

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*.

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).

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

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

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

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

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

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).

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

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)),

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

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 neologically 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.

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 (.)

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 inter rompimento 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

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

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).



Figure 3.1 Escadão Marielle Franco (Marielle Franco Stairs).



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

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:

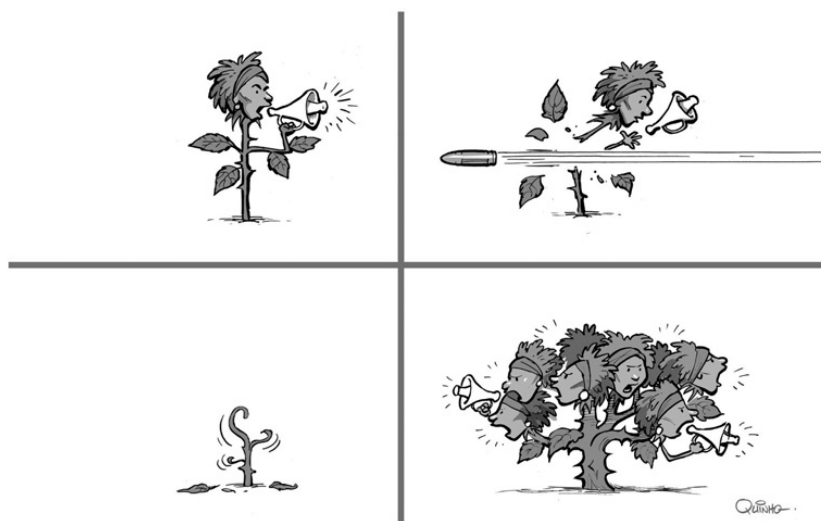


Figure 3.3 “Marielle é semente! (Marielle Is a Seed!),” by Quinho Cartum.

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 Brasília (.) 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

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 Talria'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, Talria invokes metaleptic temporality to emphasize that Marielle is nevertheless "increasingly powerful, stronger and more necessary" in Brasília. Talria 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

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

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.

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.