

Favelas: Towards a Fairer Space? Democratic Transition and Collective Mobilisation in Authoritarian Space

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Abstract:

Favelas which, as spaces, are often considered as urban margins or, more exactly, as being outside of the right of/to the city, have been witnesses to various consecutive repressive systems. From military dictatorships to criminal armed groups including a police institution, favelas have always been subjected to one form of control or another, generating a violent social order imposed authoritatively upon residents. While collective actions and social projects can be affected by the violence generated, they are not absent for all that. The intermediary sphere, i.e. between public and private, seems to be the privileged place for claiming socio-spatial justice. In these "authoritarian spaces", a new security policy, established these last years, brings us to question whether a possible democratisation of these spaces and a transformation of collective action have taken place.

Keywords: authoritarian space, intermediary space, socio-spatial justice

Introduction

Favelas, which for a long time were considered as an urban problem, are currently viewed as a separate category or space, a reversed mirror image of the city, with favela residents often being the victims of social stigma as a result. Yet, in a context of accelerated industrialisation and urbanisation, favelas represented a housing solution for thousands of families deprived of access to formal land in the city. As such, they are the product of social inequality which is emphasised even more in Brazilian metropolises, where wealth and poverty form an ambiguous relationship made up of territorial proximity and social distance (Valladares, 2005). Favelas are the

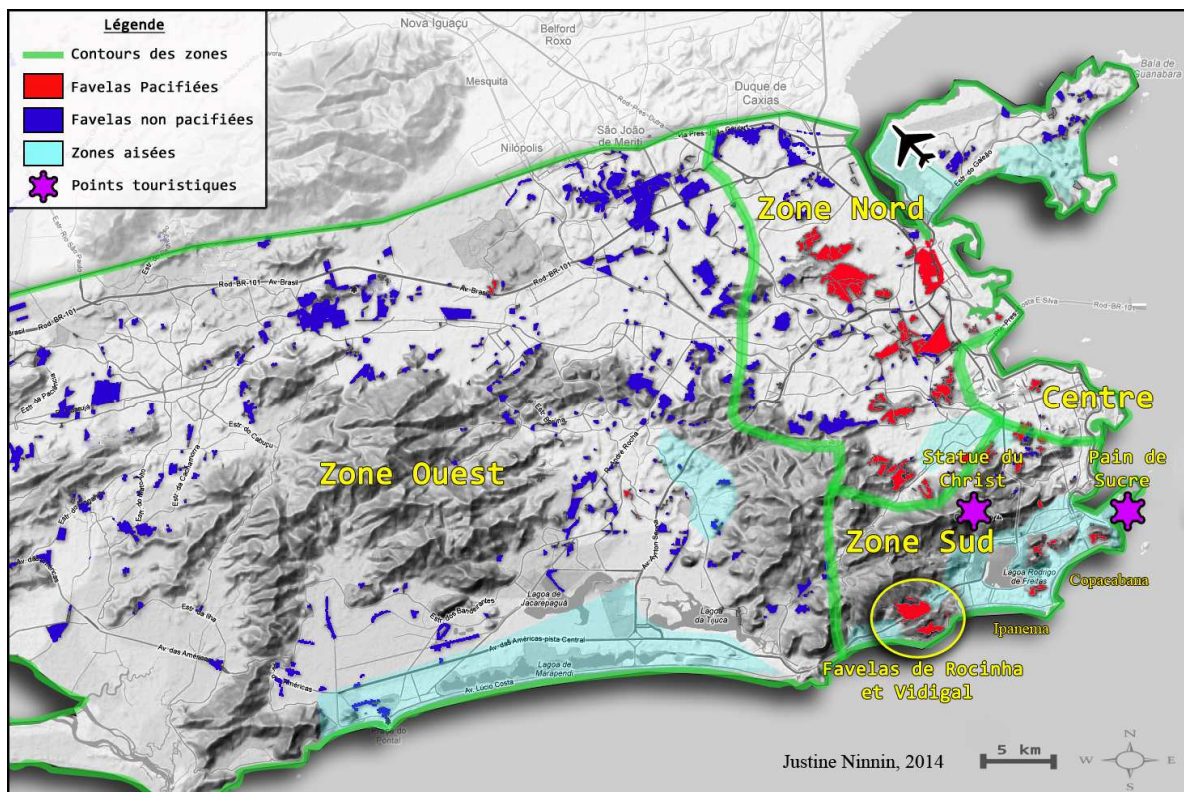
medium for a historical and multi-faceted marginalisation process, be it social, economic, political or legal, which is expressed via physical and symbolic thresholds forming boundaries between the inside and the outside. In this context of relegation, there came mechanisms for territorial appropriation, giving rise to power and control relations through authoritarian systems and the relay of different repressive systems, from dictatorships to the territorialisation of criminal groups, via the abuse of power of the police force. To what extent can we speak of authoritarian space in Brazil, and more particularly as regards favelas? For this we need to go beyond the conception of space, by taking into consideration interactions between physical space, social space and socio-cognitive space. Space can then appear as an object of control and therefore domination, power and authoritarianism. The territory, with its double dimension, a geographic nature and an ideological content, reflects a division mode as well as a control mode of space. The territory has a political dimension which illustrates the intentional nature of its production. If, as claimed by Olivier Dabène, "any political phenomenon is potentially authoritarian" (Dabène, 2008, p. 8), then the production of space is authoritarian since space is essentially political. The territory itself produces authoritarian effects, "the place effect" in particular which results from the representations we have about a territory which is well identified in our social practices, and which imposes a negative image upon certain territories, which is the case of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro, among others. The territorialised representations produced by the place effect of the favelas, crystallise the stigmatisations and fragmentation of the city.

Through the historical context of Brazil, we can identify authoritarian enclaves, where the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes goes through overlapping situations. "The Brazilian authoritarian heritage which is still perceptible at the beginning of the 21st century, was fashioned over time by the long term colonial society and the two short term dictatorships of the 20th century (1930-1945 and 1964-1985)" (Dabène, 2008, p. 98). Authoritarianism would have been "socially established" with the pregnancy of violence in the social relations, the lack of respect of civil rights and the "micro-tyranny" of everyday life (conjugal and domestic

violence, private justice, sexual abuse etc.) (Pinheiro, 2000). It is at the local level that this article analyses the relationships between space and power in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. Through a historical process whereby favelas were kept away from the right to – and even of – the city, today we can still observe authoritarian persistence on these territories. However, for a few years now, public policies have been trying to emphasise the necessary recognition of what is common as well as specific in each favela of the city. The research presented here concerns the new security policy: “the pacification” and so-called urbanisation policies of the favelas, as well as economic and social development interventions. According to the Perreira Passos Institute, 1 443 773 people live in the 1 035 favelas of Rio de Janeiro, i.e. almost 23% of the population (Cavallieri & Via, 2012). Since 2008, close to 200 favelas have been pacified through the establishment of 37 Police Pacification Units (UPP). My research favours an ethnographic approach in two favelas located in the south of Rio de Janeiro, which is the wealthiest and most touristic area of the city. These are Rocinha which has around 100 000 residents, and Vidigal with around 10 000, where I lived and carried out interviews and took part in community activities¹.

Map 1: Map of Rio de Janeiro, pacified favelas and location of Rocinha and Vidigal, Justine Ninnin, 2014

¹ Interviews conducted between September 2012 and June 2014.



The first part of the article analyses the crystallisation of authoritarian persistence in favelas, by observing the authoritarian powers exercised by different actors such as the media, the State or, still, criminal groups. The second part questions the effects of including recent public interventions, those concerning the right to the city and socio-spatial justice in particular. Finally, the last part examines the mobilisation potential of residents.

Favelas: Authoritarian Spaces at the Margins of the City?

From the point of view of the territorial dynamics of power, space, in its political and social dimension, is perceived as an object of control. We define authoritarian space as a territory where individual liberties are limited and where, in practice, sovereignty and the rights of individuals are minimised compared to the rest of society. As heterotopies – according to Foucault – favelas are “kinds of places that are outside of all places” (Foucault, 1994, p. 756), “spaces of exception kept away from the common world, but still under control” (Agier, 2008, p. 222). The fact that favelas are kept in

the background and boundaries are created through public policies and public opinion, favelas are considered as peripheral or marginal compared to an ideal urban reference. Exclusion policies provoke the creation of "spaces of extraterritoriality" governed by "rules of exception" (Birman & Souty, 2013). On these authoritarian spaces, we find what Agamben defines as the state of exception, i.e. a space where norms and rights are valid, but do not or only partially apply (Agamben, 2003).

The Role of Public Opinion and the Media in the Production of Authoritarian Spaces

In the introduction of their book *Um Seculo de Favela*, Alvito and Zaluar (1998) highlight the fact that the literature on favelas contributed to creating an "urban mythology", as did the press and public opinion. In Rio de Janeiro, poverty was for a long time perceived as a vice, and "*favelados*" as individuals living "outside formal society and at its expense" (Goirand, 2000, p. 84). Favelas then quickly became an urban problem and were denounced as grouping places for marginality, insalubrity and dangerous classes responsible for "urban ills". With the proliferation of armed criminal groups, the expansion of drug trafficking and the increase in urban violence in the 1980s, social representations have naturally been associating poverty, criminality and insecurity with favelas. In this regard, the media have been widely contributing to conveying a negative image of favelas, through TV programmes reporting on violence, resulting in the territorialisation of poverty and violence, and in the criminalisation of destitution, although poverty and crime are very much present outside favelas. Indeed, favelas have experienced a process of fictive boundary production. Although their visibility in the urban space makes of them specific territories, it does not mean that they actually all look the same: they represent complex territories and support diversity. There is "neither homogeneity, nor specificity or unity between them, not even within large favelas" (Valladares, 2006, p. 161). Far from living in urban enclaves functioning in isolation and autonomously, many residents are integrated into the urban fabric (employment in well-off areas, friendly and family relations outside the favela, etc.). Significant

internal transformations have taken place concerning occupation modes, infrastructure and equipment in particular. While in the past favelas were mainly spontaneous and precarious, their buildings have rapidly become increasingly complex, with the appearance of blocks of flats. The actual population has become more diverse, with the rise in particular of what Machado da Silva (1967) calls the “favela bourgeoisie” which is made up of individuals who have more resources than others (social, cultural, political and economic capital). Favelas are then far from what Wacquant calls “hyperghettos”, i.e. spaces including “almost exclusively the most vulnerable and marginalised sections of the black community” (Wacquant, 2006, p. 111). However, the balance of power between marginalisation and integration highlights not only the recognition of diversity and internal wealth, but also the fact that these so-called territories of exception – still called “subnormal agglomerates” today by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) – are kept at a distance. The fact that favelas are denounced as places of marginalisation partly served to justify the authoritarian urban planning affecting these territories (destruction and/or confinement), as well as the repressive security policy, combining police violence with abuse of power towards favela residents.

The Different Types of Authoritarian State Interventions on Favelas: Urban Planning, Clientelism and Police

Up until the 1970s, many campaigns – hygienist campaigns in particular – were led against favelas that were perceived as unsightly, unfit for habitation and threatening the “peace of mind” of the rest of the city, although a few experiments to develop facilities inside favelas had taken place during that period. The State reopening the doors to democracy progressively marked the end of the eradication and massive rehousing policy, and the establishment of so-called favela urbanisation policies (Soares Gonçalves, 2010). The Leonel Brizola government of 1982 did propose for example to transform favelas into “popular suburbs” and distribute title deeds. The 1988 constitution provided for displacement only in the case where a territory’s physical conditions could entail a risk to residents. The interventions of public

authorities in favelas became amplified with the Master Plan of the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which confirmed the introduction of a global programme for integrating favelas into the city. In 1994, the first major programme for the urbanisation of favelas was established: *Favela-Bairro*, which was followed by different policies such as, more recently, the Growth Acceleration Programme (2007) or *Morar Carioca* (2010) which, through infrastructure works, the creation of urban equipment and land regularisation, promoted the integration and transformation of favelas into suburbs. With the politico-administrative consolidation process, favelas asserted their place in the urban landscape. But the public authorities sought to contain favelas by slowing down illegal occupations as well as their horizontal and vertical expansion, through measures such as the construction of walls and eco-borders. The authoritarian control of these spaces, through urban policies, did not however prevent the transformation and consolidation of favelas. Nonetheless, Soares Gonçalves (2013) spoke of the recent return of policies for the eradication of favelas, by means of “extremely violent and unfair” interventions. Forced displacement operations were based on the different sections of public policies: danger zones, protection of the environment, infrastructure works and, more recently, installation works aiming at ensuring that urban space complies with the requirements for hosting international sporting events.

“Authoritarianism is not only thought out at the margin of democracies, it is also dealt with in their centre” (Dabène, 2008, p. 12). In Brazil, electoral behaviours also made it possible to observe this authoritarian persistence, e.g. the clientelist control of the votes. Inherited from patriarchal society and exacerbated by dictatorships, clientelism is found at the local level, in favelas. It often takes on the name of *da bica de agua* policy (“the water tap policy”), in the sense that the promises made by politicians in the favelas, with a view to improving living conditions (through infrastructure, equipment, etc.), very often come up during election periods. As such, residents are used as instruments of electoral regulation. This clientelist system relies on internal hierarchies and reinforces them, e.g. the members of residents’ associations, the owners of energy meters or shop owners. While we can talk about authoritarian persistence, the residents who are suspicious of

politicians learn nonetheless to adapt strategically to the political system, and know how to take advantage of it (collectively and/or individually). In situations where politicians compete, residents know that they are in a position to negotiate their vote, thereby causing politicians to outdo one another in social interventions and gifts (Goirand, 2000).

Moreover, the police institution and its abusive practices inherited from the dictatorship, also appear as an authoritarian enclave in Brazil. The police force is imbued with the mentality of the military regime and founds its interventions on the idea of an internal enemy that must be eliminated (Deluchey, 2003) (Zaluar, 2004). In favelas, abusing one's power and failing to observe residents' rights are frequent attitudes from police officers who often do not differentiate between "honest" residents and gangsters (identity checks and violent searches, arbitrary arrests, disproportionate means being implemented, use of weapons, resorting to harassment...). Institutional violence goes through the "illegal, illegitimate and undue usage of force by the repressive State machinery" (Daudelin, 1996, p. 97). This raises the issue of impunity as far as certain "homicides" are concerned in this democratic country, those resulting from "acts of resistance" in particular, i.e. deaths related to residents confronting the police force, with the latter too often claiming self-defence. Extrajudicial executions are sometimes perceived as a means of getting rid of criminals where the judiciary system is viewed as faulty. Homicides are tolerated by the residents of well-off suburbs, but also by the residents of favelas who, while strongly criticising the violent operations of the police force, do distinguish between the death of an innocent resident and that of a gangster. Moreover, in certain cases, the police force does draw benefits from illegal markets via corruption. Favelas have seen the establishment of a space where "violence, rights, authority and power mix without distinction from one another and self-legitimate" (Agamben, 2003). Through authoritarian control and extremely violent sporadic operations, the police institution has contributed to reinforcing the feeling of insecurity of favela residents.

Authority as Exercised by Criminal Groups

Factions began to emerge from the 1960s onwards, and spread in the favelas. Nowadays, according to Michel Misse, 10 to 15 % of the city's population live in areas controlled by traffickers (Misse, 2011, p. 18), with entire sections of the favelas and peripheral areas being actually dominated by militias. Competition between enemy factions has led to the proliferation of violent acts, an arms race as well as the fact that criminals, police officers and other corrupt public authorities have drawn closer to one another. Furthermore, traffickers control other informal economic services (such as Internet, real estate and transport among others), multiplying authoritarian powers and influences over the territory (Zaluar, 1998) (Machado da Silva, 2008). The authority imposed upon the area by the traffickers, takes on different forms and depends on the status of their leader, i.e. whether or not he is a native of the favela, as well as his relationship with the residents, which can vary from philanthropy to despotism (Zaluar, 2004). Indeed, some try to legitimate their power by taking part in charity works, such as improving equipment, helping the most destitute or organising leisure activities such as dance events (Goirand, 2000). Some speak of "social crime" and describe traffickers' morality as being underlain by honour, which then often becomes a local identity reference for adolescents (Valladares, 2006, p. 173). Nonetheless, it would be inappropriate to speak of complicity, even if sharing the same territory results in various kinds of rapprochements (relationships based on neighbourhood, kinship or economic links): it is more about an undesired complicity developed under duress, subjected to the law of trafficking and silence (Machado da Silva, 2008). As such, it is entirely in the interest of traffickers to meet the needs of the population to maintain control over the territory.

"Traffickers did not worry about social projects; obviously, they were playing the role of the police force because there weren't any! [...] In reality, these were limited interventions. They've never had any plans; the only plans in this case were those of the government, NGOs or churches" (A., former chairman of the residents' association of Rocinha).

Traffickers establish a violent social order which Machado Da Silva (2008) calls "violent sociability", although Zaluar prefers to speak of warrior ethos: "practices in

the criminal world are linked to an ethos based on exacerbated and exaggerated masculinity, centred on the idea of a despotic leader whose orders could not be disobeyed", or based on a "negative social capital" that would be a civility-destroying capital weighing on the social organisation of the favela, and violently destroying local horizontal networks (Ribeiro & Zaluar, 2009, p. 575). As such, social relations are structured through the use of a privatised force fuelling urban violence. Inevitably, this violent order makes relationships and the social link between residents vulnerable, by generating a fear of denunciation and retaliation, and therefore a loss of trust towards the neighbourhood, which makes the creation of a basis for collective action difficult. According to Leeds, physical and criminal violence ensuing from drug trafficking hides a more occult institutional structural violence, where the neo-clientelist political relations with these poor communities endure (Leeds, 1998). Authoritarian space is built through different processes of territorial control where the boundaries of favelas are sometimes real, sometimes material.

Authoritarian Spaces in Democratic Transition: Public Intervention in Favour of Socio-Spatial Justice

Castel highlights the fact that, in modern society, security as a response to uncertainty characterising social vulnerability, is a kingly function of the Welfare State (Castel, 2011). Yet, the residents of favelas are dispossessed from part of their fundamental rights, particularly the right to security in the wide sense of the term (i.e. physical, economic and social security). Where, for a long time, the presence of the State was neither complete nor efficient, today the State tries to reorientate public policies towards making favelas secure, by combining "policiarisation" with other public interventions, thereby guarantying fundamental rights and reinforcing the participation of the civil society in public debates as well as decision making. It is in this sense that we can talk about democratic transition in favelas. There has been a shift from policies for public security to public policies for security. Programmes are taking root in a local approach by seeking to take into account the socio-spatial singularity of the targeted places. These new orientations intervene in a context

where the city of Rio de Janeiro is brought to the front of the stage for hosting international events: making the city secure has become a priority.

Securing Favelas with a View to Integrating Them Better into the City

In 2008, the Public Security Secretariat of the State of Rio de Janeiro developed the so-called “pacification” policy, aiming at regaining control of the territories dominated by criminal groups, and at improving relations between the population and the police force, with the establishment of permanent Police Pacification Units (UPP). These operations mobilised newly recruited and young police officers in order to prevent former corruption practices. These young officers receive a monthly allowance as well as specific training on the principles of community policing.

Illustration 1: UPP Posts in Vidigal and Rocinha, Justine Ninnin, 2014



In the field of public security, pacification works towards restoring certain fundamental rights that were previously limited in the favelas: the right to life, the right to freedom of movement, the right to property, access to justice, health, equipment and community services (Zaluar, 2013). Between 2012 and 2013, the Public Security Institute noted a decrease in homicides of 26,5 % in areas with UPPs, but an increase of 9,7 % in the rest of the city. We can nonetheless highlight the paradox of pacification which, on the one hand comes up as a means of providing peace, and on the other reflects a visual and discursive matrix of war, particularly

during interventions for regaining control of favelas: use of tanks, helicopters and armed battalions, flag raising ceremonies and even in some cases army troops being called in as reinforcements, all this being part of the operation called “Shock of Order”.

Illustration 2: April 2014, the army came in as reinforcement during the pacification of the favela complex of Marê, situated in the north of Rio de Janeiro.



The daily presence of armed police officers in the streets of pacified favelas, forces residents to adapt to new social rules and practices that, at the beginning, can provoke a certain resistance; what was previously resolved by criminal groups is resolved today by the police. The fact that police duties are being extended is disorienting for part of the population which is not sure what behaviour to adopt, in the face of police officers who are the holders of legitimate violence, mediators and sometimes educators even. There seems to be a transfer of governance responsibilities to UPPs. While for certain residents, the introduction of armed police officers in the public space, by day or night, ensures greater security, for others it is perceived as “military” intrusion in their daily life. It contributes to perpetuating the “ideological militarisation of public security” in urban space, i.e. “the transposition, in the public security domain, of the conceptions, values and beliefs of military doctrine, bringing about, within society, the crystallisation of a conception centred on the idea of war” (Silva, 1996, p. 501). As such, Graham (2012) observed a militarisation of the

urban space in Rio de Janeiro, with the export of openly military practices, the urban field then being perceived by militaries as conflict areas requiring permanent surveillance. For example, in UPP areas, surveillance cameras have been installed. According to Deluchey, "the expression 'war against crime', accompanied by its ideological environment, could convey an authoritarian representation of Brazilian society and its social and political order" (Deluchey, 2003, p. 174). The rules imposed by UPPs are sometimes considered as unfair and authoritarian: prohibition of balls, requests for authorisation to organise events in public (or even private) areas, repeated checks and searches without a mandate as well as cases of assault, torture, homicide or disappearance linked to the UPPs²³... in other words a police force that changed its name but not its behaviour. The debate concerns not only the demilitarisation of the police to the benefit of a real community police, but also a global reform of the judicial system in Brazil where, tacitly, two rules of law cohabit: favelas and the rest, and where, consequently, two types of police interventions exist.

The period between the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014 was marked by a new outbreak of confrontations in pacified favelas, between traffickers and police officers, of violent episodes of repression of collective resident mobilisations or, still, of attacks towards UPPs. The current crisis seems to come from an accumulation of tension, from a feeling of social and spatial discomfort that was initially translated into large demonstrations in June 2013. Traffickers were to benefit from these tensions to reassert their power over these territories, although trafficking had in no way disappeared. Pacification brought about a redefinition of the relations between police officers and traffickers, both ending up having to share the same territory daily. Traffickers adopt different strategies; they are more mobile, less visibly armed and their points of sales are more discreet; and sometimes traffickers tacitly agree with police officers in order to maintain the status quo.

² 25 police officers from the UPP of Rocinha, including its former commander, are currently being sued after being accused of torturing then killing a resident of Rocinha, Amarildo.

"Poor people have never been out of the repression. When the dictatorship stopped, trafficking was up next, followed today by UPPs that are also another form of repression. Except that now, one lives in favelas with two forms of repression: trafficking on the one hand and the police on the other. When watching television, all one hears about are the confrontations, the gun shots and the deaths of innocent people. There are two forms of repression within the same territory; in some way they are forms of dictatorship" (F., Rocinha community leader and resident).

The pacification policy cannot guarantee on its own that residents will have access to security and be emancipated from these authoritarian spaces: the inclusion of favelas also goes through the reinforcement of other public policy registers.

Towards a Fairer Space: Mobilising the Tools of Good Governance and UPP Effect

Before pacification, various public programmes were already at work in the favelas. This is the case of the *Favela-Bairro* programme in particular, as well as the Growth Acceleration Programme (PAC) that, in Rocinha for example, brought about many improvements: the construction of a First Aid Unit (UPA), a library, a sports complex, housing projects and the widening of the streets. Pacification should be playing the role of "facilitator of the execution of infrastructure works and social action" (Batista Carvalho, 2013, p. 295). In pacified favelas, the *Rio Mais Social* programme of the municipality, in partnership with UN-Habitat, puts (public and private) economic, social or cultural services in contact, escalates local requests and seeks to develop the participation of the civil society. However, the multiplication of public programmes tends to superimpose interventions without linking them. Favela residents highlight in particular the fact that information is insufficient, some projects are not completed and there is a lack of priority insofar as visible projects are favoured to the detriment of the absolute necessary, as in Rocinha for example, where residents are mobilising against the PAC 2 Cableway Project when priority should have been given to basic sanitation works. Indeed, in this favela where one still finds tuberculosis, many drains are open, refuse pile up in the streets and entire suburbs are often deprived of water

and electricity. In the end, the civil society is not very present in decision making. The bottom-up model of “good governance”, i.e. of the exchange and aggregation modes between individual and collective actors, struggles to become efficient.

The process to include favelas into the city generates paradoxical effects: the more areas evolve towards forms with urbanity attributes, the more value they take on and the more vulnerable populations find it hard to stay there. The “UPP effect” contributes in particular to emphasising real estate speculation, and the process whereby the middle class is buying up favelas in the south of Rio de Janeiro, as is the case in Vidigal in particular, forcing part of the poorest residents to leave the suburb and settle further away, on the outskirts. This is similar to the phenomenon Neil Smith calls ‘rent gap’, through which the prospect of capital gain on lands to be rehabilitated brings the well-off classes to invest there, leading to gentrification (Smith, 1996). The land price increases and the sociological profile of the suburb in question changes. Some residents take part in this new market economy (renting and selling real estate and opening shops among other things), while others fall behind, particularly concerning the payment of rents or newly acquired bills linked to the regularisation of space (electricity, water, property taxes, etc.), because of the increase in the cost of life. As a result, the market somehow becomes a new authoritarian power in the favelas.

Joining Forces in an Authoritarian Order: Intermediary Spheres and Possible Interventions

In these territories which have witnessed various consecutive repressive systems, public space has been affected by an authoritarian socio-spatial order, which means that the local civil society had to adapt, drawing its social and symbolic resources on the intermediary sphere³, i.e. places of mediation and overlapping between the public and private domains, where forms of actual socialisation can bring out

³ Research project coordinated by Alba Zaluar, “Sociabilidade, civilidade e cidadania em três cidades brasileiras”, IESP/UERJ

collective initiatives. These can be religious or neighbourhood networks, as well as NGOs or residents' associations.

Networks as Social and Symbolic Resource

The community, as far as favelas are concerned, makes it possible to enhance the value of everyday life through relationships based on solidarity and mutual aid, unlike what exists in the rest of the city, which is considered to be more individualistic. These representations are often mobilised as a reaction against condemnations. Founded on spatial, symbolic and social dimensions, relationships between residents are organised into family, neighbourhood or religious networks, built on relations of dependency through a process of donations/counter-donations (Ribeiro & Zaluar, 2009). According to Leite, "residents make use of possible situations; as such, they develop different forms of interventions seeking shelter and support within families, among friends, in religious groups, so as to get an idea of what Giddens refers to as "ontological security" and brave the violence and insecurity found daily in their place of residence (Leite, 2008, p. 135). By taking an interest in neighbourhood organisations (churches, schools, soccer clubs, samba schools, etc.) as social order and control-producing organisations, Ribeiro and Zaluar (2009) question collective efficiency, i.e. the capacity of residents and neighbourhoods to realise shared values and maintain efficient social control. Women, for example, and mothers in particular, play a crucial role in collective efficiency, through an intrinsically legitimate power of control and mobilisation.

"People belonging to a religious order as well as mothers talk more easily with gangsters, they also have more authority in a collective intervention [...]. At the time of the *mutirões* or residents' collective efforts to clean up and widen waste water canals, I was wondering why women were systematically in greater numbers than men, but that's because they are the ones who, in the daily chores, are subjected the most to the inconvenience of the lack of sanitation" (M., Rocinha community leader and resident).

However, these networks are not impervious to authoritarian forces, weakening social relations in the process. Indeed, the construction a real civic culture of participation,

in the resolution of local problems, is very weakened by the presence of (State, parastatal or criminal) weapons, violence and repression (Machado da Silva, 2008).

Community Movements and Residents' Associations

Community ideology has been highly influenced by the Catholic Church: Liberation Theology, in the 1960s, brought a new outlook on the poor who were no longer perceived as being in need of charity, but who asserted themselves as autonomous social subjects with rights. The Church denounced cases of injustice generated by oppression mechanisms, and collective intervention was beginning to organise itself within Basic Christian Communities (BCC). Under the dictatorship, BCCs were unique places where people were authorised to group together. In the end, they became structures of opposition to the military regime (Goirand, 2010) (Lesbaupin, 1997). Also, during the repression period of the dictatorship, popular movements were organised around issues of living conditions as well as public service and social rights claims.

"Yet, at the time, the community movement was very strong; it managed to organise itself despite the situation. This movement did not rise up in arms; it did not move towards direct confrontation, although it did suffer from uncountable cases of repression [...] It was not easy. Whoever was going to protest in the street, at the time of the dictatorship, was manhandled or ignored. Yet it is during that period, according to me, that Rocinha was the most productive" (F., Rocinha community leader and resident).

These community movements relied on the many local organisations, linking in particular with the residents' associations created in the 1960s to relay their requests. While at first these associations defended their autonomy against the government, with the democratisation process of the end of the 1970s, political parties – left wing parties mainly – began to fight over the control of these associations. The loss of autonomy was then denounced by the residents, as were co-opting practices. Consequently, these associations were focusing increasingly on the management of resources and public services, more than on the defence of residents' interests. Moreover, from the 1980s onwards, traffickers also began to take an interest in these

elections. The weight of these organisations in local claims weakened, due on the one hand to the pressure exercised by traffickers, and on the other to the loss of political autonomy (Zaluar, 1998) (Soares Gonçalves, 2007) (Goirand, 2010) (Goirand, 2000).

“Residents’ associations have always played a very important role, but they lost power, due to the importance that trafficking began to take in the favelas, politically, socially and economically” (F., community leader and resident).

During that same period, Liberation Theology that was criticised and deemed too politicised by the Vatican, also lost its influence. The withdrawal of catholic interventions, the establishment of a violent order linked to trafficking, and the criminalisation of the “traditional” spheres of protest restricted mass movements. Social intervention dissipated and became modified, particularly with the arrival of NGOs that offered another model of intervention, in the form of partnerships with the public authorities and international organisations for the establishment of social projects.

The Rise of NGOs

From the 1990s onwards, mass movements broke up into many organisations and crystallised into increasingly bureaucratised institutions. Social interventions turned professional; from then on there was a real need for specific skills, knowledge and know-how. This professionalisation process took place in a context of State decentralisation, even taking away responsibility from the State (Dagnino & Tatagiba, 2010).

“These organisations are going to be used increasingly by the government to make public policies. [...] The problem in Brazil is that the government mainly finances projects that are related to the government and not to society in general. There is a utilitarian relationship of the State towards civil society. [...] Resources are given to organisations that are very close to the State. Which in the end is not decentralisation exactly, indeed the State keeps a central power, there is no decentralisation as far as decision power is concerned, there is only decentralisation as far as executing the responsibilities of the State are concerned” (interview with Paulo Haus Martin, lawyer specialised in NGOs, 2011).

Residents who are used to seeing the traditional sphere of protest monopolised by authorities and personal interests, are just as careful about NGOs that are often accused of seeking to make a profit at the expense of the social projects.

“NGOs began to enter communities with social projects but often did not create a dialogue with the residents [...] There are many people who want to create NGOs for their own benefit and sometimes we are not sure where funding comes from” (A., Vidigal resident).

The weakness of the democratic institutions and the privatisation of the public sphere are likely to cause a decline in the sense of community and a dilution in social relations.

“When the community stopped fighting for the rights of all residents, it stopped being a community. It was community and favela at the same time; today it is only favela. I understand community in the perspective of what is common to all: the exercise of citizenship with a view to fighting for our space” (F., Rocinha community leader and resident).

Finally, we can point out that in a context where authoritarian pressure has been put on the traditional spheres of protest by traffickers, politicians or sometimes elites and powerful local contractors, in order to defend personal interests, collective interventions break up; they are organised within NGOs, neighbourhood or parish networks, and the different projects find it hard to link between them, and with the public authorities. Autonomy is often presented by community leaders not only as a strategy, but also as a value in itself. “In their search for another way between authoritarianism, populism and revolution, many analysts have seen a possible source of social innovation in the autonomous movements of civil societies” (Goirand, 2010, p. 455). While collective organisation frameworks have changed, certain claims remain the same. In the case of Rocinha for example, whether during the dictatorship, under the domination of traffickers or once it was pacified, and whether it is considered as a favela, a community or a suburb (Rocinha is an administrative region since 1986), its residents are still calling for dignified living conditions, regarding basic sanitation or simply permanent access to running water for all.

Illustration 3: Pamphlet calling residents to rally in Rocinha
General invitation, on 16/05/2014, Passerelle de Rocinha. Rocinha, 1970,
residents have been subjected to an irregular supply of water for the past 50
years



Nonetheless, the public authorities are increasingly advocating an inclusive participation model, and are desirous of seeing a link between the different protest movements and the public, as well as private services working towards the improvement of living conditions in the favelas. We recently saw discussions being organised between the residents, community leaders and the public authorities, although the presence of residents remained limited.

"We must learn to organise ourselves and define our priority needs before communicating with the public authorities. At present, everyone is defending their own interests more than people's rights" (M. H., medical doctor in a Rocinha clinic and resident).

Illustration 4: Poster of the monthly discussion organised by the residents' association and local organisations, presence of local authority representatives (civil police, UPP, town planners, State and municipality social programmes, electricity company)⁴

⁴ Parle Vidigal: Discussion Cycle. Fourth discussion. The published authority has the floor: What do the public authorities claim to be doing for Vidigal? 03/06/2014, 19:00, on the square at the entrance of Vidigal.

Fala Vidigal: Ciclo de Debates



Quarto Debate: O Poder Público tem a Palavra: O que o poder público pretende para o Vidigal?

Convidados:
Guarda Municipal
ITERJ
Light
POUSO
Territórios da Paz
UPP
UPP Social

Terça-feira dia 3 de junho, 19h, na praça de entrada do Vidigal



Conclusion

What assessment can we make of the impact of pacification on collective action? For several months already, the mobilisation climate in Rio de Janeiro has been intensifying, including in the favelas. However, it is difficult to distinguish that which results from the effects of pacification and the democratisation of so-called authoritarian spaces, from that which results from the international event hosting context, provoking many criticisms from the civil society and offering increased visibility to collective movements. Places and forms of mobilisations have evolved; collective action is still present although more fragmented, and although many residents are grow weary of taking part in it. In the favelas, the successive authorities replace one another, or even overlap. Different local actors (politicians, traffickers, militias, police officers, etc.) appropriate spatialised authority and exercise different forms of authority, from clientelism to corruption, via the use of illegitimate violence and treating space as a commodity. As such, they establish a violent socio-spatial order, limiting collective actions and the possibilities of empowering residents, leading to the maintenance of spaces departing from the law. Different rules of law are maintained implicitly, contributing to defining favelas, today still, as an unfair space, at the margin of the right of the city and the right to the city. The role of the State being reasserted through UPPs, also contributes to shaping the authoritarian space through the daily militarisation of space and, therefore, a system for the control of internal dynamics.

"We are treated like second or third class citizens; even we have a hard time considering ourselves as citizens by right. For a very long time the State has been feeding assistance projects to favela residents. We are going to help the poor. For me, the projects established by the government are not public policies, but electoral projects" (R., Rocinha resident).

The new inflexion of the State, while mobilising the tools of good governance, brought out new types of more territorialised public interventions, making it possible to catch new opportunities in these spaces, and reinforcing people's expectations as far as spatial justice and the right to the city are concerned. However, territorialised public policies play a paradoxical role: while on the one hand they establish specific

inclusion actions, on the other, by exercising public interventions and specific police authority, they contribute to maintaining favelas as territories of exception or “extra-urbanity”. What city model are we seeking to build and to which extent do public policies make it possible to recognise favelas as a socio-urban form per se, where residents can claim their right to the city and free themselves from spatialised authoritarian authorities?

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