The ‘Pacification’ discourse and the public security strategy in Rio de Janeiro

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to understand the effects of the strategies claiming the discourse of 'pacification' on the scenario of public security in Rio de Janeiro. For that we will trace the trajectories of the actors claiming it, the Brazilian Army and the Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro (PMERJ). We will look at these security agencies and try to identify their role in the construction of scenarios and diagnostics about public security of Rio, as well as how they authorize their claims about how the security situation is supposed to be managed. Theoretically, to analyze the effects of global narratives about security, we must proceed to a two-step strategy: first we problematize the singularities of the processes of socialization of the security agents in the Latin American context. After that we can, focusing on the appropriation of the 'pacification' discourse in the Rio scenario, synchronize these processes with the effects of the narratives of global reach, and properly understand the way these perform their effects in a specific configuration. We claim the pacification discourse can be understood as an act of waging war through the normative imperative of 'legislating for peace', as described in Jabri(2007). However, in this particular case the pacification discourse is performed not through an association with the notion of humanity (as is implied in Jabri’s rendition of ‘legislating for peace’), but through the reclaiming of the territory.

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to understand the effects of the strategies claiming the discourse of pacification in the scenario of public security in Rio de Janeiro. We understand that Rio is an exemplary case because it presents us a very singular configuration for the analysis of contemporary uses of this discourse: it performs a deliberate appropriation of this framework, but displaces the UN as the locus of authority of the pacification strategy.

We claim that the pacification discourse legitimates a strategy of waging war through the normative imperative of ‘legislating for peace’, in the way it is argued by Vivienne Jabri(2007). In ‘War and the transformation of Politics’, she claims that the institutionalization of the practice of legislating for peace allows for a depoliticizing performance, at the same time that implies a relocation of political authority. It increases the stakes beyond the realm of a regular conflict. However, in this particular case the pacification discourse is performed not through an association with the notion of humanity (what is implied in Jabri’s rendition of ‘legislating for peace’), but it is a war waged through the reclaiming of territory.

In order to account for how this discourse is performed, we intend to investigate the socialization of the agents who claimed it and their dynamic. Therefore, after the first section where we explore the theoretical background in which the work is based we
will- in the second and third parts- trace the trajectories of the actors engaged in the pacification strategy, namely the Brazilian Army- who deployed a ‘Pacification Force’, to control the area correspondent to the Complexes of Alemão and Penha, in December 2010-; and the Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro (PMERJ)- who created the Pacifying Police Units (Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora- UPPs), special units oriented to perform community policing tactics that are occupying eighteen ‘favela’ areas since December 2008.

As a temporal demarcation to our tracing exercise, we are assuming as a central moment for the configuration of this scenario at national and state level the end of the military regime(1964-1985) and the constrains the democratic setting started to impose on the exercise of social control performed by the Army, which the civilian elite groups in Brazil not only welcomed but relied upon.

When we describe the trajectory of the Brazilian Army, we show that the pacification force is the continuation, and maybe the institutionalization, of a pattern that is directly linked to the end of the dictatorship in Brazil, in 1985: there is a residual tendency from elite groups in Brazil to stand for the ostensive presence of the armed forces and the targeting of the poorest areas in big cities like Rio as the only way through which ‘eminent threats’ to public order can be addressed. But there are also clear tensions between this view and the democratic constraints of the civilian constitution approved in 1988. As a result, from time to time, a nexus between crime, poverty and drugs is enforced in order to empower this authoritarian tendency, overlook inconsistencies of the legal apparatus built to legitimate it, and authorize an exceptional intervention that is portrayed as the continuation of the rule of law. There are high stakes both for the army as an institution and for the public security agenda in this move, and we show how the Pacification Force consolidates it.

When we address the trajectory of the PMERJ, we indicate how the UPP modifies former attempts to implement community policing tactics to adapt them to a strategy that is a strategy of war\(^1\). To understand this transformation, we discuss the construction of the security agenda in Rio since the end of the military regime. We describe how, after 1985, the reform of the military police bodies in the country (and all

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\(^1\) The UPP as a main asset in a strategy of a ‘war on organized crime’ is a clear element of the State government discourse. When, in an interview for this research, we asked the State Secretary of Public Security José Mariano Beltrame why he labeled these new units ‘pacification’ units, he stated that they were designed based on their understanding that there are clusters inside the territory of Rio that are at war. And the only way to bring a definitive solution for the problem of public security in Rio would be to reclaim these territories and ‘pacify’ the areas with the ostensive presence of the police.
over Latin America) became an important issue. We point out that, in Rio, community policing techniques provided for those advocating a reform an important tool to dissociate the military police and the military regime, and to stand for an understanding of police practice clearly distinct form the practice of war of the military. After that, we argue that a combination of Federal and State level agendas resulted in the re-appropriation of the notion of community policing that blurs these distinctions (instead of reinforcing them) in the UPP model.

In the conclusion, we bring together the performance of these two actors to understand which are the concrete effects of the pacification strategy in the Rio scenario. We claim that the use of the peace discourse is a key element of the legitimization of a strategy of war. A crucial characteristic of this strategy is the reclaiming of territory. And it is these two effects- the frame of war and the focus on territory- that allow us to make sense of the disposition of the two agents in the field: instead of a conflict about who is the proper agent to intervene in a specific area, what we see is that the security bodies are organized in a continuum of imposition of force.

2. Theorizing about the internal/external security nexus in Brazil: synchronizing global effects and the specificity of Latin American processes after the Cold War

In our narrative about the trajectories of the actors above mentioned, what we will try to present is how, in the redefining of their role during redemocratization, they construct and implement images, schemes and diagnostics about public security in Rio and how it is to be addressed. The socialization of these agents, in its turn, influences not only the framing of the scenario and the construction of the threat, but reconfigures the institutions and their role in society.

To make sense of this process, first we have to put these institutions in the perspective of the global transformations involving the different security agencies and the relation between them. Here we follow Didier Bigo when he says that there is, at the global level, a de-differentiation of external and internal security practices (Bigo, 2006: 18) and the construction of interconnected networks, and that this implies a transformation on the configuration of the field of security professionals that has effects of global reach.

Though this has a significant impact in the transformation of the modus operandi of the security agents in Latin America; to be able to understand the appropriation of
global scale narratives about security in the region, he have to factor in the specificity of the process of socialization of security agents.

What Bigo claims is that “the traditional way practices were shared out between the police and the militaries—between those who were proper to the country, and those from abroad—are the product of a slow process of the construction of the parliamentary state in Europe”, that led to the demilitarization of the police and the differentiation between the two universes (Bigo, 2001: 102). This is a slow process that took centuries and is particular to the European context.

In the case of Latin America, there are two circumstances that condition a very different process of socialization. First, the independence of most of these countries was achieved only in the nineteenth century. After the independence the many of the armies in the different countries didn’t emerge as independent institutions, but were involved in the disputes between the different political factions. Although the trajectories differ, the modernization of the military institutions after the independence was carried out in the second half of the nineteenth/beginning of the twentieth century in most cases. This delay not only jeopardized the differentiation between the army and the police, but also, in certain cases, the functional differentiation of the forces in relation to society. In Brazil and other Latin American countries, the army played a crucial political role as a modernizing force against the oligarchic elites in the first half of the twentieth century.

Second, there is the establishment of several military dictatorial regimes across the region during the Cold War and, most of all, after the Cuban Revolution. From the 60’s to the 80’s the armies and other security agencies experienced a re-definition of their political role: in operational terms, they internalized the guidelines of the Doctrine of National Security and started to fight a war against the internal enemy. At the strategic level, the militaries consolidated themselves even more solidly as a political force.

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2 To an analysis of the Brazilian case, see Carvalho (2005).
3 The Doctrine of National Security, as a set of doctrinaire statements developed in the United States in order to organize the struggle against communism in Latin America, is important for two reasons: first, because it confirms at the strategic level the reversal of the priorities of the Armed Forces—internal security starts to be considered a higher priority to the defense of the country that external security. Second, and as a corollary of the first, this strategical vision is materialized in the field through the struggle against the internal enemy. That’s when the Americans start to recruit Latin American middle ranking officers to teach them counter-insurgency techniques that they used, for example, at the Vietnam war. On possible definitions of the Doctrine of National Security and the training of Latin American Officers at the School of the Americas see Avilés (2006) and Hernandez (2009)
What we want to point out here is that, comparing to the European experience, a consistent process of differentiation did not take place to the same extent. This is particularly important to the relation between the Military Police bodies and the Armed Forces in Brazil, which is the focus of this study. Here, the schemes of perception of these agents overlap to an extent where the transference of know-how and the emulation of the modus operandi of the Armed Forces from the police is resilient and tends to resist demands for reform and external criticism. This intersection is most clearly synthesized by the image of the struggle against the internal enemy, which remains as a vestige of the practices of the Cold War years.

With the waning of the Cold War, the agencies in these countries face similar dilemmas. The pressure for democratization coming from inside and outside was overwhelming and could not be ignored, but the political legitimacy the militaries still enjoyed was considerable despite all the repression. Contrary to the preservation of the Army as an institution, public opinion explicitly resented and mistrusted the different police bodies in the region, stigmatized as the ones that carried out the ‘dirty work’ of the dictatorial regimes. As Hugo Frühling(2009) argues, this was a general phenomenon, having few exceptions, such as the two police forces in Chile and the National Police of Colombia(this one only to a certain extent and after extensive reform) (Frühling, 2009: 26). Therefore, after redemocratization a project of police reform gained momentum in most Latin American countries, with two main agendas: fight against corruption and a reassessment of police-community relations (Uildriks, 2009: 4; Frühling, 2009: 21).

What we try to do in this article is to address the way in which these global narratives about security and the practices of security agents are translated within this process of socialization. For that, we will consider the appropriation, in the Rio scenario, of the ‘pacification’ discourse as the event through which we can synchronize this local dynamics with modalities of operation of security agents that are inscribed in an international platform of action and are being diffused in a global scale.

3. The Armed Forces and the Army.

In the aftermath of the military regime and with the drafting of a new civilian constitution, the leftist leadership, persecuted during the years of the military regime,
expected to completely rule the militaries out of the domestic affairs, restraining their role to external defense.

During the works of the Constitutional Assembly (1988), the definition of the Constitutional function of the armed forces generated a great impasse, because the rapporteur- Federal Deputy Bernardo Cabral- had committed himself with the leaderships of the leftist parties to report the text exactly as it was defined by the Commission Afonso Arinos. The text foresaw that the ‘guaranteeing of law and order’ inside the country would not any more be part of the constitutional mission of the Armed Forces.

The Minister of the Army, Leônidas Pires Gonçalves, in a governmental meeting- conducted by the President José Sarney himself- presented very strong criticisms against the Commission and the Constitutional Assembly. As a result, in a gesture that indicates the influence of the Army and the significance public security affairs had to them, the President pressured the Assembly so they preserved the ‘guaranteeing of law and order’ as part of the constitutional mission of the Armed Forces (Souza Júnior, 2010: 43).

The attributions of the Armed Forces are regulated by the article 142 of the constitution, and foresee the protection of the homeland, the guaranteeing of the constitutional powers and, once ordered to by any of those powers, the guaranteeing of law and order. The use of armed forces for the ‘guaranteeing of law and order’, has to be authorized and justified by the President himself. Once it is an exceptional measure, the circumstances of their deployment have to be specified. In the constitutional text, there is only three categories where this kind of constitutional procedure could fit, all of very exceptional character: Federal Intervention (art.34) State of Defense (art.136) and State of Siege (art.137).

This meant that, in the democratic period, the army not only kept having a central role in internal security affairs, but also they reinforced the authoritarian view, according to which their know how was the most appropriate to deal with some of the issues relating to public security, which remained being understood as the struggle

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4 The Commission Afonso Arinos was a group of lawyers and researchers that was put in charge of writing an outline for the Brazilian Constitution of 1988. The Commission worked from July 1985 to September 1986.
5 This was the prerogative based on which, since the first half of the XIX century, the national government justified the deployment of the army to conduct mainly ostensive policing operations inside the national territory.
against the internal enemy. The deployment of these forces became a site of tension between the popular mandate, pressuring not only for a repressive attitude, but for the ostensive presence of the armed forces in the street; and the NGOs and Lawyers’ associations, that were trying to explore this gap to question the legality of the intervention (endorsed by a popular resistance that existed, but could be found mostly at the specific location of the deployment of the troops). To illustrate this tension, we will present two examples of important events concerning the intervention of the army in the public security in Rio de Janeiro where it is manifested.

The Operation Rio

The triggering event for the ‘Operation Rio’ was an interview, held September 2nd 1994, with the drug dealer ‘Uê’, where he claims that ‘the Rio police doesn’t know how to investigate’. In the media there was an immediate reaction of inconformity. And this led to two important political decisions: 1- The (re)creation of the State Secretary of Public Security of Rio de Janeiro(SESEG), that would coordinate the effort of the military police and the civilian police, but under the command of an army officer7; and 2- an agreement was celebrated between the Federal government and the government of de State of Rio where the Army would take total control over the fight against organized crime in the city.

In November 3rd the Army announced that their action would be reduced to carrying out 300 arrest warrants. But after the agreement was signed, the media and the public opinion in general began to make pressure for the presence of the militaries to become more ostensive and visible. In November 19th, the Army occupied five different favelas(da Silva, 2007: 552-554).

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7 The State Public Security Secretary had been extinguished in 1983 by the Governor Leonel Brizola. The reasoning behind this decision was that decentralize the command of the different police corporations would make it easier to democratize the functioning of these institutions, whose modus operandi was influenced by the mindset of the Armed Forces, due to the control the militaries exerted over it during the previous twenty years of military regime. Besides, at the time some considered that having the administrative police (the one that is supposed to do the politics of prevention, the conflict resolution of the small cases in the everyday situations and the patrolling- which were the function of the military police) and the judiciary police (the body in charge of the investigation, the arrests and keeping the criminal records- the role of the civilian police) under the command of the same agency was dangerous and anti-democratic(da Silva, 2007: 334). He replaced the secretary by three different commands, all answering directly to the governor: the State Secretary of the Military Police, the State Secretary of the Civilian Police and the State Secretary of Civil Defense.
In the interventions of army officers in favelas that followed they received several accusations regarding their conduct, such as imposing illegal curfews, invading houses in favelas without a warrant and harassing civilians. The complaints gave way to a larger reaction that questioned, at the same time, the brutality of the army behavior and the legal status of its intervention\(^8\). Furthermore, in November 22\(^{nd}\), the national Organization of Brazilian Lawyers (OAB) issued a declaration criticizing the operation (although the Rio branch of OAB supported it) (idem: 555)

As argued by Jorge da Silva, former State Secretary of Human Rights of Rio de Janeiro, for a operation that was executed after careful thought and planning (almost two months passed between Uê’s interview and the first measures), Operation Rio was deployed in clear violation of the Constitution of the country: not only there were no decree from the President specifying the circumstances of the deployment, but they tried to replace it with an ‘agreement’ between State and the Federal Union with no legal grounding (da Silva, 2007: 569)

New regulations

After this and due also to other events, the Federal government felt the necessity to specify more clearly how the operations of the army for the guaranteeing of law and order were to be planned and executed, and which kind of restrictions should be applied to these troops. The text of the Complementary Law 97 of June 9\(^{th}\) 1999\(^9\), that created in Brazil the Ministry of Defense, tries to fill this gap amplifying the discretionarity of the President of the Republic on the matter. But residual tensions between the constitutional text, the existing regulations and the operational procedures in the field persisted, and it followed the law a claim from further specification that was provided in the decree 3897 of 2001\(^10\). The decree reinforced the autonomy of the President, that could by its own initiative authorize the deployment of the army once he judged the

\(^8\) The Juridical power of the state, at the request of the authorities, structured itself to provide support to the operation, having created an extraordinary emergency call to attend the enormous number of complaints. Judges that were working at this emergency shifts issued search warrants with clear legal inconsistencies, as it would be denounced later on by the OAB. For example, there were warrants that included authorization for ‘breaking’ into the houses. In the most famous example, in the issuing of a warrant, the number of the house where the search is to be conducted has to be specified. But in this case, in clear violation of the law, judges issued warrants that applied to a specific place, ‘and the other surrounding houses’ (da Silva, 2007: 544).

\(^9\) Lei Complementar 97 de 1999 [Complementary Law 97 from 1999]

\(^10\) Decreto 3897 de 2001 [Decree 3897 from 2001]
instruments foreseen in the art.144 of the Constitution (that regulates the role of the police) were exhausted, with the reservation that the same limitations that regulates the action of the police should apply to the armed forces during the operation; and that once the militaries are deployed to ‘take over’ the operation, the police forces in charge until that point have to work under their command.

The Operation ‘Suffocation’

The Operation ‘Suffocation’/\*\*\*Operação ‘Abafa’\*\*\* happened between the 3\*\*\*rd and the 14\*\*\*th March 2006. This operation was triggered by the Army, with the aim of recuperating ten rifles and a pistol stolen from the Central Transport Facility, a military settlement. The Eastern Military Command put the Commander of the 1\*\*\*st Division of the Army in charge of carrying out the search and apprehension warrants issued by Military Justice. The Army, in this operation, was acting as ‘Judiciary Police’, carrying out diligences originated in a Police-Military Inquiry installed to investigate the theft of weapons in a place under military jurisdiction (Soares Júnior, 2010: 90-91).

The Police-Military enquiry should be established, in principle, by the Commander of the Military organization that had its weapons stolen, the Central Transport Facility. However, supposedly with the aim of maximizing the investigative procedures, the Eastern Military Command (utmost operational Army authority in the eastern area of the country) claimed for himself the responsibility to carry on the police enquiry. It claimed it was necessary to operate in several densely populated areas with the presence of criminal organizations, and this would require the employment of effectives of other military organizations. In the first days of the operation they summoned the First Police Battalion of the Army and the First Parachute Infantry Brigade, assembling more than 1,200 men that were deployed in ten different favelas\textsuperscript{11}.

Acting in several places at the same time, the army started to have the legality of its actions questioned by the OAB and the Federal Prosecutor. They stated that Military Police inquiry didn’t give the Army the constitutional support to position their troops around the city; other said that the action of the army configured an unjustified and illegal federal intervention\textsuperscript{12}.

\textsuperscript{11} Folha de São Paulo, March 13\textsuperscript{th} 2006

\textsuperscript{12} The International Association of Criminal Law released a statement in March 11\textsuperscript{th} claiming that despite the legal claim to the military jurisdiction on the place where the weapons were found, the concrete
Interestingly in this case, we have a complete different context surrounding the justification of the intervention, but a very similar pattern regarding the deployment and action of the operatives of the Army. We had a very limited and localized issue—the theft of eleven weapons— that escalated in an operation that implicated thousands of soldiers and the highest level of the chain of command. A straightforward fulfillment of search warrants that led to the occupation of several areas around the city. And a new imbroglio about the deployment of the forces showing that, the very tense relations between the expectations from the population and the public opinion regarding the army; and the constraints for the deployment of the force in a democratic scenario were not accommodated by the new regulations.

The ‘Guaranteeing of Law and Order’ and Peace Operations

The employment of the militaries in operations of guaranteeing of law and order is a common procedure that in Brazil goes back to before the Proclamation of the Brazilian Republic (1889). As José Murilo de Carvalho (2005) notices, one of the central problems of the armed forces is their capacity to maintain their resources and personnel in activity. For not having a convincing immediate foreign threat, attributing them exclusively the task of external defense would condemn them to structural unemployment. This is particularly true for the Army, that has a much bigger budget and personnel to justify (Carvalho, 2005: 136).

Carvalho’s reflection gives us the dimension of how deep the socialization of the Brazilian Army conditions its role in public security affairs: it not only provides the schemes of perception through which public opinion ‘reads’ internal security matters, but the consolidation of its role becomes strategic for the social legitimation of the Army. They have an articulated discourse about their role in Brazilian internal affairs since the 1930’s, with the Doctrine created by the General Góes Monteiro13.

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13 The ‘Góes Doctrine’ foresaw the elimination of the political disputes inside the armed forces so they could act more effectively as a political actor. As a consequence, the divergences were purged from the army and a system of systematic indoctrination was put in place. This system foresaw a tutelage over the civilian political forces and a state-led industrialization policy. The ‘Estado Novo’ (civilian dictatorship established with the support of the military between 1937-1945) materialized the aspirations of the Góes Monteiro Doctrine. After 1964, a similar effort took place. Currently, according to Carvalho, the ideas of General Góes Monteiro are carried out in the High Warfare Studies School (Escola Superior de Guerra-ESG) (Carvalho, 2005: 134).
Therefore, since Brazil started sending soldiers to UN Peace Operations, in 1962, until 2004, neither the Brazilian Army nor the Itamaraty\textsuperscript{14} saw it with much enthusiasm. Besides the fact that the militaries didn’t want to lose men to wars they didn’t understand to be of strategic interest for the country, the reputation Itamaraty was trying to build for Brazil was one of a pacific country, committed to multilateralism and generally sympathetic to the principle of non-intervention. The roles Brazilians played in the other Peace Operations they participated were usually marginal and in operations of peace maintenance, never involving imposition of peace.

When the crisis in Haiti put the creation of MINUSTAH on the agenda, those who would be the ‘natural’ candidates to lead the Mission were not interested to get too much involved at the time. The United States (the most directly involved in the crisis) was already fighting two wars, and France and Canada- that have some kind of cultural relationship with the country- thought it was a lost cause and likely to cause problems. Brazil was, therefore, encouraged by them to perform a more significant role in this new operation.

The participation in MINUSTAH seemed an opportunity to Brazil and to the newly established government of President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva because they were looking for space to extend their role inside the UN and change the tone of their foreign policy towards a more assertive position, as part of a strategy that aimed at strengthening his bid for a permanent position at the UN Security Council.

However, the country’s participation in MINUSTAH was qualitatively different from what it had done before in terms of Peace Operations. The mission for Haiti is regulated by the Chapter VII of the UN Charter, thus involving imposition of peace. And Brazil presented itself to indicate a Brazilian General that would command the whole operation, besides having the more extensive force in the field- Brazil was sending more than 1,200 troops to Haiti (two Army and one Navy Battalions) in 2004, and these numbers doubled after the January 2010 earthquake. So, in light of this uncharted territory, the Brazilian foreign policy had to slightly reframe its discourse to fit the new role the country was now willing to play. And this change was felt not only in the positioning of the country in forums like the UN, but also in the domestic negotiation with the different groups to justify the new policy.

\textsuperscript{14} Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
In May 2004, when the deployment of the troops had to be debated in the Congress, the Ministry of Defense announced the press the Brazilian participation in MINUSTAH would provide important training to improve the action of Brazilian Army in the Operations of Guaranteeing of Law and order in places like Rio.\footnote{Folha de São Paulo, May 16th 2004}

What this announcement suggests is that the Ministry, that was proposing the sending of their troops in an unprecedented number, and troops that would be running an unprecedented (and in the opinion of some, unnecessary) risk, had to change the discourse to sell to some groups inside the armed forces that this operation was beneficial for them. After all, besides the benefit of the ‘training’ sections, the UN would refund about 40% of the costs of the operation, which would allow them to expand their budgets considerably.\footnote{Folha de São Paulo, May 16th 2004}

This operation received along the years severe criticisms inside and outside Haiti, involving accusations of sexual assault, excessive use of force and even of bringing a cholera epidemic to the country. But inside Brazil these accusations did not resonate. On the contrary, the national government spent considerable energy and money promoting the mission as an example of the leadership role the country could play at the regional and even global level.

In the year of 2009, this propaganda advanced one step further: with the implementation in Brazil of the new public security initiative ‘National Program for Security with Citizenship- Pronasci’.\footnote{The Pronasci is a national program for public security created in 2007. The milestone of the program is the initiative to promote an integrate strategy of public security that combines the deployment of social programs and police apparatus in a coordinated fashion. It will be detailed later in the article.} After the national releasing of the program, the government saw in its internationalization the opportunity to expand the country’s influence in places such as Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and others. In Haiti, its implementation in a strategy that combines the action of the troops in the field with the provision of humanitarian aid was advertised as a ‘Brazilian way’ of doing Peacekeeping.\footnote{Correio Braziliense, October 24th 2009}

This created a situation where, despite the resistance the operation might have had inside the ranks of the Army, the role of the Brazilian Armed Forces in MINUSTAH reinforced the credibility of these institutions inside the country and with the public opinion. Therefore, at the moment of the installation of a Pacification Force in Rio, the Commanders of the Army claimed that their experience in Haiti provide
them with the know how to carry out their operation in the Complexes of Alemão and Penha\(^{19}\).

It is important to note here that this position is held exclusively by the Brazilian Army. The Brazilian Navy, that also sent troops to Haiti, doesn’t share this discourse\(^{20}\). This suggests that, beyond any possible tactical or operational improvement the Haitian experience could have provided the Brazilian troops with, what was also at stake was the creation of a Pacification Force as an instrument for the legitimization of the deployment of these soldiers inside the national territory.

In fact, in juridical terms, the Pacification Force is grounded in the same instruments that were built to establish the former operations (Complementary Law 97 and Decree 3897\(^{21}\)). But what changes is not only the a priori unintuitive transference of symbolic capital from an international operation towards a domestic one. The precedent of the establishment of a peace operation also builds on this gap between the formal regulation for the deployment of the ‘guaranteeing of law and order’ operations and the delimitations of the concrete procedures in the field. It provides a framework to legitimate and stabilize the interventions of the Army.

4. The Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro

The democratization and the reforms of Cel. Cerqueira

After the military regime in Brazil, how to deal with the police was a serious issue. The population clearly resented them. In the State of Rio de Janeiro, in 1982, the leftist leader Leonel Brizola was elected governor. He extinguished the SESEG and, trying to bring a new perspective to the Military Police, put in charge of the institution the reformist Colonel Carlos Magno Nazareth Cerqueira.

Cel. Cerqueira is an important personage because he was a pioneer in the implementation of this agenda for the reform of the police apparatuses in Latin America. But he did that under a different context and under a completely different perspective. Cel. Cerqueira started three important patterns of reform at his

\(^{19}\) Folha de São Paulo, December 2\(^{nd}\) 2010

\(^{20}\) A commanding officer of the Navy interviewed for this research and that participated in the operation in Haiti, confirmed that, from their position, those are significantly different situations; and that the strategies that worked in Haiti cannot be automatically reproduced in the complexes of Alemão and Penha.

\(^{21}\) Diretriz Ministerial n°15/2010 [Ministerial Directive 15/2010- Executive document that creates the Pacification Force]
administration: he focused on establishing connections between the PMERJ and the other police bodies in the world; he worked to intensify and transform the training and the learning of the military policemen in Rio in order to comply with human rights standards and address police-society relations; and he advocated the implementation of community policing techniques, that were beginning to be developed in the United States\textsuperscript{22}.

But these three guidelines make sense together and under a very specific scenario: Cel. Cerqueira’s main motivation was to modernize the police in order to dissociate the Military Police from the military regime and from the modus operandi of the armed forces. His focus on the internationalization and on the learning process was to find subsides to develop a theory and practice of policing that would be independent from the military procedures. And his interest in the community policing techniques\textsuperscript{23} was born out of a particular understanding of the causes of criminality and of how a careful analysis of these causes should guide the design not only of the behavior of the PMERJ, but of the whole criminal justice system\textsuperscript{24}.

Very elucidative of this point was an assessment that he wrote in 1991, when asked to take the command of the PMERJ a second time (at the occasion of the re-election of Leonel Brizola). Cel. Cerqueira wrote to the Boletim de Policia Militar\textsuperscript{25} (Bulletin of the Military Police) about the guiding plan he had established to his command from 1983-1987:

\textit{“I believe that we now we can talk a little about our experience in the Command of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro in the period between 1983 and 1987, analyzing some topics of our guiding plan.}

\textit{Our first concern was to try to desengage the notion of public security from the framework of the doctrine of national security still in force at the time and that oriented our regulatory dispositions.}

\textit{Another concern, of organizational nature, was to rethink the structure and organization of the military police, to adequate it to the operational issues of public security, significantly different from those of the army, whose organization and operative model we copied.}

\textit{Yet another orientation was in the direction of defining precisely our philosophy of deployment. It was necessary to clarify that we were not a war troop, that there was no...}
enemy to be fought but crime to be prevented” (Cerqueira, apud Leal et al., [1991]2010: 32-33)

Cel. Cerqueira was faced with internal resistance from inside the police, but also with external skepticism. For whole generation of military policemen, trained with manuals designed for military practice, taught according to the guidelines of the Doctrine of National Security, it was difficult to understand that ‘there was no enemy to be fought’. The resistance was such that once his program didn’t show convincing numbers in terms of the transformation of the indicators of violence it was stigmatized as a paradigmatic failure inside the force and by the public opinion. In the following years the PMERJ followed a more repressive strategy in the fight against crime, with mixed results. After his second command, in 1994, the SESEG was recreated and a General from the army was once again put in charge of the design of the public security policy. Eventually the Army itself intervened in the scenario with its troops.

**The SESEG and the ‘modernization’ of the PMERJ strategy**

During the two Garotinho administrations (Anthony Garotinho and Rosinha Garotinho, from 1998 to 2006) the struggle against the ‘militarized view’ of public security inside the PMERJ, and the repressive policies that resulted from it continued; although without the element of an immediate post-military regime context. In 1997 when running for Governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Anthony Garotinho invited the Anthropologist Luiz Eduardo Soares, then already a renowned scholar in the field of public security in Brazil, to write his proposals for public security while yet a candidate. Once elected he assigned General José Siqueira to run the Secretary but Soares remained in a key position as the special coordinator of security, justice and citizenship.

Soares’ program, besides resonating a humanistic bias that characterizes his academic work, reflected the main themes of the police reform agenda in Latin America: struggle against corruption inside the corporation and the relations between police and society. At this position, he implemented a program that is the clearest precedent of the program for the Pacification of the favelas: the GPAE, the Special Areas Policing Groups. The GPAE were special units of the Military Police already using a community policing approach and with the focus on favela communities. This initiative was one of the biggest initiatives in Soares’ proposal, but was short lived and
some of the units had to be shot down within months. Those that survived until 2008 are now administrated by the Coordination of the UPPs.²⁶

At the end of Anthony Garotinho and during the term of Rosinha Garotinho the tone changed. Early on in the government of Rosinha, Anthony Garotinho took on the position of State Secretary of Public Security, with a discourse that was clearly more technocratic than the one he had while following Soares program. He defined his strategy as State Secretary around two issues: the priority to the dismantling of drug trafficking organizations and the reform in the intelligence sector of the State Secretary in order to monitor the activities of key drug dealers.²⁷ After Anthony Garotinho left the command of the secretary the discourse remained the same, with the selection of two federal policemen for the position of State Secretary. The option for federal agents is suggestive, as they were known for having a more technical profile.

The new government led by Governor Sérgio Cabral, that implemented the UPP, got into power in 2007. The new security secretary, José Mariano Beltrame, was also a federal agent and was chosen for fitting a profile that resonates the reasoning of Rosinha Garotinho administration: a technical profile, with previous work in intelligence, and not tainted by the institutional culture of the police.²⁸ Secretary Beltrame credentials for that came from his work in the ‘Operation Support Rio’ with the Federal Police.²⁹

In fact, according to people that worked in the meeting between the Ministry of Justice of Brazil and the State government of Rio de Janeiro,²⁰ Secretary Beltrame was in the beginning apparently indifferent or even skeptical about the community policing

²⁶ Despite the governor’s initial support, and the significant prestige Soares enjoyed as a respected expert on public security, his program faced resistance inside SESEG. But the academic credibility of Soares and his program represented a very important political capital for the Governor. He had invested in his promise of promoting a ‘revolution’ in the public security of Rio de Janeiro as the achievement that would make possible his aspirations for presidency four years later (see interview with Luiz Eduardo Soares (2000). Soares survived the confrontation with the General, fired in April 1999. But the resistance against his program came not only from above, but mainly from within the ranks of the military and the civilian police. After a denouncement against the ‘rotten bunch’ inside the Civilian Police, that was articulated with criminal organizations, the pressure from inside the corporation was overwhelming and Garotinho fired him in March 2000.

²⁷ Interview with Anthony Garotinho (2003)

²⁸ Interview with Almeida and Beltrame (2010).

²⁹ In 2003, the Minister of Justice Marcio Thomaz Bastos intended to improve the investment in public security in Rio de Janeiro for the realization of the Pan-American Games (in 2007) and created, in the Federal Police, what he called the Operation ‘Support Rio’. It was, according to Beltrame’s description, “a big centre of investigation centered on the traffic” (Almeida e Beltrame, 2010, p.255). During this period it was installed up-to-date technology inside the superintendence of Rio de Janeiro, providing for the city, again according to Beltrame, with the most sophisticated center for intelligence investigation in Latin America.

³⁰ Regarding the participation of Rio de Janeiro in the then recently created National Program for Security with Citizenship (Pronasci), whose context and implications with be elaborated below.
What brought the UPP to the agenda of this administration was not a political concern with the reform of police work (which were observed in the former cases). The window of opportunity for the design of the UPP program was a result of the transformation of the strategic guidelines at the federal level and the necessity, at the state level, to address the issue of the legitimacy of the police force with the population. As the secretary expressed himself, he opted for it because after some operations were criticized he concluded that ‘this strategy of going up and down the hill was undermining the image of the police’.

Centralizing public security at the federal level- the Pronasci Program

The UPP program appeared for this government as an opportunity due to a repositioning of the national government regarding its role in public security, and of the eminent place the public security of Rio started to play in it. As most of the work of the police force is by Constitution regulated at the State level, the public security initiatives were an irrelevant concern at the Federal level until the first government of President Lula (2003-2006). Then, they started, following the guidelines of the experts working in the Institute for Citizenship (Instituto da Cidadania) - a think tank that is associated with the Worker’s Party (PT), at that moment in power- to build a program for the standardization of public security policy in the country. In its first term, their primary concern was to standardize the training of the military policemen throughout the national territory. This resulted in a special training program that created the National Public Security Force, a police force composed by middle ranking officers from different parts of the country and that could be summoned at any time to operate in any State of the federation. Having a National Public Security Force was an important initiative for a group of politicians, at the Ministry of Justice, that wanted to have an alternative for the engagement of the Army in public security operations. This group had an important political victory in 2006, when the security strategy for the Pan American Games that took place in Rio (in 2007) was being planned. The Army made

31 According to the interviews of Tarso Genro (2010) and Zaqueu Teixeira (2010)
32 That didn’t operate under the authority of any State government, but was subordinated to the National Public Security Secretary (SENASP), a section of the Ministry of Justice.
33 The aim was not only that it would give the national government more options for action in case of an emergency, but also that these policemen could go back to their states and reproduce the training techniques, which would, they expected, standardize the procedures and improve the quality of the training in many parts of the country.
34 Interview with Luiz Fernando Corrêa (2010: 107)
a claim that they should be in charge of the whole operation, and the National Secretary of Public Security (SENASP) won the bid for the deployment of the National Public Security Force\textsuperscript{35}.

In President Lula’s second term, they advanced the national public security plan one step further. They created the National Program for Security with Citizenship (Pronasci), with an yearly budget of R$ 1,3 Billion (US$ 765 Million) that, for the first time, set specific programmatic guidelines that conditions the transfer of money to state governments and city halls. The Pronasci, also designed by a group of people associated with the Institute for Citizenship, is basically a human security oriented program. Also worthy noting is that, in the designing of the strategy for its implementation, the case of Rio de Janeiro was considered a priority for the plan. According to people that took part in the project, there were two considerations that placed Rio as such a strategical priority: in terms of the external visibility, they claimed that the proximity of the World Cup and the Olympic Games made Rio a key element in promoting the image of the country. In terms of the domestic dynamics, there was the fact that they considered Rio the worst case scenario, and they assumed that if they could make the program work in Rio they could make a credible claim that it would work anywhere. In the end of the second Lula government, the City Hall of Rio de Janeiro was receiving 10% of the total budget of the Pronasci, and the State government more 10%, being that most of the latter was being spent in the city and its new security program\textsuperscript{36}.

**The UPP and community policing**

In December 2008, in the favela of Santa Marta, the first UPP was installed. The choice of this favela was not casual: it is a small hill, with few entry points. It is easy to control and a convenient starting point to a program whose success, at that moment, was far from certain.

Since that time seventeen other occupations took place in different areas across the city, drawing a lot of attention inside and outside the country. In the beginning, they were met with skepticism and resistance by the dwellers of the targeted communities. And it was precisely in the reconstruction of the fabric of the police-society relations

\textsuperscript{35} Interview with Luiz Fernando Corrêa (2010: 102)

\textsuperscript{36} Numbers and the considerations for the place of Rio in the strategical planning taken from the interviews of Tarso Genro (2010: 42), Carlos Antonio Biscaia (2010: 92), Zaqueu Teixeira (2010: 184) and Ricardo Rotemberg (2010: 335)
that the emphasis on community policing played an important role in the overall strategy.

In the operational terrain, one of the first problems to be solved by those planning the operations was how to deal with the potential victims of the gunfire that could ensue at the storm operation prepared to ‘take over’ the hill for the installment of the UPP. The PMERJ has a battalion specially trained for this kind of incursion, the Special Operations Battalion (BOPE). But this is a unit with a heavily militarized training, and causalities of civilians could potentially jeopardize the whole project. What we are observing is that, after opting for a surprise attack in their first attempts, the SESEG is now adopting a tactic of ‘warning first and shooting later’, sometimes revealing that a given operation will be taking place as early as a week before it happens.

It is worth noting that there is a political cost to be paid: in a society that expects the police to engage in the favelas as if they were fighting the war against the enemy within, the effectiveness of a security policy is measured in the public opinion not only by the drop of the traditional criminality rates, but also by the display of guns, drugs and criminals seized in the operations. By ‘warning first and shooting later’, they did most of the recent occupations without any shooting. However, they provided an escape opportunity for many drug traffickers, and allowed them to smuggle guns and drugs out of the favelas. This bet is based in a very important assumption for the understanding of the UPP strategy: that these criminal organizations lose most of their power once they lose control over the territory. In fact, the notion of territory is central to the very understanding of what pacification means. In the characterization by the State government of the different phases of the installation of the program, what indicates that an area is ‘pacified’ is when a citizen can circulate throughout the entire area of the community without the authorization from anyone from a drug trafficking organization or a militia group.

Over the last two years of ‘pacification’, the city experienced a consistent decreasing in criminality rates and a boom of real estate valuation in the areas surrounding the pacified favelas. As for the internal dynamics of the Military Police, the new strategy of the SESEG brought new guidelines for the corporation. The State government started out a program for exponentially increasing the hiring of military policemen (mainly to be deployed in the UPPs planned for the next years) and investing
in the modification of their training to include more specific instructions about community policing\textsuperscript{37} tactics.

Until a certain point in time, successful cases of community policing where claimed to have inspired the UPP model, mainly those of Bogotá and Medellín, in Colombia\textsuperscript{38}. Maybe for a reasonable initial concern of gathering support for the implementation of a technique that was tried before and faced resistance form society and from the internal ranks of the PMERJ, they pointed to foreign successful experiences not only to get information, but also to claim that their program could work. Recently, this attempt of associating international experiences with the UPP was replaced by a narrative that asserts the program as something ‘made in Brazil’, and an improvement from the past experiences from the Cerqueira Command and the GPAE\textsuperscript{39}.

As for the community policing tactic adopted by the UPP, it has been successful in winning the support of the population inside and outside the favelas where it was already deployed, creating expectation in the public opinion as well as in the poor areas that are still dominated by criminal organizations. However, the program is not necessarily aimed at the poorest or most violent communities of the city. In fact, many of those are and will stay outside it. On the one hand, what the geographical disposition of the UPPs installed until today suggests is that building a ‘safety belt’ around the areas where the main events of the Olympic Games will be taking place is an important part of the strategy. On the other hand, in what concerns the decisions observed in the deployment of the forces, a central variable seems to be the material and symbolic effect of the re-appropriation of territory in the core of the city. Or, in the secretary’s words: ‘what we want is to break the territoriality of violence’\textsuperscript{40}. According to the position stated by this administration, the Pacification police is designed to transform the spaces in state of ‘conflagrated war’ clustered in the central area of the city, which has a

\textsuperscript{37} There are some researchers that disagree with calling their deployment community policing, drawing a distinction between police of proximity and community policing, and claiming the UPP model is closer to the former. As this conceptual distinction does not have important implications for the discussion we are developing in this article, we opted not to address this debate and to consider the two terms as interchangeable.

\textsuperscript{38} Independently of how much of the model was actually ‘copied’ from other cases, considered examples of ‘best practices’, the measures adopted to fighting crime in Colombia were studied not only by the SESEG during the terms of Rosinha Garotinho and Sergio Cabral, but also by the officials of National Public Security Secretary. Secretary Beltrame himself said in interview that his team visited Colombia twice with that goal. The general coordinator of the UPPs and the State Secretary of Public Security rejected any kind of influence of the Army strategy in Haiti in the designing of the UPP model.

\textsuperscript{39} Interview with Captain Leonardo Zuma (2010: 345-346). The recurrence of this narrative in the interviews conducted for this research suggests that this is a deliberate rather than a spontaneous association.

\textsuperscript{40} Interview with Secretary Beltrame conducted for this research in August 24th 2011.
fragmented landscape, in opposition with the more homogenized configuration of other big cities, where the poor and violent areas are at the geographical margins.

5. Conclusion

In a preliminary analysis of these two trajectories, there are some important elements that are left for reflection. First, about the Pacification Force, it seems that it managed to consolidate itself without stirring much resistance in the communities that were targeted by the intervention. The first protests that got to the attention of the public opinion started to happen in September 2011, more than nine months after the deployment of the force. This was followed by a set of protests for the withdrawn of the Army and, for the first time, those pointing to the illegality of the operation, on the same grounds as the denouncements made for the occasion of the Operations Rio and Suffocation.

However, as of now, this seems not to have undermined the legitimacy of the Force. Yet in September, the government renewed its mandate. It will now stay in the Complexes of Penha and Alemão until March 2012. It is only now that a multi-phased withdrawn strategy is being planned, leaving room for the deployment of eight UPPs. What stays uncertain is in which measure this may set the trajectory of interventions from the Army in public security in a new chapter. Since the military dictatorship, and despite the redemocratization, the Brazilian elite still relies on the armed forces, and the Army in particular, as a very important mechanism of social control. With the Pacification Force, it could be moving towards the institutionalization of a more undisputed role inside the democratic world.

In what concerns the PMERJ, we can note a clear transformation of the political utility of the community policing tactics. When it was first tried in the 80’s, it was an open critique of the previous behavior of the police. It was the reflection of a political moment where the issue of the role of a Military Police in a democratic country that had just emerged from a military regime had to be addressed.

When re-appropriated by the UPP, it had a completely different function. Instead of proposing a reformulation of the whole institution, they accommodated

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41 Folha de São Paulo, September 4th 2011
42 Folha de São Paulo, September 6th 2011
43 Revista Veja, September 5th 2011
44 Folha de São Paulo, September 8th 2011
community policing as a focused technique with a specific spot to act upon. The rethinking of the community-society relations had no place in the design of the entire strategy.

This flexibilization is crucial because this is what allows community policing to be re-appropriated, as a technique, in a discourse of war. Recently, mrkva released a confidential cable sent by Dennis H. Hearne, currently U.S. Consul in Rio de Janeiro and that previously spent two years as a political adviser in Afghanistan. In the cable (from September 2009) Mr. Hearne describes the UPP program as a ‘Counter-Insurgency Doctrine’ that ‘comes to the Rio’s favelas’ and that shares ‘some characteristics with U.S. counter-insurgency doctrine and strategy in Afghanistan and Iraq’. Although clearly reflecting an American view of the situation, the comparison is made possible by the placing of the pacification police as a tactical move part of a war strategy.

The appropriation of the pacification discourse plays a key normative element exactly because addressing public security in Rio through an explicitly war-like discourse is a sensitive point to Brazilian politicians. So they conceived a strategy of war thought as an imperative of ‘legislating for peace’, bringing a set of tactical elements that could help stabilize the distinction between an unjust war and the ‘pacification’: community policing and an international peacekeeping framework. However, although in other contexts these elements are articulated in association with the notion of citizenship/humanity, here what is central is the re-appropriation of territory.

The idea of territory is very important for the whole conception of pacification and the convergence in the design of the strategies of the PMERJ and the Army. In former cases, the intervention of the army created a significant tension between the federal sphere and the State government; as well as between the army officers and the policemen that had to work under their command. But the pacification strategy puts the deployment of the two security agents in a spectrum of imposition of force that can be programmed in stages, where a certain level of emergency requires a force fit to provide the appropriate combination of hard and soft power. So one can see, in the case of the Complexes of Alemão and Penha, a clear 3-step strategy: a storm operation led by a light battalion to ‘take over’ the terrain; followed by the massive presence of the Army

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45 mrkva, cable from September 30th 2009, released September 30th 2011
Pacification Force, to ‘clean up’ the area and dissuade the residents into normalizing the activities inside the territory; and the future deployment of the Pacification Police to deepen the process of internalization of the norm with minimum force and consolidate their position with a tactic of proximity.

Finally, an element that is in an ambiguous position at this stage is the resilience of the image of the internal enemy. It doesn’t mean it hasn’t been resisted, but it shows remarkable flexibility. The analysis of the agendas of the SESEG and the PMERJ in this article suggests that the Pacification policy, despite having a territory-focused component that is implemented in opposition to a repressive tactic aimed at stigmatizing target populations and individuals, is not far from a new modality of counter-insurgency that fits not only the modernization of the strategy of fighting crime in Rio but is also instrumental to the politics of the legitimization of the Military Police in the scenario of public security in the city.

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