Original article

Militarization, militianization, and crime management in the neoliberal city

Militarização, milicianização e gestão do crime na cidade neoliberal

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Abstract
The article begins with a theoretical review of the theses on new security management mechanisms developed over the last forty years in the global North, such as "zero tolerance" and "new military urbanism". Then, it explores the nexus between neoliberalism, mega-events, inequalities, and punishment. As an empirical reflection, we focus on the Federal Intervention in Rio de Janeiro's Public Security in 2018. Thus, we aim to contribute to a research agenda that explores the links between new urban designs, differential population management, punishment, and neoliberal capitalism. We also aim to show that Brazilian manifestations of these processes have contributed to changes in the country's social and political arrangements, mainly by strengthening militia groups and the logic supporting them.

Keywords*:* new urban militarism; punishment; neoliberalism; militianization; government of crime.

Resumo
O artigo inicia com uma retomada teórica das teses sobre novos mecanismos de gestão da segurança urdidos nos últimos 40 anos no Norte Global, como as políticas de "tolerância zero" e o "novo urbanismo militar". Explora-se, em seguida, o nexo entre neoliberalismo, megaeventos, desigualdades e punição. Como reflexão empírica, debruçamo-nos no caso da Intervenção Federal na Segurança Pública no Rio de Janeiro em 2018. Assim, pretendemos contribuir para uma agenda de pesquisa que explora os engates entre novos desenhos urbanos, gestão populacional diferencial, punição e capitalismo neoliberal, além de apontar como as manifestações brasileiras destes processos têm contribuído para alterações nos arranjos sociais e políticos do País, sobretudo pelo fortalecimento dos grupos milicianos e da lógica que os sustenta.

Palavras-chave: *novo urbanismo militar; punição; neoliberalismo; milicianização; governo do crime.*

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Introduction

In this article, we argue that the city provides a privileged milieu – both in a physical and analytical sense – for many transformations that have been redefining the meaning, nature, and functioning of security mechanisms in various countries. We contend that the emergence of new control practices and security devices is closely related to broader trends in urban change. Moving beyond the theses on the gradual entrenchment of a "culture of control" in urban daily life (Garland, 2001b) and the structural interpenetration between the hyper-ghetto and the prison (Wacquant, 2010), we aim to analytically account for the question of how the government of spaces in main global cities is increasingly articulated with the government of crime.

Through theoretical considerations and empirical analysis, we indicate how a certain rationality in the production and management of urban spaces, embedded in a broader context of neoliberal dissemination in many cities of global capitalism, is implicated in security strategies of crime prevention and repression, thus contributing to the redefinition of contemporary penal control.

We begin the article with a theoretical review of the theses on new forms of conduct control developed roughly over the last 40 years in the Global North, such as "broken windows" and "zero tolerance" policies. We then discuss the so-called "new military urbanism," a form of space management that establishes militarized patterns of urban administration. Next, we present an empirically based reflection on the Federal Intervention in public security in the State of Rio de Janeiro between February and December 2018, under the command of General Walter Souza Braga Netto (who later became Chief of Staff and Secretary of Defense during the 2018-2021 Jair Bolsonaro administration and run as his vice-president in the 2022 elections). We thus seek to contribute to a national and international research agenda that explores the links between new urban designs, differential population management, punishment, and capitalism in its neoliberal form, as well as pointing out how the Brazilian manifestations of such processes dialog with the local reality and have contributed to changes in the country's social and political arrangements, above all by strengthening militia groups and their underlying logic.

New control practices

Over the last four decades (1980-2020), new practices of population control have emerged and developed in some of the main cities of global capitalism, such as "broken windows" policing, "zero tolerance" policies, "situational crime control" and the resurgence of banishment practices from urban space.

From the perspective of those who formulated "zero tolerance" policing guidelines, neighborhoods and regions with "broken windows" signal a lack of social control. The prevention and repression of minor deviant conducts ("broken windows") become prophylactic measures aimed at preventing the occurrence of more severe crimes. Their underlying assumption is that

a particular ideal of a "healthy community" is spatially expressed (Herbert and Brown, 2006). Here, the distinction between "orderly" and "disorderly" communities overlaps with the distinction between "inside" and "outside," and, accordingly, security techniques to remove those marked as undesirable are promoted.

From an operational point of view, "zero tolerance" policing advocates, in line with “total quality management” textbooks, for the need for an entrepreneurial shock in the State's repressive apparatus, comprising the digitalization and integration of extensive databases, the establishment of performance indicators for the police force, increased rigor in results delivery and, above all, an aggressive marketing strategy. As one knows, the emphasis on "efficiency" in the strategy of neutralizing allegedly dangerous populations has led to a significant increase in police brutality and generated a series of protests from organized sectors of society.

The aim of “situational crime prevention," in turn, is to intervene in the urban space in such a way as to minimize the opportunities for committing crimes. Accordingly, the criminal is conceived as a rational actor in search of maximizing utility. Looking in particular at Gary Becker's (1968) work, Michel Foucault (2008, pp. 329-364) had already dissected this typically neoliberal approach of defining crime and the criminal as an economic agent like anyone else – that is, someone who, in the face of scarce goods, makes choices between alternative ends by calculating marginal gains – and not an aberration. In the context of this economic-penal rationality, crime is prevented by creating situations where the cost-benefit computation is unfavorable for the potential perpetrator. The construction and management of urban spaces play a central role in pursuing this goal. Nevertheless, despite the formulators’ appeal to the normality of crime, in line with the supposition of a universal utilitarian reason, this crime prevention practice still operates with the distinction between "normal" and "abnormal" users of urban space, which brings us back to the field of conduct government.

The case of closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) is paradigmatic in this regard. Although closed-circuit camera monitoring of public spaces may be regarded merely as a technological input to crime prevention policies, in practice, this security technique aims to realize "an emphatically moral vision of order, often communicated through a language of censorship aimed at the most underprivileged sectors of society" (Coleman, 2004, p. 28). In this sense, it is less concerned with crime prevention and repression per se than fabricating a particular vision of urban order. Its goal is to ensure a safe environment for consumption and investment, especially for "orderly citizens." The imperative to monitor conducts, not all classified as criminal offenses, comes into play in this scenario.[1]

The contemporary resurgence of the ancient banishment practice is part of the same security logic that includes situational crime prevention strategies, "zero tolerance" and "broken windows" policing practices. Such strategies constitute the result of legal engineering aimed at circumventing the acknowledgment of the unconstitutional

nature of traditional laws that classified beggary and idleness as criminal offenses. The U.S. case is emblematic. The decriminalization of these conducts has led countless municipalities, faced with a growing homeless population, to issue civil and administrative regulations that give public and private police authorities the prerogative to temporarily ban people from public parks, libraries, university campuses, shopping malls, and other urban spaces. Failure to comply may lead to detention (Beckett and Herbert, 2010).

In this way, a new legal architecture makes it possible to penalize civil or administrative offenses for non-compliance. At the same time, because these rules are not expressly recognized as criminal, this architecture limits the accused’s right to defense, dispensing with the requirement of proof by the authorities imposing the orders and with the representation by a legally constituted lawyer. The exceptional nature of these measures rests on their unequivocal penal nature, in practice suspending the legal principles inherent to the accused's right to defense under the formal guise of a merely civil or administrative nature (see Beckett and Herbert, 2010; Minhoto, 2015).

All in all, these control practices seem to be the result of a growing articulation between a selective pattern of spatial management, the logic of economic efficiency, the adoption of exceptional legal measures, and the aim of regulating allegedly “risky” urban conduct, all in the name of a specific conception of public order and ideal of civility.

Incarceration, new military urbanism, and militianization

Among other consequences, the aforementioned control practices play a decisive role in producing and reproducing two security dispositives increasingly inscribed in the modes of government of many cities in global capitalism: mass incarceration and military urbanism. In Garland's well-known formulation (2001a, p. 5), mass incarceration – "an unprecedented event in the history of Western democracies" – is characterized, firstly, by the sheer size of the prison population and the magnitude of incarceration rates; secondly, incarceration becomes massive when it ceases to function as a mechanism for imprisoning individual criminal law offenders and starts to operate as an apparatus for imprisoning entire populational sectors. According to Garland, in the contemporary U.S.A., the "prison is no longer the destination of a few criminals, but the institution that shapes large sections of the population" (ibid., p. 6), becoming part of the socialization process of groups and communities in certain city areas. As one knows, mainly black and poor young people from large urban centers.

The high incarceration rates today in countries of the Global North and South, such as the U.S. and Brazil, frontrunners of this peculiar "prison race," are closely related to the adoption of new control practices discussed above. The regulation and monitoring of conduct seen as undesirable on

public roads, in parks, shopping complexes, residential spaces, and other public facilities are primarily responsible for the increase in short-term incarceration, the high degree of prison population turnover ("lock up and discharge"), the growth in pre-trial detention and the selective extension of the penal control network, which is expressed in the rising over-representation of poor, black and migrant youth within the penitentiary population. The selective nature of mass incarceration goes hand in hand with the selective nature of the new forms of urban space control.

From this perspective, while it is true that mass incarceration is associated with the adoption of stricter penal control laws – especially the war on drugs policy, of which the infamous "three strikes and you are out" is an emblem – as well as the introduction of mandatory and determined sentences that limit the discretion of judges when analyzing concrete cases (always favoring the usage and length of prison sentences as well as eroding procedural guarantees), we argue that one also notices a growing connection between these legislative and judicial innovations and the government of urban spaces (see Minhoto, 2014, 2015). Many new strategies for controlling conduct find, in the management of urban spaces, precisely the conditions for activating a logic of space securitization that is increasingly formulated in terms of risk monitoring, conduct policing, and systemic efficiency.

By seeking to provide security to citizens conceived as consumers of justice services, the security logic underlying these new control strategies that are at the root of mass incarceration tends to blur the boundaries between crime and undesirable conduct based on the development of risk profiles of population aggregates and the regulation and policing of conduct considered "undesirable." More and more, this results from techniques to control population flows in urban spaces. It is precisely the circulation of migrants, beggars, graffiti artists, skateboarders, drug addicts, and other primary targets of police action that reveals how "disorder becomes a gradient of crime – breaking windows, throwing garbage on the streets, jumping a turnstile are gradations of a spectrum that ultimately extends to homicide" (Harcourt, 2001, p. 149).

As we know, different *topoi with* a martial connotation have informed the political and legal debates on public security – war on drugs, crime, terrorism, criminal enemy law, emergency and state of exception, "fortress Europe," among others – indicating a growing blurring of the boundaries between crime control and war operations. Especially after 9/11, the discourses, practices, and organizations activated in the context of the "war on terror" became routinized in crime control operations targeting specific social classes, races, and places. Recently, the rise of the far-right worldwide has revitalized the same warlike distinction between *in-group* and *out-group* – which, it should be noted, was already in operation in classical fascism (see Adorno et al., 1950) –, as in Donald Trump's proposals to build a wall on the US-Mexico border to repel "*bad hombres*" and to design his government based on a mixture of a SWAT team and U.S. Fortune 500 company; or Marine Le Pen's rants of "France for the French"; the slogans of Alternative für Deutschland (AfD),

such as "New Germans? We'll make them ourselves," or Jair Bolsonaro, for whom a holy war between good and evil is being waged every day in the name of fatherland, family, and freedom.[2]

In the field of anti-immigration and anti-drug penal policies, the discourse of the enemy is increasingly intertwined with the criminology of the other and orientalization (Garland, 2001b), overt and remote surveillance, physical and virtual controls of social and spatial borders, and the use of exceptional measures. In addition to the very significant increase in the incarceration rates of migrants in many European countries, the network of detention centers, refugee camps, and waiting zones is expanding, establishing a prison archipelago for foreigners – a highly lucrative endeavor, it should be noted.[3]

Within this process, the imbrication between criminal measures and administrative measures stands out to such an extent that in countries like the U.S., migration laws are no longer a simple administrative mechanism for controlling foreigners' entry and exit, but rather a mechanism for detaining suspects without observing the constitutional requirements that conventionally regulate preventive detentions (Coleman, 2004). Many detainees in these institutions are not formally detained for a criminal offense, but rather, conceived as a "security risk," are confined in non-places, precisely "the places where the exception becomes the rule" (Aas, 2007, pp. 87-88).[4]

In the wake of the war on terror and the new anti-immigration policy, thousands of police districts have received military equipment, at first allegedly to support anti-terrorist intelligence networks, but subsequently increasingly employed for routine police operations and the control of political protests, such as the *Occupy Wall Street* and *Black Lives Matter* movements in the U.S.,[5] and the protests against pension reform in France.

Concerning anti-drug policy, we evoke another emblematic case of the U.S. experience in crime control, namely, the rerouting of Swat operations, the special weapons and tactical operations teams and primary consumers of military weapons, which, implemented in the wake of the political uprisings of the 1960s, have increasingly acted to "combat" drug trafficking and consumption, executing arrest warrants, monitoring transactions and carrying out patrols in high-crime areas (Vitale, 2021).

This growing militarization of penal control is embedded in the broader context of what has been called "new military urbanism." According to Graham (2016), contemporary military urbanism consists of the growing reconfiguration of urban space and everyday life by a military rationality, that is, by practices and discourses that place the notion of war at their core, converting mundane urban issues and events into warlike affairs. A militarized way of conceiving and constructing urban life spreads, combining itself in a particular way with the rationalities of other spheres of social life, such as the economic, political, and legal spheres.

According to this scholarship (Graham, 2009; 2016; Sassen, 2010; Boyle and Haggerty, 2009), military urbanism is strongly associated with the following trends: (1) erosion of the

boundaries between war and peace, civil and military, armed forces and police, public and private security – transcending the conventional boundaries of confined times and spaces, urban warfare is increasingly becoming permanent and geographically unlimited warfare; (2) the formation of a global network for the exchange of information, technology, and consultancy, in addition to the sale of militarization packages that, in turn, enables an industry for urban space militarization – which includes the media, cinema, the automobile and entertainment industries (as seen in the organization of major world sporting events).

Based on these theories, Dardot et al. (2021, p. 255) highlight how the contemporary process of urban militarization "tends to turn into *militianization*," which therefore involves the increasingly open and explicit deployment of exception devices in some areas of the city and against populations or groups that supposedly could pose risks to the (re)production of the city-corporation and its entrepreneurial subjects, as well as the increasingly recurrent use of practices of harassment and dispossession as forms of policing (in this sense, see Minhoto, 2020; Wang, 2022). In other words, the management of the dispossessed and of urban areas regarded as "dangerous," the repression of social movements, dissident politicians, and "policing-for-profit" practices are some of the expressions of a trend towards militianization resulting from new military urbanism.

Thus, the daily use of the rationality of war and military forces in the management of many cities of global capitalism marks an urban internalization of the notion of "battlefield" and becomes decisive for the establishment and security of new businesses, the development of new technologies, and the strengthening of an entrepreneurial *ethos*, the growing articulation between the war and entertainment industries, the fight against (and management of) crime, the formulation and execution of urban planning and the political legitimation of city administrations.

The neoliberal city

What are the specific links between the security practices and devices we described above and the modes of government in many cities of global capitalism? What exactly is the conception of security that underlies them? With no exhaustive answer to these questions, we have thus far tried to draw attention to how some of the contemporary trends in urban transformation steer the modes of governing cities towards the adoption of selective and exclusionary forms of controlling urban space that are at the root of mass incarceration and the new military urbanism.

The tendencies towards increased penalization and hyper-punitive logics for managing urban populations are embedded in a context of global dissemination and social capillarization of what Foucault (2008) termed a neoliberal "governmentality." After five decades of a global counter-revolution embryonically tested in Santiago, Chile, urban designs, State forms, public security policies,

and subjective modalities have been molded according to the neoliberal enterprise form, with criteria such as efficiency, competition, performance, and profit maximization as their main guidelines.

The new pattern of life and death management we discuss here simultaneously responds to and promotes two apparently contradictory effects bequeathed by every single neo-liberalization experiment set in motion to date: on the one hand, the deepening of a social abyss that divides society (the notorious "1% *versus* the 99%" society); on the other, the neoliberal imperatives of entrepreneurship, management, and value extraction that insist on promoting a societal and subjective form that generates that social abyss in the first place. As stated by Davis and Monk (2007), a pattern of urbanism of exclusion and landscapes of inequality emerges in tune with a broader, neoliberal logic:

> The spatial logic of neoliberalism (*cum* plutonomy) revives the most extreme colonial patterns of residential segregation and zoned consumption. Everywhere, the rich and near-rich retreat to sumptuary complexes, leisure cities, and walled replicas of imaginary California suburbs [...]. Meanwhile, a demonized criminal underclass [...] stands outside the gate [...], providing a self-interested justification for the retreat and fortification of luxurious lifestyles. (Ibid., pp. 10-11)

In other words, on a planet that establishes a nexus between slums, urban enclaves, shopping malls, mega-events, and centers of financial capital, the militarization of urban life becomes the primary form for managing increasingly evident social conflicts. Prison complexes, lean corporations, militarized configurations of policing, entrepreneurship manuals, and ubiquitous surveillance devices thus belong to a contemporary constellation of social warfare waged both by "hard" mechanisms of direct and corporeal intervention and by "soft" circuits – albeit no less consequential – of stealth subjective and statecraft reconfiguration. Both are two sides of the same coin of a neoliberal societal project in which income concentration and economic monopolization go hand in hand with demands for individual responsibility and self-entrepreneurship.

Behind the dissemination of new forms of control, one notices how a semiotics of space is associated with a hegemonic aesthetic and a politics of vision that prescribe "who or what can and cannot be seen" in urban spaces (Coleman, 2004, p. 28). A politics of vision increasingly made up of specific judgments of normality and selective images of order and civility that spread through the organization of urban spaces. Judgments and images built on what criteria?

From an analytics of government approach, we consider how new ways of seeing, producing truth, and constituting subjectivities required for promoting and selling urban places are spreading to both the government of the city and the government of crime. From this perspective, the government of – but also through – crime becomes one of the central components of contemporary city-making. In this process, the economic subject and the entrepreneurial ethos of neoliberal governmentality define how urban space

and crime are governed. A government that, combining measures of sovereignty, discipline and security, disseminates and inscribes the enterprise form in strategic urban spaces of global capitalism.

This highlights the centrality of the State in producing a political culture of permanent innovation and investment in technologies for managing population flows as well as social and urban segmentation. This centrality of the State is aligned with its neoliberal governmentalization and its redefinition as a kind of meta-company and licensing authority for new businesses:

> [...] by outsourcing its functions, the State has been transformed into something akin to a *holding company,* a metacorporation under the banner of "Nationality Inc.": a licensing authority, that is, in the game of outsourcing social, security, financial, prison, administrative, military and other services to for-profit companies. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2016, p. 52)

In his 1978 and 1979 lectures at the *Collège de France,* Foucault (2008) had already warned of this fundamental element in the reconfiguration of liberalism that took place throughout the 20th century, namely the drive to shape every grain of the social body – the State included – via and into the enterprise form. Whether in its ordoliberal or more extreme American iteration, neoliberal operators have devised a proposal to conform (as Foucault himself put it) the State to the determinations of the capitalist corporation.

Taking up this Foucauldian *topos*, Brown (2017) develops the notion of a neoliberal "stealth revolution" which, acting through a termite logic (ibid., p. 35), eats away at the entrails of the State while leaving its outer shell (institutions, parties, elections) intact. In doing so, it reconfigures basic democratic notions – equality, justice, public deliberation, self-government, and the pursuit of the common good – replacing them with neoliberal surrogates – competition, inequality, entrepreneurship, inputs and outputs, externalities. According to Brown, de-democratization is closely related to the production of an "*undemocratic citizen*," one who no longer aspires to

> [...] neither freedom nor equality, even in a liberal key, which no longer expects *accountability* in government actions, which is neither distressed nor anguished by the exorbitant concentration of political and economic power, nor by the growing restrictions on the rule of law. (Brown, 2006, p. 692)

For Brown, this political neutralization of citizenship is accompanied by the privatization and corrosion of public life, since the "project of navigating the social becomes discerning, banking on and seeking strictly personal solutions to socially produced problems" (ibid., p. 704). In Foucault's (2008, p. 311) words, the neoliberal *homus oeconomicus* – conceived as an "entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of his income" – is the sole responsible for privately managing the risks associated with inequality, violence, unemployment and illness, in short, all sorts of misfortunes that are originally and structurally collective and social.

We argue that it is precisely this accounting subjectivity and its economic grid of intelligibility that is present in the field of many of the new practices of crime and behavior

control. In this regard, Simon (2010) points out that the emergence of the real estate market for financing and home ownership in the 1950s in the U.S.A. and its subsequent historical developments could explain the distinctive and decisive features of contemporary crime, in particular

> [...] the enormous expansion in the use of incarceration, its shift towards a categorical (or mass) orientation, and the relative lack of growth in public policing (compared to prison and private policing), including also the persistence of capital punishment and the importance of guns to the politics of crime in America. (Ibid., 2010, p. 167)

This is an exemplary situation in which the calculation of the value of assets in the financial and real estate markets, risk sensitivities concerning crime, and the adoption of public and private schemes for the defense and protection of property in the urban space come together. Today's expanded and reinvigorated prison and the tendency towards the militarization of crime control are the result of the encounter between the neoliberal governmentality of the city and increasingly polarized social structures. Let us now turn to a specific Brazilian case to analyze this articulation between the militarization of urban spaces, differential crime management, and neoliberal rationality.

The federal intervention: neoliberalism, militarization, and militianization

the Brazilian national scenario stands out as a privileged point of analysis for these contemporary trends, as it sheds light on assemblages of different power technologies, the design of control strategies, and the performance of specific police activities, such as the security of sanitized spaces, the repression of political protests, and the control of crime on the margins of the city, all of which assemble in the selective production of mass incarceration, the militarization of police operations, and the reproduction of a deeply hierarchical social order. The organization of mega-events in which local and global elites meet in urban environments that have been gentrified and sanitized through new control techniques and experiments – such as the *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* (Pacifying Police Units – U.P.P.s) in Rio de Janeiro (Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023; Oliveira, 2016) and the "*operações delegadas*" (delegated operations) in São Paulo (Brito, 2015) and the extension of these techniques to the policing of the urban protests that have spread across the country in recent times (Brito and Oliveira, 2013) – as in the protests for better urban mobility and against the increase in public transport fares

–, make up a repertoire of control innovations that point to a global militarization of how the police operate in Brazilian society, from which not even the municipal guards escape (IBCCrim, 2010).[6]

In other words, the trends driving neoliberal military urbanism in the country are related in complex ways to the historical pattern of what Brazilian sociologist Michel Misse has called the "social accumulation of violence" (Misse, 2023) and militarized and violent social control, in a local hybrid conformation that illuminates the general trends we discuss in this article.

Over the last two decades, new policing and urban control techniques have spread to several Brazilian metropolises – São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, and Salvador, among others – to promote them as commodities on the global market. The case of Rio de Janeiro seems to be the most emblematic since it has constituted the stage for successive experiments that mix economic efficiency and militarization for managing territories and impoverished populations (Hirata, Grillo, and Telles, 2023). The security projects for "sports mega-events" – from the 2007 Pan American Games and its accompanying massacre, to the 2016 Olympics, passing decisively through the 2014 Football World Cup –, the deployment of U.P.P.s in highly mediatized warlike operations, and the recurrent use of the Armed Forces in "Guarantee of Law and Order" (G.L.O.) operations comprise some of the recent experiments that have shaped the city.[7]

These laid the groundwork for one of the city's most significant and violent experiences of security militarization, rooted in the logic of war against internal enemies and driven by a neoliberal economic rationale: the Federal Intervention in public security in the State of Rio de Janeiro, carried out between February and December 2018, through which the Armed Forces, under the command of Army General Walter Souza Braga Netto, took control of the entire public security structure of the state, with the declared aim of "putting an end to the serious impairment of public order" (Brazil, 2018).

Conceived by Michel Temer's administration with the support of high-ranking members of the Brazilian Armed Forces, the Federal Intervention was decreed at a time of meager rates of Federal Government popularity and intense social, economic, and political crises in Brazil. It was ordered against the backdrop of a much-heralded and widely publicized chaos in public security, produced by, among other factors, business pressures in the face of cargo theft occurrences and "street crimes" during Carnival (Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023).

While Hirata, Grillo, and Telles (ibid.) show in detail how this experiment was fully articulated with the (re)configuration of legal and illegal markets in the city with neoliberal modulations, we are interested in observing how the entire design and application of this policy was thoroughly imbued with the specific corporate logic of managing urban spaces based on the primacy of economic efficiency. As all the speeches by the authorities involved and the documents produced by the Federal Intervention Office (*Gabinete da Intervenção Federal* – GIF) show, the Intervention had, at its core, the articulation between military urbanism and the aforementioned "total quality management" textbook: the shock of corporate management in the state's repressive apparatus, the digitalization and

integration of extensive databases, the recurrent use of performance indicators for policing, the pressure for results and aggressive marketing. With a lexicon typical of lean corporate management manuals and publicity pieces from *think tanks* plagued with "*phobie d'État*" (see Foucault, 2008, p. 103), "what the intervener, General Braga Netto, did [...] was a management shock" (Etchegoyen, 2023, p. 207 – emphasis added), to use the words of Sérgio Etchegoyen, Brazilian Army General who was Chief Secretary of the Institutional Security Office during the Temer administration.

Braga Netto (2018), in turn, stated that the Intervention was carried out with the "purpose of providing all those involved with a window of opportunity" to "recover the operational capacity of the public security agencies and lower crime rates, with the fundamental aim of recovering the sense of security among the population of Rio de Janeiro" (ibid.). For the general, the aim was to carry out "efficient and effective work," extinguishing any "political influence" in the troops and maintaining hierarchy and discipline by "filling their positions and promoting their *human capital on the* basis of *meritocracy*" (ibid., emphasis added).

The "management shock" foundations are also evident in the Strategic Plan for the Federal Intervention in Rio de Janeiro, drawn up under the coordination of Braga Netto (ibid.) to direct the work, establish performance indicators, and structure the actions to be carried out. The Plan resorts to a business management technique known as SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). Among other elements, the Intervention identified the "feeling of insecurity expressed by society" and the alleged "tradition of efficiency, seriousness, honesty and professionalism of the Armed Forces" as "opportunities" for the Army while – following the usual contempt for democracy displayed both by the Brazilian Army and the neoliberal worldview (see Chamayou, 2020; Dardot et al., 2021) – regarding the "lack of public support for the Federal Intervention" and the "demonstrations and protests by politicized social groups" as "threats" to their actions.

Based on this diagnosis, the Plan presents a strategic map that breaks down the central concept of the Intervention – that is, the "incremental recovery of the operational capacities of the state O.S.P.s [*Órgãos de Segurança Pública*, or Public Security Agencies] [and] a gradual reduction in crime rates" – into four axes of managerial actions, aimed at "productivity and growth" (Braga Netto, 2018, pp. 27-28). 27-28) of State security agencies: (1) first, "seeking trust and credibility from the population," or "customer satisfaction," in the Plan's revealing words; second, (2) "streamlining internal processes and practices," or "generating customer value"; (3) ensuring "administrative efficiency," or "budget sustainability"; and (4) "valuing the human dimension," or "processing the intangible assets: human capital, organizational capital, and informational capital."

Based on this map and its established axes, the Plan presents the primary way to measure the Intervention results with various indicators and goals to be met, which would signal the success of the Cabinet's actions. All the actions taken during the Intervention – whether in the administrative sphere or street policing – should, therefore, be based on the proposed indicators and the aim of achieving the established goals.

To achieve these performance goals, the "management shock" provided the pillars for the various physical shocks (Klein, 2008) set in motion by the Armed Forces. As defined in the report produced by the Center for Studies and Research in Army History (Cephimex, 2019), the goal was to "apply military power" – in other words, to use the efficiency guidelines to reinforce the war against specific populations and urban regions. Thus, the Intervention Office acquired and transferred to Rio de Janeiro's Security System an extensive war and control paraphernalia of the State's public security agencies, the so-called "tangible legacy of the Federal Intervention," which included lethal and less lethal weapons, various vehicles (including armored vehicles known as "*caveirão*" [big skull]), helicopters and transport trucks, as well as drones, aerial mapping tools, software, cameras, among others. At the same time, the Armed Forces remained primarily responsible for patrolling actions in the state, following the G.L.O. operation implemented in the state since 2017.

A Joint Command (*Comando Conjunto* – CCj), commanded by General Antônio Manoel de Barros, oversaw the patrolling actions. Its task was to coordinate the intensification of so-called "Special Operations," i.e., various violent incursions into slums and impoverished areas of the state and, above all, the capital and its metropolitan region.[8] Statistical and georeferenced analyses identified these urban areas as those with the highest incidence of crimes the Intervention wanted to restrain. These were, therefore, the areas considered "dangerous," in which war practices were to be applied to govern these places' populations—likewise constantly labeled as "dangerous" or "suspicious"—in an attempt to achieve the goals set out in the Strategic Plan.

To trigger the actions, the CCj commander expressly established "operational principles for *actions in communities*" (ibid., 2019, p. 72.), which were: "demonstration of force, to increase the feeling of security; obtaining intelligence; reducing crime rates in the area[s], removing barriers and obstacles, and stabilizing the area[s]." Operations were promptly publicized on media channels and advertised to affected populations through leaflets praising the Army's actions (ibid.).

As several studies and reports have shown (FBSP, 2018; Ramos, 2019), the operations and patrols either coordinated or carried out by the Armed Forces were set in motion as real war deployments, in which the military paraphernalia terrorized those regions' population, rendering all those who circulated in the areas as potential enemies. In this logic, aggressive inspections against the population – such as searches without any evidence or justification, following the New York model of *stop and frisk*, another emblematic laboratory for neoliberal punitive practices (cf. Peck, 2012, p. 134 et seq.) –, unjustified arrests and detentions, home invasions without court orders and, above all, cases of torture and murder committed by state agents became an (even more frequent) part of the routine for the population of Rio de Janeiro's poorest regions. In the most brutal cases, helicopters (the so-called "*caveirões voadores*" [flying big skulls]) were deployed to fire at will at favelas.

The entire marketing campaign that accompanied the Intervention before, during, and after it took place focused on the fact that some of the goals set for "reducing crime" had been achieved.[9] However, other tragic indicators were deliberately left out of the campaigns to publicize and celebrate the supposed "success of the intervention" (Ramos, 2019). During the Intervention, the number of people murdered by security forces in the state increased from 1,127 people in 2017 to 1,534 people in 2018, reaching the highest number recorded in the historical series since then. In addition, the period saw an increase in the number of shootings in the city, as well as in the number of slaughters and people murdered in slaughters (ibid.), engendering a process of slaughter nationalization (Hirata et al., 2023) that would only intensify in subsequent years.

Thus, as the results of the military intervention show, the economic-corporate logic that characterizes a significant part of Brazil's new military urbanism has found fertile ground in a society marked by a continuous process of “social accumulation of violence” based on the construction of internal enemies (see Misse, 2023). The war logic against urban territories inhabited by populations marginalized by social markers of class and race – constantly updated in the country's history – witnessed a renewed and violent escalation as it coupled with business management guidelines, statistical systems, and the dictums of performance maximization. In other words, the grid of economic intelligibility that underpinned the Military Intervention seems to have contributed to streamlining the violent practices of exclusion, control, and differential illegalities management that have historically marked urban security in the country.

In this sense, the analysis of how the articulation between economic rationality, the logic of war, and the urban management of illegalities structured the Federal Intervention also seems to provide clues for understanding how the tendency towards militianization resulting from the militarization of security (Dardot et al., 2021) has a very concrete facet in Brazil. As various studies have shown (Hirata et al., 2022; Hirata, Grillo, and Telles, 2023; Ramos, 2019), one of the main effects of the successive experiences of militarization that have taken place in Brazilian cities, especially in Rio de Janeiro, has been the strengthening of networks linked to illegal markets known as "militias." Heirs to the dictatorship's death squads, these para-police networks – made up mainly of security forces agents and former agents – which operate in the business of extortion, murder, and political service trade took on their contemporary form in the 1990s and have since spread to various markets and areas (both physical and symbolic) of influence (Misse, 2011).

Supported by the military apparatus and the "human capital" of the security forces, the state’s political choices, and a discourse that combines management and war, these networks, which had already been growing with the urban reconfigurations that took

place throughout the 2000s (Cano and Duarte, 2008), significantly expanded their operations from the second half of the 2010s to the "vast 'gray zones' that spread out on the margins of the city" (Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023, p. 13) in the wake of Military Operations, especially after the Federal Intervention.

On the one hand, the strengthening of militias was due to the differential use of police operations to "retake territories," which opened up zones for militias by focusing on areas controlled by armed groups linked to drug commerce, especially the *Comando Vermelho* (Hirata et al., 2022; Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023). In addition, given the connections between militias and the police, the war apparatus transferred to the state security forces has also contributed to the growth of militia groups.

On the other hand, as far as the objectives of this article are concerned, it is essential to highlight how the articulation between the logic of war, neoliberal rationality, and Brazil's history of violent social control (Misse, 2023), which underpinned the Intervention and previous militarization experiments, are precisely the articulations that underlie the functioning of the militia networks themselves. The primacy of efficiency in militarized urban management is thus expressed in the imbrication of state forces with these networks, which act – even more directly – in the management of "enemies" through their elimination and take the imperatives of maximizing performance to the ultimate consequences, using force and the State apparatus to extract profit, either by shaping the markets for security services and other commodities, or by constantly inserting themselves into the different markets on the borders between the legal and the illegal (Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023).

Conclusions

In this article, we argue that new forms of control that are spreading across many global cities today are closely linked to judgments of normality and fantasies of urban order built in the image and likeness of the *homo oeconomicus* and the enterprise form, and to the inscription of marketable symbols of commercial distinction in urban space and its social representations. These forms, however, are not limited to situational interventions and rational agency, as Foucault's (2008) analysis had advocated. On the contrary, they constantly update and reposition disciplinary and sovereign devices, represented mainly by the mass incarceration of sectors of the population and the constant expansion of urban militarization.

Thus, the articulation between business management and the government of (and through) crime in contemporary cities appears as one of the central mechanisms for conducting the principles of capitalism in its neoliberal form, simultaneously stimulating the construction of entrepreneurial subjects and the enmity of all those who "failed" in the competition game and those who deviate

from or oppose its norms. Militianization – along with its constitutive racketeering practices, political violence, and practices of exception – appears as one of the most finished products of this articulation, which has taken different forms in various urban contexts worldwide.

As we have endeavored to show, the Brazilian case, and especially Rio de Janeiro, one of the most concrete examples of the tendency towards militianization resulting from contemporary urban militarization, is a privileged site for analysis, as it highlights the entrails of the aforementioned articulations and how they function to reproduce the violent patterns of a social order based on abysmal hierarchies and inequalities.

Based on the theoretical-analytical framework and the proposed empirical reflections, our article provides a first step for other studies to delve deeper into the issues raised by this agenda. On the one hand, comparative investigations of other national and international urban contexts – in the Global North and South – can make highly relevant contributions. On the other hand, further studies could show how these logics also unfold in other social spheres, such as institutional politics, the formal economy, and education.

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Notes

(1) Take the British case: legislation passed in Liverpool bans street vending (particularly flower sales in bars, restaurants, and public streets), children from taking part in the traditional *Guy Fawkes* night events (where they take to the streets to collect a "*a penny for the guy*", an activity equated to beggary) and *skateboarding* in public spaces. According to the law, the aim is to avoid obstructing the flow of people in urban spaces. For one of its formulators, it also aims to avoid the impression of "low" economic practices, such as "pure bargain" markets, typical of street vending. In cities such as Essex, Hampshire, and Cornwall, public and private police authorities can prevent the movement of young people dressed in proverbial hoodies, sweatshirts, and baseball caps because, supposedly, this clothing could prevent people from being identified by security cameras (Coleman, 2004, p. 34).

(2) For an analysis of this phenomenon, see Brown (2019).

(3) In the U.S., the agency in charge of migration control (I.C.A.) has been obliged by law since 2007 to ensure that at least 34,000 detainees are held in detention centers for migrants, most of which are run by private companies, regardless of a concrete assessment of their conduct, a practice known as *detention-bed mandate* (Morgenthau, 2014).

(4) On the contemporary imbrication between sovereign exception and governmentality, which operates through the suspension of the law or its tactical use by the State, see Butler (2004).

(5) In this regard, one must recall the intense militarization of the repression of the protests in Ferguson, Mississippi, following the police killing of Michael Brown on August 9, 2014, an unarmed 18-year-old black man. In Ferguson, 67% of the population is black, and 94% of the police force is white. In the wake of the militarization of crime control, across the country (U.S.A.), between 2006 and 2012, a white police officer killed a black person at least twice a week (Smith, 2014).

(6) For a reconstruction of the emblematic "*Translation: this article was translated from Portuguese into English by the authors themselves.*" [Operation Suffocation] in the so-called "cracolândia" region of São Paulo, see Magalhães (2017).

(7) Several studies and journalistic reports have analyzed these experiments and shown their tragic results for the city (for example, Camargos, 2022; Hirata, Grillo and Telles, 2023; Menezes, 2023; Viana, 2021): absurd levels of police violence against marginalized populations, the strengthening of militias, the restructuring of legal and illegal markets, and the recurrence of cases of political violence are some of the effects – intensified, above all, after the Military Intervention we discuss here.

(8) According to data from the Intervention Observatory (Ramos, 2019), 636 operations were recorded in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro (out of 711 throughout the state) between February and December 2018 – just over 12 operations per week.

(9) As studies by the Intervention Observatory (Ramos, 2019) point out, the very indicators drawn up by the Federal Intervention allow us to question its results. Firstly, the reduction in some of the indices was minimal and, compared to previous years in the historical series (from 2014 to 2017), is within the normal variation observed in the city. Secondly, the indicators only use data from the entire state, without considering specific areas that have had a constant presence of the Intervention Forces and have seen indicators rise. Finally, other Brazilian states (such as São Paulo), which were not under the Intervention, also had similar variations in the period.

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