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# **In the Shade of the Olympic Waterfront: People's Perception of Violence in Morro da Providência**

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**Declaration**

I, Elaine Marçal, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

## **Abstract**

In this Master thesis, Rio de Janeiro's district of Morro da Providência, Brazil's first slum and the place the term "favela" was coined is the starting point for the exploration of sociospatial segregation and (in)security. Morro da Providência is located only one kilometer away from the brand-new Rio de Janeiro's waterfront, Porto Maravilha, which was erected as part of the preparation to the Olympic Games in Rio in 2016. From this starting point, this thesis examines the meaning of this urban density and socio-economic disparity from local perspectives on security. Through a mini ethnographic exercise comprised of in-depth interviews, walking methodology and physical, visual and historical analysis of the Cruzeiro region of Providência, this thesis sheds light on questions of rights, connection to place and mobility between Morro da Providência and other areas of the city. This is done through the presentation of eight in-depth interviews, collected in the form of life stories. These stories portrait the experiences with various forms of violence in Providência, the effects in their everyday lives as well as their mechanisms to navigate the city while living under these constraints. These experiences and perceptions are supplemented with an analysis of urban and habitational policy developments at Providência and Porto Maravilha since the 1970s. In a final section, this case study of socio-spatial segregation and security are discussed in conjunction with the literature on evolving urban security arrangements.

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## 1. Introduction

Favelas are iconic landmarks in Rio de Janeiro's urban fabric. They are present in several references of the Marvelous City, from postcards exhibiting its environmental beauty to songs and cultural manifestations, like samba and capoeira. Favelas are also home to a problem that historically affects Rio residents: the drug trafficking and its effects to urban violence (Silva, 2010). In fact, the effects of drug trafficking on the number of deaths in the city have been extensively researched and constitute the basis of public security policies. In this way, the favelas of Rio de Janeiro are inserted in the dynamics of the city through its cultural inheritance and of a constant relation with urban violence.

This relationship between favelas and urban violence goes beyond public policies: It produces a negative grammar, composed of practices and norms that guide social relations in the city. As a result, favelas and their residents accumulate an image of criminality and danger in comparison to other areas of the city, which ultimately justifies violent forms of state intervention in these territories and their populations (Foucault, 1975; Leite, 2000). This image also delimits the possibilities of favela residents to access urban facilities and public services - including security itself. A branch of violence research considers unequal opportunities to debate, decide and make use of public resources and their consequent limitations on one's ability to achieve a full potential as a hidden, structural form of violence (Galtung, 1969).

Rio de Janeiro favelas are home to over a million people (IBGE, 2017). Yet, the impacts of structural, hidden forms of violence in their lives have not been central to the debates of urban violence and its implications for public policies in this city. This thesis contributes to this purpose by exploring the shadows of Rio's Olympic Waterfront. It selects of Morro da Providência, Brazil's first slum and the place the term "favela" was coined, as the starting point for the exploration of sociospatial segregation and (in)security. Departing from a broad notion of violence, it considers social, political and economic developments in Rio de Janeiro's favelas, while identifying direct and indirect manifestations of violence in a long durée chapter. These developments are complemented with the presentation of eight life stories, collected in the form of in-depth interviews during a fieldwork in Providência. In a concluding chapter, the nuances and complexities brought by the historical background and each life story are, discussed in the light of the debates of urban violence. The methodology and tools utilized in this work are discussed in the following chapter.

## **2. Methodology: Approaching the favela**

Personal encounters and first impressions are key to a fruitful field work. Indeed, Erving Goffman (1989, p. 130) stressed the importance of a researcher's first day in a social establishment: "there is a freshness cycle when moving into the field. The first day you'll see more than you'll ever see again. And you'll see things that you won't see again. So the first day you should constantly take notes all the time". Favelas are familiar places to me, but this familiarity could make me ignore important characteristics of these fields when taking notes. To avoid this pitfall, I used my personal knowledge of favelas while consciously losing myself (Solnit, 2006). This meant being completely present and open to both known and unknown stimuli as I entered the field.

This conscious (un)focus guided my first visit to Morro da Providência, a slum located close to Rio de Janeiro's waterfront. Providência is comprised of small sub regions such as Barroso, Cruzeiro and Pedra Lisa, each of them is home to unique physical and social dynamics. This chapter contains fieldwork notes from the Cruzeiro region, written between January and February of 2018. In this period, I conducted eight interviews, which lasted from thirty minutes to two hours of duration. Here, I introduce you to the individuals who shared their life experiences and their connections to the favela. All informants were given fictitious names.

### **2.1 "Give me a glass of water!" A first contact with Morro da Providência**

In my first visit to Providência, the priority was to capture the region's physical features and get to know people at Cruzeiro, a sub region located at the top of the favela. To do so, I planned a walk-along afternoon with Rodrigo, who lives and works there.

#### *Rodrigo*

In a sunny afternoon in January, the thermometer hit the 35 degrees Celsius. The weather is particularly humid on that day, allowing street vendors to profit by selling water bottles at bus stops in the busy streets of Rio's financial center. Rio central station, known as Central do Brasil, is some blocks further. There, I met Rodrigo for an introduction and some refreshments. Rodrigo is a young, skinny man born in Nova Iguaçu, a city in Rio's metropolitan region. After completing 25 years old, finishing his bachelor's degree and tirelessly working in a hostel at Copacabana, he received a "calling of God". This call that led him to the streets with the purpose of helping drug dealers and homeless populations. Now, with 27 years old, he leads an evangelical community center at Cruzeiro.

Rodrigo shared some favela practicalities as we walked to a mototaxi station. Rio central station, Central do Brasil, is in a walking distance from Providência. Most of the favelas in Rio have mobility issues. This is because most of the official transportation modals, like buses and trains, cannot transit in favelas' small alleys. Plus, the presence of drug dealers offers a safety risk to drivers and cashiers – the same reason why taxi and Uber drivers usually do not accept travels to favelas (Lindau et al., 2011). In Providência this mobility gap has been filled by irregular transportation options, such as mototaxis and small vans. They connect the praça, Providência's central region, and Rio central station.

City governments have addressed security and mobility issues in the last years. For example, a pacifying police unit (UPP)<sup>1</sup> was established in the praça in 2010. Four years later, a cable car station was installed by the side of UPP, connecting praça to the Central Station (C. Gonçalves & Bandeira, 2017). No means of transportation can reach the top of the hill, however. To get to Cruzeiro, residents must walk all the way up through its staircase, which can take up to twenty minutes. The cable car stopped its operations right after the Olympics. Today, mototaxis and minivans still have a final station at praça. When these options are unavailable, one must walk all the way to the top: a walk from the central station, passing by praça and finally up to Cruzeiro can take up to forty minutes.

The mototaxi is the quickest option, offering a fast and steep drive up to the beginning of the staircases. After some flights of stairs, we reached the community center. We drank some glasses of water while Rodrigo showed me the center's astonishing view of the waterfront. Then, I recorded his interview in the living room, which also serves as a recreational area for community children. At the end of the interview, Rodrigo and I crossed the top of the hill, starting at the Cruzeiro access and ending at the Barroso staircase, which leads to Central do Brasil. While walking between these two landmarks, I was introduced to historical sites and encountered several people who were willing to share their life stories in connection to these sites.

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<sup>1</sup> The city government implemented pacifying police units in 2010 as an attempt to rebuild their public safety approach in favelas. These police cabins were installed in selected favelas to “regain control of territories previously dominated by armed criminal groups; and to improve security for these communities through reduction of lethal violence” (Magaloni, Franco, & Melo, 2015, p. 3).





*Figure 1.* Cruzeiro’s panoramic view. On the far left, the sugar loaf. In the middle, Rio central station. On the far right, the city waterfront. January 16, 2018.

### *Dona Maria*

Rodrigo’s community center is located a couple of steps from the Cruzeiro, an oratory that gives name to the region. Dona Maria was sitting at the Cruzeiro staircases, cleaning some beans in a plastic container and surrounded by small children. Rodrigo greets her and introduces me to this tiny lady and her slow talking: “Dona Maria has been the guardian of Cruzeiro for decades! She owns the oratory keys and takes good care of the site.” I ask her if she has some spare time to talk, but she needs to prepare her great-grandchildren’s lunch: “come here tomorrow after lunch, *nêga*, then we can talk. But, if you want to talk to old people like me, you can reach up to my neighbors out there!”. We thanked Dona Maria for the suggestion and knocked on the metal gate right close to hers.

### *Jura and Cláudio*

A pair of curious eyes appear through a small opening in the gate. “May I help you, madam?”, I hear from inside the gate. I start laughing on the woman’s formal approach and introduce myself in a casual manner. She nodded and shouted at somebody who is inside her house: “look, Cláudio, she is here to interview us! Come in, dear. It is so hot outside.”.

I proceed to the front gate and enter Jura’s living room. There, Cláudio, her husband, greets me and pours a glass of water. After some minutes explaining my research project, Jura commented: “Ah, so this will be like our front neighbor? Some people went to his house, took his picture and also drove him to the waterfront for some more shoots. We have his pictures here. It turned out very good!”. I told her that Rodrigo and I were in a tour around Cruzeiro and that I would love to return in the next couple of days to talk to them. Jura and Cláudio are married for around fifty years – the same period when they started living together at Cruzeiro.

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<sup>2</sup> *Negro* is the Brazilian translation for nigger. In Brazil, this term does not carry a pejorative charge, rather, it is the acceptable way to approach citizens of African descent. In Dona Maria’s case, a linguistic variation, *nêga*, was used with a sense of endearment, illustrating her openness to speak.



*Figure 2. Cruzeiro oratory. January 16, 2018.*

### *João*

After walking some minutes down Cruzeiro's tortuous and narrow alleys, we reach the chapel of Our Lady of Penha. As we approach the chapel, we hear the laughter of young people playing in its backyard. "João must be starting his class", Rodrigo explains. "It is a good idea to talk to him, too.". The yard was completely alive: a dozen of barefoot children tirelessly chasing their footballs, two young girls playing with a water hose and a boy knocking on the door of John's house, which is right behind the chapel. "Give me a glass of water, Mister Joao!", The child cries out.

"Calm down, folks!", an impatient João shouts from the door, handing out a few bottles of water. Rodrigo and I took the opportunity to ask for a glass as well. I get to know João between chatters about those children's endless energy and the unusual heat for that time in January. Rodrigo asks if he has a little time to talk to me. Fortunately, João's class would begin in 40 minutes. Then, he invites us to enter the chapel, of which he is the caretaker. "The chapel is cooler and quieter than here - a better place for our chat", he explains. Our conversation was approaching its sixtieth minute when the children started knocking on the chapel's door, already restless with the lesson's delay. We leave João to his class inside the chapel and move on to the front square.



*Figure 3.* The chapel of Our Lady of Penha and its square. January 16, 2018.

### *Sônia*

The chapel of Our Lady of Penha overlooks a large square and points out to Barroso staircase. This square, built over a famous sports field, now features a cultural center, a bar and a meeting point for the pacifying police forces. Sônia, the bar's owner, is sitting on the stairs. "Hey, Rodrigo!" she waves, as she finishes smoking her cigarette. We approach the square, and Rodrigo introduces her with a smile in his face: "Mrs. Sônia is very special to our community center. When Christopher and I came to Cruzeiro, she was the first person who talked to us. Thanks to God, she welcomed us to the morro". Sônia is a kind woman, who is always around and was also glad to share her story. The sun was setting, and a pleasant breeze freshened some residents heading their way home, after finished climbing Barroso's mountain-like staircase. I asked to stop by her bar the next day.

### *Christopher and Marcos*

Who is Christopher? I asked Rodrigo, as we descended Barroso staircase toward the central station. "Oh! I did not tell you, did I? Christopher is a British friend of mine, who also lives in and runs the community center". He also explains that Christopher could not join us because he was serving as a volunteer in a project for carceral populations that afternoon. However, Rodrigo suggests that we can all meet for a coffee in the city center some days later for a proper introduction. I followed up by accepting his invitation and asking about other interesting people and places to meet at Cruzeiro. The first name that came to his mind was Marcos, who is a *cria da comunidade*: an individual born and raised in a favela. Marcos built

a famous cultural center – “that one, close to Sônia’s bar”, Rodrigo points up to the hill. I connected with Marcos through social networks and realized that, apart from his unconventional approach to art, he also carries a life story with an intriguing exposure to drug trafficking, police forces and afro-Brazilian culture.

### *Cruzeiro, people and connections to place*

When I finally returned to the central station, I reflected about that long day and my first contact with Providência. After each personal encounter, it became clearer that the stories I would hear in the next days would give a glimpse of how people can relate to places in unique ways, through everyday practices and representations (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith, 1991). As the stories unfolded, it was interesting to see how physical structures affect their routines in small and big ways, from "going up and down the staircases" to options of education, health and leisure. Also interesting was to identify the social nuances in the physical connections to place: each bodily, lived experience create different meanings for the available objects, such as the oratory and the big square. The nuances between what is physically perceived and what is heartily lived engenders the production of social space in Cruzeiro, its neighboring sub-regions and other areas of the city.

## **2.2 Methodology as a way to see the world**

Dona Maria is seventy-five years old and the oldest person who agreed to share a life story with me. She talks about experiences with foreign researchers, commonly called gringos, sitting on the threshold of her more-than-a-century old residence at Cruzeiro:

- Sometimes, some gringos came here, and they did not help at all; nothing, nothing... we organized everything for them to walk around our places, but they barely talked to us.
- What did they do?
- They only came to take pictures and try to find out what we did not know.
- But what did they ask you?
- They asked us... [pause] what nobody knew! Because in all these years living here I have never... [pause] I was never the one to state like “this is so, that is how it works”.
- So, they made difficult questions for you.
- Difficult questions, I could not [answer].
- Did they tell you why they came here?
- It was to look at the world.

(Interview Dona Maria, January 29, 2018)

This conversation offers a reminder: it is not enough to be on the field. In other words, one must reflect upon methodological issues when conducting research. Which questions to pose and when these questions are appropriate? Where and how to collect answers? Conversely, which reality has been brought back to the desk and transformed into academic knowledge?

These issues are not new to International Relations and, particularly, to security studies. A traditional approach to security highlights questions about nation-states and their representatives, who strive for survival in an anarchic world, potentially on military terms (Mearsheimer, 1994). As a result, most of the research have laid around centers of power within states' structures. In line with these ontological assumptions, positivist and deductive approaches to research have created simple but abstract theories, which aim to explain the occurrence of violence to the highest number of cases (Maliniak, Peterson, Powers, & Tierney, 2018; Mc Cluskey, 2018). This traditional look of the world comes from an objective understanding of human nature as mostly static and universal.

Nonetheless, another approach to security considers people's unique experiences as valuable sources of knowledge. This alternative approach to security critiques traditional foci of attention, taking questions of security beyond military capabilities and nation-state boundaries. For example, by asking "where are the women?" and asserting that the personal is global, feminist works led a methodological turn between the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s (Blanchard, 2003; Enloe, 1989; Steans, 1999). In addition, post-colonial contributions indicated that methodological "shadowing" and ignoring the intersection of several systems of difference, such as race and class, can reinforce underlying power and privilege relations when creating knowledge (Simpson, 2007). In this way, interpretive and critical approaches have built a solid methodological tradition that allows stories like Dona Maria's to come to the fore in security studies and International Relations. I follow this tradition by posing this study's research question: what are people's perceptions of violence in Morro da Providência since the 1970s?

### *Design, positionality and reflexivity*

To answer this research question, I chose a research design to explore (in)security in favelas: an ethnographic case study. As a descriptive case type, Morro da Providência holds a symbolical and historical representation as Brazil's first favela. Also, serves as a group of interest in urban margins, yet in close proximity to financial and cultural hubs. (Yin, 2014). For instance, in Marcos' understanding of police interventions in Providência:

“You know what happens, don’t you? The official story is never what the community lives. It is obvious that what shows in the media is something else, and also what is reported in the police district. Because who goes to the district is the policeman himself, who is going to give his testimony and tell their version. So, there is always that official story, right?” (Interview Marcos, January 26, 2018).

This excerpt also highlights the reason behind using an ethnographic approach: it captures how individuals experience security in daily practices (Roberts, 2010). This approach is especially useful in areas where governmental interventions can include repressive practices towards vulnerable groups (Auyero & Sobering, 2017). The ethnographic case study, therefore, combines two qualitative research strategies that allow encounters with individuals and their everyday practices of security in favelas.

The methodological traditions supporting an ethnographic case study indicate that its value comes through transparency instead of neutrality and objectivity in research (Nygaard, 2017). Indeed, to engage with real stories in connection to violence can bring up individuals’ rich, yet devastating memories. Emphasizing with these stories and providing them fair representation were mister throughout this study. I have done so through two practices: positionality towards the research topic and reflexivity about the individuals being researched.

In an analysis of cultural anthropology premises, Abu-Lughod (1996) discussed the important of two critical groups, feminists and halfies<sup>3</sup>, in the fundamental dilemma to differentiate between self and other. I echo her impasse by identifying myself as a member of the favela intellectuals’ gang<sup>4</sup>. Studying a topic and a territory I was once part of places me in a shifting ground (p. 468): the favela is an intersection between my lived experiences and my work as a researcher, serving as inspiration for this study. This positionality enhances my awareness of the relationship between myself and the individuals being researched.

Indeed, this politics of location, which encompasses the material and ideational aspects of one’s identity, has been brought up by feminist researchers as a source of power in knowledge production (Hinton, 2014). A reflexive posture considers my positionality and complements it with a word of caution: how can an empirical material become a source of power towards that community through my interpretation (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2017)? Considering the way Providência residents perceived my presence and what they decided to inform me, I had the responsibility to build creditable and legitimate representations, whilst being accountable to

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<sup>3</sup> Halfies are “people whose national or cultural identity is mixed by virtue of migration, overseas education, or parentage” (Abu-Lughod, 1996, p. 137).

<sup>4</sup> This gang is a generation of favela residents who makes free, community pre-university entrance courses and gets access to high-level universities in Brazil (Canônico, 2018).

academic standards and these individuals' expectations about this study; like in my offer to bring back a finalized work copy to Jura and Cláudio.

### *Data instruments and procedures*

The dialogue between the empirical findings and secondary sources was essential for desk work before and after being on the field (Hönke & Müller, 2012). Having access to relevant literature and other secondary sources, such as maps and official statistics, was necessary to inform what has been produced in terms of security in urban margins and indicate possible paths for contribution.

On the field, after Rodrigo introduced me to my future informants, I had the opportunity to encounter them in several occasions: whether by having lunch at their homes, greeting them on the streets or just stopping by for a quick chat. My presence in a natural setting enabled these interactions to happen without major arrangements and the product of these interactions became the primary source of data for this study (Nygaard, 2017). I combined participant observation, a standard feature of an ethnographic research strategy, moving investigation methods and interviews. These procedures complement each other when assessing different levels of a phenomenon or by providing richer and elaborated data to understand individual perceptions (Mark & Shotland, 1987; Sieber, 1973).

Moving methods incentivized a lone, conscious decision to get lost in the favela. This decision allowed me to be fully present while still embracing and welcoming uncertainty (Solnit, 2006). I also followed Kusenbach (2003) go-along practices to explore layers of meaning which are not perceptible by sitting in a place or walking alone. By phenomenologically moving through favela alleys, I grasped how the connection between residents and physical spaces resulted in rich, embodied experiences. This movement was done by concomitantly walking and talking to residents. Evans and Jones (2011) suggest that this physical proximity to a place helped individuals to remember lived experiences more vividly.

I counted on my informant's willingness to share information based on Brazilians' rich tradition of oral storytelling (da Câmara Cascudo, 1978). This choice has its risks. As João warned me about in my snowballing day, "many important sources are dying! I have already fifty-one years old. The ones older than me, who are *crias da comunidade*, are people who don't like to talk that much". Fortunately, my usual opening question in semi-structured interviews, "how is life going?", welcomed people to a simple, but attentive request to know about their particular stories. In these interviews, conducted within closed doors or standing

by a relevant landmark, I managed to introduce questions from the interview guide with the purpose of catching nuances of security and violence.

The preference for methods of data collection which did not involve writing efforts from the participants, such as questionnaires, was also of practical and security nature. In the port zone, more than half of the population (56%) is not literate or has not completed elementary education (SEBRAE, 2013). All information was collected through electronic recording, including informants' spoken consent. Also, a set of unwritten rules created called *lei do morro* (favela's law) guided me to an extreme care in regard to informants' confidentiality and data handling. A popular saying, *X9 morre cedo* (a whistleblower dies early), is one of these rules, set by Rio de Janeiro drug dealers. As a matter of illustration, my first gatekeeper had welcomed me to stay at her grandparents' house at Providência for the duration of my fieldwork. However, one day before I moved in, she suddenly cancelled her invitation by expressing concerns with the hosts' security.

#### *A data chest: analysis, trustworthiness and limitations*

At the turn of the twentieth first century, Marcos, the owner of the cultural center in the main square, conceived an artistic project that exposed Providência to the whole city. At the turn of the twentieth first century, he rescued favela memories to create an exhibition to celebrate Providência's centennial anniversary. About his creative process, he proudly explains:

“I opened a [treasure] chest, right? I opened a chest lid that I did not manage to close until today. I found very rich stories, with some information until a certain time [in history], but after that, this information ceases. So, I start to see this chest, to run all the files and all, and I start to identify the problems of the community.”. (Interview Marcos, February 6, 2018)

Indeed, Providência is a historical place, plenty of rich stories. After returning from fieldwork and transcribing the audio files, I started reviewing the data with the support of NVivo software. I had my field notes in mind while reviewing the textual material to identify topics. Similar topics were clustered, and the major ones received a node. In a second exercise, I went through each transcript once again to identify second or third references to the major nodes. Finally, three major categories emerged from the references and nodes: “Structure”, “Infrastructure” and “Navigating the City”. These categories indicate different dimensions of violence, serving as building blocks for an argument that, with the support of



relevant literature, help to understand people's perception of violence at Morro da Providência.

For this thesis project I decided to conduct qualitative interviews with the objective of learning about people's lived experiences. What is violence to them? How do they cope with the experiences of violence in their neighborhood? How do they make sense of themselves, mobilize against or in other ways act to deal with the violence? This research technique is aimed not at generalizable knowledge, but at the contextual, often nuanced knowledge about lives and the experiences of citizens in the slum. Finally, since the ethnographic "instrument" of data collection is the researcher herself, a common limitation to this approach comes from observation's conscious and unconscious biases. To openly reflect about my role as a researcher, as well as my positioning to the topic under research were practices to cope with this limitation (LeCompte, 1987; Norris, 1997).

### **3. Literature Review: Urbanism and Violence in Latin America**

Violence is not a new phenomenon. For some, it is an intrinsic aspect of human nature; others believe that it is a product of social relations. Irrespective of a Hobbesian or Rousseauian starting point, violence is ubiquitously present throughout human history. However, defining violence is a continuous debate in which terms such as direct and indirect, physical violence, structural and symbolic violence are discussed. In this literature review, the aim is to bring this debate into dialogue with research on urban violence in the favela. To achieve this, this literature review is limited to the discussion of a selected number of academic contributions on the concept of violence, focusing on a wider notion of the phenomenon established by Johan Galtung. This is supplemented with a review of Latin American and Brazilian publications on the phenomenon of urban violence. The result indicates the necessity to consider multiple forms of violence and their impacts in different city areas and their residents. This builds the foundation for an exploratory research project.

#### **3.1 What is urban?**

The western urban thought finds its roots in the Industrial Revolution. European philosophers observed the demographic and productive changes that began in the eighteenth century and aimed to understand the urban complexities of their time. For example, Friedrich Engels immersed himself in an ethnographic exercise in British cities. He observed their transition from home-based to fully fledged industrial economies. This resulted in the publication of his first book, entitled *Condition of the Working Class in England* (1844). This economic transition in the city gained clearer contours. A year later, in his collaboration with Karl Marx on the publication of *German Ideology* (1845), the urban was referred to as places where class relations developed based on new conditions of production, distinct from those found in the British countryside (Marx & Engels, 1845, p. 140). This focus on forms of production and class defining social relations was also evident in Max Weber's publication *The City* (1921b). Weber emphasized also the urban in its economic aspect of changing modes of production: cities were settlements where individuals would live primarily and constantly from an exchange of goods, as opposed to agricultural practices (p. 1213).

In sum, Engels, Marx and Weber took the Industrial Revolution as a starting point to elaborate a common understanding about the urban as a new, economic-led phenomenon, distinct from its rural counterpart. Despite sharing a common understanding of the urban phenomenon, these authors explored its impact in social relations through different objects of study. For instance, Engels noticed in his ethnographic exercise that the introduction of machinery in large-scale production in cities created job opportunities, leading to an

increasing urban density and the rise of a new working class (Engels & Wischnewetzky, 1844, p. 15). Along with Marx, he placed this working class within a new division of labour. In the factories, impersonal relationships between workers and capital replaced a personalist connection between journeymen and their masters found in countryside guilds (Marx & Engels, 1845, p. 69). The absence of relations between private property and labour in the city deepened its distinction from rural working relations. And, although concurring with an economic interpretation to social relations, Weber also looked for versatility in his city characterization. This was because not all cities around the world were composed of market places for exchange of goods. Also, European urbanization carried out not only by economic developments, but also by the chase of power: “the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who were participating in the action” (1921a, p. 926). In this way, along with a new economic order and a rising working class, power also played a major role to influence social relations in the city.

The shift from guild towns to manufactures and industrial cities did not occur overnight. In fact, the gradual shift from guild towns to manufactures and industrial cities was concomitant to a period of what was defined by Marx and Engels as vagabondage – part of the demographic transition from rural areas. Until England’s industrial economy developed enough to absorb the growing urban masses, thousands of idle individuals became objects of urban organization policies. For instance, in an occasion of numerous idle individuals, King Henry VIII of England decided to have seventy-two thousands of them hanged (Marx & Engels, 1845, p. 77). With the advancement of industrial machinery, London’s urban society was marked by cleavages between the working class and ruling elites. The rampant inequality could be identified through extremes in housing conditions. In one side, in London’s biggest working-people’s district:

“It [was] no uncommon thing for a man and his wife, with four or five children, and sometimes the grandfather and grandmother, to be found living in a room from three to three and a half square meters, and which serves them for eating and working in.” (Engels & Wischnewetzky, 1844, p. 35).

In the other side, members of middle and upper-middle classes would live in regularly laid out streets in the vicinity of the working quarters or in the vicinities’ free, wholesome country air, in fine, comfortable homes, passed once every half or quarter hour by omnibuses going into the city. (p. 46). These observations about London’s transition into an urban

society show that this process became a synonym of industrialization, and that this process did not affect individuals and areas of a city in a uniform manner.

In the eighteenth century, the expansion of foreign trade and navigation placed manufacture in a secondary role in European economies. By then, colonization and foreign trade fostered competition amongst European nations. These nations turned to non-industrial countries, which were “swept by universal commerce” (p. 79) through this global competitive effort. In the same way that the rural was swallowed by the industrial, urban forms in European cities, international trade replaced local crafts and social organizations in colonized regions. Therefore, the classic works of Engels, Marx and Weber highlight a connection between the growth of cities to the European colonialist reign in other parts of the world. To bring the focus closer to this project’s object of study, we look for to urbanization and colonialisms thought in Latin America.

### *Colonial Urbanism*

The effort to understand urban phenomena was also present in the other side of the Atlantic. Brazil’s national governments implemented the country’s first industrial development policies during the 1930s, creating a major impulse for urbanization. Alongside urbanization, intellectual curiosity about the urban also developed. In Brazil, a scholarly community developed in the 1930s, trying to make sense of the urban transition and what the urban meant. Two particularly noteworthy contributions from this era are Holanda’s *Raízes do Brasil* [Roots of Brazil] and Freyre’s *Sobrados e Mucambos* [The Mansions and the Shanties] Written in 1936, these works touched upon the Brazilian transition from a colonial monarchy to an industrial republic.

*Roots of Brazil* resorts to economic history to describe the country’s relations between the city and the countryside. From the establishment of Portuguese colonial practices in Brazil in the 16th century until the mid-19th century, wealth was produced through agricultural production: big plantations in the countryside (Holanda, 1936, p. 52). Most of the domestic consumption and agricultural-related activities also gravitated around the big house.<sup>5</sup> By then, cities were founded by the Portuguese crown alongside Brazil’s extensive coastline with the main objective to facilitate the flow of sugarcane and coffee to European markets, and to serve as places for leisure, being mostly visited during religious holidays (M. Santos, 2005).

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<sup>5</sup> Although *casa grande*’s directly translates as the “big house” to a slave master and his family, the term encompasses the whole plantation property with its slave quarters, sugar mills, “fortress, chapel, workshop and other things besides” (Burke & Pallares-Burke, 2008, p. 55).

Differently from what occurred in the old continent, where economy growth was leveraged by industrialization, and increasing productivity levels resulted in urban expansion, in Brazil the colonial model expanded itself through profit remittances to the Portuguese crown. Parts of the wealth which stayed in the colony was concentrated in the countryside, like most of the colony's cultural life.

The first effort towards urbanization in Brazilian territory dates from 1808. It was a direct result of the royal family presence in Rio de Janeiro, where it was established after fleeing from Europe and the Napoleonic Wars. The Portuguese crown created the colony's first banking system and reconfigured Rio's administrative roles. This sudden emphasis in urban development created a chasm between rural aristocrats and slaveowners and an incipient, yet growing urban leadership composed of small business owners. It also brought new material elements to the city: small mansions and single-family dwellings, home to "the bachelors and doctors, some of them children of mechanics or peddlers with black or mulatto women" (Freyre, 1963, p. 93). Freyre and Holanda described Brazil's colonial economy as a succession of agricultural and mining cycles. As opposed to what unfolded in the European continent in the same period, these changes in productive sources did not lead to an impulse for urbanization. Instead, the first signs of urbanization resulted from shifting power relations within the colonial administration.

The colonial literature informed scholars that movements towards urbanization in the first half of the twentieth century were not a novelty, but a dynamic embedded in social and economic cycles. From the 1930s onwards, now in a republican system, heavy machinery was introduced as a replacement to the Brazil's agricultural forte in the form of import substitution policies. This time, the productive change did lead to an intense and permanent demographic distinction between urban and rural regions. In the 1950s, the majority of Brazilian population lived in cities for the first time in history (Furtado, 2006). The urban-rural dichotomy, which was prominent in Europe since the Industrial Revolution, appeared in Brazilian academic circles only in the 1960s, connecting the country's particular phase of economic development with industrialization and city growth.

The rural-urban dichotomy in Brazil was different from the European. In Europe, it was characterized by a demographic change from the countryside to nearby cities, where migrants lived in "one or two-storied cottages in long rows, perhaps with cellars used as dwellings, almost always irregularly built" (Engels & Wischnewetzky, 1844, p. 2). In Brazil, northeastern migrants departed to southeastern cities (Morse, 1971). This occurred because closer regional capitals did not develop their industry and other economic sectors in the same proportion than its southeast counterparts.

Once arrived, most of the migrants found refuge in shanty houses, positioned in cities' peripheral areas (M. Santos, 1977). Centuries after the Industrial Revolution, a urban question was still unresolved: how to ensure the well-being of a urban population, which was growing in peripheral areas without adequate public services? (Carvalho, 2002). In this way, from the 1960s onwards, research on cities and people's well-being gained strength in Brazil.

### *Sociospatial urbanism*

Understanding the urban became a task in several fields of study. In the first half of twentieth century, a common understanding was shared amongst them: cities have developed a close relation to capital accumulation. It was fair to say that an economic cycle would have the potential to create a specific urban configuration (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 98). In fact, the second half of the century was marked by new economic dynamics in both advanced and developing economies: a new and international division of labour as well as technological innovations were about to change the face of urban regions.

Paradoxically, this moment also raised questions about the suitability of economic-based perspectives to research about these changes. Henri Lefebvre, a French philosopher, was a pioneer in revisiting Marxian literature and applying it into urban thinking in the late 1960s (Gottdiener, Hutchison, & Ryan, 2014, p. 80). While he understands the importance of the economic perspective in urban development, he also saw the city as a locus for accumulation of "knowledge, technologies, things, people" (H. Lefebvre, 1970, p. 24). By expanding his ontological focus, Lefebvre wondered about what occurred to urban lives between economic cycles. Also important was the increasing concern with individual subjectivities in different parts of cities.

These questions could not be answered from a solely economic perspective. Indeed, for Lefebvre, most of the twentieth-century urban research naturalized and homogenized urban experiences. He envisaged new foundations for urban research. An ontology beyond economics; comprised of perceptions of time, space and people. Epistemologies that would go beyond positivism and multiple methods to approach the urban object (H. Lefebvre, 1995, p. 157). This revisiting brought to light inquiries towards daily relations in the city, which could be explored in empirical exercises.

Lefebvre's theoretical concerns were shared by David Harvey, an English geographer based in the United States. Harvey's reflections about advanced urban economies were also distant from the common approach to the urban in the twentieth century. He included material features to urban dynamics and, by doing so, he described how inequality relates to space and politics in two important ways. For one, the economic and technological advancements of his

time created less spatial barriers for capital flows, which could concentrate in productive regions in several countries. In this sense, urban spaces were gradually “annihilated by time” (Harvey, 1985, p. 24). Conversely, changing temporal and spatial configurations would lead to differentiations among cities and to “a chaos of confused and disordered motions towards both homogeneity and regional differentiation” (Harvey, 1982, p. 441). In this way, Harvey indicated how concomitant, yet contradictory flows can materialize in the city.

Another way Harvey introduced geographic aspects to urban research was through the prism of inequality. An economic model could create material advancement while organizing itself unevenly within the urban fabric. The city potential for profit making would, therefore, not be the same in all its parts, which could result in misery and social unrest. At times, the economic response came through dispersion of economic activities to countries that could provide productivity and social control. Uneven development is, thus, an intrinsic aspect of capitalist accumulation (Harvey, 2005, p. 55). Harvey’s contribution to urban studies show that contradictory flows of agglomeration and dispersion, progress and inequality can go hand in hand.

Can inequality be mitigated within economic models? After identifying new objects for urban research and highlighting its material contradictions, this was a necessary question. For Harvey, economic models could cause less harm whether by “switching of flows of capital and labour between sectors and regions (often simultaneously) or into a radical reconstruction of material and social infrastructures” (1985, p. 451). Lefebvre shared a similar thought. He proposed a urban reform in economic, material and societal forms (1995, p. 154). These suggestions are revolutionary by nature; and the drivers for this urban change lay in individual and collective engagement.

Manuel Castells develops this argument further in *The city and the grassroots*. For him, the key for equality in the city was in the hands of the oppressed: especially through confrontation and resistance practices. The oppressed could act by challenging the meaning of spatial and social arrangements and proposing new forms and functions (1983, p. 304). Confrontation and resistance, therefore, have the potential to create local social networks, establishing alternative ways to create and consume culture, developing informal economies and advocating for social rights (1972, p. 15; 1989, p. 298). This potential can be tapped by communities in both developing and developed nations.

The works of Lefebvre, Harvey and Castells contributed to a novel research paradigm between the 1970s and 1980s: the sociospatial urbanism. Departing from distinct fields of study, these authors and many others enriched the meaning of urban by observing how increasing economic and technologic developments materialized in the local, impacting daily

lives and the built environment. The perception of space and time in political economy resulted in reflections about the contradictory nature of economic development and its uneven distribution within cities. In addition, the interest in power and inequality uncovered the dynamics of individual and collective movements in their quest for a right to the city. Finally, the sociospatial approach had the advantage of dialoguing with thoughts and empirics beyond European and American borders.

### *Latin American urbanism in time and space*

The 1960s and 1970s were watershed decades in urban research. A multidisciplinary knowledge production made use of refreshed theoretical and methodological frameworks, reflecting times of change in economic, political and social conditions. In Brazil, this literature was instrumental to understand the role of the country's first urban regions within an international division of labour, through historical and spatial approaches. Moreover, new avenues for urban investigation were open. Heterogeneities among social groups could be exposed through the lenses of economic circuits or urban spoliation, creating vivid portraits of Brazilian cities during times of political authoritarianism.

Starting in the 1960s, dependency theorists gave continuity to a post-colonial, historical approach to cities. By then, efforts towards urbanization were embedded in social and economic discrepancies, in which some groups dominated others locally whilst communicating with their pairs in a relatively autonomous manner beyond city borders (Quijano, 1968, p. 1). As a result, dependent relations can go beyond societies' social and economic aspects: its historical unfolding affects other institutional orders and the development of regional societies as a whole (Cardoso, 1982, p. 23). The dependency scholarship placed Latin America's rising urbanization in the context of wider economic arrangements. It did so not through a "catch up" argument that developing nations need to achieve the same level of economic development than its first-world counterparts. Instead, the dependency theory placed all countries in an interdependent, international economic system, which privileges the development of some countries and social groups to the detriment of others. conversation between social and economic elites in both developing and developed nations, which have been historically present in Latin America.

Milton Santos, a Brazilian geographer, concurred with development theorists about Latin America's urban heterogeneity. Yet, his conception of urban goes further by including spatial elements to social and economic dynamics, which he explored in his book, *The Shared Space* (1979). To Santos, new economic demands are always superimposed over pre-existing ones. In this way, cities have been pressured to accommodate new and old social realities, as well as



productive and distributive systems. In Brazil's 1960s and 1970s, this resulted in the creation of two urban circuits. The upper circuit was "a direct result of technological modernization, and its most representative elements [were] monopolies and a national and international framework", while the lower circuit was made of "small scale activities, especially concerned with the poor population. It was well-entrenched and enjoyed privileged relations with its region" (p. 50). Urban circuits were, therefore, not only responsible for economic processes, but also for cities' spatial organization. The diffusion of modern economic activities and the maintenance of previous, non-modern ones were tied to a geographical distribution of economic activities and income.

Dependency and spatial theories provided the foundations to empirical productions in Brazilian cities. A major work in these lines is Lucio Kowarick's *Urban Spoliation* (1980). The book is a compilation of several ethnographic and political economy notes about São Paulo's favelas and their housing conditions during the 1970s. Since colonial times, traditional shanty houses represented an autonomous, self-constructing logic within a pulsing metropolis. The resort to low-quality housing and the absence of public services in favelas creates urban spoliation: "the sum of extorsions [within a specific city area] that worsen social and working relations" (p. 59). In other words, favelas' participation in the industrial economy is not its residents, creating a growing marginal reserve army.

#### *From the industry to the everyday: the contemporary urban*

The concern with global colonial powers from the beginning of Brazilian urban research gained new momentum between the 1980s and 1990s. This time, the research focus was on new drivers of the global economy and their impacts on the city. In Latin America, a wave of democratization and structural adjustment programs enabled a closer relation between cities and international financial and productive flows (Maricato, 2003). The political and economic developments were followed by innovations in technology and communication networks, giving shape to rising global cities in the continent (Sassen, 2004). These cities also carried contradictions: "the growing numbers of the very rich and of the very poor, along with the impoverishment of the once prosperous but modest middle classes" (Sassen, 2009a, p. 32) became sensitive issues in urban economies since these group's shares of income and consumption were mostly spent in the urban regions. The recurrent relation between exclusion from specific market activities and economic inequality persisted, therefore, as a urban trademark towards the turn of the century.

During the 1990s, the relation between exclusion and inequality received its critics. The logics bringing progress and inequality to urban areas were perceived as the product of

multilevel, mostly economic factors. For Milton Santos (1994, p. 36), this understanding carries a risk of considering the urban as an overly structural, “inevitable phenomenon, considered even as a natural fact”. As a consequence, despite widening the urban research scope towards its heterogeneities, a dualistic understanding of urban dynamics, especially due to its material and structural characteristics, could naturalize urban inequalities.

The urban, in this nuanced conception, became a *locus* for both material and ideational interactions. In Lefebvre’s words, the urban is home to the social space. This space is not neutral, like an architect’s blank clipboard. This space encompasses previous social relations, geographic contours as well as micro and macroeconomic flows. And the enabler to all these urban interactions is the human: “the action of groups, factors within knowledge, within ideology, or within the domain of representations” (1991, p. 77). The individual, thus, comes to the fore of urban research. People have the potential to shape the urban through their everyday practices in the same way as economic forces.

This understanding of the urban allowed researchers to research Brazilian slums in innovative forms. For instance, de Queiroz Ribeiro (2000) chose geographical participation in labour markets and institutional arrangements as a guide to assess the impacts of welfare policies and housing conditions in Rio de Janeiro slums. His work reveals intra-urban intricacies through secondary data, yet, reiterating the need to consider everyday practices as valuable sources for individual and collective change. This need was met by Janice Perlman’s work on slums (2010). Like de Queiroz Ribeiro, she provides contextual and historical data to show how economic changes in Rio de Janeiro impacted formal and informal, legal and illegal forms of economic participation. The novelty in Perlman’s work comes from her longitudinal research in specific slums over the course of three decades. With the use of questionnaires and interviews, she collected stories in connection to inequality, both in terms of multigenerational experiences and towards advocacy for community change.

The concept of urban gained different interpretations across time and space. The thought developed in the light of the Industrial Revolution identified economics as a driving force, defining the urban in opposition to the rural. Unequal work relations and access to public services were also identified in this period. However, this approach to inequality was detached from colonial realities. For instance, Brazilian cities detached from economic strength during the colonial period, serving mostly as intermediates to the wealth concentrated in the countryside’s plantations. The slave workforce was the epitome of a rampant, extreme and unequal society.

The European conception of urban applied to Brazil only in the first half twentieth century, when late industrialization, a republican government system and massive

demographic characterized the country's first urban regions. In the second half of the twentieth century, Brazilian scholarship aligned with American and European's in a critique of the urban understood in purely economic terms. A contemporary understanding of urban sees it as a locus for social, political, economic and spatial forces, which are interconnected in a local and global levels.

Urbanization is a phenomenon that has created progress while maintaining and reproducing inequalities throughout history. This paradox is the heart of the urban question: how to ensure urban development while reducing inequality? This is a urgent question as problems in urban live remain unsolved, especially in cities in the global south (Glaeser, Resseger, & Tobio, 2008; Salahub, Gottsbacher, & De Boer, 2018). A fundamental issue lies on to approach these problems, since they go beyond inequality manifesting themselves in many forms: from increasing crime rates to lack of access to housing, health, education and justice. Ultimately, the difficulty in tackling an urban problem relates to what falls under the definition of violence.

### **3.2. What is violence?**

Violence is a phenomenon with a myriad of manifestations. This thesis departs from an interest in violence in an individual level. Thus, the analytical focus is on people's perceptions of violence. Through life stories, it is possible to observe how people experience violence in different forms and how these experiences relate to the spaces in which they live. To prepare for the analysis, I here discuss the phenomenon of violence, paying special attention to the development of new agents and forms in academic literature over the course of the twentieth century.

#### *A traditional notion of violence*

Violence is a phenomenon with a myriad of manifestations. In International Relations, for example, violence is mostly associated with state's use of force and applies to contexts of inter-state warfare. From this focus, it follows that a key question is whether the use of direct violence, that is towards the body, is legitimate or not. Violence is also used in International Relations to describe the state of affairs before the erection of states, as in the Hobbesian war of all against all. To be secure against this state of constant violence, fear and insecurity, the state is granted authority to use violence.

The common interpretations of violence in International Relations resemble the traditional notion of violence that lasted for much of the twentieth century. This notion is nicely delineated in Eisner's attempt of a general theory (2009). For him, violence occurs in

the scope of nation states because, in a Weberian sense, they hold the monopoly of the use of direct force within territories. It follows that the direct is the only form in which violence can occur. This form enables the phenomenon to be equally interpreted across geographic regions and historical periods – after all, human bodies have not changed much during the last hundred thousand years. It also regards potential harm, non-physical harm or deprivation of individual liberty as non-violent. Finally, returning to Weber (1978), violence is based on an instrumental rationality – that is, deliberate planning – conferring intentionality to the act.

### *The twentieth century: new actors and forms of violence*

The erection of states is a history of war and violence, and the (violent) control of cities was an important part of state building (Tilly, 1992). In fact, as the nature of warfare changed from inter-state to intra-state over the course of the twentieth century, new actors and forms of violence have arisen. For example, departing from a strict notion of violence between nation states, the state was gradually recognized as an actor that may use violence against their own citizens. In cases of genocide, direct violence is deliberately inflicted towards national, ethnical, racial or religious groups. As a consequence, the idea of responsibility was introduced into the legitimacy of the use of force before the international community (Gaeta, 2007). For another example, the use of violence by non-state actors aiming to strengthen their power was also acknowledged. To be sure, Pinker (2011) states that the death toll related to inter-state wars, civil wars and genocides have decreased since the 1990s, but the same trend is not present in the number of homicides in connection to drug trafficking. Rather, “over the past four decades, as drug trafficking has increased, their rates of homicide have soared” (p. 80). Thus, international drug trafficking networks and other non-state actors have challenged the states’ monopoly on the use of (direct) violence.

The direct, physical-centered form of violence has also been questioned, especially during the 1970s and 1980s. A classical contribution to this effort is Johan Galtung’s *Violence, Peace and Peace Research* (1969). For one, he acknowledges that violence exists in non-physical forms. This means that threats against one’s body or mind integrity are considered a psychological form of violence, and people may use violence towards other people. Secondly, Galtung raises an important question: can one talk about violence when it is impossible to identify a clear actor? For him, non-traceable and non-intentional acts of violence also cause physical or psychological effects. In such situations, structural violence does not have a clear actor because it is built into the social fabric and manifests itself through unequal opportunities to debate, decide and make use of public resources, limiting individual

and collective ability to achieve their full potential (p. 171). In this way, Galtung's work widened the scope of forms and actors of violence.

### *Structures and violence*

The notion of structure and its relationship with violence require further clarification. To start, a structure contains sets of expected social rules and practices which are external to every person. In turn, every person tends to repeatedly follow these rules and practices, abiding with a social configuration in place (Demmers, 2016, p. 82). In other words, structures are socially-constructed relations.

How can structures create and maintain violence? Michael Foucault's notion of power is a good starting point to understand this dynamic. In his work, power is as a synonym for human relationships, which are generally "mobile, reversible and unstable" (Foucault, 1984, p. 292). This means that people are free to elaborate strategies and shape a power relation to terms which serve their interests. In this sense, "power relations are not something that is bad in itself" (p. 298). The issue arises when they become dominant:

"One sometimes encounters what may be called situations or states of domination in which the power relations, instead of being mobile, allowing the various participants to adopt strategies modifying them, remain blocked, frozen. When an individual or social group succeeds in blocking a field of power relations, immobilizing them and preventing any reversibility of movement by economic, political, or military means, one is faced with what may be called a state of domination." (p. 283).

When dominant, power relations become static and limit dominated individual and social groups' freedom to elaborate strategies to shape them. At times, this limitation departs from the dominated themselves as they repeatedly follow the dominant power's established rules and practices without noticing them (McIntyre, 2016). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault reflects about these unnoticed forms of domination in a historical context. For him, humans became an object and a target of power when methods aimed to control body's operations while ensuring its performance, in a relation of "docility-utility" (Foucault, 1975, p. 136). These methods became dominating during the Age of Enlightenment, marking a shift from states' direct violence to a more elegant approach to coercion: discipline. Disciplinary power increased body forces in terms of economic utility and reduced its forces in terms of political obedience. Foucault identified discipline in institutions which exerted power through three instruments: observation, normalization and examination.

Firstly, observation took the form of a dual surveillance: on one side, the establishment of laws and regulations and, on the other, the ways in which people would follow them. Surveillance, therefore, was a hidden “machinery of control” (p. 173) because it was not a thing to be possessed by anyone; it was widespread in a society, making its every member always alert. Secondly, the use of norms aimed to homogenize a society by introducing a common and equal set of references to its members. At the same time, normalization also helped to classify people in terms of adherence to these norms and to correct deviant behaviors. Finally, examination combines both observation and normalization: it selects personal features and compares it to a norm. This measurement becomes a standard of character, since it connects its status in a society with its personal features. As a result, it becomes a legitimate punishment tool.

Foucault’s reflections shed light into the dynamics of structural violence by showing how social relations can create and reinforce violence in a Galtungian sense. Disciplinary power served a tool to control and dominate human bodies and minds. It also limits individual and collective chances to reverse a certain social configuration simply because they see such configuration as normal. Likewise, it can make people reinforce violent scenarios or even perpetrate violence unintentionally.

After clarifying structure’s dynamics and connections to violence, it is important to observe how manifestations of structural violence have been identified in theory and empirics. For instance, Galtung defines culture as an umbrella term for “all of it symbolic, in religion and ideology, in language and art, in science and law, in media and education” (1996, p. 2) that legitimizes structural forms of violence. Another manifestation of structural violence was identified in urban infrastructure; then called infrastructural violence. Here, the allocation of people in the urban space and the ways their circulation is enabled or constrained by material infrastructures become a “coding of their reciprocal relations” (Foucault, 2001, p. 361). As a result, infrastructure can serve as a tool to subject individuals and social groups to control, exclusion or even direct violence (Graham & McFarlane, 2014).

### *Violence and the city*

The literature on violence explores its complexity and varieties of actors and forms. This chapter showed how the concept of violence has changed over time, encompassing new actors and ways of understanding the phenomenon over the course of the twentieth century. As a brief review, it identified violence in a traditional, state-centered approach and contemporary interpretations that recognize agency in people – and no agency whatsoever. Likewise, it explored direct and indirect forms of violence while emphasizing structure’s origins,

dynamics and applications in research. These different forms to understand violence are complementary (Malešević, 2017): whilst direct violence is the most common way to grasp the phenomenon in everyday life, indirect, structural forms of violence remain mostly in the shadows of public discussions and state policies, yet still causing harm and suffering to entire social groups.

To discuss violence in the contemporary city, a concern with specific actors continues to matter. This is evident in common questions such as: who are perpetrators of violence in the city? At the same time, this actor-centered approach to violence has the disadvantage to not identify covert, structural forms of violence. Therefore, there is a need to discuss multiple forms of violence and how they relate to the city. In the analysis, an initial step is to observe who the perpetrators are. A second effort is to shed light to structural and covert manifestations of violence, especially in regards to Providência residents.

#### 4. Background: Favelas' urbanization, economic cycles and violence in a long durée

In this background chapter, I describe how urbanization, economic cycles and dynamics of violence have been present and shaped favelas in Rio de Janeiro from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

Rio de Janeiro's history can be told by its hills. During the nineteenth century, a coastal region known as Valongo received an influx of commercial and industrial activities due to its proximity to the city center. In this period, warehouses and small industries were established alongside the coast, attracting shipowners, fishermen and, later on, slave traders who found accommodation in big *cortiços*<sup>6</sup>. Another factor that contributed to Valongo's development was the installation of a slave market, which considerably increased its port movement and made it the largest slave port in the Americas: there, over seven hundred thousand slaves landed from Congo and Angola alone (Daflon, 2016). Several hills surrounded Valongo pier. Around 1850, their lands were donated by the Crown to build catholic churches or for Portuguese settlers and their agricultural practices. Together, Valongo and its hills grew in a disorderly manner, with dirty alleyways and *cortiços* (Honorato, 2008). Living in this region was unhealthy, exposing its inhabitants to various diseases and epidemics.

Valongo's demographics moved uphill by the turn of the century. Firstly, due to concerns with urban sanitation and health, Rio de Janeiro's government closed all *cortiços* in 1891. Since *cortiço* inhabitants found their sources of income by the port, their solution was to occupy the idle pieces of land in the surrounding hills. Secondly, the slave trade became illegal in Brazil in 1831, with slavery being abolished in 1888. In this way, most of freed slaves left their master's houses and plantations and joined Portuguese and ex-*cortiço* inhabitants in the hills (de Queiroz Ribeiro & Olinger, 2017). The result was the establishment of Morro da Favella, Brazil's first slum.

Between 1902 and 1906, Rio de Janeiro's major, Pereira Passos, implemented an avant-garde urban reform, comprised of urbanistic and health programs. Passos radically modernized Rio's city center, inspired by the wide and long Parisian streets in the Belle Époque (Meade, 1989). However, the mayor did not include former slaves and poor citizens in Rio's urban plan, relegating these individuals to favelas. The reform's health policies included massive and compulsory vaccinations of poor city regions, "which in many cases meant the use of force against resisting communities who were completely unaware of the effects of vaccines in their bodies" (Iwata & Del Rio, 2004, p. 175). Passos' reforms aimed to bring the future to Rio de Janeiro. However, the spatial distribution of embellishment and

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<sup>6</sup> *Cortiços* are "rented, high-density, sub-standard collective rooms in high storey buildings or houses" (Wagner, 2014, p. 15).



health policies caused two side effects: on one hand, a person's address started to reflect one's social status in the city. On the other hand, the vaccination policies carried with them a political wish to sanitize – physically and morally – specific spaces and social groups (Chalhoub, 2018).

The decade of 1930 marked Brazil's transition from an exporter of agrarian commodities to an economy based on import substitutions. As productive activities shifted towards the industry, the decline of agricultural activities created a situation of economic and food insecurity in countryside households. In tandem, economic growth concentrated in Brazil's southeastern region. As a result, cities like Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo received masses of internal migrants from the countryside between 1930 and 1950.

These cities were not ready to receive and manage migratory flows, as the first official favela census shows. Published in 1948, the national government's assessment of favelas was that "blacks and browns prevailed in the favelas because they were hereditarily backward, devoid of ambition, and poorly adjusted to modern social demands" (Zaluar & Alvito, 1998, p. 13). The political representatives' negative and "unfitted for modernity" perception of favela inhabitants extended to migrant people, even though their presence in the favelas was based in their hopes of better life opportunities. In an opposite direction than the government, the academy began to understand the favela as a constitutive part of the urban fabric in the 1940s, building the foundation of Brazilian social sciences in alignment with international developments in critical urban theory (Valladares & Freire-Medeiros, 2002).

In 1950, more than half of Brazil's population lived in cities. Urban demographic growth remained a trend in the following decade: Rio's population grew 39%, showing an annual growth rate of 3,3%. The 1960 census showed that more than half of the city's population comprised of migrants who resided in the city for less than ten years (Olinger, 2015). Most of these individuals resided in slums and worked in the services sector (C. S. Santos, 2017). Also in 1960, Carlos Lacerda was elected the governor of Guanabara state<sup>7</sup>. Lacerda shared interests with real estate and constructor companies to elevate the city's beach areas to high-class neighborhoods, even if some favelas needed to disappear in the process (Fernandes & Costa, 2010). Lacerda's statement referred to morro do Castelo's complete dismantle, which occurred in 1922. Morro do Castelo was located in the heart of the city and the municipality's public works department justified its destruction in the following terms (R. S. Gonçalves, 2016, p. 40):

"For many years, the commercial area of the city of Rio de Janeiro, which has been tightened between the sea and a series of small hills and with no room for development, is

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<sup>7</sup> Guanabara is the current Rio de Janeiro state; which capital is Rio de Janeiro city itself.

considered insufficient and demands a solution from the public authorities. Among the solutions found, the most naturally indicated is, undoubtedly, the destruction of morro do Castelo. Not only because the area currently occupied by it is magnificently situated in the heart of the city, but because it would give way to a new neighborhood that would open up to our commerce, as well as provide this part of the city with other conditions of sanitation and embellishment”.

As it becomes clear, Rio’s government did not consider morro do Castelo as part of the real city. Rather, the morro was a symbol of ugliness and, as such, a natural response was to remove it. Forty years later, Lacerda still considers favela removals as a feasible public policy, whilst cementing the notion of favela residents as undesirable in modern, urbanized parts of the city.

As a response, the first favelas’ resident associations were born, serving as a hub to residents’ demands and consolidating their role as a forum to resist against governmental removal policies. In 1963, the Federation of Favela Associations of Guanabara state was established as an umbrella organization to more than seventy local residents’ associations (Oliveira, 2002). Just one year later, the instauration of a military dictatorship brought dark times for livelihoods and social organization in favelas. Military security discourses targeted favelas as lawless areas and headquarters for rebels. In Rio, the local government kept its favela removal policies and added the military police in the control of favela regions with guerilla tactics (Napolitano, 2014). A sign of hope came with the military administration’s creation of housing bank, with the aim to support popular house constructions. However, “unrealistically high standards of construction and underestimated costs of land, materials, infrastructure, and labor, prices per unit vastly exceeded what the poor could afford” (Perlman, 2010, p. 268). The final housing loans ended up achieving individuals from middle and upper-middle classes. In this manner, the military slowed down favelados’ social and political organization, whilst strengthening the notion that the favelas are not part of the urban fabric.

In the 1970s, Brazil’s import substitution project showed its first signs of weakness as the growth of the economy slowed down. The external financing sources utilized to boost industrialization and Brazilian savings in foreign currency dropped in response to the oil crisis of 1973 (Bresser-Pereira & Theuer, 2012). Consequently, the Brazilian economy defaulted on external debts, saw an increase in public deficits and extreme inflation levels rising during the whole of the 1980s, known as “the lost decade”. This period was a watershed between models of economic and political development.

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<sup>8</sup> Favelado is the individual who lives in a favela.

In the shadow of international political and economic events, illegal flows of people and goods also underwent major changes during the 1970s. During the military period, common criminals and members of armed political groups were equally convicted under a national security law. These two groups were placed in the same prison, and within the same unit. (Penglase, 2009). This rather unexpected encounter and sharing of experiences between political prisoners and drug dealers in Rio de Janeiro prisons brought up similarities between them: Both shared a common rejection to the country's current political environment, each one for their own reasons. At the same time, this convivence allowed drug dealers to learn about political and organizational practices (Werneck, 2017). This knowledge was applied behind bars and spread to Rio de Janeiro favelas. In this way, Brazil's most famous drug mafia came into being: the Falange Vermelha, today's Comando Vermelho (Red Command). Plus, in the 1980s, the international cocaine business arrived in Rio (Leeds, 1996). Drug dealers, traditionally known by their robbing banks and weed sales, now count with an organizational structure and lucrative business, with slums as a safe haven to stock and manage the drug distribution around the city. The effects of these legal and illegal flows in Rio would become clear in the first years after Brazil's democratization.

"The lost decade" delegitimized Brazil's dictatorial government and strengthened civil society groups' efforts towards a new political reality. The country's unsolved urban question was present in the democratization debates and the land's social function was included in the new 1988 Constitution, that counted with intense civil contribution in its elaboration (Alfonsin & Fernandes, 2006). In Rio, the city's Master Plan incorporated the constitutional primacy of public over private interests in the city's territory, as well as guidelines to extend access to land, infrastructure and urban services to favela territories (Viehoff & Poynter, 2016).

In the same year, the first seminary about favela regions, public policies and the environment established the methodological and conceptual foundations for the decade's most relevant housing initiative of the decade: Favela Bairro (Favela Neighborhood), which counted with local and international funding sources. This series of events ignited an optimistic discourse for the future of favelas, supported by a constitutional right to housing and property (Olinger, 2015). Despite counting with external and independent management, Favela Bairro faced several problems from its planning to maintenance; which set the tone for the project's ten years of existence.

Along with institutional and infrastructural advancements, the beginning of the 1990s witnessed increasing levels of direct violence in favelas. This can be partly explained by the introduction of AR-15 and AK-47 automatic rifles into Rio's drug market. These heavy

weapons were smuggled through Brazil's weak border controls and escalated the armed conflict between drug gangs over territorial control (Dellasoppa, 2009). The media coverage of petty thefts in touristic beaches was another aggravating. Although these crimes did not result in deaths, the residents were horrified by the police's disregard for the high-class region and demanded a quick response from state authorities towards the place which is the historical source of violence in the city: favelas (Leite, 2000). The political response came in the form of a federal intervention in Rio de Janeiro's public security management in order to restore its status quo.

Between 1994 and 1995, the Operação Rio [Rio Operation] counted with the Armed Forces, that occupied Rio de Janeiro's streets and went up favelas through an agreement with the local administration. The operation's main focus to prevent and repress drug and arms trafficking (Estado, 2002). The result was, not only counterproductive – the operation led to a first-time record of homicides in Rio, with roughly 70 homicides per 100.000 habitants (Misse, 2007) – but also opened a dangerous precedent for police brutality in favela interventions. The Human Rights Watch reported cases of torture, arbitrary detentions, warrantless searches and unnecessary use of lethal force (Caldeira, 1996). The introduction of organized crime and heavy guns in the favela resulted a widespread feeling of insecurity. However, it is outside the favela that this insecurity gained strength and relevance. High-class, beachfront residents intensified the notion that the favela does not belong to the real city: once by being ugly and unsanitary, now because of its violent features.

The latest events linking the union between favelas and the city took place in a context of an entrepreneurial city, a moment of preparation for the city of Rio de Janeiro to host world sports games. Some favelas were included in Rio's major economic dynamics since the early 2000s. In the port zone, a series of public-private partnerships inaugurated a new urbanization cycle, the Porto Maravilha (Marvelous Port).

Morro da Providência is part of the port zone, serving as a natural border between Rio's business region and the port itself. In 2004, the top of Providência hill, also known as Cruzeiro, received the Célula Urbana (Urban Cell) project. In a collaboration between Rio's housing agency with Bauhaus-Dessau school of design, this project's primary objective was to create an open-air museum. The project was also an attempt to integrate Cruzeiro and Providência into the major waterfront project while inserting the favela in the international museums circuit (Costa & Andrade, 2004; Reginensi & Bautès, 2013). The project was completed in 2005: Cruzeiro received new pavements around its historical landscapes. however, the museum part of the project was not successful due to armed conflicts between drug dealers and police forces in the region. As occurred with Favela Bairro, Célula Urbana

did not achieve its main purpose, and the completed parts of the project have not received maintenance.

A promising initiative to give an end to armed conflicts were the units of pacifying police (UPPs), which were established in 2009 in the favelas around the touristic region. In the same year, a housing project took place in Providência: the Morar Carioca (Rio de Janeiro living). The local government's plan to combine urbanization and interventions in security, mobility and social services had no precedents in favelas' history. However, the project removed dozens of favela residents, relocating them to suburban regions under the justification of environmental risk areas (Becerril, 2017). In the end, the government's removal policy comes back to the stage, now under an environmental gaze. The latest intervention under the Morar Carioca scope was a cable car connecting Providência and Rio's central station, with an estimated cost of 18 million dollars (Freeman & Burgos, 2017). The need to remove more families to install the cable car caused a generalized outburst and a local resistance movement, supported by public attorneys. This collective effort managed to paralyze Providência's urbanization projects in the court right after the completion of the cable car whilst the Porto Maravilha concluded its waterfront initiatives. In Providência, becoming part of the real city came with the cost of removing and relocating houses and families. As a group, the residents resisted to this state policy.

Morro da Providência is an emblematic case of systematic, structural violence that materializes in terms of failing public policies. Despite its geographical and historical closeness to the port zone, the favela had a distinct development over the centuries. Since its birth, favelas participation in Rio's social and economic developments in the city has occurred from a negative and dominated position. Throughout the centuries, favelas' sense of "unbelongingness" to the real city was normalized; as such, it has served as a justification for the lack of public investment and extreme use of police forces in these areas. Likewise, the normalization reinforces a perception of favelas as no-go areas due to the presence of armed drug traffickers and environmental risks.

## 5. Perceptions of Violence: Life Stories

New questions arise by shifting the analytical focus from the state to the individual in terms of violence: How can a social group perceive violence? How can people connect to territories inside and outside a favela? Which structural features have enabled or constrained people's everyday lives? These questions will be explored in the following in-depth life stories.

### 5.1 Marcos

Like most of my conversations with Providência residents, my first face-to-face encounter with Marcos was not scheduled. I connected with him through social networks and a few days later I received a notification, very early in the morning: "are you around Providência? Just pass by the community center; my morning is free so we can talk". I was there shortly afterwards. Marcos introduced me to the people working in some refurbishment tasks in the center in our way to the top floor, usually called laje: "we can talk without interruptions up there". The laje is nicely decorated with La Lua, a moon-shaped structure created by a Marcos' colleague, who is an international artist and activist. As Figure 4 shows, La Lua is an impressive structure that can be seen from outside Providência – as if the Morro has gotten its own version of Christ, the Redeemer.

I begin the conversation by asking where Marcos finds inspiration for his artistic and cultural activities. Despite being born and raised in Providência, Marcos traces his ancestry overseas. To him, Portuguese and African<sup>9</sup> influences have marked his upbringing inside and outside Providência, as well as his adult life and his creative work:

"My last names are a combination of my Portuguese heritage, which came from my father, and my African slave roots, from my mother's side. [...] There is something interesting in my life. I was raised amidst Candomblé and drug trafficking".

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<sup>9</sup> His references to African heritage instead of a specific African country is explained by the slave trade, that did not keep slaves' nationalities in their trade.



*Figure 4: La Lua, seen from the top of Cruzeiro. Adapted from Dirby, by Marc, n.d. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from <http://dirby.info/la-lua/> Copyright 2019 by Marc. Adapted with permission.*

*Growing up between Candomblé and Catholicism: violence in the everyday*

Candomblé is an Afro-Brazilian religion, fruit of the syncretism between Yoruba, a west African religion brought to Brazil by slaves, and Christianity, Portuguese crown's official religion. Since slaves were forbidden to practice their religion, they covered their Orisha deities in Christian saints' descriptions (Fry, 1982). Marcos intertwines religion and gender to introduce me his mother's side of the family:

“My mother came from a poor, but very traditional family which established itself in the morro more than two hundred years ago [...] My mother's family is Quilombola<sup>10</sup>; I remember that my great-grandmother was one of those big, black women with a personality so strong that that could rule this whole territory”.

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<sup>10</sup> Quilombolas were escaped slaves who lived in communities called quilombos. Candomblé is tightly related to quilombos, since both religion and place were based on a celebration of freedom, nature and ancestry. The practice of Candomblé in quilombos also points to strong female references in these social groups due to the worshipping of female deities and the prominence of female religious leaders (dos Santos, 2018).

Marcos' mother was also from Candomblé, and his young childhood was marked by her religion's traditional practices. He tells me that one of his first morro memories relates to a food market located down the morro and close to the central station. A food market's last minutes are known as the xepa, when leftovers are given away or sold at a very cheap price. Marcos remembers that, for his mother, attending the xepa went beyond a financial necessity: the practice was part of a familiar tradition, which aimed to enjoy life in the spaces inside and outside the favela and to foster a feeling of community and sharing amongst its residents. However, he admits that this understanding only came later in his life. When I asked him how he felt when following his mother's traditions as a child, he tells that his experiences inside and outside Providência did not bring him any enjoyment as a child:

“I was mad at her [my mother]! Go figure. I lived with my Portuguese grandmother for some time, outside the favela. With my grandmother I was that little boy that, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, has already taken his shower and was indoors, with nice and ironed clothes, ready to sleep. How could I go to the xepa, sneak down stalls and grab food? People looked at me and I was shy... [pause] I was embarrassed. I just could not understand her.”.

Marcos concludes by quickly reflecting that, since his grandmother was Christian and his mother was from Candomblé, they did not go along so well. His reflections point to an incompatibility between both sides of the family and to how this contributed to his identity formation. To start, although Candomblé is a fruit of syncretism with Catholicism, traditional Catholics demonize Candomblé's deities and question its legitimacy as a religion (V. G. da Silva, 2018). Along with this religious clash, cultural and geographical differences between African and Portuguese sides of his family also became source of confusion: On one side, going to the xepa and having community values in the favela and its outskirts was a sign of proud and tradition to Marcos' mother. On the other, cleanliness, organization and control by remaining indoors was the norm at his grandmother's house. Marcos was heavily influenced by his Portuguese roots, which explains the combination of madness, embarrassment and misunderstanding towards his mother's practices.

Marcos continues to speak about his mother, specially about the time he lived with her at Providência. He proudly describes her as a powerful, truly favela woman with a strong personality. Then, his mood changes when reminding of the times she beat him. He explains



that he forgave all the beating by understanding it as a cultural thing, but he also felt mad at her because the beating hurt his feelings. Beyond feelings, Marcos' body was threatened in several occasions. For instance, he tells me that his father kept a gun at home, but the gun in itself did not represent any danger. Rather, it was a natural presence in the household, since he learned how to manage it when he was a child. What really worried him was when his mother used the gun.

“This story was actually funny”, he says with a nervous laugh. His family had a guest at home, so Marcos and his sister were cleaning the house. At a certain point, his sister curses at his mother. He goes on saying that his mother went into her bedroom, grabbed a revolver and ran towards his sister, pointing the loaded gun at her:

“My mom screamed: curse me again, I dare you! Then, my sister grabs me and puts me in front of herself to protect her body. I am not crazy, so I grabbed my sister and placed her front of me for protection, too. We kept changing positions like that for maybe one minute; we were a little tense, but it was also so funny!”.

Marcos says that the situation de-escalated when the guest got a hold of the mother's arm. At the same time, he approached his mother and managed to open the gun's cylinder, dropping all the bullets on the floor.

In the stories about the xepa and the funny times with his sister, Marcos externalizes feelings of shame and anxiety that point out to the insecurity he lived inside and outside the favela. These feelings blend into the joy of childhood's play and the naturalness with which he forgives the times when his body had been subjected to direct violence. However, the madness and anxiety related to violent experiences are still alive in Marcos' memory, showing that his coping mechanisms are somehow ineffective. These two stories show how physical and psychological violence marked Marcos' childhood and have accompanied him as he grew up.

I continue the conversation by asking Marcos if this gun episode with guns was an isolated one, and he answers that his mother resorted to the revolver every time she entered in a discussion, whether at home or somewhere else in the neighborhood. He clearly remembers the last time she did so, in 1988. He lowers his tone of voice to share the details about the last fight between his parents. He explains that, as usual, she ran to the bedroom to grab the

revolver, but this time his father managed to take it away from her. Part of his house was being refurbished, so the floor was unstable. Marcos breathes deeply and says:

“My dad was walking backwards, with the gun in his hands. According to him – this is his version, I was not at home – he stepped on a piece of wood to find support and shot, to scare my mom. But when he shot, he said that he aimed too low instead of aiming to the ceiling. Well, the bullet hit my mom. It entered the front of her chest and left through her back. It dilacerated her aorta vein and her lungs... then, she quickly died”.

Marcos' last memory of his mother shows how belonging of a resourceful family in the favela was tragically intertwined with violence. When he reflects about his mother's death, he brings back the confusion that marked his upbringing in a multicultural family. The only source of information about the death came from the person who actually killed her, which makes Marcos feel unsure about how the situation unfolded. This uncertainty gains clearer forms as we continue talking about his father.

I asked Marcos why his father kept a gun at home. To this, he responds that his father was a drug dealer in the sixties and seventies and, because of his father's occupation, drugs and violence became part of his life: “I had friends who went to jail, who died, my house - my house was always associated to violence.”. I follow up by asking how his house related to violence. He says that his family lived in a big, cool house in the lower part of the favela and, although he did not live at the top of the favela, he was always there because his father's selling spot was at Cruzeiro.

Marcos believes that Providência geographically differentiates its residents and that some sub regions are historically more stigmatized than others. For instance, “if you are in the praça, in the middle of the morro, somebody will say probably say ‘ah, the favela is not here; it's up there in the Cruzeiro or in the Pedra Lisa’. This person would think that he is not in the favela because the lower parts are more elitist.”. This argument highlights an interesting sociospatial dynamic within Providência: in the 1960s and 1970s, living in sub-regions on top of the morro was a synonym to poverty and stigmatization. Despite living in the lower part of the favela, Marcos did not consider himself rich. He compares today's drug business with his father's situation in the past to conclude that his father was not so powerful, after all. Instead, he believes that his family was resourceful because nothing was missing at home and, at times, they would even indulge into nice and expensive meals.

Drug dealing activities led Marcos' father to spend part of the 1970s in jail. During this period, Marcos lived both in the favela with his mother and outside the favela, with his grandmother. He tells me that this part of his life was complicated because he felt very constrained. When I asked who the cause of constraint was, he answers:

“The favela was very repressive. [...] I played marbles with my friends only from inside my house's gates. We had a big backyard, but my friends could not come in to play and they always asked me to leave and run through the favelas' small alleys with them. But I could not leave. I am a person who thinks a lot, so you have no idea of my suffering as a child. I had a lot of toys... many bags, full of them. When I wanted to play with my friends, I would tie some of the toys in a thread and throw them to the other side of the gate so that we could play together. [breathes deeply] It was terrible.”

At this point, it became clear how Marcos' house was associated to violence. Plus, this story shows once again how his family resources and violence were intertwined. In the favela, a house serves as a structural device, allowing or denying one's access to quality of life. At the same time, a house is also the place where “social practices and ways of interpreting urban conditions” (Simone, 2014, p. 18) are developed. Thus, a house in an infrastructural sense is an instrument of silencing due to the weight that its norms carry, crystalizing the right way of doing things. In Marcos's case, his family's access to good quality housing allowed him to enjoy the perks of a resourceful childhood, but only indoors. This is because of the house's tight norms in place while Marcos' father was in jail, which constrained his freedom while protecting him from threats.

When I ask Marcos about his father's memories, he says that he was as a very calm person who never beat him. At the same time, he knew he was a criminal. For him, the father followed a certain work ethics because he would always try to solve his problems by talking, to end in good terms. But if needed, he would pull the gun and shoot. And his father was a good shooter:

“People tell stories about my dad, that he had a lot of stamina. So, if he had to solve an issue with somebody, he would say ‘give this guy a gun’. He would run to one side of the morro and the person would run to the opposite side. My dad knew how to sneak into all

these alleys, so he has always found ‘the guy’. He would always win [by killing his opponent].”.

Marcos’ story informs about growing up with a violent father, whose involvement in drugs, crime and violence ensured his economic security in his youth, as well as physical security in times of the potential repercussions of his father’s imprisonment. Marcos feared. His stories demonstrate how dominant threats of, or direct violence, have structured the everyday life of Marco’s upbringing. Both his mother and father were violent, handling guns at home and around the favela. Marcos lived through this indirect form of violence by using coping mechanisms such as the laughter and the work ethics argument related to his father’s occupation. However, when it came to direct effects of violence, his perception differentiates for each parent: he shares no feelings of madness or anxiety towards his father precisely because he never beat him; the same feelings are present only in regard to his mother. Finally, despite considering his father a calm person, his knowledge of Providência’s infrastructure, as well as his good shooting skills shade some light about why Marcos remains unsure about the circumstances of his mother’s death.

#### *How to be a case of failure in the favela*

When I talk ask Marcos’ interests, the first thing he brings up is a passion for arts. He talks about his childhood’s fond times, when he learned how to read sheet music with his wet nurse’s son. Some years later, he joined a renaissance music choir. He got a job as a goldsmith right before turning eighteen; and his salary supported a growing interest in photography, which eventually became his full-time job. In the 1980s, having a camera was very expensive and, for Marcos, having such a niched hobby while living in the favela turned out to be a challenge:

“I was approached by the police countless times when walking around with my camera. They thought I had stolen it and I could not prove that I had not. I did not walk with a camera receipt with me all the time, you know? It was when I got a photography laboratory, a gift from an uncle who was still in the drug business. My uncle installed the laboratory inside the favela so that I would not need to go to the asphalt to process my photos”.

The resources Marcos had in Providência did not ensure his safety beyond the morro. The recurrent police encounters and enquires about the camera’s ownership expose how negative

discourses about favelas and their residents became normalized and intrinsic to its punishment branches. Also, the police approach reinforced structural violence in terms of culture and place of residence. In other words, “it was not possible for them [the police] to think that a favelado could own such an expensive thing and have such a fancy hobby”. Marcos’ solution to continue photographing was, therefore, to concentrate his practices within Providência’s safe territory.

Marcos’ contact with photography has only grown with time. He tells me that he became an assignment photographer for a magazine right after leaving his work as a goldsmith. After that, he crafted his photography skills working for eight years with a renowned architectural photographer. He remembers that he learned so much technically, but at the same time his boss was very strict, even rude at times. For him, keeping a low profile helped him to navigate the city’s elitist milieu. After several years of confusion over his mother’s humble and sharing practices at the xepa, Marcos realized that this tradition was an effective way to utilize the family’s resources and explore the city while staying connected to his roots. In this way, he replicated his mother’s strategy to take his artistic passion beyond the favela.

Between the 1980s and 1990s, violence crossed Marcos’ path once again, making him bring his photography work back to Providência. By then, police interventions in favelas increased in frequency and in death toll, as a result of clashes between police forces and drug dealers. In Providência, a violent intervention remains in the residents’ memory: Mosaic operation, which occurred in 1988. Marcos remembers that several people were executed in front of Old Lady of Penha church during this operation. him, Mosaico operation marked residents’ lives because they witnessed the way police forces exterminated both guilty and innocent and people:

“You can see that there is a cliff by on the left side of the church, right? Today, the cliff is surrounded by protection fences, but it was not the 1980s. Well, the police killed fourteen people in that cliff: they were thrown out of the abyss. Other three people were machine-gunned right in front of the church”.

In this tragic event, structural violence manifested itself through the police rationale to consider a whole social group as dangerous and not deserving of rights. These group did not belong to the city and its legal apparatus; therefore, they could be simply killed without following a legal due process. Plus, Cruzeiro’s lack of infrastructure, represented by its cliff,

served a tool for police forces to perpetrate direct violence towards seventeen people and indirect, psychological violence in a whole community.

Drug dealers responded to Mosaic operation right afterwards by killing a police detective who was taking pictures around Providência. By that time, owning a camera became a privilege in the port zone: firstly because of its high price, secondly because people related a camera ownership to a potential death sentence, as it happened to the police detective. Marcos tells me that this was the exact period when his profession crossed paths with violence: the 1990s. Providência was about to celebrate its hundredth anniversary; and in the years before the jubilee he sought information to create an art exhibition and celebrate the morro's hundred years of history:

- I needed to do something, and I had the freedom to take pictures around.
- You, as a local, was able to walk around Providência?
- Kind of. The drug dealers asked me to do so with a lot of respect. Yet, it was complicated because at times I wanted to take a picture at night and the police would stop me to ask questions. In the end, I had to find a way around<sup>11</sup> to finish the project.

Just as in his childhood and adolescence, Marcos has made good use of his relationship with the drug business to seek safety and keep his camera inside the favela. It is possible to say that the favela has a particular universe of social relations. And that within this “micro society”, Marcos makes use of the structures related to the dominant power – the drug traffic – to strengthen his respect, since he is still recognized as the son of a traditional dealer. More than this, he obtains the traffickers' permission to walk around Providência streets. Different than his father, Marcos learns how to use Providência's infrastructure in an artistic way, with the aim to celebrate its beauty inside and outside the morro.

Marcos tells me that while collected historical content around Providência, he noticed that some regions in the favela had better provision of like water and sewage treatment than others. Even though the favela's infrastructure problems had nothing to do with photography, he ended up acting upon them. With a help of a friend who worked in a big newspaper, he captured people's infrastructural struggles and exposed them in the media. As a result, public services started to come up to the favela to fix these problems.

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<sup>11</sup> To find a way around is a loose translation of the Brazilian expression “dar um jeitinho”, which means to finish a task despite its difficulties, especially through being socially versatile.

The combination of art and advocacy Marcos' work took Providência to the mainstream while creating new avenues for engagement within the favela. He proudly tells me that it was through one of his exhibitions that an international advocate artist approached him and offered funding to build a cultural center. Today, he and his team offer photography and foreign language courses for children who live around the Cruzeiro. When finishing to tell me his life story, Marcos concludes that he is not a case of success for the favela. He says so because he did not end up doing what people expected him to, which was to follow his father's steps and become a drug dealer. Indeed, Marcos' story shows how to make use of a resourceful childhood in a violent upbringing to build an artistic career, that enabled him to explore new cultural environments. Through his work, he combined art and his life experience to channel positive perceptions of Providência across the city, and to enable stories like his to multiply inside the favela through advocacy and cultural engagement.

## 5.2 Sônia

Sônia's work and life are closely tied. She owns a two-storey building right in front of the main square. There is a small bar on the first floor, which she manages during her working hours. Her house is in the second floor. There, she lives with her niece, who has just given birth to a baby boy, and with her brother. I passed by Sônia's bar every time I climbed Cruzeiro's long staircase: I would greet her, buy a bottle of water and rest for some minutes. Then, I would check if she had time to talk about her life. When the bar movement was low and she did not have to help with the baby, she would say: "ok, let's sit by the church and talk".

### *The mother: structural violence and migrant women*

Like Marcos, Sônia is a *cria do morro*. Yet, her heritage is different than his because her mother, Bete, came from Pernambuco.<sup>12</sup> When I asked why her mother moved to Rio, Sônia briefly explains:

"My mom got married in Recife and had four children. But she broke up with her husband, he was not good to her. Then, her dad did not allow her to take her children home. He said that the children must stay with the ex-husband, who was a very bad guy. She did so and moved to her sister's house because she did not have money to rent a

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<sup>12</sup> Pernambuco is a state in Brazil's northeastern region.

house. Then, her ex-husband gave all four children away to different families while they were still little".

Structural inequalities are harmful for women, especially because of the potential violence present in the intersection of gender and income. In Bete's case, when faced by the husband's abuse, she asked for another woman's help to leave her marriage under extreme distress and financial insecurity. Poverty and sexism accompanied Bete after the divorce: they are behind the ex-husband's decision to give the children away without her consent; and the father's decision that she did not have the right to care for the children. Bete's story shows how structural violence becomes embodied in women's life in ways that silence the physical and psychological harm caused by men while reducing their access to legal safeguards.

I ask Sônia what Bete did after losing her children. She answers that her mother just wanted to move on with her life, and that she found a good chance to do so when a lady from Copacabana showed up in town. This lady was willing to bring a girl to Rio de Janeiro to work as a maid in her house. When the lady got to know Bete's story, she knew that she was perfect for the job because Northeastern girls are more naïve, therefore, more trustworthy than those from Rio.

What was the role of migrant women in Brazil's urban economy? Bete's experience was informed on economic and gender structures. Although Rio's economic growth created opportunities for low-income workers, it also increased the number of informal labour markets due to the lack of governmental regulations. This covert job market was tougher on professions traditionally occupied by women. For example, Brazil's working law recognized domestic work as a profession only in 1972. Yet, it provided scarce rights to the category, such as the right to register the work, vacations and social security (Sassen, 2009b; Silva & Goes, 2013). The lack of rights was usually justified by a perception of household work as not productive and its workers as naïve and unaware of their rights. This structural configuration becomes violent in the sense that it creates an image of female domestic workers as second-class citizens with an invisible contribution to the urban economy.

Bete worked for eighteen years as a maid until getting married for the second time. She bought a wooden shanty with her husband, left her work and moved to Providência. With him, she had three children. Sônia describes her mother's life in the favela in terms of suffering:



“It was during those dictatorship years, you know? My mom did not know how to walk around the favela, and her husband would scare her to ensure that she would not even try to learn. He cheated on her and accumulated debts at the food shop; because of the debts, my mom had to sell our house and rent another one. For all this suffering, my mom sent her husband away”.

Whilst the state restricted favela residents in their freedom of organization, Bete lived through constraints in an individual scale. This time, structures became embodied in an intersection of interpersonal and infrastructural violence. Bete’s husband justified his psychological violence with the dictatorship’s political and social situation. He used a sexist logic to assume that, as a man, he was the only one in the relationship who could keep a normal life outside home – even maintaining extramarital relationships. The husband’s psychological violence also had an infrastructural aspect. He restrained Bete’s movements in the favela and, by doing so, the favela itself became a source of infrastructural violence.

Sônia continues to talk about her mother’s struggle. She remembers that Bete did not know how to write or read, and her father would always use her illiteracy to put her mother down. He would say that Bete could never succeed in doing anything on her own. Yet, once again, Bete carries on with her life. Sônia gets very emotional when remembering that her mother had a dream to open her own business. After breaking up with her husband, Bete found a way to work on her dream while providing for her children. She did so by navigating the city: going up and down the hill every day to visit the xepa.

“I followed my mom down the morro to catch dirty sardines at the bottom of stalls. She would get that sardine, come home, clean it and fry it, putting it on a tray to sell. Eventually, a man who had a vacant wooden shack noticed our suffering and gave us a home. After all, in a community, families get help from neighbors when they are in a very hard situation.”.

The xepa became Bete’s option to feed her children and create a source of income. She faced the violent structures which have been following her by freeing herself from an abusive relationship for the second time and allowing herself to get to know the favela. In the process, Bete found support in her neighbors, which highlights the importance of favelas’ historical sense of community and mutual help. Plus, Bete also served as an inspiration to Sônia, who accompanied her while she gave form to her small business.

Sônia points to her two-storey, brick-made building in front of the main square. She proudly tells me that the house is her mother's legacy. That was the place where Bete raised her three children until rapidly falling sick:

“My mother amputated three toes because she did not know she had diabetes. It was this quick, girl. Right after amputating, she died at the hospital. But she did not die because of the surgery; she passed away because she got pneumonia at after the surgery. She was already weak... then, she got this respiratory infection. It was just too much for her”.

Bete's story shows how violent structures can have disproportional effects on women. In Pernambuco and in Providência, the intersection between cultural norms of male dominance and economic dependency placed her in a vulnerable position. Throughout the years, these structures affected Bete's physical and psychological integrity through a lack of decision-making power, lack of reproductive freedom and obstacles to access economic and health options such as health care (Montesanti & Thurston, 2015).

#### *The daughter: structures and intergenerational impacts*

Right after listening to Bete's story, I notice that Sônia does not have a thumb in her right hand – she also lost it due to diabetes. When I kindly ask her how that happened, she explains that the whole thing began in a seemingly inoffensive way: by doing her nails.

- Yes, girl. A lady did my nails and took some blood out of that toe while removing its cuticle. That created a small ball of pus beneath my nail. I kept trying and trying to pop it out, but I could not. So, I went to the family clinic down the morro. There, a nurse used a needle to pop it out.

- Without doing any blood test or anything?

- Just like that. He sent me home and prescribed an anti-inflammatory for some days.

- Did it get any better?

- No! The infection got worse and my toe was all swollen, full of cloths inside. Then I went to an emergency room, instead. There, a doctor told me: “oh, they prescribed you four days of anti-inflammatory? I will give you more fifteen days of it. And I will make a cut on this toe, to get those clots out, and cover it with a bandage”.

- Then it got better... or?

- No, dear! After some days I removed the bandage and noticed that the toe was like... dead. The infection got even worse, so I went to the family clinic once again. One doctor

checked my toe... then called another doctor to check it, too. Then, they told me: “I will put you in an ambulance and take you to the closest hospital. A surgeon must check this toe”.

- Then you were hospitalized. What did the doctors at the hospital said about your thumb?

- Ah, they told me: “we will have to amputate. This toe is long gone!”.

Sônia wraps up her detailed experience with three different health institutions by reflecting that although all these consultations were free of cost, she ended up paying for each of them with her suffering. In fact, this suffering has been the toll taken by countless women in public health systems across the globe. Sônia’s story exemplifies how medical neglect can cause physical and psychologic distress through inaccurate diagnostics and lack of qualified staff. The neglect translated into violence when, after looking for help in three different health institutions, Sônia was not given the information, support, and compassion needed for her to feel that she is being properly cared for (d'Oliveira, Diniz, & Schraiber, 2002). Paraphrasing Galtung (1969), it is hard to conceive that, despite all the medical resources in the world, an easily preventable disease such as diabetes can still cause violence.

I asked Sônia about her childhood in another conversation. She replies, laughing, that her story is very sad because her mom was a little mean to her. Sônia went to school, but only until the third grade. “I was a mischievous girl, you know?”, she concludes after sharing that she got her menace when she was twelve and secretly started dating a boy while her mother spent some months in Pernambuco. Her laughter turned into sorrow as she brings up a pregnancy as a result of this relationship: “oh, my story is so sad!”. While Bete was still in Pernambuco, a neighbor took her by the hand, all the way down the morro and to the closest pharmacy. There, she remembers asking for an abortion pill. The pharmacist did not have anything for her because seemed to be around four and a half months pregnant.

Bete returned from Pernambuco and was informed about Sônia’s pregnancy. Sônia remembers her mother’s exact words. Bete said, “you are too young... you are only twelve. You will not have this child. Whether you leave my house with this child right now, or...” And that was when Sônia says she had no option than to have an abortion. After all, she had nobody else; her mother was her only family. Her boyfriend said he would support her, but he ended up leaving Providência. Bete took her to a curious<sup>13</sup> in Nova Iguaçu<sup>14</sup>, who performed the abortion. Sônia does not have vivid memories of what happened afterwards. All she

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<sup>13</sup> A “curious person”, in this context, is a person who performs clandestine abortions.

<sup>14</sup> Nova Iguaçu is a city in Rio’s metropolitan region. A bus ride from Nova Iguaçu to Central to Brasil takes around one and a half hour.

remembers was that she was very scared, that her belly made a *swoosh* and she started feeling sick until passing out. Her mother took her back to Providência, and she returned to senses at the central station.

Sônia's abortion is an example of structural violence in its complexity. In her story, she described several layers of constraints, their effects in her body and the strategies inside and outside the favela to have access to the practice. Despite criminalized and considered a moral offense in Brazil, abortions are a common practice that challenges legal and behavioral norms. Yet, women and girls who live in poor, marginalized areas have limited access to reproductive care. As a result, this social group shows higher rates of unintended pregnancies and a higher risk of death related to abortions performed with insecure methods than the general female population (Anjos, Santos, Souza, & Eugênio, 2013; Wurtz, 2012). Conversely, middle-class women have better access to abortion clinics, which are mostly located in Rio's affluent neighborhoods and count with safer and less invasive methods to interrupt a pregnancy (Heilborn et al., 2012).

I wondered if Sônia could not go back to school after the abortion. She explains that it did not happen because she received an ultimatum from her mother. She clearly remembers Bete's words: "if you think you are going to do anything and just spend your days walking around the favela, you are wrong!" Sônia explains that, for her mother, since she was no longer a virgin, she would not have any focus on school and would continue to arrange other boyfriends, instead. The option that Bete found to avoid this situation was to find her a job. At the age of fourteen, Sônia started working at a Japanese bag factory in the port region. There, she worked from 9 a.m. to seven p.m., then walked up the morro.

There were no heavy guns in Providência at that time, Sônia reckons, and that was a good thing. Yet, she had her resources in case of need. Since she has accompanied her mother around the favela since she was little, she got to know many people. So, if she needed to go down the morro and a clash between dealers and police occurred, she would quickly ask somebody to enter their house. For her, if a person does not know the morro and tries to sneak around, this person will surely get lost. Sônia worked in the factory until her mother's death. Then, she took over Bete's responsibilities, giving continuity to what she left. Today, she thinks that she has lived just like her mother did, "getting fat and taking care of the bar. Just like that!", she says with a big laugh.

Bete and Sonia's lives can be observed in a continuum: both stories share experiences of pain, loss and forms of resistance that, somehow, repeated themselves over a generation. The loss of a child – directly, through abortion or indirectly, via lost custody - was an experience

shared by both mother and daughter. In both stories, this violence was imposed over, giving these women little chance to act over their own bodies and rights.

In the case of Bete, the loss of four children was the result of a life marked by abusive paternal and marriage relations. Poverty and financial insecurity worsened her situation, living her in a situation of extreme vulnerability. In the case of Sonia, the abortion and the physical and psychological suffering after the procedure were the result of other forms of violence accumulated throughout her life, such as the lack of education and access to contraceptive methods, which ultimately exposed her to a serious life risk.

The way Bete found move on with her life was to leave her place of residence and explore the city. Firstly, by migrating to Rio de Janeiro and getting to know Providência, then by achieving emotional and financial independence through work. When Sonia became pregnant, her mother made use of the same strategy to ensure that she would also move on with her life.

Although work served as a coping mechanism to both Bete and Sônia, their working conditions did not have an effect of expanding their access to public services. In fact, child labor and the difficulties of maintaining a business while illiterate did not have major effects on the structural constraints in regard to their education and health. Thus, over time, these structures become violent once again; affecting their bodies and culminating in Bete's death and Sônia's amputation due to a preventable disease. Physical and psychological violence manifested in Sônia and Bete's lives in distinct times and places. However, both women became especially vulnerable to their effects due to gender and socioeconomic structures, which remain present and reinforced across generations.

### **5.3 João**

I met João inside Old Lady of Penha's church while he prepared some class notes. He introduces himself as a teacher and the guardian of the church. He explains that, since it is vacation time, the kids will come to him for school tutoring. Education has always been present in his life. As we go inside the church, he tells me that he studied in public schools around Providência until high school when his father and his older brother tightened their budgets to invest in a private prep course for universities' admission exams. Their effort paid off: he was accepted at a public university, where he studied biology. However, for him, the effort paid only partially because he did not know how to speak English. Plus, since his family did not have any more money to pay for a language course, he could not get a full baccalaureate. Instead, he went for a teaching diploma. João did not find a job as a biology

teacher after completing his studies. For him, in the 1990s, being a favelado with higher education was not easy:

“I was discriminated twice. First, at the university and then in the job market. To have a little success in pursuing a teaching career, one needed QI<sup>15</sup>. I did not go along with the other students; I mean, what was a favelado doing at the university? Nowadays, because of the incentives and more access to higher education, people [from the favela] have a little more chance.”.

João assesses that his access to higher education was frustrating. He believes that it is hypocritical to say that favelados must always work hard and get some education because sometimes the chances to get better at life just do not come regardless of how much people work. Yet, he has exercised his profession through Capoeira. The Capoeira classes are held inside the church, which are a positive example of religious syncretism. As he nicely describes, people from several favelas and religions come to join our class. Twice a week, he shares his practice, and everybody dances in the candlelight. Like Candomblé, Capoeira is a non-written tradition. And, if it is up to João, it will remain as such – no filming, no written paper. This is because he thinks there are people who come to the favela to learn about its culture and then “steal it” when returning to the asphalt. Instead, the asphalt must go up, get to know the favela and keep its culture where it belongs. João has been thinking about stopping Capoeira practices because people from other morros are feeling insecure to leave Providência late at night. João sees that the problem is not in the Cruzeiro, which is a safe region. When shootings occur, they concentrate down in the favela.

#### *How to be a favela intellectual in the 1990s*

As described in Chapter 4, Rio’s city governments have systematically connected the idea of urban violence with favelas, whether through ineffective public policies or by reinforcing negative discourses about their residents. These actions naturalize power relations in which favelados are stigmatized and perceived as second-class citizens who do not belong to the real city. These state’s actions have impacts in real lives inside and outside the favela, as João experienced firsthand. His plan to seek a better life for himself and came through higher education during the 1990s, a time when negative discourses about the favela gained strength. His presence at the university questioned such discourses; however, being an

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<sup>15</sup> “QI” is an acronym for “quem indica” or “the one who sponsors”. It relates to networking advantages an individual can have when applying for jobs.

outsider made him feel unwelcome in the academic environment and made it difficult for him to establish social relationships with his peers. According to him, this was an essential factor that impeded his professional success. Another negative factor was the lack of English language. The financial limitation did not stop João from entering the university but made it difficult for him to leave the university with the same opportunities as his colleagues. João's story shows how structural violence in its indirect forms, such as social stigma and financial constraints, can affect a social group's chances of social mobility.

João has found a way to succeed in his career in an environment where his talent was recognized, and he was not seen as a second-class citizen: by bringing knowledge to the favela. Today, he is proud of his more than twenty years of experience as a teacher. After living frustrating experiences in his university learning process, João protects his legacy. The choice to maintain a verbal and unrecorded environment for his classes is a way to maintain the knowledge within the favela, preventing outsiders from capturing and taking it to the asphalt, where he and other favelados would struggle to access it.

#### **5.4 Cláudio and Jura**

The first thing Cláudio mentions when I ask him about his childhood is how far we are from his hometown. He was born in a tiny farm, located in an equally small city in Paraíba's countryside<sup>16</sup>. He goes on saying that takes a whole day plus three hours to get there. In his hometown he worked as a farmer, then as a cowherd. The weather always set the tone for harvest and animal handling, he remembers, so he was never sure if he would have enough money or food. His concerns increased specially after his father's death; he became the sole provider to his mother and his eight siblings. Yet, he shares a fond memory of the times he returned home after a week's work: "I was happy to receive a little money, and this money would go straight to my mommy's<sup>17</sup> hands."

Cláudio summed up his childhood and adolescence through the intensity of the droughts in his hometown and the context of food and financial insecurity that threatened his family. In fact, phenomena associated with climate changes, such as droughts, intensify the effects of structural violence (Confalonieri & Marinho, 2007). The search for employment on several fronts was Cláudio's solution to provide for his mother and siblings. However, his work's income was not enough. In this way, the increasing urbanization and economic development of the southeast appeared as an alternative.

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<sup>16</sup> Paraíba is a state in Brazil's northeastern region.

<sup>17</sup> Cláudio addresses his mother as "mainha", which is a regional dialect. Here, I translated it as mommy.

It was during these times of financial and food insecurity that a cousin of his got married and moved to Rio. She joined the wave of migrants who moved to southeastern states during the 1950s. When his cousin left, Cláudio wondered that if Rio is what as good as everybody was talking about. If so, he should go and spend some time in the city as well. At the end, Cláudio migrated and started living with his cousin and her husband, who had bought a wooden shanty in Providência. When I ask him about his life when he moved to Providência he says:

“I slept in a small sofa while my cousin and her husband had a small bed on the side. There was place only for this furniture in that small shanty. Girl, I did not have any education, so my only option was to work in civil construction. But I also thought: you know what? I see everybody suffering in this favela. I will work hard and do something more than being just a construction assistant.”.

Cláudio goes to his house's window and points towards Rio's main bus station down the hill. He asks me if I see the hospital beside the station; he explains that the hospital was his first job. Once again, he explains, he would receive his salary every Friday, go back home and give all his week's money to his cousin. She would take a part to send to his mommy, and the rest to cover his expenses. Cláudio never stopped working. He did not take vacations over the course of ten years. Instead, he sold all his holidays in order to make extra money and send to his family. When I ask why he worked so diligently during for such a long time he explains that, in his mind, people would like him if he worked hard:

“People think I am a little strict, but I am not. I only like to do things right. I never missed work, I was never late... I even decided to not do a surgery! Why? Because I did not want to miss any working days.”.

Marginalized populations, such as migrants and favelados, are in structural conditions that impose physical and emotional suffering. In Cláudio's case, the violence lasted over a decade through a psychological pressure to provide for a family in need. Also, the incessant and exhausting workload is a reason of pride for Cláudio. His decision to remain working, despite his severe health condition, was his "right way to do things" and showed how his physical suffering has become natural, even commendable, over the years.



Happily, building after building, Cláudio did learn new tasks. He is proud to share that he became a specialist in his field and managed to financially support his family. He also remembers when was working in a construction site near Copacabana when he first saw Jura: “oh, I once saw that beautiful lady... then, every time I went to work, I stopped by her building to say hello.”

### *Jura and Cláudio*

Jura is also a northeastern migrant; she was born in Rio Grande do Norte. When I ask about her childhood, she explains that her hometown was a place of peasants. Like Cláudio, she started working when she was a child; her parents did not allow her to study because she needed to contribute to the house's expenses. When working on plantations, she always wore a big hat and long-sleeve shirts, so that the sun would not burn her skin so much. Jura decided to move to Rio when she turned eighteen.

Jura also counted with a relative's support to migrate. Her sister already lived in Providência and guided her through the process. However, the family support ended when she finally moved, and the favela's infrastructure constrained her first steps in the city. At times, she felt like a prisoner. She felt so because people who already lived in the morro knew how to move around, but she did not know any places or anyone except for her sister. And, for that, her close neighbors thought that she was dumb. She did not have time to learn about the favela. Soon enough, she moved to an apartment close to Copacabana to work as a maid. When I ask how her work was, she tells that she did everything: from cleaning and cooking to babysitting. Her boss would go out and she would take care of the baby during the night. Jura also did not have any vacations, and when she began spending some time talking to Cláudio in front of her building, her boss complained:

- You are so beautiful! Why are you spending your time with this guy? You should continue working here.
- I am beautiful, but I have got no money. With the salary you pay me, I will not remain beautiful for long; I earn barely enough to eat.

Still young, Jura migrated to Rio carrying with her memories of suffering also shared by many Northeastern citizens, such as child labor and financial insecurity. Her adaptation to Providência occurred in a traumatic way. Her initial reaction to a new way of life was to retract and stay indoors because of a lack of favela's knowledge and a fear to explore it on her own. The path chosen by Jura to set herself free from this (infra)structural prison was to leave

Providência. Although the domestic work appeared as an alternative to alleviate her economic and infrastructural constraints, the everyday work maintained a context of violations in terms of low wages, high hours worked and harassment in the workplace. This was when Cláudio left his cousin's house, Jura left her maid's job and they began their lives together at Providência.

### *Building a life together in the favela*

Jura and Cláudio invited me for dinner at their house one day, so I took the opportunity to ask about life in Providência when they decided to live together. Jura remembers that their first home was rented with a lot of effort and sacrifice. By then, most Providência houses were wooden shacks surrounded by dirty alleys. To walk up and down the hill, they had to find support in pieces of wood, placed on the way to cover the mud and sewage. Cláudio also shares his memories of that time. For him, it was particularly difficult to get drinking water. He used to bring two big buckets to a water fountain located in a lower part of the morro. Then, he would wait: there were always around forty people waiting in the line to get water. Finally, he carried both full buckets all the way up.

As time passed by and their family grew in size, Jura returned to her cleaning job to contribute with the house income and they rented bigger places to live with their three children. Finally, after working for over twenty years, they saved enough money to build a brick house from scratch: the one they currently live. About the building process, Cláudio explains that they paid for the piece of land and for the raw materials. Then, a neighbor came approached them and said that the land could not be used because he had plans to build a playground for his children in the area. The problem was that people did not resort to governmental sources to register their purchases in the favela; a spoken agreement was enough. Therefore, they had no documents to prove their land ownership.

Cláudio resorted to the local drug dealer to solve the issue. He lowers his voice to say that a friend of his, who was a drug user and close to the dealers. After listening about the land situation, the friend calmed Cláudio's mood. He said to him not to worry because his house would be built. Then, the friend asked Jura and Cláudio to have everything set for the construction on the next weekend. On the agreed date, the friend showed up very early in the morning, along with dozens of other neighbors who volunteered to build the house. Before starting the work, the friend knocked on the neighbor's door and informed him: "look, we got the dealer's approval to build Cláudio and Jura's house. If you have any problems with that, go and talk to him.". Laughing, Jura remembers that the house was completely built in two

weeks of work; and that this neighbor spent more than twenty years without talking to both of them.

Building a family in Providence was a difficult task for Jura and Cláudio. Despite all their effort and sacrifice to pay their rent, the poor quality of housing and services such as clean water and sewage treatment continued to distress the couple. Their story reflects the historical neglect of public policies in regard to favelas and show how such policies, by privileging particular groups and regions of the city to the detriment of others, become tools of structural violence.

Since they mentioned their experience with drug dealers, I followed up about their experiences with police forces. Cláudio and Jura walk around Providência, but they avoid asking too many questions about what happens between the traffickers and the police. In Claudio's opinion, the Cruzeiro region was more violent in the past. About twenty years ago, he saw many dead bodies in front of the church. He remembers that the police threw six or seven people in the cliff nearby, and whoever did not jump down the cliff was killed up in the favela. After this period, the Cruzeiro region got better in terms of massive killings. Cláudio thanks God for his neighborhood to be “quiet” for such a long time. Still, he knows that every once in a while, a problem between the dealers and the police arises. Then, the police go up the hill.

Jura says that they only showed up in their house twice. She thinks that the police do not come to her place that often because they know where to look for the information they need. She was taking care of her grandson the last time they showed up. They knocked on the door, saw the baby and said, “oh no we are not going in. Thank you!”. Cláudio had his own share of recent encounters with policemen, but in the regions surrounding the favela. For example, as he walked by Providência’s entrance on his way to work, some policemen approached him and asked:

- What are you carrying on this backpack?
- I am carrying my lunch box.
- Are you sure? Did you go to the favela to hide or to buy drugs?
- I do not know what you are talking about. I am on my way to work.

A policeman ripped the backpack from Cláudio’s back and opened the zipper. Inside, they found his metal lunch box. The policeman opens the box, looks at it and asks:

- Is there anything inside this box?
- Yes, sir. Food.

The policeman returned the lunch box, opened, to Cláudio. Cláudio held the box with so much hatred that he decided to throw it against the cops with all his strength. Both box and the food splintered against the wall beside them. And Cláudio continued his way to work as if nothing had happened. When I ask why he reacted in this way, he says:

“Girl, that policeman’s attitude hurt me so much that I got courageous and reacted. I was a worker, not a dealer! I do not know what happened to me that day... a person can die because of such behavior, you know?”.

Jura and Cláudio have lived for over fifty years in Providência. Now, they are retired; they only take care of their grandchildren. “God has been good to us”, she praises. At times, they listen to shootings from outside. In fact, Jura heard the sound of a bomb coming from down the morro the day before. Again, she shares that she does not sneak around the favela to know what happened. For her, it is better to stay home and wait for the noises to go away. Cláudio agrees: “yes, girl; we have to pass through these things in life. We, who live in the favela, must be ready for everything. But let’s forget about these things and have some lunch!”.

The favela is not just a housing cluster. It has local dynamics, which are built from the incorporation of new and old residents to its territory over the years. These dynamics occur in the absence of the state and its public policies. In this sense, alternative institutions and forms of social organization, such as drug trafficking, are a result of structural violence.

In the case of Providência, drug dealers remain a central figure in mediating conflicts between residents, through a combination of legitimation and coercive practices, since the 1950s (Chilton, 2004). On the one hand, the drug trafficking stands in opposition to police forces, replacing their intermediary role between state justice and favela citizens; as exemplified in the case of the construction of the house of Cláudio and Jura. On the other hand, the dealers restrict residents’ political autonomy, especially in their access to justice (Burgos, 2002; Monteiro, 2004). As a result, the relationship between dealers and residents widens the gap between the favela and the real city.

After the introduction of heavy armaments and a more lucrative drug market in the favelas between the 1980s and 1990s, the real city has reached the favela. The state, in the form of police interventions, aimed to replace traffickers’ control of territories and social hierarchies. The police behavior inside favelas can be perceived as legitimate, as in Jura’s affirmation that they know what and where to look for information in the favela. It can also be

seen as coercive and the source of hatred and resentment, as in Cláudio's experience on his way to work.

## 5.5 Dona Maria

Dona Maria has lived in Providência for almost sixty years. She was born in Paraíba and got married when she was eighteen, giving birth to four children. Then, her husband and I moved to Rio with the children. In Providência, she gave birth to another child. Despite being happy to be a housewife, she felt the need of having more income in order to find a bigger place to live. Happily, this help came from the neighborhood. As she explains, they rented a small house, living there for around three years. Then, a man gave them a piece of land, in which they have built up a brick house, little by little, throughout the years.

I ask about her husband's occupation. She tells me he was a carpenter and a construction worker; he built their house mostly by himself. However, he died in 1983. Better saying, people killed him; I was sad to hear that. I told Dona Maria that she did not need to give any details about it, but she just continued speaking: "It has been so long... almost forty years, right? It was his friend's fault, that dumb guy. They were playing too close by the cliff when my husband tripped and fell." Dona Maria had no choice than to look for means to raise the children on her own. She describes the first years after her husband's death in terms of suffering. She put all her children at school so that she could work in an apartment close to the morro's entrance, washing some ladies' clothes. "I do not even know how I made it, *nêga*".

Dona Maria remembers receiving support from the community while getting back on her feet. She was always here and there washing clothes, while her children were at school. She did not even have time to cook for the children, but the relief came from her bosses: "they actually cooked for me! Every day, when I returned their clothes, they always gave me money and food, which was ready to feed my children when I got back home." After some years, Dona Maria started receiving a government's pension due to her husband's death. Then, she stopped washing clothes and focused on raising her children.

As she lives close to Cruzeiro oratory and was always around it with her children, João asked her if she wanted to become the monument's guardian. She was happy to help because the whole area around the oratory was a big mess, in her opinion. As the oratory guardian, she has been taking care of and keeping it organized for the last forty years. During this time, the area around the oratory was paved and a big water reservoir was installed on top of her house. When I ask her who performed these changes, she says that it was not the city government but other people. Also, the government started to manage the water tank just

recently. Since then, “it is all dirty. I have never seen anyone from the government coming up in here to clean this tank.”.

Today, she takes care of the house and her grandchildren. Sometimes, she goes to the food market to buy fruits for the kids. In her opinion, the Cruzeiro is safer than the lower part of the morro. As a case in point, she tells me about her visit to food market earlier that day: after leaving the van, which left her in front of the staircase, she had to come home very quickly because of a cross-fire. She goes on by saying that when she goes down the morro, she does not know what is going to happen. Plus, she likes living in the Cruzeiro because she is already used to its quiet environment, despite its drug selling spots:

“We have to lower our voice to talk about these things - drug stuff, you know? We do not have problems with it, no. There is only one man who lives around here who deals with this stuff, but he is old in the business and does not mess with anyone here. And neither will anyone mess with him, right? No one is silly. I like it here, but down the morro? Oh my!”

Dona Maria raised her five children. She opens a big smile when I ask about them and she answers that all of them are working in the city center as we speak. Her biggest happiness in her life was to raise them, she says; and they are her greatest pride because they all have made it to the university. Dona Maria does not know how to read or to write, but her children did it for her: “they did so because I suffered a lot in this life, you know? I always said to myself: ‘I will go through this hardship, but I will ensure that these kids will have a better life.’”.

Dona Maria’s story, like the geography of the hill, has been marked by ups and downs. From an early age, she has lived between pain and suffering, support and solidarity. When arriving in Providência, she struggles with the lack of resources for herself and her family. Then, her neighbors put a roof under their heads; as it did with several other families in vulnerable conditions. At the same time, the favela brought tragedy through its geography: the lack of safety on the cliff made of it a tool of infrastructural violence. In this way, a game between friends ended up in great tragedy.

Dona Maria’s suffering lasted for three years after her husband's death, especially in terms of financial insecurity. The curtailment of his social security rights by the state has, thus, become a form of structural violence. During this period, she relied on the solidarity of her bosses and neighbors to keep her family strong. Job opportunities and the daily feeding of her children represented, once again, the dynamics of self-help within the favela.

Finally, after decades of living in the favela, Dona Maria feels safe - especially in Cruzeiro. She acknowledges the presence of drug trafficking in her neighborhood, but the owner of the drug selling spot is old in these practices. This makes her understand his *modus operandi*: he causes no harm to his neighbors. Yet, he still belongs to the drug trafficking and makes Cruzeiro residents of Cruzeiro respect his authority. Despite living in the favela for more than fifty years and getting to know her neighbors, the uncertainty brought by armed clashes between police and traffickers make Dona Maria feel afraid and insecure every time she goes down the hill.

Fortunately, her legacy of effort and suffering is sustained through her children's success. Today, Dona Maria is happy. Her main problem in Cruzeiro is not the drug trafficking, but the lack of maintenance of water services, which carries a potential risk to her health, as well as to their children and grandchildren's.

## **5.6 Christopher and Rodrigo**

Christopher is a British lawyer who had built a solid career in Wall Street. For him, to work as business lawyer was tough, but making rich people even richer was even harder. He was unsatisfied with the lack of personal purpose in his daily work, so he took advantage of the 2008 financial crisis to rethink his life plans. Christopher's family is evangelical; he has a cousin who does missionary work in Asia. After talking to her, he decided to go to São Paulo and serve as a volunteer in a religious NGO:

“So, I flew down [to São Paulo] and I just got like a crazy expensive flight, all the way down. I got a driver to drive me to Zona Sul, the city's southern zone; when getting there I freaked out... it was too much poverty”.

Christopher worked in the NGO for some days. There, God spoke to him. He clearly remembers God's words, saying that he must stay in Brazil. And so he did: he returned to New York, quit his job, and moved to São Paulo. After five years of volunteer work in marginalized communities, he left the NGO. In 2013, he read a book about religious social work which backed up his decision:

“The author was basically criticizing a lot of missionary practices because they are really old fashioned [...] these practices do not have a proper connection with the church, so they become welfare organizations. They have this neo colonialist approach, so wealthy people in the first world would keep sending money to Brazil, for example, but not with a purpose of real social change.”.

After quitting his job in São Paulo, he got to know that his church held activities in Rio. Then, he travelled to the city for a weekend, checked-in in a hostel and went on to the church.

### *Rodrigo and Christopher*

By the end of 2013, Rodrigo had just received a bachelor’s degree from a prestigious university in Rio. Then, he found a job in a hostel in Copacabana, where he worked every weekday. He always had small breaks on weekends to do voluntary work. He remembers that, on a given Saturday, he checked-in a British guest in the hostel and took a bus to church. To his surprise, after arriving at the church, he encountered the same British guy from the hostel. He remembers that they instantly became friends: “Christopher told me his story and we were so happy about our shared interest in volunteering and social work”.

Christopher extended his stay in Rio and Rodrigo joined him in several social activities around the city. During some months, these activities were focused on street populations. Most of the times, their gesture was welcome. Rodrigo remembers that they always offered food and a nice conversation. It was not much, but sometimes it was everything one needed. The difficulties arose when they eventually switched the focus to slums. As Christopher explains:

“First, we tried a touristy slum, Dona Marta. It was all good! Then, we went to a non-touristic slum, São Carlos; and we had a horrible experience. We went right up to the top and the residents looked at us as if we were ghosts. They said, ‘there is a police operation going on. You need to leave the favela right now!’”.

São Carlos’ experience did not stop them from continuing their social work in favelas. “Let’s pray and keep on going”, Christopher thought. It was when they visited Providência for the first time. They went all the way up the staircase until the church. There, we greeted Sônia at the bar and went downstairs. Rodrigo says that they returned many other times, to get to



know the neighborhood and talk to the residents. However, the drug dealers noticed their movements inside the favela and approached them, saying that they were sneaking around too much, and that they should go away. For him, traffickers and the locals did not understand at first why people from the asphalt like them were interested in getting to know the favela. He believes that the local logic is for people to hope leaving the favela someday, not to enter. Therefore, their interest in Providência became very suspicious.

There was something in Providência that made them think twice about leaving. When I ask Christopher “why Providência?”, he replies that this favela has a lot of tradition and beauty that is mostly unknown in the asphalt. He was particularly curious about this place surrounded by police forces and watched by drug dealers from within. Rodrigo gives me a similar answer. For him, before coming to Providência, he heard that it is Brazil’s first favela. The place has a historical and symbolic importance; therefore, he was excited to getting to know it. However, he added some words of caution. As he lived in the asphalt, he grew up with an understanding that favelas are always related to violence. This reference only changed when he actually visited Providência.

After some months of social work around the city, Rodrigo and Christopher decided to create a community center. Their idea was to have a closer contact with marginalized communities as well as to provide immediate social support. Providência came up as a good place for the center because they found a bigger potential for relationship building up here, in the community, than in the streets.

#### *How to do good in the favela as an outsider*

After deciding to build a community center, Christopher and Lucas took some time to establish themselves in Providência. Their first step was to find a gatekeeper. They got to know Lucas, who owns a bar in the lower part of the favela. They started to hang around his bar and was so intrigued by Rodrigo, that he started a conversation:

- So... you know gringos, huh? Will you bring more gringos to Providência or what?
- I do not know. There is no good in bringing gringos here if we get assaulted and we lose our iPhones... we need some protection.
- Ok. If somebody bothers you, just say that you are with me, and you will be fine.

Lucas, then, became his person of peace.<sup>18</sup> Yet, finding a house remained a challenge. They visited Lucas' bar a couple of times, and they thought of building something on top of his bar. Lucas did not accept their offer, so they started asking in the neighborhood about available places. Nothing came up. Christopher concluded that, if you are a stranger in the favela, nobody is going to sell or rent things for you. Finally, Rodrigo found a solution online: he saw a house on sale in the classifieds. In Christopher's words, the whole process turned out to be just perfect: "the guy sold us the house and it just seemed right. It seemed like a real adventure!".

In the moving process, Rodrigo got to know that a neighbor was sharing gossips around, saying that they were undercover policemen. This caused problems when Christopher was bringing moving their home appliances by car:

"I had the courage to pass across the drug selling spot; I did not even know there was a selling spot close to our place. I heard the dealers scream a 'hey, stop there' kind of thing as they approached me, pointing their guns. They asked what I was doing there and asked to check the car. I introduced myself, showed the home appliances and they said 'ok, carry on'".

Later that day, they were organizing their appliances when they saw a tip of a gun through the window. They stepped out of the house and saw all the neighbors staring at them, as the dozens of armed dealers pointed their guns in their direction. They started asking questions. For Christopher, their approach was quite adequate, considering that they were bandits. The dealers did not accuse them of being a policeman, they just asked what they were really doing there. Then, Christopher shared his testimony: he explained that they were religious people willing to do social work in Providência. For them, what began as a fearful situation – they thought they would be beaten or killed – turned out to be a successful introduction to the dealers, who agreed with their presence and social work in Providência.

I asked Rodrigo how they registered the house purchase since agreements in favelas are mostly informal. He remembers receiving a paper stating that he bought a house from a certain person. It was more a receipt of payment rather than a legal document. However, they are in the process of formalizing the house as a community center. He explains that it is

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<sup>18</sup> In the religious lexicon, a person of peace is someone with a good reputation, who is known and respected in a community and is receptive to a missionary's purpose.

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possible to arrange legal documents for a house in favelas with UPPs. Christopher adds that, in his opinion, the registration represents an extra layer of protection from police abuse:

“You know how things work in the favela, right? The police squad comes with the guns and then just put them in your face. I do not stand on human rights here. I am not like a lawyer, the gringo who knows his rights. I am not calling Amnesty International when a friend gets beaten by the police for no reason. I know I am a squatter, yeah, I do not pay taxes to live here. So, I understand why people resent the police.”.

I ask if he had any bad experiences with police forces himself. He tells me that the police took me once. In his perspective, they did that just to show they have the power to take people away because only asked for my passport, then released him afterwards. After some seconds in silence, he expresses his anger: “why does the police act like this? Come on, I am not a dealer. I can understand why people hate them. It looks like they are supposed to treat people like crap. And it is even worse for boys with dark skin. They risk being killed on the street, you know?”.

Rodrigo also shares his negative experiences with the police. Recently, a foreign volunteer came to work in the center for a few days, so he was sleeping in the living room. They woke up at dawn with the light of police lanterns, as they broke into the center’s door and stood in the living room. The first person the police saw was the foreign volunteer, who did not speak good Portuguese. Rodrigo remembers to have heard them saying, “ah, he is a gringo, this is a social project... let’s leave.”. This police approach was new to him. He admits that he got very scared, because they did not even knock on their door, and this is a normal behavior in the favela. In the asphalt, this approach would be an absurd. As a resident, he knows that he must get used to it, and stay calm.

Despite the difficulties to become a resident in Providência, they are happy to serve in the community center. For Rodrigo, their aim is to become a reference for the community. Every day, they work with people and for people, especially with young boys, who they consider a target group for both drug dealers and police forces. And Christopher hopes that Brazil’s first favela becomes the place where real social change can happen, because all he sees is a community with an enormous potential to generate good for society.

Christopher and Rodrigo lives before outside favelas do not reflect a context of structural violence. In fact, they had access to higher education, stable sources of income, and the option of reflecting on a sense of purpose in their careers. These possibilities of reaching the

maximum of their potential point out contrast with the childhood and adolescence of several young people living in the favela.

Religious beliefs helped them to find meaning in voluntary work. Over the years, their reflections raise an important question about the activities of NGOs and other institutions in favelas: sometimes, even unintentionally, they maintain a situation of social and financial dependence from external sources. These activities temporarily can relieve a situation of vulnerability and bring rewards to their actors for their good deeds, but they do not change the structures that can cause violence over time, as the notion that positions slum dwellers as charity targets.

Christopher and Rodrigo were exposed to structural violence when moving to Providência. Their initial reactions were of shock when witnessing poverty and police brutality. The structural effects in their own lives came from not sharing the same social norms than other residents. A clear example was the lack of support from the neighbors to find housing. Their difficulties remained after finding a house: they began to sense differences in power relations as the drug dealers stopped their cars in a very police-like approach. In sum, as outsiders, Christopher and Rodrigo took some time to recognize local social dynamics and learn how to navigate in the favela. Throughout this process, they became vulnerable to dealers' threats, which were solved after they clarified their wishes to do good.

After finding a house and negotiating their presence in the favela, their source of problems were the police forces. Despite being a lawyer, Christopher acknowledged the local social dynamics, where his formal education has little value. Therefore, as a favelado, he has begun to suffer from police truculence. At the same time, he recognizes his privileges as a foreigner white man with higher education. The form of violence he has received is indirect while the violence against other groups, especially young and black residents, is much more likely to become fatal.

Rodrigo highlights the effects of structural violence by comparing the state's discourses and practices between the morro and the asphalt. By experiencing different police approaches in Copacabana and Providência, he felt distressed and afraid. In his mission to do good in the favela, he has looked for ways to stay calm and adjust to this new social setting.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

### *A closer look at the Shades: Perceptions of Violence in Morro da Providência*

What are people's perceptions of violence in Morro da Providência since the 1970s? This is the question that guided this research from its formulation, during the field work and analysis of historical data and qualitative, in-depth interviews. Based on a wide notion of violence, this thesis has observed the history of Rio de Janeiro by emphasizing the development of its favelas. This long *durée* analysis sets the stage for eight Providência residents as they share their life stories. In each story, the residents inform their perceptions of violence inside and outside the favela and how they navigate the city under such constraints. This chapter highlights key elements observed in these life stories and discusses them in the light of literary debates on violence in the city.

The discussion around the concept of violence is broad because this phenomenon offers several avenues for interpretation. A traditional notion of violence characterizes it in its physical form and its impacts on the human body. A more open notion of violence recognizes the traditional views' importance while adding symbolic and structural forces to its characterization. These forces can place people in a vulnerable condition while constraining their ability to escape from it. Traditional and broad notions of violence cover distinct forms and effects of this phenomenon; thus, both have been widely discussed.

The conceptual discussion of violence positions itself far from the developments on the urban. Despite this conceptual detachment, the history of Rio de Janeiro in its relation to favelas shows how both phenomena have been contingent on each other throughout history. My project does not study this dynamic in depth. Instead, I elaborate a long *durée* analysis, looking at favelas' history in parallel with the port region development. The analysis shows how a socio-spatial division between favela and asphalt has been in place since the birth of Rio's first favela, and how this division has become a source of various forms of state violence throughout history. My main contribution shifts the analytical focus from states to people by presenting eight life stories. The stories expose the nuances and complexities through which violence manifests itself in everyday life.

Firstly, personal experiences do not nicely fit in the literary debates. By considering traditional and broad notions of violence to analyze life stories, it is possible to observe how structural forces such as gender and class interact to cause psychologic trauma. These same forces can also have a direct, physical impact on the bodies of those who suffer it. For

instance, in structural contexts of financial insecurity, poor access to education and reproductive knowledge, young girls become especially vulnerable to bodily harm; as Sônia's abortion story illustrates. Conversely, violent events that causes damage to a person's body can also incur in invisible and psychological marks. The Mosaico operation, in which police forces shot and threw people off a cliff, is an extreme example of physical violence that left scars on residents' minds: Both Marcos and Cláudio bring up this operation as an event that shocked the neighborhood. In sum, traditional and wide notions of violence might indicate distinct avenues for literary discussion, but in real life both notions work in tandem to affect people's lives.

Secondly, the perception of violence in the form of armed conflict between police and traffickers has changed since the 1970s, particularly after the introduction of organized trafficking and police interventions in the favela. In times of frequent police presence in the favela, the feeling of insecurity tends to increase in the residents of the regions where conflicts concentrate. These conflicts concentrated in the Cruzeiro between the 1980s and 1990s, contributing to a notion that this sub-region was dangerous at that time. In the 2000s, with the introduction of the UPPs, conflicts have changed in location – now, they concentrate around the Cruzeiro. As a result, insecurity in Cruzeiro residents increased when they have to go down the hill. This is because the lower part of the favela has gained a reputation as dangerous. The residents' stories show how perceptions of violence change over time, as people accumulate different experiences in their surroundings.

Thirdly, an infrastructural landmark is perceived in different forms by different people. This is exemplified by the xepa: Marcos's mother regarded it as a tradition, through which she celebrated her sense of community with the favela. Marcos, however, perceives the xepa experience as degrading and shameful. At the same time, the xepa serves as a way to escape financial insecurity for Sônia and Bete. In this way, the practice of collecting food remains in the food market's final hours brings distinct impacts to people: whether as a source of distress, a coping mechanism to structural violence or a source of tradition and culture.

Finally, what makes favela residents' pain and suffering to be hidden is the naturalizing effect present in structural violence. In the case of women, the domestic work placed them under exhaustive working hours, at times with limitations to move around the city and sexual harassment in the workplace, which was also their home. Working as a domestic woman under degradant conditions became a natural choice for these women, since they had no other work possibilities due to their lack of formal education. At the same time, the norm that domestic work should keep women in subaltern conditions has crystallized over the years. This norm was especially tougher in regard to migrants such as Jura and Bete because

northwestern women were perceived as innocent, therefore, easier to keep in subjection through domestic activities.

Experiences of violence have marked the lives of favela residents. This thesis considers the academic debates about urban violence to elaborate a historical and in-depth analysis about Morro da Providência. A clear definition of time and space, as well as a broad notion of violence' forms and effects help to explore eight life stories in their nuances, especially by shading light into structural and hidden forms of violence. By presenting these stories, the main outcome was to highlight the various ways that people have passed through various experiences of violence, experienced their effects in unique ways, and resorted to various mechanisms to keep building their lives in the city.

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