÃ: e nós não sabe pra que que é o bagulho=
RENATA: =e nós não sabe pra que que é, porque a pessoa não volta pra dar retorno
THAINÃ: [e quando
RENATA: [quando volta=
THAINÃ: =é um negócio que a gente não entende nada (…) época de olimpíada e copa, cara, tava cheio de gringo aqui na favela, jornalista, antropólogo (.) nunca vi- nunca conheci tanto antropólogo na minha vida
RENATA: nem eu, e aí, né, a Renata que já é mais pá e brose, já tá aí ali na atividade (.) falo logo, a partir de agora pesquisador só me pesquisa se me pagar, não vai levar meus conhecimentos de graça pra academia mais não

THAINÃ: and we don't know the purpose of the stuff=
RENATA: =and we don't know what that is for, because the person doesn't return here to give us feedback
THAINÃ: [and when
RENATA: [when they come back=
THAINÃ: =it's something we don't understand at all (….) during the Olympics and the World Cup, man, it was full of gringos here in the favela, journalists, anthropologists (.) never in my life have I seen so many anthropologists all at once
RENATA: me neither, and then, you know, Renata is more straightforward, she's already there struggling (.) I say right away, from now on scholars have to pay me, they won't take any more my knowledge for free to the university

(Trajano, R. & Medeiros, T., 2018, 21:59–22:50)

And while ethnographic researchers are well aware of the extractivist tendencies of anthropological research (even though they don't always act on such supposed awareness), Thainã and Renata provide a rare glimpse of how research subjects who have experienced such exploitative logics approach requests to participate in research with distrust. Thainã added that "if you want to understand the favela, come to the favela . . . Or alternatively, I will give you some theories and authors, just so you understand the favela. There is a group of philosophers from São Paulo, Racionais M.C.s. Listen to them and you will understand the favela. Go listen to MC Orelha and you will understand

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the favela . . . ” In addition to enacting a skepticism about longstanding extractivist practices on the part of academics, Thainã and Renata were invoking the *nós–por-nós* (we by/for ourselves) stance (Fabrício & Melo, 2020) that we have discussed throughout the case studies. That is, the *favelado* and *favelada* were claiming that *favelada/os* produce relevant knowledge, and that for them, a valid scholarship about the favela has to necessarily engage with philosophers and intellectuals from the territory.

The *nós-por-nós* stance is iconic of a number of changes in the favela, including the fact that since 2003, Blacks and other minorities have had access to the public university through affirmative action. This is but one of the achievements of Brazilian Black social movements. If we were asked what methodologically a sociolinguistics of hope would look like, we would say that there is, of course, no algorithm for building trust with the subjects practicing hope and for abiding by a general set of ethical principles. The now increasingly common practices such as “acknowledging one’s positionality” are certainly a start, but they should not be treated as a passport to freely study marginalized populations. Going to the field to understand what communities think, as Thainã and Renata suggest above, is no guarantee of fair dialogue with interlocutors in the field either. Ana Deumert (2022), for instance, debates the “naïve belief that once we bring in speakers as agents, we can study them, their actions, and their practices” (p. 4). A common naïve empiricist claim is to say that once we have been there in the field – and once we look to our interlocutors not as informants but as “agents” – a field of visibility opens. Further, “[m]ethodological practices such as photography and/or audio/video recordings” (p. 4) would render visible the hidden meanings of what our interlocutors say (or do not say). Yet, Deumert hastens to add, “by making certain things visible, we simultaneously make other things invisible” (p. 4).

A conspicuous invisibility, so to speak, is the system of power that declares what counts as the “visible” meaning of an utterance or communicative practice that one witnesses in the field. Take the example of the *papo reto* activist register. On more than one occasion, we received pushback in peer reviewing and other forms of academic gatekeeping because what we were describing as *papo reto* was allegedly not a register. One reviewer, for instance, claimed that Bolsonaro could also be said to embody a *papo reto* (straight talk) style, which would invalidate the claim that this is the enregisterment of an anti-racist agenda. Another said that since they have spent a lot of time living in and researching Brazil but had never heard of *papo reto*, the phenomenon could not exist. Yet another one doubted that the reference of “*canalhas*” (in the informal dictionary definition provided by Coletivo Papo Reto) in the phrase “[to be *papo reto*] is not to be a fan of *canalhas* [scoundrels]” could mean not white supremacists/Bolsonarists, but “drug dealers.” Meanwhile, in Daniel’s

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dialogue with *faveladas/os*, usually the agents of the drug trade are not referenced in derogatory terms, as they may be neighbors, acquaintances, or even friends (see also Rodrigues and Siqueira, 2012). In this example, what counts as visible, that is, as "empirically valid?" Adriana Facina (2016) – a scholar who, so to speak, would have listened to Thainã and Renata, and tried to understand the meaning of communicative practices in the favela by engaging with *faveladas/os* – reached similar conclusions as ours about the *papo reto* activist register. Through a sustained dialogue with *faveladas/os* and other scholars studying favelas, she describes the practice of *desenrolar a conversa* – to "unroll the conversation," that is, to be *papo reto* – as signaling that the conversation will have, from that moment on, to be contextually "clear" and "serious." This is "um dispositivo muito utilizado nas favelas para mediar e solucionar conflitos que em determinadas situações podem resultar em violência armada e morte" or "a very common device in favelas for mediating and fixing conflicts that could possibly lead to armed violence and death" (p. 219). She adds that *desenrolar* is important not only for those liminal situations but also for a number of other occasions, including those where physical or symbolic survival "depende de saber usar adequadamente argumentos e ter uma *performance* convincente" or "depends on one's using arguments and having a convincing performance" (p. 219). Together with activists from Raízes, she named one of the main frameworks for the teaching of *papo reto* that we documented in Chapter 4 as "Vamos desenrolar."

Adriana Facina and the Brazilianist reviewers and colleagues we discussed above clearly have different agendas vis-à-vis the visibility and validity of the knowledge that *faveladas/os* produce. One party is interested in building alliances and producing knowledge alongside interlocutors, the other decides what counts as knowledge based on their epistemological stance. In the case of *papo reto*, the latter party doubts that this particular practice is a register at all – or even that it exists.[1] Regarding the existence of *papo reto*, perhaps the more important question is: Does someone who embodies this style project a persona who is against white supremacy or not? Who decides what counts as reference for a particular utterance framed as *papo reto*? From our anecdote, the response to those questions will never be "empirical" – or at least not metaphysically empirical, as scholars like Derrida, Deumert, and others have claimed. Power is of course something that will participate in the logic of rendering visible something while invisibilizing something else – on one occasion, for instance, Daniel had a paper rejected on the basis of those comments, and therefore *papo reto* did not count as visible for that publication. Ultimately, the types of alliances in the field one builds, the (collective) aspirations one facilitates, the

[1] We are still not sure why our colleagues of Coletivo Papo Reto would go through the trouble of creating an organization based on something that does not exist.

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spectral voices one allows to be cited, and the views one nurtures about scholarship, as the privilege of a few or a human right, all matter in a sociolinguistics of hope.

For researchers who have invested in the question and topic of hope, one of the major questions that remains, then, is quite simply: What counts as knowledge? We have been careful to emphasize throughout this book that knowledge cannot be limited to that which is produced by "empirical" means or only to that which is generated by those with the appropriate institutional credentials. In fact, although our theorization of hope draws, admittedly, from philosophers and other intellectuals, as we have seen, the most principled and sophisticated enactments of hope come not from the mind of the academy but from interlocutors and authors from urban peripheries characterized by conditions of unrelenting violence and seeming hopelessness. To repeat Claudia Blöser (2019): "We hope in a great variety of ways" (p. 212). We also hope using a great variety of resources. The resource we have focused on in this book, of course, is language. And whether it was from our treatment of metaleptic temporality, our description of the *papo reto* activist register, or the pedagogical scaling of hope by community-based collectives, we hope we have inspired our readers to continue to look to language as a reason, so to speak, for hope.

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Postscript

When we finished writing this book, on October 31, 2022, Jair Bolsonaro had just lost the presidential election to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva by a thin margin of 2 million votes. A story familiar to U.S. Americans of voter suppression tormented many Brazilians, as Bolsonaro had used institutions such as the Polícia Rodoviária Federal, or the Federal Highway Police, to prevent people in Brazil's poor Northeast, who mostly voted for Lula, from reaching the voting booth. His administration also adopted measures such as using the public bank Caixa Econômica Federal to offer loans to people on low incomes – one of the segments which was mainly pro Lula – with hardly any guarantees of repayment. Many other extralegal means of keeping Bolsonaro in power were rehearsed by his administration and supporters. On January 8, 2023, just one week after the inauguration of Lula in his third term as president, Bolsonaro's supporters invaded the Palácio do Planalto, the seat of the Brazilian Parliament, and the Supreme Court – vandalizing works of art and public property, clearly imitating the storming of the U.S. Capitol by Donald Trump supporters on January 6, 2021.

Due to the depredation of the iconic buildings housing the executive, legislative, and judicial powers and the investigations that followed, the inauguration of Anielle Franco and Sônia Guajajara as ministers for racial equality and Indigenous peoples, respectively, had to be postponed for a few days. Nevertheless, it is meaningful for us to write in this afterword that a close relative of Marielle Franco – her own sister – is currently practicing in institutional politics the hope that the former councilwoman has metaleptically taught legion of activists in Rio de Janeiro and across the world. Marielle was vicariously present at the combined inauguration of Anielle, a Black woman, and Sônia Guajajara, an Indigenous woman from the Guajajara/Tentehar people. Several times during Anielle's inaugural speech as minister of state, the mantra "Marielle, *presente*" – which epitomizes much of the pragmatic strategies and semiotic models described in this book – was intoned, and the audience would rise to their feet and cheer Marielle's memory fists clenched. Like Marielle, Anielle recognized and revered the Black women who came before her – a bond through the pain and resilience of those surviving the legacy of the world's largest and longest slavery regime during the colonization of the

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Americas. Like her sister, Anielle also calibrated portions of her talk into the *papo reto* activist register. For example, at one point in her speech, Anielle said:

> Combater o racismo e o fascismo parte também da luta por justiça e reparação e por democracia. Precisamos identificar e responsabilizar quem insiste em manter essa política de morte e encarceramento de nossa juventude negra, comprovadamente falida – assim como estamos identificando e responsabilizando quem executou, provocou e financiou a barbárie que vimos no último domingo. Precisamos enquanto sociedade ter uma conversa franca e honesta que países no mundo inteiro já estão fazendo. Encarar a realidade de que essa política da guerra nas periferias e favelas nunca funcionou. Pelo contrário, apenas segue dilacerando famílias e alimentando um ciclo de violência sem fim. Se o mundo em que queremos viver é um mundo onde todas as pessoas tenham o igual direito de serem felizes com sua liberdade, respeitando uns aos outros em paz, em harmonia, com justiça e dignidade, já passou da hora de pararmos de repetir as fórmulas fracassadas que não entregam nada disso.

> Fighting racism and fascism is also part of the struggle for justice and redress and for democracy. We need to identify and hold accountable those who insist on upholding this demonstrably failed policy of death and incarceration of our Black youth – just as we are identifying and holding accountable those who executed, provoked, and financed the brutality we saw last Sunday. We as a society must have a frank and honest conversation that countries around the world have already been doing. We must face the reality that the policy of war in the peripheries and favelas has never worked. On the contrary, it just keeps breaking up families and feeding a never-ending cycle of violence. If the world we want to live in is a world where all people have the equal right to be happy with their own freedom, respecting each other in peace, in harmony, with justice and dignity, it is about time we stop repeating the failed formulas that don't deliver any of this.

The current minister for racial equality regarded the attack on the seat of Brazil's governmental, judicial, and legal institutions as a fascist act. She was also explicit that the executive and other institutions ought to adopt *papo reto* (and other cohering registers) in order to address demands for justice from social movements, opposing the incarceration of the Black population and the so called war on drugs: "We as a society must have a *frank and honest conversation* that countries around the world have already been doing." In further enunciating that it is necessary to "face the *reality* that the policy of war in the peripheries and favelas has never worked," Anielle invoked the valorized indexical tropism (Agha, 2015) of *papo reto* – that is, she dismisses discourses that embrace tropes like the "war on drugs" as a solution to urban violence. Furthermore, she says that if the ultimate aspiration of a society is social and racial equality, "it is about time we stop repeating the *failed formulas* that don't deliver any of this" – in other words, it is time to replace registers of speech and action that insist on discursive formulas like "merit," "war," and "incarceration," in favor of tropes like "redress" and "fighting the extermination of the Black population," which stand as central referential objects in the *papo reto* activist register. In closing her inaugural address, Anielle quoted verses by the

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writer Conceição Evaristo and the human rights activist Lúcia Xavier, iconic Black women. She hastened to add that – "we, Black people, will not retreat and we will no longer bow our heads." In Anielle's terms, therefore, the time for hope is now – "we will not retreat."

In other words, an important stance to effect such hope is not "bowing our heads." This is one way to embrace the reflexive semiotic models of defiance that the activists and social movements described in this book have been teaching us.

Marielle, *presente*, because hope cannot wait.

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