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## **Resisting numbers: the favela as an (un)quantifiable reality**

Abstract:

In this paper I discuss the tense relationship between favelas and statistics through three types of resistance to quantification. The first concerns the ways in which the favela has been incorporated into population censuses. I show that the category ‘subnormal agglomerate’ and its transformation over time represent a gradual generalization and normalization of the idea of the favela as spatialized poverty, based – aside from income deficits – mainly on the illegal occupation of the land on which the houses are built. The paper discusses the relationship between being a place ‘difficult to count’ (which is what this kind of resistance involves) and the very idea of poverty. The second form of resistance concerns the constant movement of people, things and houses in the reality lived in the favela. This movement counterposes the attempts at immobilization imposed by the population statistics, as I show through the discussion on the category of ‘domicile.’ This discussion is embedded in the broader analytic and conceptual framework of an anthropology of the house. Third, I show that explicit resistance to the official figures exists through the contestation of the Census findings. I shall show how residents and local organizations argue against the figures at the same time as they recognize them not only as a relevant reality, but as a part of the dispute for moral valorization and public resources. I discuss these disputes, tensions and resistances, arguing that by adopting an ethnographic approach we can explore the interrelations between multiple realities (the favela itself as a lived and problematized space, statistics, poverty), that correspond to the reference points targeted by particular agencies.

## **Introduction**

The end of the nineteenth century saw the first clusters of houses made from cheap and reusable materials, built on hill slopes close to centre of Rio de Janeiro. According to the narrative that became widespread and persists today – in effect an origin myth (Valladares 2000) – the first such place to be occupied was called Morro da Favella. The existence of a space with houses made from precarious materials, built in a disorganized form on lands that did not officially belong to the people who had constructed them, soon became a public issue. Over time the word favela became more widely used and transformed into a generic term for a particular kind of urban form in Rio de Janeiro, perennially associated with concerns about their alleged ugliness and insalubrity, and for supposedly harbouring all kinds of dangerous people.

More than a century later, rather than vanishing, as the aim had been for a long time, Rio's favelas have grown in number and size, and today much of the city's population lives in this kind of space. They continue to be a major theme of public debate, omnipresent in the election campaigns, for instance. Favelas were and continue to be seen publicly and treated by state governments as a 'problem' that needs to be addressed (Machado da Silva, 2002). Paradoxically, one of the main arguments repeatedly used in support of intervention is that these are spaces where the state has always been absent.

Over the twentieth century, various 'solutions' were discussed and executed in relation to what has been called the city's 'cancer,' ranging from proposals in the 1960s and 70s for their complete extinction through house demolition, to the 1980s and beyond when their so-called 'urbanization' was planned through infrastructure works.

The most recent modality of problematizing the favelas began in the 1980s and became more firmly established in the following decade. The emergence of armed groups controlling the sale of banned drugs and the favela territory as a whole led to a new and singular configuration of crime in Rio de Janeiro (Misse 2002, 2007). These places, which had always been treated as violent, became perceived as the loci responsible for producing 'urban violence' (Machado 2010). The dismantling of entire favelas, the implementation of urbanization projects and the investment in welfare policies still remained part of state government action for the favelas, but today they are accompanied practically and symbolically by the alleged need for police action.

Statistics have been and remain **important elements** in this problematizing construction of the favela. As well as being one of the main modern modes of building social knowledge, they are a key form of state reality, providing the reference point through which diverse agencies are mobilized in the effort to govern. Indeed they occupy a fundamental place in the construction of the units, objects and domains of action via the state, yet they are not purely state forms. Statistical realities are a focus of constant dispute – all the more so that the access to 'public numbers' (Porter 1995) and their use involve more people and become a common language.

Over the course of the successive transformations (Thevenot 1995) that occur in the construction of 'large numbers' (Desrosières 1993), various types and scales of dynamics intersect. In this text, I intend to examine a number of critical dimensions of the construction of statistical reality. My proposal is to think specifically of the relation between these spaces called favelas and the state statistics, examining the diverse forms of resistance to the quantification of (and in) these spaces. The aim in this paper, therefore, is to foreground the

tense dynamics between the construction of statistical reality and other realities. Here reality (or realities) are taken to be the arrangements of elements and relations that people conceive as existent, relatively autonomous and external to subjectivities, observable, tangible and intelligible – that is, a *common* referent point in both senses of the term: shared and ordinary. In adopting this approach, it not only makes sense to approach *realities* in the plural and not *reality* in the singular, it is essential that we do so.

The text is divided into three parts, each dedicated to a form of resistance of the favela to numbers. In the first I examine the *aglomerado subnormal*, ‘subnormal agglomerate,’ a category used to cover favelas in the official statistics, and discuss how a particular, spatialized conception of poverty has been produced through the construction of these spaces as difficult to count. Hence the aim is to explore how quantification is employed to conceptualize poverty as a reality, i.e. as something existent, comprehensible and on which **it is possible (and in this case necessary) to act**. By comparing the place of the favela in three different censuses (from 1950, 1991 and 2010), I intend to show the nexus between *normalization* of the favela as a category and the idea that these were places in which and on which it was – and still is – difficult to produce numbers.

Next I turn to the category ‘domicile,’ a statistical reality based on the immobilization and stabilization of persons and houses, fundamental to the construction of demographic statistics. The endeavour to construct these discrete units contrasts with the constant movement that produces houses as realities lived by favela residents. These spaces are difficult to count precisely because there is so much movement within them.

Continuing, I then discuss a kind of resistance that emerges through the explicit contestation of this population data. I suggest an analysis of the arguments and justifications for a ‘self-counting,’ carried out by local organizations in one huge set of favelas, the Maré complex. The statistical realities produced by official agencies are described as false by some people since the methodology used is considered at once inadequate and based on prejudices and stigmatization. Producing their own numbers, organizers of the local census argue, entails challenging the form through which the favela is publicly perceived and treated by state agents.

## From the favela to the subnormal agglomerate: poverty as a spatialized reality

The 1950 census was the first national survey to include the population of favelas. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) prepared a specific document analysing the information collected in these locations, in which it identifies the difficulties involved in collecting and classifying the data. Based on this research, IBGE proposed a definition for these spaces, namely the following:

Hence, included in the conceptualization of favela were human agglomerates that possess, totally or partially, the following characteristics:

1. *Minimal proportions* – Groups of buildings or residences formed by units generally numbering higher than 50;
2. *Type of habitation* – Predominance in the grouping of small houses or shacks, rustic in type, constructed primarily from tin or zinc sheeting, planks or similar materials;
3. *Legal status of occupation* – Unlicensed and unsupervised constructions on lands belonging to third-parties or unknown ownership;
4. *Public improvements* – Absence, either entirely or partially, of a sewage system, electricity, telephones and piped water;
5. *Urbanization* – Non-urbanized area without street paving, numbers or signs (IBGE 1953).

This definition of the favela forms the conclusion to the study undertaken into its characteristics. It therefore presumes the concrete existence of the favela as a real phenomenon, which can be technically and objectively characterized through data collection and field observations.

In 1991 IBGE included the category ‘subnormal agglomerate’ in the census as a type of ‘census sector.’<sup>1</sup> These two categories are referred to as ‘operational.’ In other words they refer to data collection rather than the logical and analytic organization of the information. A census sector is an area defined through the capacity for a single census officer to carry out all the activities related to data collection within a certain time interval. The definition of the subnormal agglomerate is as follows:

The special sector defined as a subnormal agglomerate is a group made up of at least 51 (fifty-one) habitational units (shacks, houses...) mostly lacking basic public services, occupying or having occupied until recently land belonging to a third party (public or private) and generally built in a disordered and dense layout. Subnormal Agglomerates should be identified on the basis of the following criteria: a) Illegal occupation of land, i.e. construction on land belonging to a third party (public or private) either presently or recently (acquisition of the land deed during the past ten years); and b) Possession of at least one of the following characteristics: urbanization outside of existing patterns – reflected by narrow roads built in an irregular layout,

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<sup>1</sup> “The census sector is the territorial unit established for the purposes of registration control, formed by a continuous area, situated in a single urban or rural block, with a size and number of domiciles that enables its survey by a census officer. Hence each office will proceed to collect information with the aim of covering the census sector designated to him or her.” (IBGE, 2010 Census Guide. Source: <http://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/materiais/guia-do-censo/operacao-censitaria.html>). There are approximately 314,000 census sectors across Brazil as a whole.

plots of unequal sizes and shapes, and constructions built without permission from public authorities; and precarious basic public services. (IBGE 2011: 27)

The definition of the subnormal agglomerate is clearly based on the definition of the favela from the 1950s. Both highlight as the main characteristics the lack of urbanization and an illegal land ownership system.<sup>2</sup> The difference between the two is that the older expression concerns the posterior description of a reality external to the statistics. In the second case a type of place is described, the characteristics of which are a problem for field research.

Subnormal agglomerates, alongside other spaces like indigenous villages and prisons, for example, were defined as a unit linked precisely to the supposed difficulty of collecting information in the field. It comprises a kind of practical and quotidian resistance to the work of the researchers.

From 2010 onward, when the last national census was conducted, the category became considered as a unit of analysis. As part of the results of its survey, IBGE published a document specifically on subnormal agglomerates throughout Brazil. This contains maps and tables on the population data for these sectors, aggregated by state and region. There was a change, including in reference to the spatial units to which the term refers: a subnormal agglomerate, named after the ordinary name of the area, can be composed of various census sectors.<sup>3</sup>

These three forms of incorporating favelas into public statistics are distinct framings of what these spaces comprise in relation to the actual effort to *count* as a routine practice – data collection – and in relation to its place in the overall set of census units and categories. Setting out from a shared definition of the favela, the first form of incorporation is the result of an exploratory field trip, on the basis of which an attempt is made to define the favela in technical terms. As an operational category, the subnormal agglomerate represents an expansion of the notion of favela through a shift away from the specificity of Rio de Janeiro that points to the specific difficulty of carrying out such surveys.

In 2010, the category was transformed from an operational unit into a particular type of unit of analysis that violates the standard rule of successive aggregation in increasingly broader units that correspond to the sum, and only the sum, of a definite quantity of elements of the immediately preceding type. In contrast to this procedure, presenting the population

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<sup>2</sup> The relation between the categories is revealed not only from the logical viewpoint. The internal code used for the subnormal agglomerate in the documents completed by the researchers is 'FAV' (IBGE Census Methodology 2000, p. 284).

<sup>3</sup> Among the diverse platforms created by IBGE for publication of the 2010 Census Data is a specific web application for subnormal agglomerates. Visitors can use this application to search by state, city and 'name of the agglomerate' and access the information collected for each of the census sectors included in the agglomerate: see <http://www.censo2010.ibge.gov.br/agsn/>.

data for subnormal agglomerates per state, for instance, implies taking these places as the same *type* of space – understood also as an aggregate of persons – whose identity allows (or forces) us to go beyond the logic of successive encompassment of contiguous spatial units.

The three forms of framing reveal, on one hand, the favela's persistent resistance to quantification, demonstrated by the progressive normalization through an abnormalizing typification. The idea of the favela is expanded and objectified so as to apply beyond the reality of Rio de Janeiro and is presented as a recurrent – and in a sense normal – form at the same time as it becomes an increasingly abstract category of abnormality, capable of encompassing an ever larger number of cases.

The category 'subnormal agglomerate' far from summarizes or encompasses everything treated as poverty in Brazil. But it does allow us to recognize the centrality of the idea of the favela in the construction of Brazilian poverty and, more specifically, of its spatialized presentations. Two characteristics came to be transposed from the common category of favela that IBGE transformed into an object of systematic inquiry in the 1950 census to the 2010 survey. The first of these is the disorganized layout of the houses, roads and paths, while the second is the illegitimate occupation of the land, presuming the construction and occupation of spaces belonging to other people or entities without their consent.

Spatialized and 'favelized' through the category of 'subnormal agglomerate,' poverty is only indirectly attributed to the individuals counted as a lack through the inference that those living in these spaces have little money. What stands out is a certain kind of usurpation involved in defining the relation of ownership with land as illegitimate or illegal.

### **The 'domicile' as immobilization**

The statistical reality of the population is made through immobilizations. Exclusive relations need to be established between spaces and between them and people. The first stabilization mobilized by this kind of quantification, both in terms of data collection and in the construction of the logical framework for interpreting the data, is the association between persons and spaces through the idea of a residence and the management of resources for maintaining collective life. The category 'domicile' defines the unit of data production – questionnaires are completed for each domicile – and represents the first form of aggregation of information on individuals, who, combined, form a 'population.'

The successive forms of data aggregation – based on increasingly broader spatial categories, each level composed by a given quantity of elements from the preceding level – set out from the definition of each person’s exclusive belonging to one, and just one, particular spatial and economic unit. Thus a certain number of people inhabit one domicile, a certain number of domiciles form a census sector, a certain number of census sectors, in turn, make up a district.

IBGE’s definition of the domicile is the following:

*A structurally separate and independent place of residence, constituted by one or more rooms. Separation is characterized when the place of residence is delimited by walls, fences, etc., covered by a roof, allowing the residents to isolate themselves, assuming responsibility for part or all of the food or residential expenses. Independence is characterized when direct access to the place of residence exists, allowing residents to enter and leave without passing through the place of residence of other persons. Domiciles are classified as private or collective (IBGE, n/d: 16. My italics).*

The notion of domicile functions in the first phase in the creation of a population: in other words, the connection of a number of individuals with a determined territory, based on ‘isolation’ in the management of the resources needed for “food and residence.” It also encompasses the idea of the ‘family,’ the ideal configuration of this set of individuals. One of the classifications of domiciles refers precisely to the family status of their residents. The statistical reality of the domicile, therefore, contains relations defined between individuals, economics, family and built spaces.

The relation with the idea of family is important in the definition of a concept that has acquired a central role in the discussion of public policies in Brazil, which is the so-called ‘housing shortage.’ This is calculated on the basis of the number of ‘families’ who live without a home, though the largest contingent refers to those who live in ‘inadequate’ places, or share the same space with another family. The ideal that one family, and no more than one, should correspond to one domicile plays a strong role in the form in which large-scale policies are designed, executed and evaluated.

Through an ethnography undertaken in a community from the set of favelas known as Complexo do Alemão, I intend to show how these elements appear as part of another reality, namely that of the houses experienced in the favela. While in the domicile the relations are exclusive and the units discrete and stable, in this other reality these relations are elements typified by their constant transformation and movement.

The discussion on the relation between numbers and the favela proposed here is inserted within the broader agenda of an anthropology of the house, which aims to place this central element of social life at the centre of analysis. Anthropology has explored houses from diverse perspectives and in response to different questions. I shall quickly highlight three approaches that have proved inspirational to my work on favela spaces. The first concerns what is typically labelled material culture, which I incorporate through the emphasis on the participation of constructed spaces, objects and substances as a vital dimension of relations (Miller 2001). The so-called ‘new kinship studies,’ for their part, have suggested exploring the house in their multiple dimensions as the privileged locus and institution for the construction of family ties (Marcelin 1996, 1999 and Carsten 2005). Its basis in subversive readings of the idea of *maison* developed by Lévi-Strauss (1979, 1991) challenge normativity and the search for explanatory models – which similarly vexed Lévi-Strauss himself, among many others – radicalizing his proposal to take the native concept of the house as a starting point for building a new analytic foundation for kinship (Carsten & Hugh-Jones 1995). Another essential reference point are the studies by Brazilian anthropologists that introduced a new approach to sociological and political questions central to the tradition of social thought, focusing on economic relations, labour relations and domination in Brazil (Heredia 1979, Palmeira 1977, Garcia Jr. 1975, Woortman 1980).

Based on these sources of inspiration, I propose an anthropology of the house with specific variations of some of the issues examined by these authors. The first is the attention paid to the *everyday economy* – that is, people’s ordinary economic practices, setting out from a radically ethnographic approach, which consequently means taking them not just to be immersed – as they of course are – in relations of family, friendship and politics, for example, but taking these relations as a fundamental and inseparable aspect of them and vice-versa. The second line of approach focuses on *forms of government* (Neiburg 2014, L’Estole 2014), specifically in relation to the debate on the construction of favelas as a problem and poverty as a reality in response to which it is necessary to act, but also in order to comprehend the forms through which houses are made at an everyday level in the favela.

An anthropology of the house thus allows these entities to be comprehended as a quotidian process, without failing to take into account the diverse other agencies that participate in their construction in addition to those of residents, including the agency of state governments. By placing the two realities of the house analytically side-by-side – the statistical reality as a domicile and the lived reality – my aim is to show how reciprocal resistances are crucial to our understanding of favelas.

The houses that I observed in the favela are indissociably physical and symbolic constructions around which much of social life takes place. They are the place of care, where bodies and gendered persons are formed. People invest large financial and emotional resources in houses, such that their trajectories, relations and prospects for the future are intrinsically linked to these domestic spaces. Houses also transform all the time, physically and in people's imagination. Constituted by and through the movements of everyday life, I focused specifically on three of them, which dialogue directly with the foundations to the conception of the domicile as a statistical reality. The ethnographic data that follows derives from my field research in Complexo do Alemão, a group of favelas in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro, begun in 2012 (Motta 2014).

Among the things that most heavily circulate between the houses and within them is money. A native expression exists on a specific form of separating and marking out types of money, namely 'house money.' In practice, this money is defined by its source and the subsequent use made of it. Usually it is composed from regular income from work, such as wages, or trading. This revenue is used to cover housekeeping expenses in a broad sense. It pays for cooking gas, electricity, cable TV, internet access, cleaning materials and food. These expenses do not refer to a discrete unit, though: all these expenses also go towards maintaining the house's relations with other houses. This becomes clear when we observe the purchase of food, which is commonly used to prepare meals for many other people beside those considered domicile residents.<sup>4</sup> Children tend to be the most mobile between houses. In the case of one of the families that I observed, for instance, the children ate meals in their grandparents' houses during the week.

Loans and presents in the form of money are also common between houses. In the majority of situations, these are considered obligations between persons who perceive themselves to be connected by family ties. Various authors have demonstrated the importance of food, substances and their circulations in the construction of this kind of relation (Carsten 2005). In the social universe that I observed, money also comprises an important means of making and sustaining ties. House money is money that makes the family.

The parents of a young woman who becomes pregnant, for instance, feel obliged to build a house for their daughter. This relation of origin between houses resides at the base of a hierarchical organization filled with moralities that transforms over time, but always involves specific forms of monetary circulation, for example. What is in play, then, in the reality of the

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<sup>4</sup> In this specific ethnographic context, 'living' in a house is defined as having a place to sleep every day and store clothes or other belongings deemed to be linked to specific persons.

lived houses, especially in terms of money, are not *discrete reference units*, as the reality of the domicile presumes. These favela houses are constituted as such not through isolation but through relations. Hence I use the notion of a *configuration of houses* to describe this necessary constitution of houses through their relationships with others.<sup>5</sup>

The physical houses are also in constant movement: they are mutable houses. As well as the successive annexation of new rooms when resources permit, the houses can be transformed, for example, into business spaces. A living room can be turned into a hairdressing salon, later into a clothes store and later still back into a living room, as I was able to observe in one particular case. This specific kind of mutability is central to money-earning strategies among the people with whom I conducted field research. The convertibility of house spaces also increases the value of the property on the favela's real estate market. Not even in terms of what may at first appear to be its most static aspect – namely, its physical dimension – is the lived house stable.

### **The favela that counts itself**

In this section, I shall examine another kind of resistance, made explicit by particular subjects, which takes the form of contesting census numbers. In the case analysed here, the resistance to quantification is specifically directed towards official statistical data and is transformed into an initiative for constructing alternative numbers.

Maré is a huge favela, built on flat land across most of its territory. Its occupation began with the government-authorized use of areas situated next to Avenida Brasil, its first residents being construction workers who built the road. The expressway links the Centre of Rio to part of the city suburbs and other municipalities in the regional conurbation. It was in this locality that the first self-census initiative took place. This began in 1999 and became consolidated through a project organized by the Maré Study and Solidary Action Centre (CEASM) (Silva 2002). The second Maré Census was undertaken in 2011, at the initiative of other organizations, namely Redes da Maré (Maré Networks) and Observatório de Favelas (Favela Observatory). As well as the population count, an updating of the base maps for the area was made beforehand, along with an Enterprise Census, which aimed to produce a survey of businesses and the jobs generated by their activities.

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<sup>5</sup> Here I draw from the work of Louis Marcelin (1996), in which he formulates the concept of a configuration of houses. The use that I make of the concept, however, is closer to Elias's idea of a configuration (1980) (Motta 2014).

On these two occasions the justifications for the need to mobilize residents and local organizations in order to collect the data centred on two types of arguments. The first was the inability of the IBGE information to account for the specificities and real demands of the residents. The second concerns the form in which the stigmatization, prejudice and ignorance of researchers foreign to the community impede well-conducted research. In the more formal statements, like the one that follows, these two arguments appear necessarily interconnected:

Innumerable methodological distortions still persist in the surveys carried out in favelas. Most derive from the imprecision of the base maps, but it is also impossible to ignore the existence of biases arising from judgments about the favela whose impacts range from planning the research to conducting the interview, such as the construction of marginalizing premises that hinder or prevent approaching the public. The process of stigmatization is one of the innumerable historical effects of how favelas have been conceived and represented, since their appearance, in different fields of the social imaginary. (FBB, n/d)<sup>6</sup>

This type of resistance mobilizes discursively two other types to which I referred in the previous items of this text: the association between spatial disorder, poverty and movement and the illegitimate appropriation of the spaces. Of course, unlike the aims of an analytic text, the organizations of Maré construct political and moral arguments to justify the effort to create new statistics.

Although the critique of official statistics may have been severe at times, the production of the Maré Census involved the participation of various state government agencies. The National School of Statistical Sciences (ENCE), which is part of IBGE, and the Pereira Passos Institute (IPP) run by the Rio de Janeiro City Council, are cited as ‘partners’ of the project, funded through a grant from the Banco do Brasil Foundation, a state bank.

The relation with these agencies is a sign of something that traverses the dynamics of criticism and the production of alternative data: namely the ambiguity between recognition of the relevance and real existence of the realities of statistics, combined with a permanent distrust concerning them. Above all there is an idea here that statistics is the reality perceived by state agents and that, therefore, it is necessary to dispute them. As summed up by one activist from Complexo do Alemão, who considers the population of the locality much higher than the number obtained by the census: “A lower population, less investment.”<sup>7</sup>

While on one hand the objective was to adapt the methodology to local specificities, there was also an opposite movement. In 2010, the research team from the Maré Census covered the entire area and, as well as correcting the official maps that were out-of-date,

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6 Source: <http://www.fbb.org.br/tecnologiasocial/banco-de-tecnologias-sociais/pesquisar-tecnologias/detalhar-tecnologia-356.htm>

7 Lucia Cabral, from the NGO Educap, cited at: <http://vivafavela.com.br/449-censo-nas-favelas-e-controverso/>

proposed that residents organized themselves to give names to those streets that still had none. In this process, therefore, as well as rectifying official information, there was also an adaptation of the local itself to the formal criteria, including the naming of streets. The mapping, therefore, is a reciprocal process of transformation between statistical reality and everyday reality.

Quantification and the type of order that it implies are not only state normative ideals that ‘abnormalize’ resistances. The Maré Census shows that the statistical reality can be a form of moral and political valorization of the favela that occurs through the incorporation of some of its main principles of order and rigour with the practices of activism – as an object of political struggle<sup>8</sup> – and the experience of spaces – such as allocating names to the streets, for example.

### **Final considerations: realities that count**

For two years, during my doctoral research, I accompanied the everyday practice of constructing a statistical information system. Following the creation of the National Solidarity Economy Office in 2003, it was necessary to produce an information system that could serve as a basis for policies in the area. The concept of the ‘solidarity economy’ was not part of the **vocabulary** of national public administration at the time. It was necessary to create the reality that would be the object of intervention. The process took years, hundreds of meetings, accusations, fights over how to produce this information. The argument of the majority of those involved was that it would be impossible to quantify the solidarity economy and, worse still, it was a violent reductionism that put at risk what was its most characteristic aspect. At the launch of the publication produced to disseminate the first data from the statistical research that had eventually been produced, I was worried. Several of the staunchest opponents of the so-called “mapping” were present at the ceremony. One of them was on the roundtable for the event and spoke to the audience in a packed auditorium. He began his speech with the book in hand, shaking it in the direction of the public, and said: “Here it is! Now we exist!” (Motta 2010).

This episode shows that much of the effort to contest the very possibility of quantification, always based on the argument that reality does not fit into numbers, is part of

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<sup>8</sup> “Many citizens do not recognize the favelas as an integrated part of the city. Nonetheless, in order for the invisibility of a place to be overcome, its residents also need to recognize and valorise their belonging to it. The Maré Census is above all a means of discussing the reasons for the favelas being stigmatized and for basic rights to be neglected there.” (Source: <http://www.fbb.org.br/tecnologiasocial/banco-de-tecnologias-sociais/pesquisar-tecnologias/detalhar-tecnologia-356.htm>)

the logical construction of its validity, since it needs to construct itself as a reality. When sufficiently separated from other realities, it can present itself as autonomous, coherent, common and tangible. The resistances to quantification, therefore, seem to be a privileged angle for observing their construction.

Thinking about statistics implies thinking about the state government and its forms of agency. Through them and the studies of the tense relations between them and other realities, the processual and distributed character of the forms of government reveal themselves. The state categories, statistical data, are not ready-made instruments for imposing a centralized power, but the outcomes, always provisional, of negotiations between diverse agencies.

In the paper I have looked to explore the possibility of bringing together different logics and scales of analysis. By identifying the transformation of the idea of the favela in Brazil's demographic censuses and the fundamental place of the idea of immobilization on the basis of domiciles, I sought to show that the forms in which people construct and live houses are interconnected, relevant and subject to the action and concern not only of residents. Based on the analytic strategies presented in this paper, I seek to explore the relation between questions that are commonly examined separately by the social sciences: domestic and family life, public policies, political disputes for recognition.

One fundamental aspect of public numbers that I have explored only superficially here is their capacity to transform other realities. Whether through the incorporation of logical models, such as street naming (which is a specific form of classification) in Maré, or as a criterion for the construction of condominiums for so-called 'social housing,' statistics are realities made all the more real through their participation in constructing the conditions for acting on other realities.

The processes for producing public statistics, resistances, negotiations and incorporations unfold around the forms of classifying and framing people, spaces and relations. Examining this type of quantification, therefore, involves examining the dynamics involved in the definition of the realities that are relevant, suitable for discussion and dispute: of what are the realities that count.

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