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In a recent interview, influential rapper KL Jay from the Racionais MCs put forward an ominous warning to fellow Afro-Brazilians: "We are in enemy territory." He continued by advising Black people to increase strategies of resistance and protection such as walking through the streets "like lions and pit bulls." KL Jay's unsettling conclusion cautioned readers: "do not try to be accepted by the system, the system does not like you." Hailing from the outskirts of São Paulo, KL Jay's voice joins the innumerable voices opposing the long-standing history of Brazilian state terrorism against Afro-descendant populations. The national homicide rate of Black youth (between 15 and 29 years old) is four times higher than that of whites. Every 23 minutes, a young

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Black person is murdered in Brazil, according to the final Senate report of the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission (CPI) published in 2016. This number corresponds to a death toll of nearly 23,000 Black youth annually.

The rise of extreme state-sanctioned violence has come to a breaking point with the recent assassination of Rio city councilor, Marielle Franco. Franco, a 38-year old elected Black woman from the Maré favela, was attacked on her drive home from an event titled, "Young Black Women Who Are Changing Power Structures." She was abruptly cut off by another vehicle before being shot four times in the head, along with her driver, Anderson Pedro Gomes. Both died instantly. Despite the suspected links between her attackers and militias (active or retired police officers, corrupt firemen, and local politicians), the law of silence reigns and Marielle Franco's murderers remain unpunished. Now, four months after the attack, many Brazilians continue to mourn while facing questions of survival in an undeniable, yet nebulous, murderous system.

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The term "enemy territory" refers to tense situations in which a "we" recognizes itself as an entity sharing common values through which an "other" or a "them" is inversely defined. The "other," perceived as a foreigner or a stranger, is then defined as the one who seeks to harm "us" — or, a "them" from which "we" must defend "our"-selves. In war, for example, when soldiers enter hostile territory, they take many precautions to protect their physical integrity. Through the protection of their presence and their being, they also safeguard the mission they've been commandeered to carry out. Brazil, however, a nation-state invaded and colonized by a Portuguese fleet 518 years ago, is not officially in a declared war or an armed intervention abroad. Therefore, who are the "enemies" KL Jay was referencing in his message about "enemy territory"? Under what criteria and what conditions does the violence of the mass murder of Black populations in Brazil become legible as genocide or ethnic cleansing?

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It is undeniable that Brazil has always been a country with enormous social inequalities and resultant violence. Brazil is considered to be a Third World country in perpetual development, and accordingly continues to assume the role it has been assigned in the world system dance of global capitalism. Those who subscribe to this logic might assume that the problem lies within the so-called Global South's "natural" incapacity to become "civilized," democratic, and modern. But that would be a mistake. Deeply integral to the Brazilian geopolitical structure is the normalization of insidious violence brought about by the banalization of death in the modern-colonial world. The evidence for this spans from colonial rhetoric to developmental rhetoric.

The atrocious genocidal process being enacted against Black people in Brazil is in direct contradiction to the nation's emancipatory narrative of modernity. This false narrative fractures when the facts and figures point towards the nation's violence against Black and Afro-descendent populations. Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe writes of the coloniality of violence and these such places that produce death, "more and

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more, death itself becomes something spectral through both the way it is lived and by the way it is given." These political concerns are significant to the project of infiltrating the interior of enemy territory. In a place where up to 160 Black people are murdered per day, we can directly confront the machine which fuels technologies of death is to ask the very question that torments us all: who killed Marielle Franco?

The way in which genocidal proportions of violence against Black population in Brazil have not yet become national scandal is proof enough of the naturalization of Black death. As the Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano asserts, the naturalization of the death of racialized people will continue to develop in Latin America as long as it is fed by complexities of race and ethnicity in concurrence with seigniorial relations between the dominant and the dominated; sexism and patriarchy; the *familismo* (games of influence based on the family networks), the clientelism, the *compadrazgo* (cronyism), and the patrimonialism in the relations between the public and the private (especially between civil society and political institutions). Present political

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debates fail to account for this web of power relations. We are repeatedly led into a false debate about democratization and its political configurations instead of confronting issues of the coloniality of power, articulations of authoritarianism, and Brazilian state terrorism against racialized populations.

(Re)existence in the Face of Dehumanization and Injustice ///

In the 1970s, Black feminist groups formed to theorize and denounce logics of oppression along the intersecting axes of race, class, gender, and sexuality. In the United States, the work of Black feminist and sociologist Patricia Hill Collins invites to interrogate how socially constructed dynamics must also be situated within concrete experiences. In Brazil, Black women have also had to build their connections to the territory from the position of being "outsiders within" (a concept coined by Collins) imposing a way to exist and resist in occupied territory while facing the combined violence of oppressions of being both women and Black. Within the violence of the modern-colonial world, Black women's resistance is a testament to radical

daily efforts of re-existence. As political philosopher Frantz Fanon warned, it is necessary to get rid of everything imposed by colonization and undermine colonial structures both individually and collectively, including the internalized self-dehumanization. However, in order to politicize, to open minds, and to awaken the masses, it is necessary to bring spirits into the world, or "to invent souls," as written by poet and founder of the Negritude movement Aimé Césaire. Now, as ever, envisioning resistance as a reinvention of reality is an essential exercise, especially in the face of racialized dehumanization. To reimagine Brazil's quilombismo, as Afro-Brazilian theoretician Abdias do Nascimento has offered, means to abolish binaries and borders imposed by the modern-colonial project and to reimagine ways of feeling, thinking and acting in the world. And Marielle Franco knew exactly how to do that.

In many ways, Marielle's execution is immersed in the depths of the colonial, racist, sexist, homophobic, and patriarchal matrix of violence established by the modern-colonial project. The symbolism of her death,

in particular, is even more politically potent when we consider that it was enacted by the very forces she spent a lifetime struggling against. In order to transform configurations of the coloniality of power and the circumstances it imposes as reality, Marielle dared to transpose territories of death.

Marielle Franco approached the issue of violence across the triad of gender, race and the city, stating "women living in the Maré are not yet participating in dialogues about cisgender, transgender, sexuality, and the binary." With an intimate understanding of the false debates between those who work in the field and those entrenched in theory, the sociologist once said in an interview: "I think this dialogue [on gender identities], abortion, and women's autonomy is central to the agenda of the feminist movement, but before addressing those points, we need to talk about child care and violence right here, and the vulnerable position occupied by women from favelas. It is from these points of view that we understand our relationship to the state." During her lifetime, she used her voice to lift up the realities and causes of favelas, Black and LGBTQ communities, and victims of police and paramilitary

violence, interfering with the Brazilian political domain which is otherwise dominated by the white supremacist elite. Her life and her death always recentered and will continue to recenter political struggles related to gender and anti-Blackness. In the face of a fraught national history, her commitments to these causes demand a new orientation.

Chants of the Mexican proverb "they tried to bury us; they did not know we were seeds" became a mainstay during the demonstrations that took place after the murder of Marielle Franco organized by groups ranging from feminists, Black movements, LGBTQ movements and Native peoples, to human rights activists, political parties and artists. Marielle Franco has undoubtedly become an extremely strong symbol of resistance against the Brazilian modern-colonial naturalization of death and erasure of the struggles against racialized discrimination. Her bloodshed in the struggle sows infertile ground in enemy territory, planting seeds for the future. In a country where the seasons are hardly distinct, rain showers are followed by sunshine and meet the conditions under which our seeds begin to sprout.

Fabiana Ex-Souza is an Afro-Brazilian artist and researcher based in Paris. With the support of a scholarship from the CAPES-Brazil institution, Ex-Souza currently pursuing a PhD in Visual Arts and Photography at Paris VIII University, developing his research on Decolonial Aesthetics. She also holds a Master's degree in Arts with a



research focus on Afro Brazilian Contemporary Art. Read more on her contributor page.



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info@thefunambulist.net

The Funambulist EURL,75 rue du Cherche Midi, 75006 Paris, FRANCE