



The role of Black women in urban housing struggles in Brazil: From land occupations to the institutional policy

Thalles Vichiato Breda

Federal University of São Carlos

Abstract

In recent years, housing movements and their activists have gained more prominence as housing has become increasingly unaffordable. In Brazil, land occupations, a tool for housing access, are mainly composed of Black women—the most vulnerable societal group. Black women have developed a vital role in the housing struggle, being responsible for the occupations' management and their victories. Still, they are invisible to part of society and to some scholars. This article analyzes the role of Black women in land occupations organized by the MTST (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto*—Homeless Workers Movement). It discusses how they became activists, accessed leadership positions, and more recently, how they push to access positions in institutional and party politics. The research is based on ethnographic field work in an MTST occupation in São Carlos during 2018 and 2021 and analyses of the movement and its leaders' social media profiles. The trajectories of two Black women MTST activists who rose as leaders within the occupation are analyzed. It is observed that their leadership was produced internally and resulted from individual ambitions, collective experiences lived inside the occupation, and the MTST's education and political project. The strengthening of 'identity agendas' within the MTST has given greater visibility to marginal Black women and resulted in the production of political capital at the individual level and for the movement. The MTST has been incorporating identity agendas in the housing struggle and the right to the city. Consequently, it gives marginal Black women more visibility as key actors in struggles around the production of urban space.

Keywords

Housing policy, homeless movements, land occupations, intersectionality, Latin America, Brazil

Thalles Vichiato Breda is a PhD candidate at the Department of Postgraduate Studies in Sociology at Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar - Brazil) and a PhD candidate at the Institute of Architecture and Urbanism of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar (Germany). He is Assistant Researcher at IRD (Institut de recherche pour le développement - France), Researcher at Sagemm Network: Social Activities, Gender, Markets and Mobilities from below (Latin America), Researcher at Observatory of Inequalities, Conflicts, Autonomy and Democracy (UFSCar) and Assistant Editor of Contemporânea - UFSCar Sociology Journal. **Contact:** thallesvbreda@gmail.com

Housing movements and their activists have gained more prominence in the last decade in Brazil. Since 2016, the political conjuncture, the absence of an effective federal housing policy, rising unemployment rates, the political crisis, and more recently, the Covid-19 situation have made it difficult to access housing. In this scenario, low-income populations have relied on occupations and housing movements to guarantee access to land, housing, social rent, or fundamental social rights (Breda, 2022a).

More than struggling for housing, occupations work as instruments of pressure for occupiers to access essential public services (Miagusko, 2012) and as a tool to produce urban space according to low-income populations' demands. They are also a crucial space in shaping identities (c.f. Helene, 2019; Caldwell, 2007), political engagement, and politicization of the occupiers (c.f. Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki, 2021). Occupations have also served in shaping leaders from the grassroots.

Land and housing struggles in Brazil are not recent; poor and Black populations have always had difficulties accessing both land and housing. Since the end of slavery (1888) and the beginning of the republican era (1889), through the industrialization and urbanization period (20th century first half), there has never been adequate land or urban reform. Understanding these disputes and their players is crucial to unveil the social structure, forms of social reproduction, and the centrality of these social movements in the global south, especially in Brazil.

Several housing movement scholars have pointed out that women have a majority presence in occupations (Helene, 2019; Perry, 2016, 2012; Garcia, 2012). They lead and organize the occupations' daily activities, assemblies, and negotiations with public authorities. In 2014, a survey conducted within the Homeless Workers Movement (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto* – MTST) estimated that women make up 70% of the movement (Valle and Góis, 2020), and approximately 60% of them are part of the MTST coordination (Carmo, 2021).

Although studies in recent decades have given attention to the role of women within social movements, little has been said about Black women. The role of Black women as movement leaders, intellectuals, and politicians has been denied by politicians, public-sector workers, society, the dominant media, and many scholars, making them invisible (Perry, 2016, 2012; Garcia, 2012). Recent literature on the MTST has focused on its organization, forms of politicization, or even the role of women, without significantly addressing race (c.f. Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki, 2021; Carmo, 2021; Santos and Goulart, 2016; Miagusko, 2012; Goulart, 2011).

Attempting to fill this gap, this article analyzes the role of Black women in MTST land occupations. It discusses how they became activists, accessed leadership, and, more recently, how they have pushed for and gained positions in institutional and party politics. I argue that these processes are related to the individual and collective experiences lived within the occupations and are also driven by the MTST's political project. I also discuss the importance of the racial and gender agenda in the movement's struggle for the right to the city.

Figure 1

Location of São Carlos and São Paulo cities, São Paulo State, Brazil. *Legend: Red star: São Carlos. Black dot: São Paulo*
Source: <https://d-maps.com/>.
Edited by the author.



One of many housing movements in Brazil, the MTST has been a strong protagonist in organizing land occupations for 25 years. It is present in 14 of 26 states and about 55,000 families have already been through it (Canofre, 2018). Self-denominated as the ‘largest urban social movement in Brazil’, it is not only about the housing struggle but also a movement defending social rights (Miakusgo, 2012; Simões et al., 2017). They understand that the right to housing is not unrelated to resources, services, and urban infrastructure.

Its political strategy is based on promoting occupations with hundreds of families on unused land on the outskirts of cities in order to pressure the government to implement housing policies. The places are chosen carefully, targeting lands with tax debts and that do not fulfill their social function¹. Other housing movements have a method of occupying vacant buildings in central areas, challenging already well-structured urban spaces (Guerreiro, 2016; Helene, 2019).

This analysis relies on the results of ethnographic work² carried out between 2018 to 2021 in an MTST land occupation in the southern region of São Carlos city, São Paulo state (Figure 1). In early 2023, I also conducted informal interviews and participant observation in three MTST occupations in São Paulo, which corroborated the data observed and collected in São Carlos.

¹ According to the 1988 Constitution, all property must fulfill a social function. If it does not, the state can expropriate it. In most cases, to make this instrument work in practice requires political articulation and social pressure.

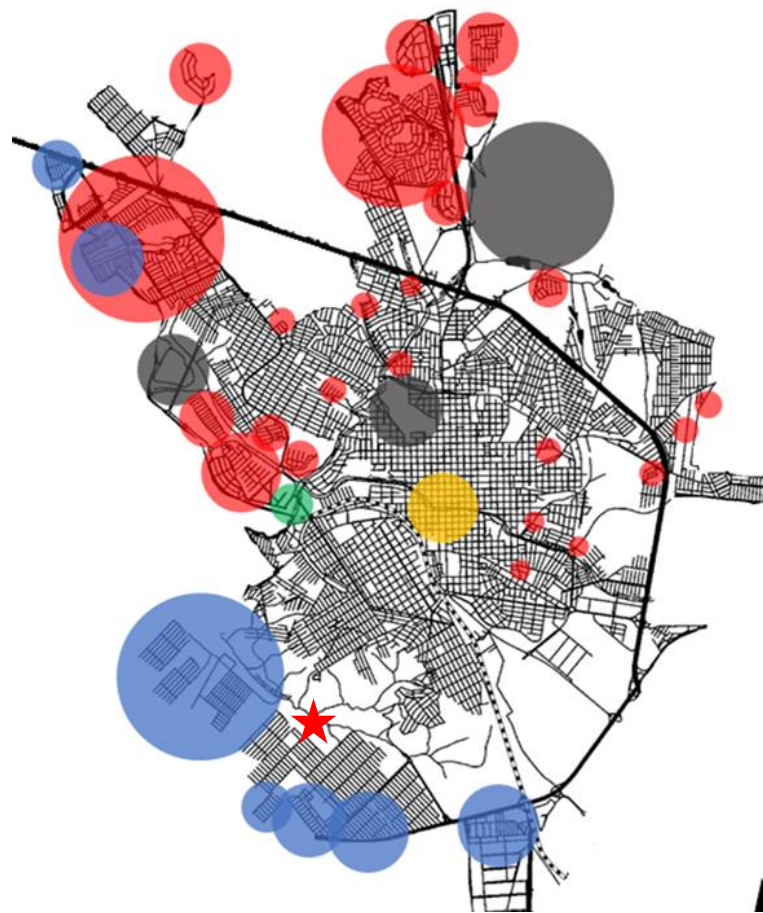
² I conducted ethnographic work most frequently between 2018 to 2020. In 2021, I conducted a few in-person visits due to Covid-19. Between August 2021 and December 2022, I lived in Germany for my cotutelle Ph.D. modality and kept in touch through WhatsApp. During these years I participated in assemblies, meetings with public agencies, conducted in-depth interviews with the occupiers, external supporters, local councilors, and their assessors, consulted legal documents, the MTST’s website, news portals, and analyzed their profiles on Instagram and Facebook.

São Carlos has approximately 255,000 inhabitants and is known as Brazil's technology capital, home to hundreds of technology companies and two public universities. Historically, its urban development was dictated by the interests of the agrarian elites from the era of slave coffee farms, and later by the industrial elite. During the 20th century, white elite interests displaced formerly enslaved and poor populations to the city's southern region. This socio-spatially segregated region currently holds about 80 thousand people, concentrating the city's poorest and Black populations. On the opposite side, the northern part concentrates the wealthy and White population (Figure 2) (Breda, 2022b). This logic of colonialism, slavery and white, male supremacy, continues to organize most Brazilian cities where whites and Blacks still live in unequal conditions. Brazilian industrialization and urbanization have not overcome these inequalities (Garcia, 2012).

The occupation in São Carlos started in late 2015 and has about 130 families. In 2017, the MTST was invited to take over its organization. Currently, the leadership board comprises 5 Black people: a man and a woman (a couple) as the main leaders, two coordinators, and an MTST external coordinator. Among them, two women stand out for their leadership profile: Juliana³ (coordinator) and Débora (external coordinator). In 2020, they won the land's regularization and urbanization (Breda, 2022a). These achievements were possible due to the role played by the leaders.

Figure 2

São Carlos city: location of the land occupation (red star). *Legend: Blue: Social housing for low-income population; Red: Middle and high-class gated communities; Black: Public universities; Yellow: City center; Green: Mall; Red star: Land occupation.*
Source: Thalles Vichiato Breda



³ With the exception of public people, such as candidates for elective positions, all names are fictitious.

This was not the only outcome. The political education processes promoted by the MTST and the struggle produced a feeling of political engagement. Also, the legal victory of the land was a turning point in Juliana's life and activist trajectory. She decided to engage more and accepted to become an MTST regional coordinator. Another result was Débora's candidacy for São Paulo city councilor, which drew attention to the movement's new strategy. Since 2018, the MTST has been launching leaders shaped in the occupations to run for legislative positions. These candidacies include identity agendas that connect with the right to the city. In this process, the figure of the marginal Black woman has gained more visibility, and gender, racial, and sexuality are now part of the MTST's right to the city debate.

This data highlights Black women's fundamental role in the housing rights struggle through occupations and party politics. This process reflects personal and collective ambitions and the political project of the MTST. The movement seeks to impose its agenda through political pressure exerted by the occupations and by party politics. The strategies for disputing public resources, the production of political capital, and the production of urban space have diversified within the movement.

Women's struggle: **social vulnerabilities, feminization of poverty and social movements**

Brazilian women started their activism in the 1970s, mainly based on two demands: the struggle for city rights (day-care and health centers, for example) and the effort to find their children who disappeared during the military dictatorship (1964-1985). Since then, they have always been the majority in the movements that fight for better living and working conditions, in collective actions, in feminist movements, in NGO management, etc. Even with all this presence, they remain invisible as social actors (Garcia, 2012; Gohn, 2007; Perry, 2012, 2016).

Gohn (2007, p. 55) points out that some analysts have used two terminologies to discuss women's participation in social movements: the 'feminist movement' and the 'women's movement'. The first refers to the struggle focused on demands centered around women, such as breast cancer, discrimination in the work force, wages, abortion, and sexuality. The second term refers to movements led by women who demand societal improvements that affect the entire population. Women as political actors are invisible to society and big media in this case. In recent years they have gained more prominence through feminist struggles within the 'women's movement', such as in the fight for housing. Previously, this issue was not considered a priority in the anti-capitalist or class struggle. The valorization of this agenda points to the growth of new forms of engagement, debate, and activist performance (Gohn, 2007; Helene, 2019).

Even though women's roles have been valued in social movement studies, Black women have often been neglected because they are not seen as leaders. Keisha-Khan Perry (2012; 2016) has argued that Black women are at the center of the struggle for land, housing, and resources for communities in Brazil. They are the main political interlocutors between communities and the state but are consistently seen as lacking the knowledge or political

sophistication to organize mass movements. They are often seen as having little formal education, as domestic workers, or as hypersexualized. Perry argues that white activists gain more empathy than Black leaders when communicating their demands. This process also results in a lack of studies on black women.

Agreeing with Perry's statements, Helene (2019) points out that women are at the forefront of the majority of housing movements for two main reasons: the first reflects a history of exclusion of the poorest layers concerning access to land, housing, and the labor market. This condition is even worse for women, especially Black women. The second is the 'feminization of poverty'. According to IBGE data (2019), Black women are the population with the lowest monthly income, followed by Black men (R\$ 1,471 and R\$ 1,710, respectively); at the top are white men, followed by white women (R\$ 3,388 and R\$ 2,526 respectively). Along with gender, race is an essential factor in these differences.

One of Brazil's least recognized and underpaid jobs is domestic work, mainly occupied by Black women. The *PEC das Domésticas* (Domestic Workers' Law), which aimed to regularize the profession was only just created in 2013. This law suffered great resistance from the (white) middle and upper classes, which have exploited this population for centuries - first as enslaved people and later as underpaid and unappreciated domestic workers. Despite the passing of the law, three out of four domestic workers continue to work informally, and thus receive no social and retirement rights (Vieceli and Gavras, 2023).

Households headed by women and single mothers have been increasing in recent years. According to the IBGE (2010) census for São Paulo, 44.1% of homes are headed by women (15% more than in 2000). Within this sample, 34% are single-parent families with children (compared to 3.6% in the male sample) (Prefeitura, 2012). Thus, women make up the majority in the most vulnerable scenario of single-parent families.

Regarding household chores, women spend more than twice as much per week as men: 21 hours versus ten hours, respectively (IBGE, 2019). This unpaid 'double journey' overburdens women. The assignment of reproductive work to women results from the sexual division of labor forged by capitalism (Federici, 2017), patriarchy (Kergoat, 2003) and colonization (Garcia, 2012). Women perform unpaid work and are situated at the margins of the labor world. Access to housing which is already difficult for many becomes even more difficult for them (Helene, 2019).

The home has great centrality in women's lives since they spend so much time on housework, children, and elderly care. The quality of housing and its location is central to everyday life. In structuring urban capitalism, urban mobility is designed to serve the production sphere (dominated by men) to the detriment of reproductive activities (dominated by women). This model imposes barriers to women's mobility in everyday activities (Helene, 2019).

In the Brazilian context, housing and job centers are becoming increasingly distant due to the expansion of marginal 'dormitory' neighborhoods. In general, these places and their residents (Black and poor) are highly stigmatized. In this sense, urban mobility and housing

can be seen through the lens of gender and race since primarily Black women are trapped in these spaces with poor urban infrastructure (Alfonsin, 2006).

Even though the domestic space is predominantly women's, it does not mean it is a space of women's strength. The home can be a very dangerous space with high rates of femicide, domestic violence, and cases of sexual abuse committed by husbands or close relatives. For example, 50.3% of violent deaths of women are committed by relatives and 33.2% by partners or ex-partners of the victims (Waiselfisz, 2015). Both public and private spaces are marked by gender hierarchies that recognize men as the most powerful. In this precarious scenario, housing need is a unifying factor for this vulnerable population. Later, participation in housing movements opens a path for their political education, engagement, and life transformation (Helene, 2019).

Between home and occupation: gender and race in Juliana's story

I met Juliana for the first time during the COMDUSC⁴ meeting in June 2018. The discussion concerned the Municipal Fund for Housing and Urban Development, which had 6 million reais. The fund was an object of dispute among diverse members of society. On that day, the occupation was represented by Carol⁵, Juliana and the couple. Carol stood up to explain the occupation's demands, aiming to get part of the funds for them. Twenty-nine years old, white, a graduate in architecture and urbanism with a Master's in progress, she dominated the technical and formal language. She claimed that by law, the fund should prioritize resources for social housing and land regularization and underlined that the occupation had legitimate demands.

After Carol, Juliana spoke about the vulnerable situation to which families were submitted in the occupation, stressing that the fund's resources would be essential to guarantee their rights to housing. Afterward, the answer given by several men there—city hall staff and real estate market players—was wrapped up in technocratic and legal terms to say it would not be possible to release a grant. The men's condescending tone was intended to indicate that both women knew absolutely nothing about legal and technical procedures. This piece illustrates what has already been pointed out by Perry, that women, especially Black women, are not seen as leaders or knowledgeable people.

One could see differences of class, race, gender, age, and dwelling playing out in the meeting. Although other leaders were present, it was Juliana, a 21 year old Black woman, without a high school diploma, who positioned herself as the voice of the occupation in front of an audience of white, middle-aged, well-dressed men with good connections and political capital, who were there to take part of the funding for their enterprises' benefit.

⁴ Municipal Council for Urban Development of São Carlos is an advisory, inspection, normative and monitoring body of the municipal system of planning and management of Urban Development, linked to the Municipal Secretariat of Housing and Urban Development.

⁵ Fulô's member (fictitious name), a group formed by Architecture and Urbanism post-graduate students. It provides technical assistance to low-income populations on a voluntary basis and is supported by the Federal Law 11.888/08 of 2008.

Juliana was competing against big developers over the production of urban space and the use of public money. Her positioning in front of those people was an act of courage.

A month after that episode, I met Juliana in person on my first visit to the occupation. I went there to invite the leaders to participate in the event organized by the research group in which I take part. The idea of the workshop was to mix students, professors, researchers, and community leaders in the discussions. When I asked Juliana who from the occupation could participate in the event, she promptly answered:

... me and João [leader], because all the meetings I always go with him, because (...) he has a little difficulty in talking to the people, so I'm always there, I've been there since the beginning (...) when he's not there, I take his place (...).

Juliana recognizes her good communication skills and understands she is in charge in João's absence. During their participation in our event, it was possible to see her skills. In the morning, she led the visit to the occupation with 30 people, showing each corner and answering any questions people had. In the afternoon, it was João and Juliana's turn to go to the university, and again, Juliana stood up and led the discussion without being intimidated by the audience.

Although she acts as a spokesperson and leader, Juliana has a coordinating role in the occupation. She organizes the families, controls who attends the assemblies and protests, and distributes donations. Juliana negotiated the use of the local public daycare and health center for the occupation's residents. Her role seems to be an extension of what she's been doing her entire life. She comes from a broken family. Her father passed away a few years ago and her five younger sisters' father, 'became addicted to crack and disappeared into the world'. The Tutelage Council constantly took in her sisters because their mother is cognitively disabled. From a very young age, Juliana became responsible for the whole family, organizing, budgeting, talking to social workers, getting government benefits, and taking care of the retirement of one of her cognitively disabled sisters:

I give support to my mother; I am the only person who runs with her here, runs with her there, and I am helping her, and... It is tough, it is very hard. (...) we are not born with a structured family; we need to have a very strong head because otherwise, we can't stand it.

When she moved into the occupation with her husband, she was six months pregnant and had to build her home (Figure 3). With great pride, she pointed to the parts of her hut and told me:

Then I built this part here and nailed it... I was the one who made my sewage pit (...) Two and a half meters deep. I made the pit myself because my husband was working, and my relatives were all working; there was no way anyone could help me. (...) my neighbors all enabled me to (...) make my little home.

This care that she learned in the domestic sphere is reflected in the construction of her home and the organization of the occupation:

Figure 3

Juliana's shack at the occupation. Artwork made by artist Mundano, 2017. *Source: Juliana.*



I can't leave the occupation (...) I am divided; I have to separate myself here for my family, the occupation, and my mother, which is very complicated.

It is very stressful because you have to be in the leadership explaining to the people, talking to them, and often what you do is not understood. It is tough. And we don't earn anything for this, you know. We are here because we really like to help people. After all, if it weren't for us, I don't know what this occupation would be yet. From time to time, they [people] come to our house: 'Hey Juliana, can't you help us? Can't you get some people there who can help us? Until we settle down, right'. It is tough.

Like the other women leaders, Juliana is more present in the occupation's daily life than their husbands. This is because their husbands are responsible for bringing the money home, so they are out working or looking for a job. With labor divided by gender, it is up to the women to take care of all domestic tasks. In this case, their work and responsibilities in the occupation can be seen as an extension of this domestic universe.

This occurs in more than just the occupation. The foreword 'The history of the MTST is the history of women in the periphery', signed by the 'Women of the National Coordination of the MTST' (Simões et al., 2017, p. 11), explicitly brings the issue of gender and division of labor:

Because of all this [the condition of women in society], the struggle for housing has immense liberating potential for women. We are the majority: we don't have equal rights, but we have the same legal duties and, in addition, socially constructed duties.

Often abandoned by their 'partners' these women work double or triple shifts, outside and inside the home, and still care for their children and elderly relatives. In the case of the homeless women, after all this, they still go to the encampment, where they assume tasks and responsibilities within the collective project that is the occupation:

coordination and group meetings, communal kitchens, and joint efforts, among other activities (my translation).

When referring to ‘socially constructed duties’, they refer to the division of labor, that is, the roles women are expected to play. Juliana's case is an example: she not only takes care of the occupation and her house; she has to take care of her disabled mother. She has five sisters and two children. In the domestic sphere, she has eight dependents relying on her care, plus her husband. From time to time, she does some work to supplement the family income, like baking a cake: something she can do in her home and sell to neighbors. She works a ‘double’, ‘triple’ or ‘quadruple’ shift, depending on the demands.

When I talked to Juliana in 2018, she was 21. Her role as a coordinator began when she was around 19. Her trajectory illustrates the arguments set in the last section. All these adversities in Juliana's life shaped part of her leadership profile: the forced early maturity, the urgency of dealing with social workers, and caring for the family. In the public sphere, the economic crisis, rising unemployment, and the dismantling of social and housing mechanisms in the last years led her to the occupation and to MTST.

Her role is fundamental in keeping the occupation's struggle going. And it was through this that she discovered activism and changed her life. In 2020, she became MTST's regional coordinator and now seeks to help other occupations based on her experiences and expertise.

Organization, political education, and housing rights achievement: Débora and the MTST

When the occupation began in 2015, the main goal was to access housing units produced by the federal housing policy. However, since 2013 the contracting of subsidized housing for low-income groups has dropped sharply, and the national housing policy was practically extinguished in 2020 (Breda, 2022a). This scenario indicated that it would not be possible to access social housing. Without alternatives, the occupation leaders sought the MTST in 2017. The movement's entry into the occupation was fundamental for their victories.

Débora, an MTST's state coordinator at the time (now she composes the national board), takes care of several occupations in the state of São Paulo, including the one in São Carlos. Her function is to help ‘in the survey of the demands in each region and also in the orientation of how one can obtain success in their demands, fulfilling the mediator role of community demands concerning public power’ (Guilhermina, 2021). She is 30 years old (2018), Black, a single mother of three, with a mathematics degree and living in São Paulo.

As soon as she arrived in the occupation in São Carlos, she set up the MTST rules:

Débora: (...) we have regulations inside the occupation (...), we don't accept any aggression, (...) drugs are forbidden inside our spaces, respect silence hours after 10, 11 o'clock... So, the movement is good for this because there were no rules before. [The MTST] helped to reinforce the importance of not having this kind of thing because

there is all this criminalization (...) to say that the occupation is not legitimate and is a place of crime...

(...), the housing struggle is dignified, (...) if the police come, a negative image of the families' struggle is created. So, from experience, we don't allow aggression, drugs, [shakes] sales...

Historically, social movements in Brazil have been criminalized and stigmatized by public authorities, the media, and sectors of society (Plataforma, 2019). In a local radio interview, the São Carlos mayor described the occupiers as 'bums' and 'bandits' (A Cidade On, 2019). The movement knows that preventing occupations from being criminalized or stigmatized is essential to produce their legitimacy and achieve social rights. Establishing rules avoids visits from police and builds an occupation-positive image that moves away from the idea of mess, violence, and criminality.

Débora's speech reveals the movement's mediation to avoid conflicts and domestic violence, for example. Based on that, the occupation is a safer space, especially for women and transgender people who are constant targets. In this occupation, an episode of physical violence by a man towards a woman led to his expulsion.

Concerns about domestic violence and gender began in the MTST in 2016 when a domestic violence episode happened in one of its occupations (Helene, 2019). Since then, the MTST has organized conversations regarding gender and race, promoted a State Women's Meeting⁶, and created the Women in Movement Collective, among other things.

Débora is also responsible for mediating the occupation's demands with public authorities. Supported by the MTST's legal sector, she ensures that public authority abuse does not happen.

Débora: (...) When the City Hall came up with this absurd proposal, they thought they were dealing with lay people... 'You have to leave, that's it, it's over' [referring to the several government removal requests]. They treat the occupation coordinators as if we really didn't understand our rights (...) This feeling happened to those here [in the occupation], 'Wow, we will have to leave, and now, what am I going to do?'. So, the City Hall uses this a lot, the supposed people's lack of knowledge to impose, pressure, and get things by force. So, the movement has a fundamental role in this mediation, explaining the City Hall's role. So, for me, the movement is essential in this.

Many occupiers have little schooling and can be tricked by the authorities, who use technical and legal language. Débora reassures these people who don't know their rights that the role of State won't be manipulated. Along with this, Débora and the MTST seek to conduct political training with the occupation leaders and coordinators:

Débora: But then there is an MTST's Training Sector that gives more detailed training for you, which is a coordinator. Explain why we are occupying, that it is not illegal. What we are doing is true...it is in the Constitution that all property has to fulfill a social

⁶ The first meeting occurred in 2019 in São Paulo gathering 600 women.

function (...), and the right to housing is also in the Constitution. So, in a certain way, you are questioning and claiming the right to housing. So, the occupation is not something illegal. We are pressuring the public power to use this tool in the Constitution. So, it is a training that we give more grounded on what this struggle for housing is, for defense itself, to argue for...

The effects of the training are also observable among the occupants, as Cássia reported to me:

And we didn't know we have the right to occupy what is ours, we have the right to housing, we have the right to several things, and we didn't know that. (...) Then we accepted the MTST coming to help us (...) And we won't leave here because this is ours too. We are fighting for housing; the competent bodies of the municipality, the state, and Brazil, have to work for us; it is their obligation to give us housing; we are not asking for charity here, it is our right, and we have to enforce this right, and they have to see us.

The lexicon presented in Débora and Cássia's speech is repeated by other occupiers. This informal educational process can be compelling. The movement promotes an environment for debate with access to information and conjunctural analysis, orally and in an accessible language (Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki, 2021). This political education enables citizens to be more aware of their rights, being a fundamental tool for defending themselves, debating in meetings, protests, and daily conversations.

Most of the time, I have observed a politicization of the occupants regarding class struggle. The politicization regarding gender and race on the other hand happened more often among the coordinators, leaders, and some activists. Here it is essential to clarify that not all occupants are MTST activists. Some get more involved in the struggle and become activists or even coordinators – like Juliana and Débora. And some are there to get their own house, such as Cássia.

Débora and the MTST presence are fundamental for the occupants' achievements and politicization. For six years, she has been going to the occupation almost every month, organizing assemblies and protests, leading meetings with public authorities, pressuring city hall, and communicating with lawyers, activists, support members, and councilors.

Becoming an activist from inside the occupation: crossed paths, representativeness and the movement's strategy

Débora and Juliana have something in common in their trajectories: they became activists through MTST occupations. The leadership positions they occupy today blend personal and collective struggle as well as the MTST political education and political project. Débora explains how she met the movement:

I went to the movement [in 2012] out of the necessity of wanting my own house, you know. [...] I lived with my parents, I have my kids, but I didn't have my own house. [...]

And there happened to have an occupation near my house [greater São Paulo], and I was introduced to the movement and started the fight for housing.

The occupation works first as a demand for housing; then, from the experience of collective struggle, the sense of belonging and the desire to do more for others emerge.

Débora: When we win something, like there, when we won back our land, we leave with victory. I said, 'Hey, if I made it, then I can help other people in the same situation as mine to get [a house]'. So, I joined activism, and this was my role within the movement.

Juliana is following the same path. In January 2021, when I visited the occupation, she had become the MTST Regional Coordinator. Like Débora, the moment of victory made Juliana develop a sense of belonging. Now she wants to use her experience to help others.

Based on interviews with MTST activists in greater São Paulo, Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki (2021) point out that after they secure their homes through the movement, some people sustain a sense of commitment and solidarity that makes them continue collaborating with the movement, like in the cases of Juliana and Débora. The authors argue that the struggle for housing through occupations is long and requires a continuous engagement for years that has the potential to transform individual political principles and values, producing lasting forms of engagement.

On the same day I visited the occupation, I heard Débora telling Juliana how important her experience in the occupation was for her political formation:

Débora: [...] You saw that it was there [in the occupation] you had the formation [...] You see that your practice here was a formation, here you learned a lot.

Juliana: I learned a lot, many things [...].

The know-how Juliana accumulated through her experience and the teachings offered by the MTST were fundamental in shaping her political engagement and leadership profile. Débora played an essential role in Juliana's trajectory, introducing her to the next level. I ran into another similar case in São Paulo in 2023.

Thatiana, the main leader in an occupation in the North Zone of São Paulo, joined two years ago and initially rose to coordination. She is 27 years old, married, and without kids. Currently, she also coordinates other occupations in greater São Paulo and is part of the movement's board responsible for the city's North Zone, together with Débora, whom she affectionately calls 'mother Débora'. The MTST invited Thatiana to set up an occupation in Curitiba (Paraná state), where she spent one month.

The movement's strategies go beyond political education and learning through struggle. They decide the internal leaders and have them circulate among the occupations, aiming to spread their knowledge and testimony, shaping other leaders and collaborating with MTST territorial propagation. When Thatiana calls Débora 'mother', she reveals how personal relationships and representation of Black leadership are essential to becoming an activist. A secondary narrative from one woman also illustrates this argument (Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki, 2021, p. 5-6):

Then in the early morning, she held an assembly. What encouraged me was that assembly. You have to see what a strong woman. What a speech she gave. I think it was about four o'clock in the morning and she held this assembly. I don't know if I saw her speech as special to me, because it was not a man speaking that day. I thought it was a man, because to take three buses and occupy a piece of land... Then came that woman's voice in the darkness of the night. A woman bringing that strength (...) So, these women are ready to listen to what you have to say (...)

Breaking the stigma about occupations and MTST is essential, and this can happen through the representatives. Many don't think it is right to *invade* the land, not agreeing with the movement's strategies. However, all these women reported to me that their perception of the movement changed. At first, they had a stigma about it and only wanted to get a house and move on. By participating in the struggle, they began understanding their rights, the movement's strategy of *occupying* lands, and the will to help others blossomed. Secondary narratives about other occupations reveal the same process. Bruna started as an occupant and later became the coordinator of the Dandara occupation. As Bruna says, as quoted by Santos and Goulart, 'So, supporting the coordinators, helping in the kitchen, I got to know them a little bit at a time until I became a coordinator and started to attend the meetings and the training, which changed all my thoughts' (2016, p. 151).

The kitchen, a space dominated by women, is fundamental for exchanging experiences and recognition. Besides experience, the movement's training sector is an important tool for shaping leaders. Santos and Goulart (2016, p. 150) show MTST's strategies through Felipe's speech, an activist from the formation sector:

[...] the MTST's training sector focuses more on the training of intermediary activism, the group coordinators become sector coordinators (...) we apply this training course on them so that when we leave the field, they can be used within the movement's sectors and they will be invited to compose. For example, she has the profile to be in the organization sector, and he has the profile to be in the negotiation sector, according to each one's case. The movement's formative effort is more at this level of occupation coordination for the movement coordination and the sectors.

Felipe's speech illustrates my previous argument that this non-formal political education does not necessarily extend to all occupants but rather to these intermediate activists. The strategy is to invite coordinators from occupations that present a leadership profile to work in other sectors and offer a training course. This allows the occupants to reach different positions within the movement structure.

Santos and Goulart (2016) point out that MTST has moved carefully in building a well-defined program regarding the training sector that is based on the systematization of empirical events. However, they point out that more guidance is needed in constructing the training program in theoretical-methodological terms.

Carvalho-Silva and Tomizaki (2021) argue that informal education and political engagement occur more intensely during experiences and practices in day-to-day collective action, stimulating new ways of acting and thinking. Political engagement is sustained

through access to information and compression of the movement's values. The MTST collaborates by giving substance to feelings of injustice and revolt that many occupants already carried. They provide instruments for understanding the origins and mechanisms of social inequality in collective struggle.

Juliana and Débora are examples of learning through struggle and MTST's training. Débora went further and reached the national coordination. She took an even more significant step toward party politics when she ran for São Paulo city councilor in 2018. It is possible to imagine that for activists from greater São Paulo, the movement's headquarters, there are more possibilities for growth since there is a concentration of occupations, information, people, and flows, opening up more opportunities and visibility.

On the one hand, this process gave new meaning to their lives, both in the private and professional spheres. On the other hand, the MTST uses activists' accumulated knowledge and the representation of its leaders to increase its political and territorial reach.

Women, Black and *periférica*: from activism to party politics

Since 2018, the MTST has attempted to enter party politics by having its members run for positions in the legislative and executive branches. Their goal is to have activists 'with the pen' to make decisions and influence public policies from inside the state, says Ediane Maria, an MTST activist (Hoffmann, 2022). This process reveals an MTST shift in influencing political decisions: previously through occupations, protests, and negotiation tables, and now through the 'pen'.

A report on MTST's website titled 'Occupy politics - Meet MTST candidates to contest and win elections' claims that:

The MTST has recognized, for some time now, that to advance the struggle for the rights of the poorest people, it is essential not only to occupy empty and unproductive land but also to occupy institutional politics. And, once inside those spaces, to fight even more for housing, health, education, and transportation.

In 2018 we had already launched the first homeless candidate for president in the history of Brazil. In 2020 we will continue the race [...]. For this, it is essential that our activists and all those who are part of the MTST are also engaged in the battle (MTST, 2020).

The MTST's new strategy is justified based on political conjuncture post-2016. In a news article in 2018, Boulos⁷ claimed that due to the political conjuncture, 'it became tough for any social movement to stay just in its box', 'At that time, we decided to assume the role of contributing to the unity of the national left, [...] in this way the MTST became a political actor. And so did I, as a representative of the movement' (Paiva, 2018). Boulos emphasized that the political conjuncture formed by the 'parliamentary coup' that removed President Dilma Rousseff from her position (2016), the rise of Michel Temer's right-wing government 'with setbacks in social and democratic rights,' the (still unsolved) Marielle Franco murder in

⁷ Guilherme Boulos is the MTST's best-known national leader. He is white, 40, middle class, with a background in philosophy and psychoanalysis.

2018 (Rio de Janeiro city councilwoman), ‘Lula’s political condemnation’ along with the rise of ‘extreme right-wing ideas’ ‘led us to enter this dispute for the direction of the country’ (Estado de Minas, 2018).

In 2018, Boulos ran for the Republic presidency, getting half a million votes. In 2020 he ran for mayor of São Paulo, reaching the second position. In 2022, Boulos was elected Federal Deputy for the state of São Paulo with more than one million votes, being the highest-voted candidate in his category. His campaign was based on his trajectory as a housing rights activist. In addition to Boulos, other MTST activists who identify as Black women from the margins have been running for legislative positions since 2018.

In 2020, Débora launched her candidacy for São Paulo City Council. Although, there is no official ‘co-councilor’ or ‘co-deputy’ position, her candidacy occurred through a collective mandate. This model officially allows one person to run for the seat while the other members are ‘co-councilors’ and share all decisions made by the mandate.

The collective mandate was composed of three marginal Black women, called ‘*Juntas - Mulheres sem teto*’ (Together—Homeless women), and had access to housing and the right to the city from the perspective of Black, marginal, single mothers as its agenda. The *Juntas* denounced the lack of women and marginal Blacks’ representation in institutional politics. In São Paulo (2019), of the 55 seats only 9 women were councilors and none of them were Black (Galvani, 2019).

The campaign's video (Figure 4) begins with the sentence: ‘We are *Juntas*, homeless women. A collective team of three Black women from the periphery, leaders of the most significant urban movement in the housing struggle in the country, the MTST’. The video presents their trajectory. Each of the three women represents a different occupation in São Paulo. Valdirene became the leader of the *Copa do Povo* occupation in São Paulo’s East Zone in 2014. Jussara joined the movement in 2012 and leads one of the largest urban occupations in Latin America, *Vila Nova Palestina*, in São Paulo’s South Zone. Débora joined the movement in 2012 and is one of the *Marielle Vive* occupation organizers in the city's North Zone (Juntas, 2020).

Figure 4

“*Juntas - homeless women*” campaign, 2020. Legend: from left to right, Valdirene, Jussara and Débora. Source: Youtube Profile “*Juntas - Homeless Women*”



Their speeches emphasize their transformations within the movement: ‘The MTST’s marginal and collective struggle changed our path, and now we want to transform many people’s lives’. The narrative is similar to that of several Black women in the previous section. However, the scale proposed now is from within the State.

The collective mandate also brings a racial, gendered, and spatial agenda: ‘Our life story is the story of several women from the periphery of São Paulo’; ‘We are the voice that won’t be silenced; we are Black bodies that have agreed not to die, we are the periphery, and we will occupy the São Paulo city council’ (Juntas, 2020).

According to Cláudia Garcez, state coordinator of the movement, these feminist discussions are relatively recent within the MTST: ‘we didn’t discuss these things within the movement—although we saw the valorization of women within the spaces—it was more a silenced thing, and we didn’t go into confrontation’ (Helene, 2019, p. 952). Débora reveals how important the movement was for her to understand the social markers that run through her:

Before I joined the MTST... because I was a woman, Black, from the periphery [...]. Society tells us that our place is in underemployment, is slavery, is to be humiliated. Society puts this on us. And then you start believing it. ‘Wow, I can’t speak out. Gee, I can’t occupy any space of power, of speech. But society only puts this on us because some people really believe that this is our space. And our job is precisely to make people aware that this is not our space. Our space is that of power, of speech, wherever we want. To fight for our rights (Débora’s speech towards a Black man, 2022).

The collective mandate obtained an expressive vote, getting very close to being elected. Meanwhile, the women are not alone in this struggle. In 2018 the first successful attempt to insert MTST activists into institutional politics occurred through the ‘*Mandata*⁸ Juntas—co-deputies of Pernambuco state’. The collective mandate was elected to the Legislative Assembly and is considered the first example of a ‘collective and feminist mandate to occupy a seat’ in Pernambuco.

Five women were in the mandate (three Black—one transsexual—and two white). Among them, one is lesbian and another is bisexual. The terms used to describe the mandate are feminist, mother, Black, marginal and sexual identity. Only one is an MTST activist: Jô Cavalcanti calls herself a mother, domestic worker, feminist, Black, Recife’s residents of the urban periphery, and MTST’s national coordinator (Juntas Codeputadas, nd).

In 2022, Ediane Maria, state coordinator of the MTST, was elected São Paulo’s state deputy, the first domestic worker to be elected for this position. Twenty years ago, she migrated from Pernambuco to São Paulo to work as a domestic and was a victim of contemporary slavery (Sakamoto, 2023). She has always been concerned about social inequality, finding support within the MTST, where her politicization process began. She joined the movement through the *Povo Sem Medo* occupation in greater São Paulo in 2017.

⁸ In Portuguese, the noun *mandato* (mandate) is masculine. They used the made-up word *mandata* to give the connotation of the feminine gender.

Ediane started to look at the right to the city from the perspective of race, gender, and class struggles. Realizing that most periphery residents are Black and working women without access to resources, she started to claim improvements for them: 'Black women need to occupy spaces of power, of decision making, which have always been denied to us' (Basilio, 2022). She wants to bring 'the people and the peripheries to the center of the debates' (Stabile, 2023). She is also one of the founders of the Black movement *Raíz da Liberdade* (Root of Freedom), a collective within the MTST. Ediane became a symbol of power and resistance for the MTST's base, especially for Black women. When I visited three occupations in São Paulo, several women said they feel their struggle is stronger because of Ediane. Like Débora, she is a symbol of the movement.

One identity category MTST activists use to describe themselves is '*da periferia*' or '*mulher periférica*' (from the periphery or peripheral/marginal woman). The native category can be found in the book 'MTST 20 years of history' (Simões et al., 2017, p 8-9), as in the profile and political campaign of the cited female candidates. Ediane Maria, in her official Instagram profile, describes herself as 'Black, marginal, LGBT, Northeasterner, and mother of 4 children,' for instance.

The term is used on the one hand to describe the women's condition (spatially and socially): women in the periphery are dispossessed of rights and goods, live in conditions of extreme inequality, are 'continuously exploited', 'suffer the cycle of systematic violence', have 'lower salaries', 'their intellectual capacity' is questioned, 'are under-represented', 'suffer abuse and sexual harassment'. On the other hand, there is an attempt to empower this identity as a fighter/warrior woman and use it as political capital and a tool for struggle.

These women reinvented their professional careers by moving into party politics. They mobilized their identities, symbolic and political capital, networks, their engagement with social movements, and their personal and collective struggles to construct themselves as activists and political actors, bringing agendas from the margins into the political debate and positively re-signified the periphery and Black women's issues. The *periférica* category is central for the movement, which has a peripheral-territorial base, and for these activists to dialogue with this segment of the population. The MTST has a recent understanding that the right to the city can only be fulfilled by considering women, Black, and marginal residents' demands. In this sense, the peripheral Black woman figure gains more visibility, and the movement also gains more strength and visibility.

Conclusion

Black women have always participated in social movements as part of the base, in the organization, or as leaders. However, they suffer a process of invisibilization and marginalization that has historical roots in capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism. The question we ask ourselves is why they are now gaining visibility. Looking at the MTST's occupation, there is a concern with producing internal leaders. Since marginal Black women are in the majority within the movement, they are the ones who have ascended in the MTST hierarchy. Some of MTST's strategies for producing internal leadership are: capturing the

know-how and expertise shaped by struggle, offering non-formal political training, and circulating activists in roles and occupations to spread knowledge and testimony.

The marginal Black woman's representation blended with good personal relationships and affection has been an important asset. Débora, Thatiana, and Ediane's shared paths are an example of it. It increases the confidence of the occupants and the activist base and gives them more strength for the struggle. In this sense, they collaborate with the movement's legitimacy in urban peripheries. They are responsible for the strengthening, growth, and achievements of MTST.

The identity agenda, especially as Black women from the periphery, has gained more prominence within the MTST in the last decade. Putting these women who fulfill this profile in the spotlight has proven to be an effective strategy for increasing the possibilities for accessing public resources and producing political capital. On the one hand, the political process gave new meaning to these women's lives, both in the private and professional spheres. On the other, MTST uses these activists' knowledge and representation to increase its political and territorial reach.

As a result, Black women have gained more visibility as key political actors and producers of urban space. They now yearn to dispute institutional areas of great centrality, aiming to redefine the asymmetrical distributions of power, guarantee dignity and fundamental rights, and improve democracy. These processes blend personal and collective ambitions and the MTST's political project. Whether through the occupations, the struggles for social rights, or running for political office, these women and the MTST are fighting to transform urban peripheral spaces according to their demands. The movement continues to have a solid territorial anchor once its occupations are in the periphery and its strong leaders are marginal Black women seeking to occupy central spaces of power.

References

- A Cidade On. (2018) Moradores protestam após prazo de 60 dias para deixarem área ocupada no Cidade Aracy. *A Cidade On*, March 1. Available at: <https://www.acidadeon.com/saocarlos/NOT,0,0,1310495,moradores-protestam-apos-prazo-de-60-dias-para-deixarem-area-ocupada-no-cidade-aracy.aspx> (Accessed in 1 July 2022).
- Alfonsin, B. M. (2006) Cidade para todos/cidade para todas – vendo a cidade através do olhar das mulheres, in: FERNANDES, E. & ALFONSIN, B. (Eds.) *Direito urbanístico – estudos brasileiros e internacionais*, p. 253-264 (Belo Horizonte, BH: Del Rey).
- Basilio, A. L. (2022) Boulos anuncia apoio a militante do MTST nas eleições estaduais em São Paulo. *Carta Capital*, 27 April. Available at: <https://www.cartacapital.com.br/cartaexpressa/boulos-anuncia-apoio-a-militante-do-mtst-nas-eleicoes-estaduais-em-sao-paulo/> (Accessed 30 June 2022).
- Breda, T. V. (2022a) Changes in Contemporary Brazilian Housing Policy: The Dismantling of Social Housing and Grassroots Mobilization, *Metropolitics*, October 21. Available at: <https://metropolitics.org/Changes-in-Contemporary-Brazilian-Housing-Policy-The-Dismantling-of-Social.html>. (Accessed 21 October 2022)
- Breda, T. V. (2022b) A economia política da terra: as elites e a produção das periferias pobres, in: Georges, I. P. H.; Rizek, C. S. & Breda, T. V. (Eds) *Produção e Reprodução das Formas de*

- Sociabilidade: Dimensões territoriais e multi-escalares*, p.357-396 (São Paulo, SP: Editora Alameda).
- Caldwell, K. L. (2007) Mulheres negras, militância política e justiça social no Brasil, *Revista Gênero*, 8 (1), pp. 53-69.
- Canofre, F. (2018) Boulos: ‘Num momento de crise, é preciso fazer com que a voz de indignação chegue à política’, April 20. Available at: <https://sul21.com.br/ultimas-noticias-politica-areazero-2/2018/04/boulos-num-momento-de-crise-e-preciso-fazer-com-que-a-voz-de-indignacao-chegue-a-politica/>. (Accessed 21 October 2022).
- Carmo, C. G. C. (2021) ‘Nossa Luta é Transversal’: Ocupação Tereza de Benguela e a Luta das Mulheres do MTST, *Emancipação*, 21(1), pp. 1-20.
- Carvalho-Silva, H. H. & Tomizaki, K. (2021) Os aprendizados da luta política: trajetórias militantes das mulheres no MTST, *Linhas Críticas*, 27, pp. 1-19.
- Estado de Minas. (2018) Guilherme Boulos, o líder dos sem-teto que quer chegar à Presidência, *Estado de Minas*, June 6. Available at: https://www.em.com.br/app/noticia/internacional/2018/06/06/interna_internacional,964806/guilherme-boulos-o-lider-dos-sem-teto-que-quer-chegar-a-presidencia.shtml. (Accessed 13 November).
- Federici, S. (2017). *Calibã e a bruxa: mulheres, corpo e acumulação primitiva* (São Paulo, SP: Elefante).
- Galvani, G. (2019) Militantes negras do MTST unem-se para as eleições em São Paulo, *Carta Capital*, December 14. Available at: <https://www.cartacapital.com.br/politica/militantes-negras-do-mtst-unem-se-para-as-eleicoes-em-sao-paulo/> (Accessed 30 June 2022).
- Garcia, A. S. (2012) Las Mujeres Negras y el derecho a la ciudad: las relaciones raciales y de género, in: Santos, R. E. (Ed), *Questões urbanas e racismo* (Petrópolis, RJ: DP et Alli; Brasília, DF: ABPN).
- Gohn, M. G. (2007) Mulheres – atrizes dos movimentos sociais: relações político-culturais e debate teórico no processo democrático, *Política & Sociedade*, 11, p. 41-79.
- Goulart, D. C. (2011) *O anticapitalismo do Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto*, Doctoral dissertation, Marília: Universidade Estadual Paulista.
- Guerreiro, I. A. (2016) O MTST e o PMCMV: o ‘poder popular’ próprio do *Lulismo*. *Dialektiké*, 1, pp. 52-78.
- Guilhermina, V. (2021) O movimento mudou a minha vida?: conheça a trajetória política de Débora Pereira, *Desenrola e não me enrola*. March 8. Available at: <https://desenrolaenaomenrola.com.br/raizes-perifericas/o-movimento-mudou-a-minha-vida-conheca-a-trajetoria-politica-de-debora-pereira>. (Accessed 17 June 2022).
- Helene, D. (2019) Gênero e direito à cidade a partir da luta dos movimentos de moradia. *Caderno Metrópolis*, 21 (46), pp. 951-974.
- Hoffmann, B. (2022) Como nova estratégia MTST lança coordenadora como pré-candidata, *Gazeta de S. Paulo*, July 6. Available at: <https://www.gazetasp.com.br/estado/com-nova-estrategia-mtst-lanca-coordenadora-como-pre-candidata-a/1112007/> (Accessed 13 November 2022).
- Juntas Codeputadas. (without year) *Mandata Juntas codeputadas Estaduais*. Available at: <https://www.juntascodputadas.com.br/> (Accessed 1 June).
- Juntas. (2020) Juntas - A história de várias mulheres da periferia, *YouTube*. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q00LxAipswM&ab_channel=Juntas-MulheresSemTeto (Accessed 1 June 2022).
- Kergoat, D. (2003) Divisão sexual do trabalho e relações sociais de sexo, in: Emílio, M. et al. (Eds) *Trabalho e cidadania ativa para as mulheres: desafios para as políticas públicas*, pp. 55-63 (São Paulo, Sp: Coordenadoria Especial da Mulher).
- Miagusko, E. (2012) *Movimentos de Moradia e Sem-Teto em São Paulo: experiencias no contexto do desmanche*, 1st ed. (São Paulo, SP: Editora Alameda).
- MTST. (2020) Ocupar Política: Conheça as candidaturas do MTST para disputar e vencer as eleições, *MTST*, October 7. Available at: <https://mtst.org/noticias/ocupar-a-politica-conheca-as-candidaturas-do-mtst-para-disputar-e-vencer-as-eleicoes/>. (Accessed 14 November 2022).

- Paiva, F. M. (2018) Boulos sobe a rampa: coordenador do MTST vai disputar as eleições. *Carta Capital*, March 20. Available at: <https://mtst.org/noticias/boulos-sobe-a-rampa-coordenador-do-mtst-vai-disputar-a-presidencia/>. (Accessed 13 November 2022).
- Perry, K. Y. (2012) Urban space and collective memory: Black women's knowledge in political struggles, in: Santos, R. E. (Ed) *Questões urbanas e racismo*, pp. 164-215 (Petrópolis, RJ: DP et Alli; Brasília, DF: ABPN).
- Perry, K. Y. (2016) Geographies of Power: Black Women Mobilizing Intersectionality in Brazil, *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism*, 14(1), pp. 94 –120.
- Plataforma Brasileira de Direitos Humanos. (2019) *Relatório sobre a criminalização de movimentos de moradia na cidade de São Paulo* (São Paulo, SP: Plataforma Brasileira de Direitos Humanos).
- Prefeitura Municipal de São Paulo. (2012) Informes Urbanos: Domicílio chefiados por mulheres aumentam cerca de 50% na última década, October. Available at: https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/upload/Informes_Urbanos/13_do_micilios_chefiados.pdf. (Accessed 25 October 2022).
- Sakamoto, L. (2023) Doméstica vítima de escravidão toma posse como deputada estadual em SP, *UOL*, March 16. Available at: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/colunas/leonardo-sakamoto/2023/03/16/domestica-vitima-de-escravidao-toma-posse-como-deputada-estadual-em-sp.htm> (Accessed 18 March 2023).
- Santos, P. H. A. S & Goulart, D. C. (2016) Formação no Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto: uma análise de seu projeto político, *Lutas Sociais*, 20 (37), pp. 142-154.
- Simões, G.; Campos, M. & Rafael, R. (2017) *MTST - 20 Anos de História: Luta, Organização e Esperança nas Periferias do Brasil* (São Paulo, SP: Autonomia Literária).
- Stabile, A. (2023) Ediane Maria: 'o quarto da empregada te silencia e te torna apenas mais um', *Nós*, March 24. Available at: <https://nosmulheresdaperiferia.com.br/ediane-maria-o-quarto-da-empregada-te-silencia-e-te-torna-apenas-mais-um/> (Accessed 25 March 2023).
- Valle, C. & Góis, T. (2020) Mulheres negras, mães, trabalhadoras: a linha de frente do MTST, *Instituto AzMina*, November 28. Available at: <https://azmina.com.br/colunas/mulheres-negras-maes-trabalhadoras-a-linha-de-frente-do-mtst/>. (Accessed 30 June 2022).
- Vieceli, L. & Gavras, D. (2023) Dez anos após a PEC das Domésticas, 3 em cada 4 delas trabalham sem carteira assinada, *UOL*, March 23. Available at: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/2023/03/dez-anos-apos-pec-das-domesticas-3-em-cada-4-delas-trabalham-sem-carteira-assinada.shtml> (Accessed 30 March 2023).
- Waiselfisz, J. J. (2015) Mapa da violência 2015: homicídios de mulheres no Brasil, Brasília, DF, ONU Mulheres.