

ARTIGOS

#MariellePresente: world solidarities and painful realities and memories among Feminist/Queer/Black movements in Brazil

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Abstract

I will address the (painful) political and sociocultural context surrounding Marielle Franco's murder in Brazil, in 2018. Marielle Franco was a Black, lesbian, feminist, activist, mother, partner, politician, and sociologist whose work focused on police violence and militarization. Her assassination constituted both a collective loss and a drastic turning point for those engaged in social struggles and the fight for justice for marginalised populations in Brazil. The attack against Marielle Franco — considered a powerful social symbol - and by extension a direct attack against leftist ways of thinking and the social achievements of Black, feminist, and gueer movements in Brazil, can be perceived by some as a lost battle in the fight for equality in Brazil. In the middle of the historical violence that characterizes Brazil, which includes high rates of hate crimes and police brutality that comprises even murders (particularly against Black people), Marielle's assassination became a sheer message for various social movements to realize what has socially been lost and the high stakes that Brazil faces regarding social equality today. I use Marielle Franco's murder as an analytical site to disentangle Brazil's evolving political and sociocultural context. This includes the various stances and social policies developed around gender, race, and sexuality (and their connection to leftwing and right-wing political fields) before the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff (Worker's Party) and during the "coup d'etat" that led Michel Temer to power and the election of right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro. I also analyze how Franco's political life and death (i.e. who did order her assassination?) have encouraged the development of transnational solidarity movements, specifically in Montreal.

Palavras-Chave: Police Violence. Intersectionality. Social Activism.

To Antônio, Marinete, Luyara, Anielle, Mônica, Renata and Marcelo I am sorry.

Introduction

In this text I seek to offer colleagues from the Social and Human Sciences, particularly sociologists and anthropologists, as well as feminist and queer intellectuals, with an analysis of the political execution of Marielle Franco, a Brazilian sociologist and black feminist, that happened in the midst of a post-coup political context in which conservative sectors of the Brazilian elite impeach the first democratically elected female president in the country. As we shall see, I take Marielle Franco's political execution as an attack on Brazilian democracy, particularly on the national project of a more just and inclusive Brazil for all, populations, poor and addressing discrimination against blacks, women, LGBT, indigenous people, and so many other vulnerable groups.

This text, and the situations it analyzes, are only possible in the present moment from the conjunction of two factors: 1) the apprehension of a certain intersectional positionality among feminist / queer / black movements and 2) the post-truth period. The intersectionality paradigm, as we know, was the main feminist theoretical contribution of recent times, possible exclusively from black feminism that theorized how power is exercised in societies from the hierarchy of groups and populations, fundamentally based on differences of class, gender and race. However, I point out in this text a post-intersectional ethnographic situation, where intersectionality goes beyond the walls of universities and is rooted in common sense, particularly in the world of politics and social activism, becoming a current discourse of society at large.

Despite 15 years of experience in research on homosexuality, particularly male homosexuality, in the last five Antropologia Sem Fronteiras, Salvador, v. 1, p. 1-32, e112403, 2024 https://periodicos.ufba.br/index.php/rasf/index

I have dedicated myself, among other researches, to the history of women and queers in sociology and anthropology. Despite the extensive fieldwork, especially with the archives of the Faculty of Philosophy and Human Sciences of the Federal University of Bahia, only two articles were published. One coauthored with my research assistants on the life and work of Bahia's first intellectual feminist, Zahidé Machado Neto, pioneer in studies on women and the female condition in the state (Fernandes, 2024; Fernandes, Dantas, Pereira, 2016). Another analyzes the trajectory of one of the first black female sociologists of Bahia, Antônia dos Santos Garcia, whose trajectory and interests, so similar to those of Marielle Franco in life, addressed the articulations between gender, race and the right to the city, thus being a pioneer in the 1970s and 1980s of what would become the paradigm of intersectionality (Fernandes, Sardenberg; 2018).

This work on the history of women and gueers in sociology and anthropology led me to propose, together with a group of anthropologists from around the world, during the inter-congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) held in Ottawa in 2015, an International Commission on Global Feminisms and Oueer Politics, recently approved by the union's general assembly at the inter-congress held in Póznan, Poland in August 2019, for which I'll be the chair and Prof. Susana Rostagnol, from Uruguay, will be the co-chair. In addition, after the last world anthropology congress, held in Florianópolis, Brazil, in 2018, I had the opportunity to coordinate in Bahia the post-event "What About Women in the History of Anthropology?" which brought together about 100 researchers from 12 countries who, in five days of intense activities, resumed the trajectories and contributions of women, queers, and blacks to our discipline. In this sense, ethnography has become for me, for the past five

years, a lonely journey through archives, organizing papers, discovering faded photos, reading newspaper clippings consumed by fungi and moths, but always with short periods of intergenerational conversations that promoted exchanges between our elders, family and friends of these researchers, my students and me.

The case I will address in this text was guite different. From this experience and the knowledge gained from the ethnographic biography, I analyze the case of a woman who was the victim of a barbaric execution. Marielle Franco was an unassimilated black and lesbian woman, so she faced the negativity of blackness, femininity, and lesbianism in the political arena, as she presented an "empowered" image of herself, always with a smile on her face, her hair loose and colorful makeup, and a lot of strength in everything she said. In her political activity, she articulated mainly three axes of oppression: class, gender and race, and since her youth, has prioritized black women from low-income communities, called favelas in Brazil. Later in her career, we saw the emergence of lesbian Marielle, lover of her wife and therefore a staunch defender of LGBT rights. As showed by Sabrina Senger and Tiago Graube (2018), all of Marielle Franco's agendas came from her personal experience, the focus of her struggle being feminism, anti-racism, the struggle for the sexual citizenship of LGBT people and for a citizen's public security, especially for the favelados, always guided by the guarantee of the Human Rights. Although her death is just one of many cases of femicide and racism in Brazil, she became a "case of public impact", because of the complexity and cruelty with which the killers planned the action, but also by the electoral success she achieved, her commitment in the defense of her agendas and the admiration that each and all of us who believed in a Brazil more just and democratic felt.

To make sense of both her trajectory and her death and what happened after her execution, including the political use of her image and the emergence of solidarity practices both in Brazil and in several countries abroad, I divide this text into four parts. At first, I approach the biography of Marielle Franco, resuming her academic formation, political militancy and interests. In the second I return to the night of her political execution in a street of the city of Rio de Janeiro, after a lecture at Casa das Pretas, a collective space of black women. In the third part I cover the reproduction of the main fake news related to Marielle Franco's image, which claimed that she was a thief, corrupt and linked to criminal groups, as well as a situation where her image was used by supporters of the then presidential candidate, far-right conservative Jair Bolsonaro during the 2018 election campaign and, finally, I shortly address my participation in three demonstrations of justice for Marielle Franco that took place in Montréal in 2019.

Biography: A Woman Who Bothered

Marielle Francisco da Silva, known politically as Marielle Franco, was born in 1979 in the *Morro do Timbau* community, the oldest part of the *Complexo da Maré* (Rezzutti, 2018; *others*), having lived her childhood and youth in the *Nova Holanda* favela. *Complexo da Maré* is a conglomerate of 16 different favelas in the city of Rio de Janeiro, with around 140,000 inhabitants (Arnaldo, Lima; 2019). In this community, Marielle graduated from High School, besides becoming a funk music dancer between the age of 14 and 17 years old. Also in this community she became a catechist for the Catholic Church, volunteered in the community pre-school, and was a student and secretary in the community based course preparing for the mandatory test to enter universities in Brazil called "*prévestibulares*", before moving out of the community when she

established herself as a leading black feminist activist for LGBT rights and against police violence in Rio de Janeiro.

She was the daughter of Antonio Francisco and Marinete da Silva, both of Paraiban descent, in the northeastern region of Brazil, who migrated to Rio de Janeiro; sister of Anielle Silva also an important community leader; and mother of Luyara Santos, now 19 years old and a physical education undergraduate student. She left widowed her 14-year-old partner, the architect Monica Benicio, who also became an important leader for democracy and justice in the case of Marielle Franco's political execution.

In this topic I will address some aspects of Marielle Franco's personal biography, especially those that I consider relevant to understand her political position in the social movements of Rio de Janeiro, as well as to look for elements that justify her political execution.

Marielle Franco began her political activism in defense of Human Rights in her teens, working with the Youth Ministry (Pastoral da Juventude) of the Catholic Church and the prévestibular of the Center for Studies and Solidarity Actions (Centro de Estudos e Ações Solidárias - CEASM). However, it is attributed her adherence to the fight against police violence in the favelas to the death of a girlfriend who was the victim of a stray bullet in a conflict between police and traffickers in the 2000's (Globoplay, 2018; Rocha, 2009). Before that, following the same path of many young militants of the same social origin (Fernandes, Sardenberg; 2018), she found in the Youth Ministry, a progressive branch of the Catholic Church linked to social movements, her first place of political organization. In the Parish Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes at the Complexo da Maré, she acted as catechist, information that, when released in a note of solidarity after her death by the National Confederation of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB, 2018), considered a conservative

institution, has sparked revolt in the most reactionary sectors of the Catholic Church. The Secretary of the Diocesan Mither of Petrópolis, city near Rio de Janeiro, questioned in disagreement with the note, "catechist? A woman who defend totally antagonistic values to the Catholic doctrine, such as gender ideology, drug release, and abortion? It's too much CNBB hypocrisy and bragging" (Aragão, 2018). Even though she was notoriously a LGBT woman, after her death, she was honored by progressive and conservative religious sectors from various Christian denominations, including evangelical leaders. The Order of Baptist Pastors of Brazil (OPBB) stated that,

If confirmed that [Marielle] was murdered by her opinions, we will have crossed a new and grave line in the already tragic deterioration of our society. As Baptist pastors, we defend the right of all to express their ideas and beliefs. [...] We urge the authorities of Rio de Janeiro to do their utmost to find and punish those responsible for this further heinous crime (Aragão, 2018, s/p).

The public university in Brazil has always been a class project that has primarily benefited the elite youth. In addition to the class aspect, the university prioritised the white population, since even black middle-class youth faced barriers to access and remain in university (Osorio, 2009). In this sense, the university has always been an *almost impossible* project for young people from labour class, especially the *favelados*, as was the case of Marielle Franco. With the expansion of the higher education system and the implementation of affirmative action policies for young black, indigenous and popular groups, primarily during the Lula administration, Brazil achieved the goal of diversifying the population benefited by the public higher education system and, for the first time in history, students from the lower classes, black and indigenous, were not a minority in the classrooms. One of the first barriers faced by

young people from the lower classes for university access is the "entrance exams", compulsory tests for the approval and guarantee of a place in higher education. Although alternatives to tackle inequality in access to public universities in Brazil can be rescued since the 1940s, it is in the 1980s that we see multiply the autonomous organization of university entrance preparatory courses in low-income communities and *favelas* across Brazil. Marielle Franco was one of the beneficiaries of one of these courses, called "pré-vestibulares comunitários".

In 1998, when she was 17 years old, Marielle Franco became a student of the CEASM' pré-vestibular of Maré. This course was created after the diagnosis made by the founders themselves, that only 1% of young people in Maré were successful in accessing the university, whether public or private. First as a student, then as a secretary, Marielle served in the community pré-vestibular for two years, having interrupted school by giving birth to her only daughter, Luyara, at the age of 19. She was also an educator in the pre-school of her community for two years, which indicates a concern with the education of children and youth in their own community. One of the characteristics of these community courses is the preparation for access to the public university, but also for life in this society, aiming at "taking the voice of the favela to the asphalt", In other words, the young prepared in these courses are expected to return benefits to their home community, valuing their roots. Hence the idea of the "seed" that so marked the manifestations after Marielle's political execution that claimed that "we are all Marielle's seeds".

Marielle Franco was accepted for the Social Sciences undergraduate course at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro in 2002, where she studied with a full scholarship exclusively for poor students from Complexo da Maré (Rocha, 2019) and graduated sociologist in 2007 with the final course

monograph entitled "Education and Regulation in the Labor Market: The Debate on the Causes of Income Inequality in Brazil".

In 2003, when Marielle honored her sister Anielle's high school graduation, she met history teacher Marcelo Freixo, later state deputy and now federal deputy for the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL), this teacher has become one of her main political partners. At an event aimed at community prevestibular students entitled "Sunday is movie day", Freixo spoke for the first time with Marielle, having reported that, "in that same instant I realized something that would mark me forever: Mari spoke with her teeth, her broad, intense, giant smile was the size of the woman she was already becoming." (Freixo, 2018). When Freixo was elected state deputy in 2006, Marielle became one of his parliamentary assistants and, as a political activist and resident of Maré, joined, at the invitation of her partner, the Human Rights Commission of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro. In this commission, Marielle worked mainly on police killings and summary executions, and pioneered the commission's assistance to relatives of dead police officers, something that had never been discussed in the state. In partnership with the Military Police, Marielle, as the commission's coordinator, created a protocol service for the care of family members of dead policemen, (Rezzutti, 2018), project just recently rejected in the Legislative Assembly by Bolsonaro government supporters.

At this point, Marielle Franco's role in fighting police violence became notorious in Rio de Janeiro, and in 2009 she would start her important master's research on the policies of pacifying *favelas*. Thus, during her intense academic formation, Marielle dialogued mainly with the fields of urban sociology, studies on socio-spatial segregation and urban violence, and these studies, as we know, strongly marked her career and

political action. In the field of politics, Marielle argued that her principles were "unity, representativeness and the possibility of having someone in politics who was not like traditional politicians", stating that political representativeness could not be "something ethereal" (Arnaldo, Lima; 2019).

In 2009, after receiving the title of Specialist in Social Responsibility and Third Sector from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, she was approved in the Graduate Program of Public Administration at Fluminense Federal University, both universities of the Brazilian federal public system. She then defended a dissertation entitled "UPP [Pacifying Police Unit], Reducing the Favela to Three Letters: An Analysis of the Public Security Policy of the State of Rio de Janeiro" in which she critically analyzes the police intervention and performance at Complexo da Maré. According to Marielle Franco (2014), the policy called "favela pacification" would be nothing more than a make-up to a neoliberal militarist model of maintaining violence (Senger, Graube; 2018). She then proposed citizen alternatives that went from simple changes such as greater illumination of public streets to broader transformations that would involve greater occupation of public space by people.

In 2016, at the invitation of partner Marcelo Freixo, Marielle Franco ran for a seat in the City Council of Rio de Janeiro. Marielle presented herself with the slogan "I am because we are", in reference to the African concept of Ubuntu, prominent in Brazilian social movements up to the present day (Rocha, 2019). In addition, her campaign was marked by gender, race and class identity positions, as she positioned herself as a black woman from the favela, central triad of intersectionality theories, which have become the main paradigm of feminisms in Brazil in the last decade, summarized by Marielle in her campaign video as "gender, race and the city". However, following the contributions of Brazilian black

feminism that demonstrate that the pride of blackness is something that is achieved with education, militancy and throughout life (Figueiredo, 2014), different from the favela marker, Marielle stated that "before I was black I was already favelada". According to commentators on the electoral success of some black, LGBT and indigenous people in representative politics (Arnaldo, Lima, 2019), Marielle Franco operated various forms of identification and her electoral and political success was due to the place of identity in the 2016 Brazilian elections, where the vote was directly linked to the representation and social image of the candidates.

In her first election, Marielle was the fifth most voted city councilor in Rio de Janeiro, with 46,000 votes, of which only 10% came from the favelas. The other 90% were voted in middle- and upper-class neighborhoods, and it was in these regions that her candidacy and positions were legitimized, even though her speech was throughout the campaign addressed to the favela. In just over a year in office, Marielle presented 116 propositions and 20 bills for the municipality, "including one to secure abortion in legal cases, [other] to open night care centers for working parents, and [yet another] to set up a campaign against public transportation sexual harassment" (Rizzotti, 2019). Of her approved projects, it is worth mentioning "the regulation of the profession of mototaxi, the regulation of city council contracts with social health organizations and the creation of a new parturition house for the humanization of birth" (id. ibid.).

Lia de Mattos Rocha (2019), sociologist and personal friend of Marielle Franco, having even participated in her master's defense, states that even in a minority party, Marielle has made up an important commission for investigating corruption in the city of Rio de Janeiro, particularly in the public transport biddings and the mega-works for the construction os stadiums

for the World Cup and Olympic Games held in Brazil. After the political coup of 2016, which removed Dilma Rousseff as the first woman elected to the presidency of Brazil, her vice president Michel Temer took power. He was responsible for a Federal Intervention in the Public Security of Rio de Janeiro, which began in February 2018. Marielle was opposed to this intervention. According to Lia de Mattos Rocha (2019), these interventions, called pacification policies, have existed in Rio's favelas since the military dictatorship (1964-1985). In these policies the favela had always been seen as "enemies", remembering that the favela, even in its diversity, is always seen in Brazilian society in a generalized and universal way. Against this view Marielle became one of four councilors who monitored the Federal Intervention. After her death Michel Temer used her murder to defend the intervention, even though Marielle was publicly opposed to these policies. Still according to Lia de Mattos Rocha (2019), "Marielle was apparently executed as a way of silencing her and stopping her fight, in defense of the rights of favelados, women, blacks, LGBTs, i.e., from the working class so exploited and abused" (p. 278-279).

In addition, shortly after being elected, she started to preside the Women's Commission of the Rio de Janeiro City Council. Regarding gender and race, it is important to mention that this chamber in 2016 elected 51 councilors, two of whom were black and six were women, including Marielle. It was as chair of this commission that she gave her last speech at the chamber floor on March 8, 2018, on the occasion of International Women's Day. Three were the axes of her speech: the underrepresentation of women in politics; the need for a solidarity-based economy for Brazil and the fight against harassment of women in public transportation in Rio de Janeiro (Senger, Graube, 2019). We will now see how the political execution of Marielle Franco took place.

The political execution of Marielle Franco

Marielle Franco was killed downtown Rio de Janeiro at the age of 38, in full exercise of her first term as city councilor. She was in the back seat of a car, and the driver Anderson Gomes was also killed, being the only survivor of the ambuscade her parliamentary assistant Fernanda Goncalves, who saw Marielle fall on her lap after the shots. The group was ambushed shortly after leaving an activity of the black women's movement on the way from the Lapa neighborhood to the councilwoman's residence. The route made part of the map of where the federal intervention took place in Rio de Janeiro. At around 9:30 pm, a cobalt car pulled up next to Marielle's car and 14 shots were fired, four of which hit Marielle's head and three her driver Anderson's back as they were fired diagonally. In reference to the murderers' car, both driver Elcio Vieira de Queiroz and shooter Ronnie Lessa were public security officers, the former being a police officer who had been expelled from the corporation and the second a retired police officer. The shooter lived in the same condominium as the current Brazilian president, and with his family had personal relations, having already been honored by the president's son in the legislative assembly of Rio de Janeiro. At his house were found 171 rifles.

Regarding the night of the execution, Marielle participated in an activity of the black women movement at *Casa das Pretas*, one of the main collective cultural spaces of black women, located in the bohemian neighborhood of Lapa, in downtown Rio de Janeiro. In this place happens social and cultural events, political debates, and workshops. One of the main projects of *Casa das Pretas* is the debate series entitled *Black young women changing structures*, to which references are invited to discuss a particular topic. On the evening of March 14, 2018, a debate was scheduled for 6 pm on *black female entrepreneurship and*

activism. In addition to Councilwoman Marielle Franco, the coordinator of the collective Az_Pretaz - Black and Indigenous Women of Communication and Technology - Alice Lourena, the young writer Ana Paula Lisboa, the rapper Hellen N'Zinga and the publicist Moara Valle, all black and references on entrepreneurship.

According to anthropologist Fatima Lima (2018), present at the activity, at 6.30 pm the *Casa das Pretas* was already crowded, massively by black women with their curly hair and turbans. The activity started an hour late as participants were waiting for Marielle Franco, who faced the chaotic traffic of downtown Rio de Janeiro to reach the venue. According to Fatima Lima,

A little later, Marielle Franco arrived. I gave her a hug and a kiss, we exchanged words and affection. She was beautiful! The mouth painted blue; her beautiful curly hair was divine. I commented: "increasingly blonde". She told me smiling: 'we can do anything, including being blonde'. I smiled. Marielle, after greeting everyone, went to the opposite side across the crowded room, sat down with the other four black women and thus began the conversation. (Lima, 2019, p. 72-73).

Marielle Franco's speech on the debate *Black young women* changing structures started with her reading a quote from the American feminist theorist Audre Lorde, "I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own" (Mesquita, 2018). After reading the citation in the original English language and also in the Portuguese translation, she said that she chose this phrase to open her speech because she had studied it in her English course, in an exercise in which the teacher asked them to bring a quote to class of an important woman. According to Marielle, Audre Lorde made her think about how fundamental self-identification is, because for her it was very important to state

her place as "woman, black woman, bisexual, [...] married to a woman, mother to a daughter" (Mesquita, 2018). After this Marielle introduction. resumed her academic emphasizing the difficulty of staying at university: "when I entered the Social Sciences undergraduate course, we were just two black women" (Mesquita, 2018) and that the first conflict she had with a professor was a request for him not only require reading in English: "I didn't know any English, I came from Maré" (Mesquita, 2018). She also said that when she arrived at the university, she knew she was favelada, but it was there that she began to understand herself as a woman and as a black woman and that from the beginning of her higher studies she knew the importance of the university for a person with her social background.

After this brief history of her academic background, she approached her position in the City Council, reinforcing her campaign slogans:

The mandate of a favelada, from the peripheries, and a black woman, needs to be guided by social movements, by the organized civil society, with whom we can be strengthened, once we are in a place where we objectively are not recognized as legitimate. Denial is what they present as our profile.

She also pointed out the importance of Casa das Pretas, stating that it is essential "to have our place, to have our moments, to have our place of resistance, these are the moments when we get stronger in the struggle" (Mesquita, 2018). For the writer Ana Paula Lisboa, the tone of the conversation was optimistic: "it was a fruitful conversation, we were in a moment of celebration, talking less about pain and more about good things being done by women". At the end of her speech, she thanked all the participants and concluded with the phrase "let's go, let's go together occupy everything" (Mesquita, 2018).

After the activity Marielle was invited to have a beer in a bar in Lapa, bohemian neighborhood of the city. However, the councilwoman said she was very tired, because that day the mayor, the conservative evangelical pastor Marcelo Crivella, had vetoed a project that required the city to publicize its accounts (Mesquita, 2018). It was in this bar that, half an hour later, participants received the news by the WhatsApp application: "they executed Marielle Franco" (Lima, 2018). At first unbelieving, the information was only confirmed after several calls to members of PSOL and social movements. The next day, writer Ana Paula Lisboa published:

we will continue to be because she was. She will always be. Yesterday we talked so much about ancestry. We reverenced all night the black women who came before us. What a privilege it was to spend the night with this woman and tell her how beautiful and important she was. How proud I was of her (Portal G1, s/d).

The deaths of Marielle Franco and her driver Anderson Gomes were reported almost in real time by the media and also quickly circulated on social networks. Marielle Franco's assistant, who survived the ambush, said she had pulled the parking brake to stop the car and promptly asked a pedestrian who called the police for help (Bittencourt *et alli*, 2019). She then called her husband and informed him that both Marielle and Anderson, "were passed out", claiming that she only realized they were dead when she heard the policeman say, "it's two downs and one survivor".

Júlia Bittencourt *et alli* (2019), a team from the Bachelor of Public Security at Fluminense Federal University, studied the administration of Marielle Franco's death by the state. At first the authorities stated the hypothesis of a *latrocínio*, that is, a robbery followed by death, which was refuted shortly after the arrival of the police on the spot with the realization that nothing had been taken. From then on, they started to work

with the hypothesis that was already circulating in the media and social networks that it was a political execution. Moreover, the complexity of the case, very well planned, indicated the participation of public security agents or even the armed forces, which led, even if it was a "case of public impact", to take complete secrecy as a strategy of the investigation.

In March 2019, the accused were arrested, but the motive for the crime, described in the case file as a "bad motive", that is, a negligible motive, was never solved. Marielle Franco did not keep sensitive information about corruption or trafficking in Rio de Janeiro, she was a councilwoman and a militant like so many around the world who fight against racism, sexism, LGBTphobia, classism and for more egalitarian societies. Due to the lack of concrete motivation, the society demanded the continuation of investigations that indicated the existence of an orderer. However, the idea of an orderer is not a priority for law enforcement officials, who seem pleased with the arrest of the shooter and his accomplice. In this way, Julia Bittencourt et alli (2019) demonstrate that, in the Marielle Franco case, there was a disconnection between the language of the "world of life", especially of journalists and society and that of the "world of law".

Relevant questions about "who ordered the execution" are very relevant for journalists and society, while they do not seem to require much effort from the operators of state institutions [...]. The latter were more focused on framing the facts legally, as is proper to the exercise of their technical activities. (Id., p. 75).

However, corroborating the authors' analysis of a disconnection between the language of society and that of the legal operators, black feminists were already asking investigations to elucidate the orderer since the occurrence. In a large demonstration at the *Casa das Pretas* on March 21, 2018, the Black Panthers collective occupied the windows of the

house in front of a crowd, and the collective's spokeswoman said, "We should not ask who killed Marielle, but who ordered Marielle Franco's death, because the black people of the favela do not die at the hands of another favelados, but of this cowardly and perverse state" (Mídia Ninja, 2018), and that's why we see in the manifestations about this case posters and banners with the question "who ordered the killing of Marielle Franco?". Despite hundreds of thousands of demonstrations and sympathetic notes demanding investigations into Marielle Franco's political execution, the case was also appropriated by social actors who had been responsible for impeaching President Dilma Rousseff and who at that time were launching defamatory internet campaigns about Marielle in support of Jair Bolsonaro and his political party, which I will discuss in the next subtopic.

The treatment of media and social networks on the political execution of Marielle Franco

The death of Councilwoman Marielle Franco and her driver Anderson Gomes generated two types of reactions in Brazilian society: revolt, sadness, indignation and willingness to continue her struggle on the one hand, but also hate on the other. About this last reaction - the hatred - that I will talk about right now. This topic draws heavily on the monograph of young feminist journalist Marcella Borba da Silva (2019), who analyzed Marielle Franco's post-mortem coverage, as well as the main fake news in the case and the attacks Marielle Franco's image suffered by supporters and party partners of current Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Thus, in this topic I speak more of the political use of Marielle's image after her death than anything else, focusing, in dialogue with the previous topic, on the 'world of life' and how conservative groups elaborated and used her death for political purposes.

To Marcella Borba da Silva (2019), we live the post-truth period, with massive investment in discrediting the facts and where the rational loses weight in the face of the emotional. This means that in contemporary times it does not matter who speaks or the facts being disseminated, but who wants to believe what. Post-truth, for the author, is highly tied to a belief in the unseen, that is, believing or "having faith" that something is true becomes more important than being a fact. Thus, in Marielle Franco's postmortem Brazil, we have consolidated the appreciation of the truth of the individual, without any connection with facts. Even research in the journalistic field indicated that in Brazil 78% of people who are exclusively informed by social networks, mostly facebook, share fake news and that, of these, only 38% have tried to check some source. In this way, we saw a shift in the notions of true and false, which contributed to the reproduction maintenance of discriminatory practices on the Internet and therefore in society.

In this context of "general misinformation" (SILVA, 2019), the journalistic field ended up aligning with the commercial field, becoming the fourth power, once the media started to produce discursive memories, i.e., to give the desired meaning to the news, prioritizing the spectacle - i.e., everything that attracts and draws attention to the detriment of facts. This has made hegemonic journalism in Brazil a "theatrical act," in which the journalist's role has been to direct feelings rather than to provide unbiased information. Marielle, as the young journalist points out (Silva, 2019), was a victim of this new conjuncture, in which fake news was published not only by autonomous blogs, but by hegemonic media once respected in Brazilian journalism. This was especially the case in the Marielle coverture through the intentional publication of false, inaccurate or manipulated news, which was massively

repeated, often with the change of title alone and all aimed at countering the left, communism, feminism, homosexuality and the *favelas* as the nation's main political enemies. This led to a mistaken view of Marielle Franco trying to become common sense, as we will see in the following subtopics.

Marielle Franco: thief, corrupt and linked to drug trafficking

On October 17, 2019, I announced this conference to several virtual groups of Brazilian immigrants living in Montréal. In the 2018 elections, at the Brazilian Embassy in Montréal, Jair Bolsonaro won with 51.65% of the vote and the candidate Fernando Haddad, of the Workers Party, received 48.35% (GAZETA DO POVO, 2018), demonstrating that also abroad, particularly in Quebec, the polarization of Brazilian society was replicated. In one of these groups, which I later found to be mostly supporters of the current Brazilian president, I received about 150 comments, most of them as personal attacks on me and the conference proposal and also spreading false ideas about Marielle Franco, all properly printed. These comments spread the notion that Marielle Franco was a thief, corrupt and related to drug-dealers, and that because of her alleged prior life linked to crime, her fate had followed a normal course in a country with high murder rates. But where did these ideas come from and how did they reproduce so strongly? Seeking to answer this question, Marcella Borba da Silva (2019) wrote the monograph entitled "Fake News Analysis in the Marielle Franco Case".

For the author, the first manifestation that conveyed these ideas took place on the social network facebook, on the personal profile of the judge Marília Castro Neves, of the Court of Rio de Janeiro, on March 16, 2018, just two days after the execution of the councilwoman. It is worth mentioning that the

judge had already led to embarrassing situations regarding the publication of intolerant, LGBTphobic and anti-worker's party content in social networks before. In her post she stated:

The point is that Marielle was not just a "fighter"; She was engaged with bad guys! She was elected by criminal organizations and failed to "compromise" with her supporters. She, more than anyone "far from the favela", knows how debts are charged by the groups she transacted with. Even we know that. The truth is that we will never know for sure what determined the death of the councilwoman, but we are sure that her behavior, dictated by her political engagement, was decisive for this tragic end. Anything else is mimimi (sic) of the leftists trying to add value to a corpse as common as any other.

In this sense, as the journalist's analysis points out,

For the magistrate, Marielle is just a poor favelada engaged with bandits, for how is it possible for a poor black woman to be anything but a bandit? The discursive memory on which the judge relies gives the sense that a black person cannot be part of an upper class or equal to her. This refers to the fact that blacks are forced to deny their ancestors, which did not happen with the Marielle case (id., p. 36).

After the magistrate's post, the journalistic scene about the case of Marielle Franco was occupied mainly by manipulated news titles that led Brazilian society to understand Marielle Franco as a victim of drug criminality, being herself responsible for her execution, by not comply with agreements with criminal organizations. For example, the newspaper Folha de São Paulo and Veja magazine, two of the main Brazilian media vehicles published news with the respective titles: 1) "Judge says Marielle was engaged with bad guys and that she is an 'ordinary corpse'" and, 2) "Judge says Marielle was engaged with bad guys". Despite mentioning only these examples of large Brazilian media, the situation must be understood from its massive repetition. This idea was worked and reworked in

hundreds of thousands of news and became the main source about the Marielle Franco case for the Brazilian uninformed society, the one that does not seek to check the facts or even read the content of the article, that is, that shares something just by the title.

As this mis-interpretation was present in the comments of the poster of this conference in the group of Brazilian immigrants in Montreal, a year and a half after the original post of the judge, we see the effectiveness of the manipulation of facts in constructing an untrue image of Marielle Franco postmortem. It is important to mention that after two days of the publication of the judge, she made a new post, apologizing for running this fake news. However, this new post did not raise the replicability rate of the original post, demonstrating that her "apology" was more a historical record of personal retraction for sharing something wrong than the desire to inform society about the false news that she promoted, besides demonstrating, in her post, a distancing from the reality of most Brazilian people, particularly those who live in *favelas* (Silva, 2019).

Marielle Franco Street: depredation of public patrimony

Another case that demonstrated conservative hatred of Marielle Franco and what she represented was the moment when state deputy Rodrigo Amorim of President Jair Bolsonaro's party, in the presence of then-candidate and now Rio de Janeiro state governor, Wilson Witzel, broke a street sign honoring Marielle Franco at a corner of downtown's Candelária neighborhood, next to the Rio de Janeiro City Council.

As the councilwoman and her driver were executed on a street in downtown Rio de Janeiro, the main symbol of the fight for justice and the investigation of the orderer was a street sign

bearing the name of the councilwoman. According to Revista Fórum, the idea of the street sign was created by a woman who chose to remain anonymous (Revista Fórum, 2018). In a print shop on the periphery of the city, this militant ordered dozens of signs, which were taken to the first major demonstration on the case, also in the neighborhood of Candelária, where thousands of people attended on March 20, 2018. This street sign, which emulated an official street sign of the municipality, reads a short biographical phrase of the councilwoman: "1979-2018 Councilwoman, defender of human rights and minorities, cowardly murdered on March 14, 2018". In the Candelaria demonstration, the street signs were glued on top of the official signs, which led, after just one month of the councilwoman's political execution, to the approval of a public space with the name of the councilwoman next to the City Council. In this great demonstration, many personalities from the political world, as well as family members and friends of Marielle Franco spoke, including her sister Anielle, who was already facing fake news based on the judge's post:

Marielle was never a bandit. We were never funded by drug dealers and she was never married to a bad guy. They will not destroy what my sister built. I want light and information for these people who share fake news as they are uninformed (G1 Rio, 2018).

In early October 2018, in the midst of a political campaign for the Brazilian elections, an act of candidates from the party of the president Jair Bolsonaro took over the national media scene. Rodrigo Amorim, Daniel Silveira and Wilson Witzel in the midst of intolerant speech about the Brazilian left, broke a sign of Marielle Franco Street that was in a public space near the City Council. In a Facebook post, the author of the attack, Rodrigo Amorim, stated: "[This plaque represents] the depredation of public property, [since Marielle's allies] illegally removed [the plaque with the original name], [...] by pasting a Antropologia Sem Fronteiras, Salvador, v. 1, p. 1-32, e112403, 2024 https://periodicos.ufba.br/index.php/rasf/index

fake plaque that reads 'Marielle Franco Street' on top of the original plaque". In addition, he stated that the act was aimed at "fulfilling our civic duty, [and therefore] we removed the depredation," concluding with the phrase "brace yourselves, stupid leftists: as far as we are concerned, we'll destroy you".

After the attack, Deputy Rodrigo Amorim framed half of the sign and hung it on the wall of his office in the public building of the Rio de Janeiro Legislative Assembly, as a clear provocation to all who defend democracy in Brazil. In addition, at that time, he also stated that "the left" was making political use of the murder of Marielle Franco, and was silent on many other murders, which became a common argument Bolsonaro's supporters in Brazil. Parliamentarians from Marielle Franco's party were opposed to the attack, affirming the unbelievable character these politicians made of Marielle Franco's image during the election campaign. Chico Alencar, for said: "destroying a tribute to murdered example. a councilwoman and bragging about it is barbarism, it's unbelievable" and Marcelo Freixo, of whom I mentioned above, pointed out that he was taking the appropriate judicial measures: "we need to know why he hates Marielle so much".

Despite these hateful situations involving Marielle Franco's post-mortem image and the electoral success of Bolsonaro and his supporters; naming public spaces under the name of Marielle Franco has become one of the main ways to enhance her memory and denounce her political execution. Between April 2018 and October 2019 several demonstrations made this reference, and bills were passed for the creation of Marielle Franco streets in Ribeirão Preto, Caruaru and Salvador, Brazil and Lisbon, Portugal, in addition to the baptism of public spaces such as a rural settlement of the MST in Paraná, a corridor in the Chamber of Deputies in Brasilia, a public garden in Paris, among many others. Replicating this strategy, Brazilian

protesters in Montreal also followed this trend, as we will see in the following topic.

International solidarity: the case of Montréal

I arrived in Montréal as a visiting scholar at Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie at the Université du Québec à Montreal on January 6, 2019. In the early days I followed a the Brazil-Montréal Facebook page from coordinated by professor Alessandra Devulsky, responsible for organizing most of the demonstrations about Brazil in Montréal. In late February I confirmed to participate in a Facebook event, which would take place on Saturday, March 16, at Place des Arts, to demand the solution of the crime that killed Marielle Franco and her driver Anderson Gomes. As a way of contributing to this demonstration, I decided to organize, on March 14, when Marielle Franco's execution completed one year, a kiosk in the hall of UQAM with photographs and video of the councilwoman and we remain there, Igor Leonardo and I, talking to the interested people all day about the state of the investigations. We also counted with the presence of Alessandra Devulsky herself and feminist sociologist Danielle Coenga. Between the 14th and the 16th Igor Leonardo and I produced a series of materials, including a version of the street sign with the name of Marielle Franco, this time emulating the Montréal signs. In the demonstration of the 16th, organized by Brazil-Montréal people attended, who took the Collective, around 200 spoke in defense of the progress microphone and investigations, the need to find out who was the ordered of the execution and other general matters in relation to political situation in Brazil. In addition, a street sign was glued symbolically, replicating the demonstrations neighborhood of Candelária. Another major event took place during the Fierté Montreal Festival. The LGBT Brazilian

Collective in Montréal participated in three different moments of the festival: 1) The Queer Market, where they sold handcrafted products produced by members of the collective, with a view to raising funds for a contingent at the March; 2) The Community Day in which we replicated the UQAM kiosk model, this time with more people, talking about the political execution of Marielle Franco, having been much more effective in spreading this situation and, finally, 3) the participation with a contingent of 100 people during the March, taking to the streets of Montreal, each and every one with a Marielle Franco T-shirt, flags, posters and even a musical group. (Picture 1).

Picture 1 - Poster for the conference #MariellePresente: Global solidarities, painful realities, and memories among Feminist/Queer/Black movements in Brazil, presented by Prof. Felipe Bruno Martins Fernandes (Federal University of Bahia), on Friday, October 25, 3:00-4:30pm, at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology & Faculty of Arts and Science, Concordia University.



#MariellePresente: world solidarities and painful realities and memories among Feminist/Queer/Black movements in Brazil

Felipe Bruno Martins Fernandes Dr. Felipe Bruno Martins Fernandes is an Federal University, Bahia, Brazil

Friday, October 25, 2019 3 - 4:30 p.m.

Room H-1120

Feminisms at the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil, and a visiting scholar at the Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

In this talk, Fernandes will address the (painful) Hall Building, 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd, W. political and sociocultural context surrounding Marielle Franco's murder in Brazil, in 2018.

Anthropologist and Professor of Gender and

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FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE ciology and Anthropology

Source - Columbia University (2019)

Final considerations

In this text, in addition to informing the international academic community in the field of Humanities and Social

Sciences, particularly Sociology and Anthropology, as well as Gender and Sexuality Studies (Queer) about the biography of an executed colleague, I sought to offer elements that further international solidarity around the exceptional situation in contemporary Brazil. I have sought to demonstrate that a prominent sociologist and political leader, a specialist in public security and a fighter for democracy and social justice, has been cowardly eliminated from the political scene by hands that, in power, build an unfair Brazil and are seeking to promote more inequality in a country where poverty, racism, sexism, LGBT phobia and so many other forms of discrimination are the rule, not the exception. I sought to offer elements of understanding the case of Marielle Franco linked to the three major axes that surround the manifestations for justice: 1) the idea that we are seeds of Marielle, a principle she learned and spread, derived from her initial militancy in the education of children and young people of her favela; 2) the guestion of the ordered of the crime, since the "world of law", as we have seen, was content with the arrest of the shooter and his accomplice, and 3) why the naming of streets and public spaces in honor of Marielle Franco are being spread all over the world. Finally, I would like to point out that Marielle Franco was an intellectual whose sociological knowledge was brought into her public life as a political representative of black women, LGBT and favelas in both the state Legislative Assembly and the city council, promoting the engagement of the Social and Human Sciences in a reality of chaos and injustice.

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#MariellePresente: solidariedades mundiais e realidades e memórias dolorosas entre movimentos Feministas/Queer/Negros no Brasil

Resumo: Abordarei o contexto político e sociocultural (doloroso) em torno do assassinato de Marielle Franco no Brasil, em 2018. Marielle Franco era uma mulher negra, lésbica, feminista, ativista, mãe, parceira, política e socióloga, cujo trabalho focava na violência policial e militarização. Seu assassinato constituiu tanto uma perda coletiva quanto um ponto de virada drástico para aqueles envolvidos em lutas sociais e na busca por justiça para populações marginalizadas no Brasil. O ataque contra Marielle Franco — considerado um símbolo social poderoso — e, por extensão, um ataque direto contra maneiras de pensar da esquerda e contra as conquistas sociais dos movimentos negros, feministas e queer no Brasil, pode ser percebido por alguns como uma batalha perdida na luta pela igualdade no Brasil. Em meio à violência histórica que caracteriza o Brasil, que inclui altas taxas de crimes de ódio e brutalidade policial que inclui até assassinatos (particularmente contra pessoas negras), o assassinato de Marielle tornou-se uma mensagem clara para vários movimentos sociais perceberem o que foi socialmente perdido e os altos riscos que o Brasil enfrenta em relação à igualdade social hoje. Uso o assassinato de Marielle Franco como um local analítico para desvendar o contexto político e sociocultural em evolução no Brasil. Isso inclui as várias posturas e políticas sociais desenvolvidas em torno de gênero, raça e sexualidade (e sua conexão com os campos políticos de esquerda e direita) antes do impeachment da presidente Dilma Rousseff (Partido dos Trabalhadores) e durante o "golpe de estado" que levou Michel Temer ao poder e a eleição do presidente de direita Jair Bolsonaro. Também analiso como a vida e a morte política de Franco (ou seja, quem ordenou seu assassinato?) encorajaram o desenvolvimento de movimentos de solidariedade transnacionais, especificamente em Montreal.

Palavras-Chave: Violência Policial. Interseccionalidade. Ativismo Social.

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