

UPPS AND THE “CRIMINALIZATION” OF FAVELAS

A Challenge to the Comprehension of the Notion of “Public Space” in Brazil

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*Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Criminology*

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This work is dedicated to all the people that live in favelas of Brazil.

*O morro não tem vez
E o que ele fez já foi demais
Mas olhem bem vocês
Quando derem vez ao morro
Toda a cidade vai cantar*

(Tom Jobim – O Morro Não Tem Vez)

Acknowledgements

This thesis, as the conclusion of my Master of Art's degree, was only possible due to the greatness and generosity of several people that I was fortunate enough to meet throughout my life. As it is impossible to mention all of them, I shall name only some of those that were an important influence to me.

I start by especially thanking Professor Daniel dos Santos for his work orienting me and for making possible my Masters at the University of Ottawa. Above all, his contribution and intellectual influence were fundamental to all the work that culminated in this thesis. He always found time to share his immeasurable knowledge when orienting me, which was essential for me to deal with the several difficulties I faced while studying, working and living in a completely new environment. He stimulated me or reprimanded me when I needed it. He taught me much more than the subjects I studied in class. His humility, alongside his grand gestures of wisdom and kindness, are an example for me as a student, researcher and, above all, a citizen.

I would like to express my gratitude to Flavio Serafini, Matheus Rodrigues, Henrique Vieira, Thiago Melo and Taiguara Souza for sharing their knowledge and their fight for justice and human rights in a better world.

I would like to thank the teachers that believed in me from the beginning: Lilza Soares and Mariangela Alvarenga, who instilled in me passion for writing, and my History teacher, Marcelo Freixo, who brought forth my nonconformist attitude. In other words, I would like to express my gratitude to the people who are dedicated to the noble profession of teaching, because they are part of what I am today.

Professor Roberto Kant de Lima was important for encouraging me to push further in my academic life. I owe him the support he gave me when taking my first steps in that universe. I also thank him for creating a space of academic excellence in the INEAC, where I met several other researchers, professors and students from universities around Brazil, all engaged in the betterment of the academic work. Amongst them, I name those that were closer to my walk: Lenin dos Santos Pires, Antônio Rafael Barbosa, Ana Paula Miranda, Fabio Reis Mota, Marco Antônio da Silva Mello, Edilson Márcio Almeida da Silva, Bóris Maia, Flávia Medeiros, Vinícius Cruz Pinto, Roberta Boniolo, Marcos Veríssimo, Frederico Policarpo, Kátia Mello, André Gil, Carolina Llanes, Felipe Berocan, Izabel Nunes, Letícia Luna, Jorge da Silva, Sabrina Solza da Silva, Marta Fernandez, Mauro Villar, Lucía Eilbaum, Virgínia Taveira and Claudio Salles. I must also express my gratitude to Lúcio Duarte and Solange Creton, for their work and competence so essential in making this collective effort a success. I must also thank the work and dedication of my professors from the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, and the support of my fellow students of the undergraduate program in Social Sciences.

I am thankful to Maria Amelia Medeiros, Jess Auerbach, Lais Daflon and Denise Brown for reading my text and for the advice they gave me.

I also would like to thank to those that took care of my health: Regina Céli, Fábio Barbirato, Jaques Finkielstejn and Durval Mota.

In this new phase of my life in Ottawa, Canada, I was privileged to have as professors Jean-François Cauchie, Colette Parent, Fernando Acosta, Jon Frauley, Álvaro Pires and Véronique Strimelle. All of them were always dedicated and willing to give the best of themselves to their students. As well, I thank professors Catherine Danforth, Michael Kempa, Steven Bittle and Prashan Ranasinghe who helped me during my first experience at the University of Ottawa in the winter of 2011, as an undergraduate student in the Student Exchange Program. This program was supported by the External Affairs Ministry of Canada, and under the supervision of Professor Daniel dos Santos.

I am also grateful to the professors with whom I worked as teacher assistant, Louise Fines and Dominique Robert, for their patience and training me as a TA.

The Department of Criminology at the University of Ottawa and my peers in the Criminology graduate program were also responsible for creating the conditions and the environment for the development and success of my MA studies.

I have faced several difficulties by choosing a new country to undertake my graduate studies. Several people helped me in this process of adaptation and I am thankful for the friendship of the Prazeres family, Farouk Kaspaules, Cécile Catalfo, Myriam Saboui, Antônio Marinho, Gabriel Estrela, Aline Mourão, Rafael Mascarenhas, Pier Angelli, Marcelo Campos, Mariana Raupp, Dominique Houle, Chanelle Sabourin, Karine Major, Val Poirier, Ann Morin, Marilene Maube, Maud Vanpaemel and Catherine Jouphe. The *Roda de Samba* was also important to bring Brazilian warmth to my cold Canadian nights.

I am very grateful to my partner, Júlia Silveira, for understanding my absence and giving me support through this extremely difficult period. Her love, partnership and support, sharing her insights, intelligence and, as always, her patience, were fundamental to me.

I am especially thankful to my beloved Luisa Silveira, Geraldo Araujo, Simone Silveira, Ligya Araújo and Maria das Graças for accepting me in their family with so much love and kindness.

I thank the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of the University of Ottawa for giving me an international admissions scholarship to help fund my MA studies.

My dos Santos and Daniel dos Santos devoted an immeasurable amount of time to me during my studies in Canada with solidarity. It would be unfair to only mention the reception that I had in their home and family. Generosity and kindness are some of the most valuable lessons that I have learned through this period of my life. Words cannot

express my gratitude to their unselfish dedication to me. The only thing they ever asked me in return was that I should work hard on my Master's. They also asked me to be someone different from the vanity and the selfishness that prevail in the world. With all my limitations, I will carry those values with me all my life. My and Daniel dos Santos opened the doors of their home for me in Canada, and, I would dare to say, the world. Through them and Patrick and Anh Thu, I would like to extend my gratitude to the whole family that gave me new meaning and reason to believe in friendship and family.

Finally I shall express my deep gratitude towards my family in Brazil. They gave me all the encouragement to come to Canada and to stay abroad. I thank João Raimundo and Sônia Rebel for their kindness and love for me, as well as for helping me with important History lessons, as the great professors that they are. I also thank my parents, Sandra Rebel and Edson Benigno, for all the support during struggles in my life and for contributing to my work. And last but not least, gratitude for my dear grandmother Rizza Rebel in the name of my whole family.

Abstract

Because of the high levels of violence practiced by the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro State (Brazil), especially if its lethality is taken into consideration, the Pacifying Police Units - *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* (UPPs) in Portuguese - were created in 2008 to work in some *favelas* (slums or shanty towns) of the state's capital, the city of Rio de Janeiro. This form of policing became the object of attention of several social scientists due to its apparently less violent action in these specific urban spaces, which are historically marked by a social stigma and constitute a special target for police action.

In this thesis, we analyze some of the research work that emphasized the *UPPs*' characteristics as possibilities for a new and less violent police. It is argued that, despite the features that make the *UPPs* to be apparently less violent, it is necessary to take into account several other aspects that sociologically explain the police action in Rio de Janeiro and the *UPPs*.

The social construction of Brazilian citizenship and public space affects the way Brazilians build the notion of equality between individuals and social groups, relating it to similarity between themselves and accepting as natural the unequal treatment given by the state's institutions. This legal and juridical culture, associated to the new economic and financial context that the city of Rio de Janeiro has been going through in the last years, refers to the necessity of state control over some *favelas* to be able to increase the value of such urban spaces, through land speculation, in order to achieve a surplus-value by implementing new economic and lucrative activities. This state policy is heavily based on "pacifying" the *favelas* through the politics of security, in which police play a major and important role.

Therefore, the thesis begins by offering an explanation of the Brazilian views of public space and citizenship, resorting to some social scientists studies that dealt with the specifics of those notions in Brazil. Then we elucidate how a documentary analysis was made explaining how the *UPPs* are understood in Brazil. Later, dissertating about the historical development of *favelas* and police in Rio de Janeiro, explaining the conjuncture in which the *UPPs* were implemented and how they are understood.

Yet, in our research, we consider that the *UPPs* are not breaking away from the paradigm of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro State, but using a different practice to give continuity to a traditional function of policing (repression) and a process that one could call of "criminalization" of *favelas*.

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1. Introduction

The state¹ of Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, has the police that kill more people than any other in the western world (Misse, 2013). Associated to the high level of police lethality, Brazil ranks now as the fourth biggest prison population in the world. On the one hand, intellectuals and social movements try to explain and to criticize this situation and the selectivity of the Brazilian criminal justice system, and on the other, certain segments of society and the mainstream media are constantly claiming for more repression and blaming the so called “organized crime”, especially the drug commerce and trafficking in the *favelas*² as responsible for such levels of violence. Despite the presence of the drugs’ commerce all over the city, the specific configuration that it gained in the *favelas* made those regions the main object of police violence.

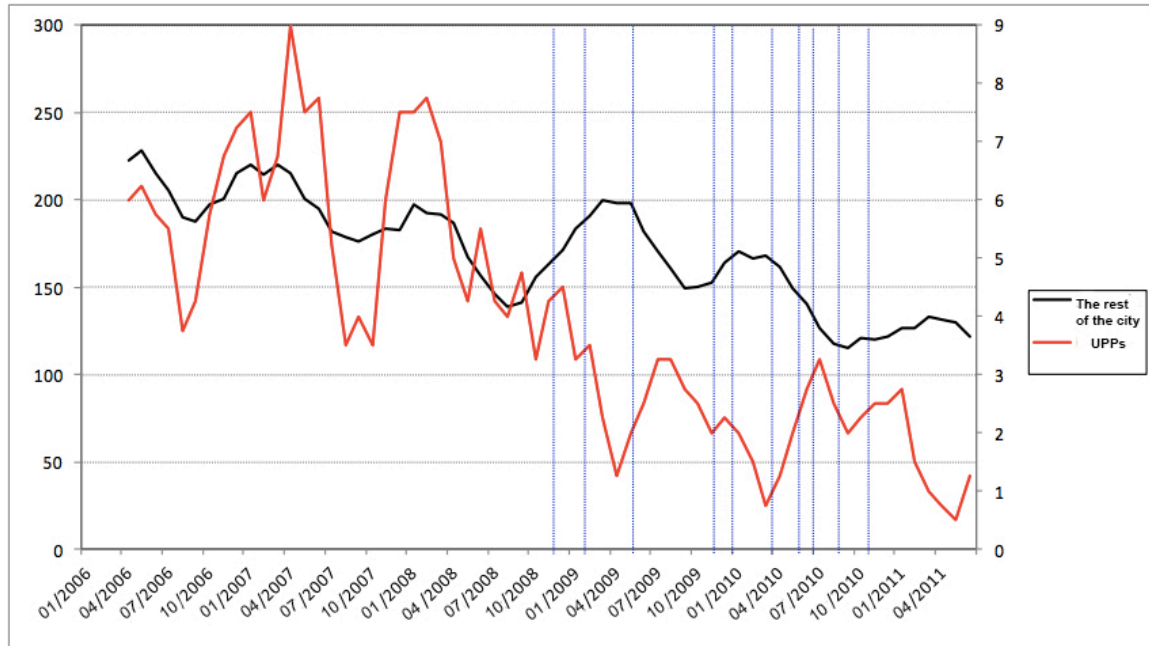
Amid this complex situation, the government of Rio de Janeiro introduced in 2008 a supposedly new mode of policing to act in *favelas* that became instantly extremely popular: the Pacifying Police Units (abbreviated as *UPPs*³). Presenting a less lethal practice than the traditional police (see graphic 1), and virtually ending the presence of drug dealers carrying heavy weapons in the *favelas*, the *UPPs* quickly began to receive compliments of intellectuals from all backgrounds, and especially from the mainstream media, constituting what Vera Malaguti Batista (2011) defined as “a macabre consensus”.

¹ Brazil is a Federative Republic. Its territory is divided in 26 states and the federal district with Brasília, as the capital of the country.

² *Favela* is used in Brazil to make reference to slums frequently found in urban areas and, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, often in the hills. The main characteristic of *favelas* is the precariousness of houses and the lack of urban infrastructure, and services.

³ *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* in Portuguese.

Graphic 1: Lethal victims of police action per month in the city of Rio de Janeiro:
comparison between *favelas* with and without *UPPs*.



Source: Institute of Public Security retrieved from Cano (Coord, 2012, p.39, Retrieved from: <http://riorealblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/relatc3b3riofinalcaf13.pdf> on 2014-06-10. The vertical lines represent the dates of implementation of *UPPs*.

To understand the *UPPs* requires a contextualization of the historical moment that the city of Rio de Janeiro is experiencing. Hosting part of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the World Youth Day⁴ celebrated by the Catholic Church, the 2016 Olympic Games and some international exhibits, this city, capital of the state with the same name, has “re-gained” some international importance, and thus is being urban and socially reconfigured to be able to allow the new economic circulation of goods and profits that such reconfiguration requires from its population. This new situation increases the pressure on

⁴ Retrieved from <http://worldyouthday.com/rio-2013> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

the city, its infrastructures and inhabitants, the *cariocas*, to become an even greater territory for consumption, but also responding to some citizens' demands that collective spaces should be protected against any threat from the massive investments, since it is well known that this sort of investments are destroying collective spaces. Lima, Pires and Ribeiro (n.d.) confirm that all these rearrangements transform Rio de Janeiro in a *commodity city* with a new political demand for security.

The *UPPs* are allegedly inspired by the principles of community policing⁵, with a strategy that avoids the traditional armed conflict between drug dealers and police or between the gangs of drug dealers, seem to be suitable for the new necessities of the *commodity city*. This understanding of *UPPs* as community policing is also found in some analysis:

The program also emphasizes the 'community policing' aspects that should be incorporated by new officers, encouraging them and, above all, the local commanders to build a close relationship with the community. (...) The overall message and government guidance is still one of building trust and respect between this new police and the community." (World Bank, 2012, October, p. 45)

There are two aspects that differentiate the *UPPs* from traditional policing: "(i) the proposition of permanent occupation in the *favelas*, without prediction of departure; and (ii) emphasis on the removal of firearms in *favelas* instead of the purpose of eradication of the drug commerce in those spaces" (Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012, p.10).

⁵ <http://www.upprj.com/index.php/faq>

This goal is expressed in the discourse of Rio de Janeiro's state security secretary, José Mariano Beltrame:

We cannot guarantee that we will put an end to drug trafficking nor do we have the pretention of doing so (...). [The idea is] to break the paradigm of territories that are controlled by traffickers with weapons of war. Our concrete objective is [to ensure] that a citizen can come and go [in a favela] as he pleases, that public or private services can get in there whenever they want." (Phillips, 2010, April 12).

Therefore, what distinguishes the *UPPs* from the more traditional Military Police is its permanence in the *favelas* – in opposition to the old configuration of the strategy of “war” against the drug commerce and trafficking, in which the police “invaded” the *favelas* and, after eventually engaging in shootings, left the place, as if it was the “enemy’s territory” – and the considerable reduction of armed conflicts in this kind of urban spaces.

It is hard to quantify the decreasing of violence rates due to the inaccuracy of the statistics provided by the Brazilian state, but the disappearance or absence of drug dealers holding heavy weapons in the *favelas* with *UPPs* is a significant data verified by multiple studies such as those that will be analyzed in the next chapters. Despite the short period of time since the beginning of the implementation of this policing as a state policy, some researchers observed a decrease in the occurrence of crimes, like homicide, and the confluence of those factors associated with the economic moment that Rio de Janeiro is going through. All of this made the *UPPs* to become heavily publicized in the media. It

seemed that the fear historically associated with the *favelas* in the city of Rio de Janeiro – and constantly influenced by the stratospheric rates of violence and by the sensationalist media (Silva, E.M.A, 2010) – was converted into a collective euphoria that saw in *UPPs* the possibility of a panacea to all the problems the city has faced.

Initially this dissertation intended to offer a critical analysis of the *UPPs* practices, trying to explain the contradictions that this sort of policing seemed to bear, with its purpose of integrating further the *favelas* into the city of Rio de Janeiro, in order to offer a criminological counterpoint to the social acclamation around *UPPs*. However, through my academic experience in the department of Criminology of the University of Ottawa, debating my object of study with colleagues and professors I started stumbling upon the difficulty to explain why the *UPPs* were so acclaimed in Rio de Janeiro.

In some of my public presentations about my research, after explaining what the *UPPs* are and how the Brazilian media describes them, I had to struggle to be able to offer a sociological explanation that would allow me to argue how and why this policing, despite some objective improvements in the perspective of the *favelados* - people who live in the *favelas* - gave continuity to the logic of repression and social segregation. I was surprised to find that, in opposition to what occurs in Brazil, the questions I had to face in Ottawa were often about why and how the population of Rio de Janeiro did not revolt against the *UPPs*. They could not understand, for example, the motivation that made a mother, which had two sons murdered by police, write a moving poem to the *UPP* commander, praising this *Police Unit* when it was implemented in the *favela* where she lives in (Rodrigues, 2012a, p.190).

This contrast between Brazil and Canada, referring to the ways of understanding this sort of policing, made me realize that I was taking as natural, a set of elements that inform the observation about *UPPs* in the society where I was socialized, and that created the *UPPs*. Therefore, through the debate with colleagues and professors, I was able to understand my “mistake” and to change my research.

I came to the conclusion that I could make a much richer work by explaining how a significant sector of the Brazilian society, and some of its intellectuals, came to understand the *UPPs* as a policy that is ending the social segregation in Rio de Janeiro. Therefore, the explanation about the construction of the “native notion” of *cidadania* (citizenship) and *espaço público* (public space) became key elements to contribute to the difficulty to understand this policy of state policing in continuity and as a component of what I called as *criminalization* of the *favelas*. It refers to a social process based on the stigma that these urban territories carry with them in Rio de Janeiro, which legitimizes a discriminatory treatment offered by the criminal justice system. This unequal distribution of the punitive state’s apparatus does not harm only the *favelas*, but became the homogeneous and derogatory common sense look over these social spaces, giving sense and justification to the violent state action against the people who live and inhabit them.

The Greek myth of Antaeus, son of Poseidon and Gaia (the personification of Earth) is an inspiration to this work. Extremely strong, Antaeus used to challenge and to kill all his contenders. When Hercules fought him, he realized that it was impossible to defeat Antaeus knocking him to the ground, what always made him to get up stronger. Thus, the son of Zeus perceived that, holding Antaeus aloft, and distancing him from the Earth, the son of Gaia lost his powers and, by doing that, Hercules was able to defeat the

unbeaten giant. Like Antaeus, the theoretical apparatus chosen for this research must be close to the Earth (the society studied) able to offer explanations for its specificities instead of distancing itself from it, losing its power.

The first chapter offers a theoretical explanation to the constitutions of the categories of *cidadania* (citizenship) and *espaço público* (public space) in Brazil, and its implication for everyday social life in Rio de Janeiro. The work of José Murilo de Carvalho will be our main resource, and articulated with the work of some other social scientists that offered a significant contribution to the understanding of those categories in Brazil.

The second chapter refers to the methodology used in this research. The method we chose is a deductive one, using theories able to describe the Brazilian *espaço público* (public space), and applying them to a document analysis that will help us to explain how these categories are perceived and articulated in the understanding and description of the *UPPs*.

The third chapter presents a sociological narrative about the historical constitution of the *favelas* and the police in Rio de Janeiro, in order to show how it became possible to legitimize an unequal treatment given by this institution as well as other institutions from the Brazilian state and even assimilated and accepted among Brazilian citizens, often justified by the stigma of those urban spaces. After what, the implementation of *UPPs* will also be presented and connected to the social context in which those special unities of policing appeared.

In the fourth chapter, the documents about *UPPs* are analyzed in contrast with official documents and the several media in which the notions about Pacifying Police Units are found.

Finally, it will be possible to conclude that, with its contradictions, the *UPPs*, with their relatively different practices in relation with Rio de Janeiro traditional Military Police, constitute the structure of the equipment of the *criminalization of the favelas*, but also serve as perspective for the development of a more democratic policy of conflict administration.

2. Theoretical Remarks

2.1 The Dilemma of the Brazilian Public Space

The enterprise for understanding the Pacifying Police Units as an element that constitutes the system of public security of Rio de Janeiro requires some relevant remarks about the specific Brazilian notion of public space. We shall resort to a theoretical framework that was developed around the heterodox notion of public space that prevails in Brazil, in order to explain the principles that orientate the Brazilian juridical culture nowadays. We will look forward to show how this notion influences the development of citizenship and juridical inequalities in the field of security policies of Rio de Janeiro State, and hindering the existence of public policies in this state. However, the local use of the notions of public space, citizenship, and republic, in the society we are studying, will not be understood as universal categories, but as social facts in the durkheimian sense (Durkheim, 1982): as something coercive, collective and external to the individual. Something produced by society.

Yet it is important to avoid a misunderstanding. To make myself clear, the goal of this theoretical exploration is not to assert that those categories are real in one society and fake in another, but to explain that they assume a specific meaning in the society we study. The following analysis is an effort to explain that, in Rio de Janeiro, when a police officer or a state governor uses the word “citizen”, they are talking about something completely different from what, for example, a police officer in London will understand by the same word. To explain the meaning of such categories as citizenship, public space,

and republic in Brazil, requires that we should be able to sociologically show how they were historically constructed.

To avoid the overlap of theoretical concepts that are rich in meanings, but are resignified in the social interactions we studied, the development of the notion of citizenship in Brazil will be analyzed in contrast with some classical theoretical models about citizenship, bringing into discussion, elements that exerted influence over its implementation in this country. Accordingly, the Brazilian sociologist José de Souza Martins (1994, as cited in Almeida, 2007) had some interesting insights about the importance of the recognition of those specificities:

Many talk about civil society and citizenship as if both of them were able to constitute themselves and to scatter with the vulgarization of two or three chapters of the French social thought classics. This naivety of the colonized mentality prevents us from seeing that we are not in France or in Europe. Citizenship is not the miracle of the easy speech. Where it is real and makes sense, citizenship was not produced by the wearisome repetition of the word that designates it. Citizenship was produced by radical conflicts that affected society in its roots. (...) As a matter of fact, we (Brazilians) are far from a society of citizens. Our historical traditions and our historical unsolved dilemmas push us dangerously in another direction (p.12)⁶

⁶ Our translation.

Therefore, the notion of public space that prevails in Brazilian society, as it will be demonstrated, is not the one of a space regulated by the collectivity where the sum of individuals, regardless their differences or subjectivities, rule democratically according to the common interest. This Brazilian traditional notion of public space as the space ruled by the state is connected to the local peculiar notion of citizenship.

2.2 A peculiar notion of citizenship

There is a vast set of theoretical work that discusses how the notion of citizenship is understood in Brazil. One of the most important of them was developed by José Murilo de Carvalho (1980a, 1980b, 1989, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2003) and will be borrowed, adapted and articulated with several other theoreticians serving as an important source of inspiration to this chapter and to our research.

One of the classical theoretical contributions about the sociological concept of citizenship is found in Marshall's **Citizenship and Social Classes** (Marshall, 1950). In his book, Marshall presents the rights and duties that he considered inevitable in order to achieve the condition of citizenship.

He divides the concept of citizenship in three parts - civil, political and social rights – that were progressively constructed within the historical development of English society. The English people introduced civil rights in the eighteenth century. These were the rights that should guarantee individual freedom: the right to come and go at will, the right to acquire property, the right to enforce rights in courts, freedom of press, etc. Freedom to enforce rights in court is especially important because it guarantees the possibility of equality of rights with other citizens.

Only one century later, after the diffusion of those rights, political rights were developed and introduced. They consisted of the right to participate in political activities as a member of institutions invested of political power or as an elector.

Another hundred years were necessary for the elaboration of social rights. They relate to the rights for free collective bargaining over wages and better working conditions, for unemployment and health insurance, and general guarantees to appropriate living conditions.

However, José Murilo de Carvalho (2003) warns that the attempt to narrate this history solely by its chronological aspect can induce the observer to a serious simplification. The consequence can be the conclusion that the implementation of citizenship in Brazil is only a matter of time. A teleological look over the history of those three rights in England tends to impose difficulties, because it necessitates the awareness that this process took place in stages, with several contradictions. Nowadays they may seem inseparable, but accordingly to Marshal, they were unified constituting the modern notion of citizenship due to several struggles throughout history. Therefore, the difference between the Brazilian notion of citizenship and the British one is that, in England the introduction of a right was coupled to the implementation of another: the implementation of civil rights made possible the vindication for political rights and, thenceforth, the social rights came.

In Brazil, those rights were not the outcome of social struggle. They were “donated” according to the will of governments. The proclamation of the Brazilian Republic in 1889 – that made the subjects become “citizens”, at least according to the law – was not conducted by a process of popular uprisings, but through an agreement made

by the elites that were discontented with the economic situation of the Empire that centralized resources in Rio de Janeiro displeasing, for example, coffee farmers from the province of São Paulo, one of the main emergent groups that would assume the power in the Republic (Carvalho, 1980a).

The adoption of direct elections, to replace the indirect ones in the end of the Brazilian imperial age, is a historical comedy episode that reveals how the creation of rights is disconnected from the popular achievements. This event, one of many that were to shape the Republic, took place in 1881. Before that, around 10% of the population were able to participate indirectly in the elections for Parliament. The criterion for a man to become a voter (women did not have the right to vote until 1932) was his income, which was measured by the amount of his properties. With the implementation of direct elections, the condition for an individual to become a voter was to be literate. With this advent, the percentage of voters was reduced from 10% of the population to only 1% of it. With the proclamation of Republic there was an increase to 2% of the population. It means that there were less literate people than "*padrone*" (people with the minimum amount of lands) at the time. The advent of the Republic in Brazil was linked to a series of changes to allow the situation to remain the same (Love, 1970).

Before being a right, voting was a social function (Carvalho, 1987). It was granted only to those who were not interested in radical social changes, excluding the majority of the population. It is important to remember that slavery was only legally abolished in 1888, one year before the proclamation of the Republic, and that former slaves could not afford education. The Republican Constitution was even more exclusionary on this subject, because it removed from its text the obligation for the government to offer basic

education to the population. Consequently, political citizenship, in its Brazilian version, required a condition that only the civil right to education could provide and, at the same time, this right was denied to the population.

The slavery system is a key-element to understanding the difficulties of the development of universal rights in Brazil. In spite of the resistance undertaken by the abolitionist movements, the country was the last one in the continent to abolish it. And Brazil was created by an act signed by Princess Isabel, daughter of Emperor Pedro II, Regent of the Brazilian Empire. This was due to several external influences and to the changes in the internal labor market that were turning slave labor into something costly. The slaves did not have basic civil rights such as the right to physical integrity, freedom, and even to their own lives. The abolition of slavery did not ensure access to social and political rights; if it had, the slaves would have become the majority of those that would be called citizens with the proclamation of the Republic (Fonseca, 1973).

It is also incorrect to state that the landlords were citizens in the classical meaning of the term. Even if they were free, had the right to vote and all the guarantees to their integrity, they did not have the notion of equality under the law that is fundamental for the conception of citizenship.

The desire for freedom did not mean necessarily that the values of individual freedom, as the base of civil rights, had great importance in Brazil. Despite the existence of a strong movement against slavery that repudiated this economic system and its implications, in some cases, even if the slaves could afford their freedom, the possibility to acquire slaves was admitted. Hence, according to Carvalho (1987) the values attached to slavery were socially admitted in great part.

With the English attacks against the ships that brought slaves to Brazil, a law that banned the slave trade was created in the same year that the law 601 of September 18th, 1850, also known as Land Tenure Act. This law regulated private property in Brazil for the first time. It meant that the landowners, anticipating the abolition, decided to take the necessary measures to avoid that future former slaves would be able to have their own properties (Gadelha, 1989). The process that culminated in the slavery abolition in Brazil was influenced in some proportion by the legislators concerned with the conservation of the social structure of the time.

Yet, José Murilo de Carvalho does not intend to allege that there is only one way to build citizenship. His reading of Marshall's sociology about the implication of the struggle between social classes to constitute citizenship is a suggestion of a comparative perspective to exemplify how the concept of public space was appropriated and resignified in Brazil. He recognizes that some other countries as the United States of America, France and Germany followed their own way. But in Brazil social rights started to be implemented during the dictatorship headed by the President Getúlio Vargas (1933-1945), when the political rights were suppressed and the civil rights were being attacked. Voting was allowed and political rights were "expanded" when another dictatorship (1964-1985) dominated the country, and the institutions of political representation were only "decorative" because political parties were considered illegal (only two were allowed), parliamentary opposition mandates were canceled by the government that also decided to choose, with no elections, who should run the Congress, some of the states and cities' governments. And, even in the present time, the civil and social rights are still unaffordable to a significant portion of the population.

Carvalho argues that, without popular participation, this process of rights implementation tends to be commanded by institutions that set laws with no meaning for the society in which they are supposed to exist. In Brazil, this institution is the state and, therefore, the notion of public space, instead of referring to a territory controlled collectively by the citizens, is understood as a space that belongs to the state.

One of the outcomes of this heterodox republican transition is the formation of the *Coronelismo* (Carvalho, 1980b), a political system that was constructed with the decline of the Empire and its political centralization. With this system, (that only in the decade of 1930 started to be reconfigured in the dictatorship headed by Getúlio Vargas, who in a symbolic act burned the flags of all the Brazilian states) the big landlords that used to be popularly called *coronéis*, (colonels in English) spread across the country, settled a local control, and supported the president of the Republic. Unlike the Empire, when the political and economical power were more concentrated around the crown, the Federation influenced the formation of a complex web of mutual interests between local power (the *coronéis* supporting their state governors and city mayors) and central power (the federal government supported by the governors, that were supported by the *coronéis*), and in which the local landlords had great control over the political and social life (Carvalho, 1997).

In those huge farms, the law was created and executed by the *coronéis* who controlled the right to property; the right to come and go; the protection of physical integrity, etc. The elections were also under their authority. They could punish someone for not voting according to their will. Therefore with the control over civil life, political

freedom was impossible to achieve even before the elections⁷. During *Coronelismo*, the national political system was based on the bargains between *coronéis* – exercising control over public positions gained from the governors - from the school teacher to the police chief - and governors themselves. And among governors who gave support to the presidents of the Republic who, in exchange, admitted the governors' control over the states.

The denial of the human condition in the slave system, the aversion to the action of law in the latifundia, and a state committed with private power are three important inheritances that the Brazilian Republic perpetuated from the ancient colonial regime, as they are still well alive in the present times.

To explain how the notion of citizenship lost its sense in its appropriation in Brazil, Carvalho (2001), created the neologism *estadania*, a mix of the words *Estado* (state in Portuguese) and *cidadania* (citizenship in Portuguese) describing what went on in Brazil. Unlike some countries that promoted bourgeois revolutions (as, for example, England, United States and France) defeating the monarchies, and imprinting its values in the political system, putting the emphasis of the idea of citizenship in the individual and promoting guarantees against the oppression and active control by the state, requiring that states be accountable to its population, or like in countries such as Germany, where the notion of citizenship was established with the active role of the state incorporating

⁷ *Cabresto* (halter in Portuguese) vote is the name that historians use to designate the electoral system that prevailed through *coronelismo*. With the *cabresto* vote the *coronéis* used their power to control the electorate to vote on their candidates. Since the vote was not secret it was something simple to do by buying the votes or using violence to guarantee it (Porto, 2000). Therefore, voting did not represent the democratic participation of individuals in politics. It was more a tool to measure the power of local landlords.

citizens, in Brazil, the idea of citizenship is associated with state control. In Carvalho's (1997) words:

Our (Brazilian) state, despite the inclusion of elements from the Iberian tradition in its ideology, cannot be stuck to any other tradition of active civil life. This state is not a public power guarantor of rights for all, but a trap of economic groups and citizens that, with it, weave a complex web of private distributions of public goods. And this is what I call *estadania*.
(p.2)⁸

Despite its similarities with the German model, the Brazilian process incorporated the social inequalities existing in society in its laws, the judicial system and law enforcement, as we will show in the case of the police in Rio de Janeiro (Carvalho, 1996).

This understanding does not mean however that, in those other countries, police and courts treats everybody equally, but that in the Brazilian legal and juridical culture, the idea of the differentiation in the implementation and formulation of the law finds legitimacy in society in a particular way. Unlike in some other justice systems where, broadly speaking, it is possible to see that some kinds of acts and behaviors easily escape the selectivity of the criminal law (Glasbeek, 2002; Wacquant 2009; Robert, 1995), in Brazil it is the social *status* of the person that will exert influence over his or her performance in “public spaces” and, therefore, over the selectivity of law enforcement (DaMatta, 1991).

⁸ Our translation

It is possible to see some similarities between the so-called public space in Brazil and in France, as object of comparison. In both of them, public space must be submitted to general rules instead of local rules, and the minorities (afro descendants in Brazil and immigrants in France, for example) are segregated while equality is expressed formally. The law that did not have the popular mobilization of citizens in its genesis will supposedly be applied with equality to all (Lima, 1999).

The difference between the French system and the Brazilian one is that in Brazil the recognition of inequality is manifested explicitly in daily life, through the ritual use of the question “Do you know who you’re talking to?”⁹ and even in laws that offer different “rights” to supposedly special people¹⁰.

An explanation about the dilemma of the Brazilian public space is given by the theory of the parallelepiped and pyramid (Lima, 2000). The society characterized as a

⁹ “Do you know who you’re talking to?” is a question used in the so-called Brazilian public space when a conflict appears and someone resorts to his or her social status guaranteed by his or her personal relations. This question eliminates the conflict because depending on who is the person that uses this sentence and the people that he or she knows, in other words, the capital of the personal and affective relations, there is a difference of social status of the person. Therefore, if, for example, a policeman finds a car in an irregular situation and try to give a fine, the owner can make the question “*Do you know who you’re talking to?*”. It will mean that the rule will not be applied in this case, because he can use his connections to not pay the fine and even to harm the policeman. This interrogation is the opposition of “*Who do you think you are?*” used in societies where the idea of equality of treatments prevails (DaMatta, 1979).

¹⁰ The idea of inequality in Brazil is so complex that, despite the Federal Constitution affirming that everybody is equal under the law, there are laws that offer privileges and different treatment for people. It is the case of the law of special prison (article 295 of the Penal Code) that states that people with university degree, governors, ministers, etc. cannot be in jail with “common people”. Another privilege stipulated by the law is the *foro privilegiado* (privileged forum in English) that guarantees that people who occupy important positions in the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary cannot be judged by the “common” justice. The several attempts to put an end to these unconstitutional expedients ended up with the inclusion of new categories to receive such privileges (Mendes, 2004).

parallelepiped, the base corresponds to the top. In this model all the elements are founded initially the base of the parallelepiped and, according to their performance and merit, supposedly all of them can reach the top. The difference between the individuals does not mean an unequal treatment. The quantity of the resources limits the quantity of individuals that can reach the top. Therefore, the resolution of conflict is something important to maintain the order, because different individuals are formally equal, and this is expressed through the administration of conflict. A well-known example of a society that shares those beliefs is the United States.

In the pyramidal model, different parts that complement each other comprise society. The top is smaller than the base and conflict represents a threat to the existing order, putting at risk the totality of the social hierarchy. This structure depends on the maintenance of the inequalities. Therefore, the resolution of conflicts is not the suppression of inequalities but the maintenance of it. The idea of equality is associated to the similarities between the members of the same level of the pyramid. A well known example of this kind of hierarchical society is India and its caste system (Dumont, 1980).

Accordingly, Brazilian society is defined as the overlap between the parallelepiped and the pyramid. “In this public space ambiguously defined, the form of the law enforcement, literal and universal, of the local rules coexists with the tradition of the particularized implementation of general rules always depending on the interpretation of those in the summit of the pyramid”¹¹ (Lima, 2000, p.121).

Using the analytical strategy of generalizations, as those proposed by the Weberian concept of *ideal type* (Weber, 1949), a comparative interpretation of the

¹¹ Our translation.

different notions of public space and public services in Brazil and the United States can help us put into light the specificities of the Brazilian notion of Republic.

In the Brazilian political culture, the defense of public services (as health care, education, etc.) is not an element that can be used to distinguish the politicians' ideological position because all ideological strands express, in their discourses, the understanding that those services are the responsibility of the state, that it should be freely offered to the population. In the United States of America, the defense of the gratuity of public services like universal health care is an element that can help to define the ideological group of the candidate. It is safe to say, at least to the common sense, that a conservative candidate tends to be against a universal plan of health care. In the USA, unlike in Brazil, it is not expected that all the candidates from different parties and ideologies share the position in favor of gratuity of such services. We shall refer later on to the fact that the notion of public space is interpreted differently in both of these societies, and how this difference explains the contrast described above.

In Brazil, candidates to public positions, from the extreme right to the extreme left, historically promise investments in free public health care and public education, even if those promises are not fulfilled, as it often happens. In Brazil and in some other countries, public universities, for example, do not charge tuition fees to their students. They are 100% free all over the country and, even if state governors attempt to abolish its gratuity and to decrease its quality, they always make promises that they are going to invest more in it. This contradiction between the speech and the practices of Brazilian politicians is obviously not a specificity of Brazil and can be explained by several factors. The peculiarity of interest for this analysis is the Brazilian and virtual consensus around

this gratuity that causes estrangement in countries like the United States and Canada, that sustain an economic situation much more comfortable than the Brazilian one, but that normally charge for the University education.

In the United States, for example, the proposition of the presidential candidate Barack Obama to create a universal health plan provoked several protests around the country¹². He was accused, among a lot of other things, of being a “socialist”. In Brazilian society, a simple protest against public health care would be something absolutely exotic. As in the case of public universities, several elements influence these differences, and certainly several countries have health systems and university systems similar to either the Brazilian or to the American one. But the use of those examples is interesting for this analysis because in the United States the defense of a universal plan of public health care is indicative of the political position of the candidate. The defense of universal health care tends to be associated to a liberal political position and its reprobation tends to be associated to a more conservative position.

On one side, it seems difficult for a North American to understand that the conservative Brazilian politician, who defends universal health care and free universities, is not less conservative than the right wing in the United States; on the other, it is equally difficult for a Brazilian to understand how the North American poor elector can give his vote to a candidate that does not defend universal health care and free universities. But one of the strongest elements, that influence that those situation are taken as natural in each empirical situation, is their different notion of public space. The Brazilian notion of

¹² The Telegraph (2009, August 12) Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/6015009/Barack-Obamas-health-care-plans-turn-nasty-as-angry-crowds-protest-outside-town-hall-meetings.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

public space as a property of the state influences politicians - even those who advocate for a downsizing of the state - to defend in their campaigns the gratuity of public education in all levels, and universal health care. As public space was never understood as something shared by the collective, but as a set of goods under the paternalistic state control, the proposition to suppress social care would mean the denial of those that “possess” these resources to share some of it with the population. That is why in Brazil, the defense of the gratuity and quality of universal health care and public education is not a criterion, in a general way, to differentiate the candidates ideologically.

In Brazil, one of the few public institutions that kept its undeniable superior quality in relation to the private one is public university. However, not all students get the chance to enter these universities. The criterion to select the students that will have the right to study for free in a better university is an exam called *vestibular*. Only a minority of students with better grades will have this privilege. The consequence of it is that, in a general way, the wealthiest do not pay for their public and better universities, while the most deprived of financial resources will have to pay for their shoddy undergraduate studies if they want to have a college degree. Some argue that *vestibular* is an unfair process of selection, because the great majority of the population cannot afford to study in private schools to be prepared to have a good performance in the *vestibular*, which means that there is no equality of opportunities before the exam that is equally applied to all. The inversion of this thought could be a concept that orientates the sense of equality that leads the American poor voter to dislike the idea of universal health care in the United States. With their bourgeois belief that the inequalities of opportunities from the colonial system were defeated with the violent war for the conquest of their

independence¹³, there is an equality of opportunities and, therefore, it is fair that only people who know how to use their freedom in the “free market” in the right way can afford good health care and education.

There are several social movements that fight for policies of quotas for the Afro descendants and the poorest people in the *vestibular* (Bittar, 2006). When the inequality is perceived, it becomes fair to provide unequal treatment that compensates it. When there is equality between the individuals – as in the idea of capitalist free market according to Adam Smith (1981) that asserts that the individuals must look for well being without states interference – it may seem unfair to offer to people that had the same chances, free access for something that they did not endeavor to have.

In the United States the notion of public space as something that belongs to the collective is central in defining the ideological position of the group that will be against or in favor of a universal health care system. In a general way, the idea is that they will dispute how money should be spent for the collectivity. Certainly, in both situations, the tax collection generates discontentment, but in the situation where the public is understood as the sum of all, the sense of collectivity will lead to other disapprovals in those against the universal health care. There is a bourgeois belief that the access to such service must be the responsibility of the individual that competes in the free market, and that this freedom to act will guarantee or not their capacity to afford health plan. Therefore, the dramatic situation of the United States, where a significant amount of people does not have access to health care, is naturalized by those who share this belief. Because the failure to have a health plan is a consequence of the use of the individual

¹³ Unlike in Brazil, where independence was made through an expensive financial agreement between the Portuguese emperor – that remained in power after it –and the metropolis.

supposed freedom in the market. According to this notion, those who could not afford health care either made bad decisions or did not have the necessary amount of struggle to be able to guarantee a better situation. Hence, the equal status can justify the inequalities in this notion of market society.

The Brazilian notion of public space will exert influence over the comprehension that the lack of health care for the population is a consequence of neglect of governments who were too greedy, incompetent or corrupt to offer such services to the people. But unlike other countries, like England, where there is also a public health system, in Brazil the terrible situation of the public hospital is understood as a problem that affects only the poor. It is not a problem that concerns directly the middle class and the wealthiest because they do not have even the expectation of using the public system. It is as if, in Brazil, the public hospitals do not need to be good. Theoretically, they need to be good enough, and often they are not, to the expected standards of those that need it, while the rest of the population will have an expensive health treatment that reproduces their differences in relation to those that received the social heritage of the slavery, *coronelismo*, etc.

The acknowledgement of this difference does not mean to understand that to have a bad health system is worse than to have no public health system at all. The inference here proposed is that the system will only be public when it will be formulated for the totality of the population. When those policies are made taking the whole population as the target, they will be different. They will be public. And then the word citizen, will have another meaning in Brazil.

It is not a limitation of budget that precludes the implementation of public policies in the terms here presented. Since, in the case of the police, for example, millions have been spent with machine guns, cars, bullet proof trucks, and even bullet proof helicopters used illegally to hunt people and, at the same time, there is almost no investments in politics of ombudsman, human rights, etc. (Souza, 2008) because the police is historically formulated, in a general way, not to protect the population but as a possible instrument of repression against the “others” in a society marked, not by an inequality generated by the market, but by another one that comes before it, separating people in different social and juridical *status*.

If the values to understand as inappropriate to treat a noble as a commoner are not overcome with the proclamation of the Republic - made by the elites who were unhappy with the centralized power of the Empire - and if there is no popular participation, the old notion of equality remains, turning citizenship into a strange and sophisticated word that was appropriated by the “new” system, but without its essential meaning because society still remains divided in *status*.

What is more astonishing for a foreigner is the statement that in the Brazilian notion of equality, it does not seem unfair to give a worse treatment to someone with a lower social status. All the politicians defend public health care and all the governors affirm to be proud of it, but all of them use the private system, because the public one is understood almost as a charity for the poor. With few exceptions, for instance, public universities, where several strikes and routine protests by its personnel have been able to guarantee the quality for the minority approved through the *vestibular*, public services in Brazil (including social rights) were created by a paternalistic state controlled by a

populist dictator and, therefore, they were made to be good for the poor. It means that their terrible quality is understandable, not because there is no money enough to build a better system, but instead, it was created to satisfy only a portion of the population who never had social rights, in order to avoid the progress of popular social movements. That is why the same government who created those rights banned the communist party, chased its members, imprisoned, tortured and killed union members, etc. (Skidmore, 1988). If in the United States the idea of public health care is associated with the left, in Brazil it was implemented by a president who sent Jewish communists to concentration camps in Germany (Morais, 1993; Carneiro, 2001).

The social process that culminated in the Proclamation of Republic in Brazil did not intend to extinguish the privileges and inequalities from its ancient state structure. However, from our perspective, one should not understand citizenship as something associated to the state's political configuration. So, in order to avoid confusions between the "native" categories and the sociological concepts used in this analysis, the word citizenship (*cidadania* in Portuguese), citizen (*cidadão* in Portuguese) and public (*público* in Portuguese) will not be translated from Portuguese when they are referred to how they were and are appropriated in Brazil.

Citizenship, the concept found in the Sociology of Marshall (1950) is completely different from *cidadania*, something institutionally defined as a set of rights and duties that change with the successive Republican Constitutions in Brazil and that are applied unevenly to the Brazilian *cidadãos*. Consequently, *cidadão* is what the former subject became after the proclamation of the Republic in 1889. It is a person devoid of privileges and personal relations, which would guarantee differential treatment in a society divided

by social and juridical hierarchies. A citizen is someone who, despite his or her idiosyncrasies, is treated with equal opportunities in a society where there is universal access to social, civil and political rights. *Público* space is the space controlled and regulated by the Brazilian State where the goods are distributed unevenly according to the personal relations of those who can have access to it.

Consequently, it is difficult to imagine the possibility of constructing public policies in Brazil if the Republic does not become something public instead of *público*. It is necessary to turn the *público* space in a space where everybody understands everybody as equals in order to disseminate rights instead of privileges.

Still, the perception of this sociological reasoning that leads José Murilo de Carvalho (2001) to develop the concept of *estadania* is not clear for the Brazilian people when they are using the word *cidadão* in their daily lives. Something similar occurs in some countries guaranteeing in the law the religious freedom, but that oppress some people according to their religion, justifying it with as a precaution against terrorism, for instance. In this example, the law enforcement agents do not necessarily believe that they are acting in contradiction to the law and, sometimes, neither the justice system understands it as an illegal act. The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu (1989) offers support to understand this behavior explaining it as an incorporation of social structures in the process of socialization. In other words, the agents exert a structuring power, a symbolic power that constructs reality, because they were structured - learned, naturalized and reproduced - in society recreating concordances and meanings through communication and repetition. Thus, there are several elements that constitute symbolically the idea of

freedom of religion, that are not expressed in the law but that are subjectively present in the way that people in society understand it.

3. Methodology

3.1 A Qualitative Research

Although some quantitative works are used in this analysis, this research is essentially qualitative. Instead of deepening in the discussion about the issues between quantitative and qualitative research, it is important to make clear that the qualitative approach was chosen according to the problem of research about the notion of public space that orientates the implementation of *UPPs* and the kind of analysis here undertaken studying other studies about *UPPs*.

Hence, the theoretical apparatus presented in the previous chapter was used in a deductive reasoning (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009) – as a logical process in which the conclusion assumes some general premises departing from a more general information to get to a more specific one -, using the concepts of *estadania* to decipher the dilemmas of Brazilian *espaço público* (public space), to then narrow it down to an hypothesis: the way in which the *UPPs* are evaluated and perceived through the reproduction (in different intensities) of the notion of *cidadania* (separating the individuals in different social status) hinders the perception of *UPPs* as a policy that, despite its alleged advance towards a relatively less violent policing, is enrolled in the ensemble of policies that give continuity to a process we will call *criminalization of favelas*.

3.2 Intersections between theory and methodology

The use of the theoretical apparatus does not mean that this research assumes naively that the adoption of new concepts is capable to transform this reality. However,

the way in which the individuals understand and culturally categorize the elements of social life has objective results in their lives. For example, the use of the Brazilian Army against its own people - what would be inconceivable in some other Western countries - as it has been happening in the *favelas*, or the social acceptance of massacres of individuals promoted by the police in those same places, are only possible because the people from *favelas* are *cidadãos* (citizens) and not “special” people. When they are recognized as people with a different status, a different treatment becomes socially legitimated. People only say “Do you know who you’re talking to?” because they know that they will have real privileges when they trigger their social status in Brazil.

The transformation of society must be understood as a dialectic process. Marx and Engles (1970) criticized the conservative proposition of the Young Hegelian German philosophers as they believed they could change life in society by simply replacing the ruling ideas by other thoughts considered liberating and true. The renovation of thought in itself is not able to change society according to Marxist thought. In the theoreticians’ words:

In direct opposition to German philosophy which came down from heaven to earth, we here intend to rise from earth to heaven — that is we will not start from what people say, imagine, represent to themselves, nor from thought-of, represented or imagined people, in order to arrive afterward at bodily people; we will start from really acting people, and try to deduce from their actual life-process the development of these ideological images and reflections of that life-process. For these misty formations in

the brains of people are necessary sublimations of their material, empirically ascertained life-process, which is bound up with material conditions. In this way morals, religion, metaphysics, and other forms of ideology, lose their apparent independence. (Marx & Engels, 1970, p.10).

If the word “material”, in the passage above, is understood as something produced by human activity (“really acting people”) it is possible to avoid a positivist interpretation of this enunciation accepting the idea of men, not as an universal ontological data, but as historical subject, an individual that can only be explained in relation to the cultural construction of his life. Therefore, to change the way people understand and explain their lives, it is necessary to change the way they interact, and those changes cannot be separated from each other. They are a historical dialectic process.

It is assumed that a transition from *cidadania* to something that presents the values of citizenship cannot be made only deciphering and explaining the meanings of those ideas. It can also be assumed that to understand *cidadania* as equivalent to the concept of citizenship is to deny the historical and cultural formation of this category in Brazil, and this limited interpretation may cause difficulties to think about multiple possibilities of interactions in this society.

Therefore, to analyze state policies in Brazil as a synonym of public policies implies understanding privileges as rights; unequal treatment as something justifiable and natural; the *UPPs*, as it will be shown, as public policies.

Following this reasoning, the theoretical apparatus of this research will be used, not to impose an ethnocentric superior alleged truth, but to reflect and denaturalize

categories that are founded and peculiarly used in Brazilian society, and reproduced and taken as natural by some scientific analysis (as it will be made in the next chapters) demonstrating how this naturalization implies in those studies.

In order to provide an explanation about how the categories studied are understood and defined in the cultural realm where the *UPPs* act, we shall rely on a relativist perspective starting with the idea that the cultural systems must be observed avoiding preconceived parameters so that ethnocentric perspectives are precluded. Thus, the study must avoid to privilege one specific and external point of view and the description must take into consideration the characteristics of the studied society instead of the values of the researcher, or what the researcher thinks to be universal. The cultural integrity and the native system of values must be respected in order to escape from an ethnocentric and normative perspective that intend to define the object of study according to notions that are not shared in the social relations occurred in the social daily life analyzed (Boas, 1974; Benedict, 2005; Geertz, 1973). Hence, through the use of this perspective typical to anthropologists a description about how the society “understands” itself is adopted to the detriment of a narrative that intends to classify and categorize this society according to outer parameters.

If the Brazilian native categories are reproduced on analysis about the Brazilian society, social, political or civic rights become understood as an attribution of the state instead of something constructed by society in the public space. Consequently, a researcher that is using the native perception about those rights will tend to explain the implications of the *UPPs* to the development of citizenship according to the symbolic structure (Bourdieu, 1989) that orientates the social construction of the *cidadania*. In the

same way, an analysis familiarized with the classical notion of citizenship (Aristotle, 1984) will face several difficulties to understand how Brazilian society often accepts the so called public policies that apparently fragment and segregate such society, because it will be hard to understand that the hierarchies exist and are not constructed only in the state's law. This notion (of citizenship) is constructed in society, reproduced by the law – as “structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends” (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53) – and sometimes even expressed in the law. This peculiarity can be observed in the speech of some people like Ruy Barbosa (1980) – one of the major Brazilian jurists who, as a politician, was essential for the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil – who expressed quite clearly the notion of equality that prevails in Brazilian society:

The rule of equality consists only in unequally rewarding unequals according to the measure of their inequality. It is in this social inequality proportional to the natural inequality where is found the true law of equality. All else are just frenzies of envy, pride, or madness. To treat equally the unequals, or to treat unequals with equality, would be flagrant inequality and not real equality. The human appetites conceived the inversion of the universal order of creation intending not to give to each one what

they are worth, but to attribute the same to all as if all would have the same value (Barbosa, 1980, p.50)¹⁴

This notion of equality remains deeply embedded in dominant Brazilian values. It is one of the elements that help us to understand how and why the high levels of police lethality “are accepted” in Rio de Janeiro (Misse, 2013), particularly when the victims are “merely” *cidadãos*. In terms of civility, when their human dignity is not socially accepted, it is as if they were already socially dead before police kill them. This research will be guided by this theoretical notion over the native perception that understands *cidadania* not as process developed by social members in their relations, but as something that the state gives or concedes to people who do not have privileges. An *UPP*'s policeman talking to a researcher about the police action in *favelas* expressed this idea: “Sooner or later those people (who live in favelas with *UPPs*) will learn to live better, to communicate and then they will learn what it is to have *cidadania*” (Nascimento, 2013, p.10).

3.3 Documentary analysis

In order to explain how the naturalization of native categories influences a specific way to understand and legitimize the *UPPs*, we decided to undertake an analysis of documents that seemed significantly related to our analytical categories (Cellard, 1997). As the Units of Pacifying Police of Rio de Janeiro Military Police came into existence in December of 2008, the quantity of academic research on this subject was relatively limited, thus facilitating the bibliographical sample survey we initiated covering the period starting in the year 2008 until 2013.

¹⁴ Our translation.

The preliminary analysis consisted in a critical evaluation of the documents. Our purpose was to understand how the notion of *espaço público* (public space) influences, with more and less intensity, the analyses that legitimize the *UPPs* as a more democratic policy. This meant look in works of research on the *UPPs* that “naturalized” the category of *espaço público*. Hence, our research is not about the studies that demonstrate an intention to legitimize the state violence in the *favelas* of Brazil – Rio de Janeiro included – and that understand the “war on crime” as an ontological data.

After this first stage, we chose for our analysis three main sets of studies that presented the characteristics described above, and that covered several aspects (cultural life in *favelas* with *UPPs*, the relation between police and community, the changes - or lack of them – in violent criminal rates, etc.) of the *UPPs* while presenting multiple methodologies and theoretical apparatus. Therefore, those three works were the most complete analysis about *UPPs* published in the covered period and they were more deeply examined in order to find how the notion of public space interferes in the way that *UPPs* are understood and explained. They were produced by several researches that work in traditional scholar institutions of knowledge production about subjects related to security.

The first document analyzed is called *The Owners of the Favelas: An Exploratory Evaluation of the UPPs Impact in Rio de Janeiro*¹⁵, coordinated by sociologist Ignacio Cano (2012), and funded by the Development Bank of Latin America¹⁶ as a sponsor. It

¹⁵ Our translation. In Portuguese it is called ‘OS DONOS DO MORRO’: UMA AVALIAÇÃO EXPLORATÓRIA DO IMPACTO DAS UNIDADES DE POLÍCIA PACIFICADORA (UPPs) NO RIO DE JANEIRO FÓRUM

¹⁶ CAF Development bank of Latin America. Retrieved from: <http://www.caf.com/en> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

was undertaken by the Brazilian Forum of Public Security¹⁷, in cooperation with the Laboratory of Violence Analysis from the Rio de Janeiro State University¹⁸. Though this is an official document, it should also be considered as a research report presenting several studies with qualitative and quantitative methodologies about the regulation of the *UPPs*, their impact on criminality, the perception of this sort of policing by the people who live in the *favelas* where the *UPPs* intervene, and the perception of *UPPs* policemen on themselves and their work – that intends to:

Not only increase the knowledge about *UPPs* and its effects, but also to contribute with a reflection that allows, to the extent possible, to improve this program and, ultimately the security and the social insertion of the people who live in the most vulnerable areas of the city and also the citizens of Rio de Janeiro¹⁹. (Cano, 2012, p.6)

The second document entitled *Pacifying Police Unities: Debates and Reflections*²⁰ is the communication number 67 published by the Institute of Religious Studies²¹ and organized by political scientist André Rodrigues, sociologist Raíza Siqueira, and historian Mauricio Lissovsky (Rodrigues, Siqueira & Lissovsky, 2012). Through qualitative methods, the researchers investigated several aspects involving the *UPPs* covering again the point of view of people living in *favelas* in which there is the

¹⁷ Retrieved from: <http://www.forumseguranca.org.br/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹⁸ Retrieved from: <http://www.uerj.br/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹⁹ Our translation.

²⁰ Our translation. In Portuguese *UNIDADES DE POLÍCIA PACIFICADORA: DEBATES E REFLEXÕES*.

²¹ ISER. Retrieved from: <http://www.iser.org.br/website/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

presence of the *UPPs* about this policing, its influence on culture, religion, gender relations, transportation, etc.

The third document analyzed is the report *Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process* (World Bank, 2012, October) produced by the Sustainable Development Sector Management from the Unit Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank²², and its empirical material, and part of the analysis is drawn from a background report commissioned to the Sociology Department of *Pontifícia Universidade Católica of Rio de Janeiro*, led by sociologist Marcelo Burgos of the same university. This report discusses the meaning of *pacification*, the relation between police and drug dealers in Rio de Janeiro, the “redefinition” of “communities” with *UPPs*, the effects of *UPPs* in areas without *UPPs*, etc. This report is “the story of Rio’s attempt to break with history and establish a new kind of state presence in its favelas” (World Bank, 2012, October, p. 12) and intended – through a qualitative research with a case-study approach, consisted of observation, focus groups and key informant interviews in four *favelas* - to document how life in the *favelas* is changing with the implementation of *UPPs*.

It is also important to make clear that the critical reading of those studies allowed several reflections that will be presented in the next chapters. The exercise we undertook of analyzing these documents does not disregard the quality of them. On the contrary, it is an attempt to take advantage of those important contributions about *UPPs* to give continuity to the knowledge production about it. Each one of those three works, as deep researches that covered several aspects about the *UPPs*, and what surrounds it, present

²² World Bank. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

oscillations in the ways that they explain this policing. Those oscillations were found as valuable elements to explain how the Brazilian notion of public space exerts influence on the way that *UPPs* are understood in the society that created it.

Finally, in order to explain how some notions about *segurança pública* (public security) and urban violence are spread and naturalized in Brazilian society, news reports, articles, newscasts and communications found in the mainstream media are also analyzed in the following chapters. Those materials about *UPPs* in the media were collected during the period of research and then cataloged according to the subjects that they covered. Then some of them were select qualitatively according to the ways that they demonstrated social representations about the local notions of public space and citizenship connected to their evaluation of the *Pacifying Police Units*.

Ten other academic works about *UPPs* published in the period covered by this research were also examined in the following analysis.

4. *Favela* and Police in Rio de Janeiro

4.1 Understanding *Favelas* in Rio de Janeiro

This chapter explains how the notion of *favela* was constructed in the city of Rio de Janeiro. It provides a brief historical narrative that makes possible the comprehension of the symbolic meaning of *favelas* in present days and how it became a privileged object of criminal justice in Rio de Janeiro.

The lack of housing policies for the former slaves who became free men and women in 1888, and *cidadãos* (citizens) by the time of the proclamation of the Republic in 1889, associated to the necessity for workers in the city of Rio de Janeiro, made this new social segment of free men and women, between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, to settle in large houses divided into small rooms with precarious hygiene and privacy conditions called *cortiços* (tenements) (Azevedo, 1997).

The mayor Francisco Pereira Passos, who governed the city of Rio de Janeiro from 1902 until 1906, initiated a process of urban “modernization” through the demolition and relocation of the *cortiços*. The population who used to live in those houses migrated to the uninhabited regions of the city that, by then, were the hills. The agglomeration of popular housing in the city’s slopes characterized by disorder, lack of formality, infrastructure, services, hygiene and morality were called *favelas*, *morros* or, more recently, *comunidades* (Valladares, 2005). Since its beginning, this biased look that segregates *favelas* symbolically and physically, is still alive and also orients the

government way to deal with such spaces and territories that gives to Rio de Janeiro a peculiar urban configuration, in which the wealthiest class neighborhoods have to live together with the inconvenient presence of *favelas*.

Image 1: Favela *Vidigal* situated between the high-class neighborhoods *Ipanema* and *São Conrado*



Source: Brasil (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, Subsecretaria-Geral de Cooperação, Cultura e Promoção Comercial, n.d.). *Brasil Global Net*. Retrieved from: [http://www.brasilglobalnet.gov.br/pub/Finlandia/Rio/Praia%20do%20Vidigal%20\[Foto%20Ricardo%20Zerrener\]%20RZC_2159.JPG](http://www.brasilglobalnet.gov.br/pub/Finlandia/Rio/Praia%20do%20Vidigal%20[Foto%20Ricardo%20Zerrener]%20RZC_2159.JPG) last accessed on 2014-06-10

Despite the common sense notion that often classifies *favelas* as the locus of poverty and misery, the social economic composition of those territories is heterogeneously composed, having a considerable amount of middle class people in its

populations (Silva, 1967). Thus, the *favelados* (people who live in *favelas*) constantly suffer from the *stigma* (Goffman, 1963) that this social place carries. In a hierarchized society like Brazil (Lima, 1999) this *stigma* will constantly serve as a symbolic reference to differentiate the *cidadãos* (citizens), legitimizing an unequal treatment, and justifying a specifically violent way of dealing with them as a characteristic of the state's institution of repression when they act in the *favelas*. This complex process gained a new configuration with the advent of trafficking and commerce of drugs like a retail business that, in the beginning of the 1980 decade, found in the *favelas* a profitable space due to informal agreements between dealers and state agents based on economic negotiation and violent dispute that Michel Misse (1999) calls *social accumulation of violence*.

I call “*criminalization*” of the *favelas* the outcomes of this process, with the hardening of *segurança pública* (public security), the increase in selective arrests²³ and police killings (Misse, 2011, January), especially from the beginning of the 1990s, legitimized by the symbolic constitution of the *favela* as an object to be combated. A research made in 2012 observed that 55% of the Brazilian prison population was between 18 and 29 years old, 61% of them were black, 49.1% of the arrests were made due to crimes against property, and 25.3% for drug dealing; 89% of the prisoners went from illiteracy to primary education complete, and only 0.39% had completed an university education^{24 25}. This concept does not intend to say that *favelas* are the exclusive target of

²³ Sardinha & Coelho (2014, January 10). População carcerária cresce seis vezes em 22 anos. *Congresso em Foco*. Retrieved from <http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticias/populacao-carceraria-cresce-seis-vezes-em-22-anos/> last accessed on 2014-06-10

²⁴ Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. (2013),7,1-133. Retrieved from http://www.forumseguranca.org.br/storage/download//anuario_2013-corrigido.pdf last accessed on 2014-06-10.

imprisonment or police lethality in the same way that Wacquant (2009) does not affirm that the poor are the only object of criminalization when he is developing the idea of criminalization of poverty, but, in this case, that the symbolic values that this social space generates, allow the legitimization of such policies. In a similar way to the process of “criminalization” of poverty observed by Loïc Wacquant (2009) in the ghettos of the United States of America and in the French *bidonvilles*, and other researchers around the world, the “criminalization” of the *favelas* presents as specificity the cluster of *favela*’s social stigmas associated with the Brazilian juridical inequality that separates the citizens in status.

The social historical constitution of civic and social rights in Brazil does not allow inferring the existence of a substitution of the welfare state - that never existed in Brazil - by a penal state. What is observed and will be explained in the next chapters is a reconfiguration of the state’s apparatus of repression in confluence with new economic necessities faced in Rio de Janeiro.

4.2 The Historical Background of Rio de Janeiro’s Police

The history of the police in Rio de Janeiro begins with the arrival of the Portuguese Royal Family in Brazil in the 19th century. As well as the history of the police in Brazil, because it was in Rio de Janeiro that the first police forces were created.

Pressed by the Napoleonic Wars, the Portuguese Royal Family had to leave Portugal to its American colony. With the arrival of the Royal Family, Rio de Janeiro, the

²⁵ UOL Educação (2012, July 10). No Brasil, apenas um em cada três presidiários concluiu o ensino fundamental. Retrieved from <http://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/2012/07/10/no-brasil- apenas-um-em-cada-tres-presidiarios-concluiu-o-ensino-fundamental.htm> last accessed on 2014-06-10

capital of the colony, gained economic and political importance receiving diplomats, nobles, etc. (Hobsbawm, 1962). The Portuguese Court, of about fifteen thousand nobles, had to face a new and unknown situation: the necessity to coexist with the slaves in the urban space. Several architectonic transformations began to be developed to make the colony resemble the metropolis. The amazing urban growth was followed by the increase in urban violence and social contradictions (Mattos, 2004).

With this new social configuration, and with the purpose to restrain assumed risks of “sharing the place” with slaves, Prince Regent of Portugal, João VI, created the first Brazilian professional institutions of police forces. The General Intendancy of Police and Court of the Brazilian State was established in 1808, and the Royal Guard Police was created in the following year, 1809. These institutions had administrative, judicial and police attributions to apply and implement the law. They were financed by dispatch of judicial permits and donations made by landowners and merchants.

Among the attributions of the General Intendancy one should mention the fulfilling of mandates, the construction of public buildings, fire fighting, the censorship of the press, the repression of begging, vagrancy and smuggling, the compiling of statistics on the population, to issue passports, the construction and the administration of jails and dungeons but also the inspection of buildings, public spaces as streets and parks, and public transportation. The Royal Guard also had to fight fire, but its main attribution was monitoring and repressing crime and violence.

Despite the wide spectrum of activities assigned to those institutions, they actually worked mostly chasing and capturing runaway slaves and repressing *quilombos*²⁶ and *capoeiras*²⁷ (Holloway, 1997; Salem, 2007).

After the Brazilian proclamation of independence and the abdication of emperor Pedro I, who returned to Portugal, the police forces lost their centrality and presented problems of indiscipline up to a point of joining the riots. Such a situation brought to the attention of the governing authorities the necessity to develop a military institution with a strict hierarchy.

In 1831 the Permanent Body of the Municipal Guard was created. In 1844, it would be called Police Corps of the Province of Rio de Janeiro, and later on Provisional Police Corps of the Province of Rio de Janeiro in 1865, and afterwards Military Force of The Rio de Janeiro State and finally, in 1920, the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro State.

At the present, each state²⁸ has its own Military Police and Civil Police. According to the Brazilian Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988)²⁹, the Military Police is responsible for crime prevention and repression, mainly “street crime”. The Civil Police

²⁶ *Quilombo* is a generic term used to define the communities constituted mainly by Africans and African descendants of escaped slaves, which assembled to resist the colonial slavery system and to offer refuge to other slaves (Flory, 1979).

²⁷ *Capoeira* is a martial art created by slaves that mixed fight with dance and African music rhythms in order to provide self defense to slaves and to disguise it to avoid punishments. The practitioners of *capoeira* were called *capoeiras* and they became one of the main targets of the state repressive forces (Assunção, 2005).

²⁸ Brazil is a Federative Republic divided in 26 states and the Federal District, surrounding the country’s capital, Brasília. Each state has one governor, head of the local state, like in the United States of America and the provincial prime minister in Canada.

²⁹ Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

is a judicial police responsible mainly for “major” criminal investigations. Both of them are accountable to the governor of each state. It will be explained later on that, despite their Constitutional attribution, both Civil and Military Police act promoting investigation and repression, working on each other’s toes.

Since its beginning, the soldiers of the Military Corps were hired in the lower classes. They received a minimum wage and were submitted to a hierarchic disciplinary regime. The choice of a military structure is coherent with the necessity to neutralize the risks that workers from lower classes, armed by the state could offer to the social status quo, getting revolted, for example. Furthermore, the corporativism and the military ethos are very efficient elements to keep discipline that orientates the police members to keep the chain of command (Castro, 1990; Storani, 2008).

One year after the Proclamation of the Republic that took place in 1889, and two years after the official abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888, the Criminal Code was significantly modified (the first Brazilian criminal code was adopted in 1830). Its new text presented a growing preoccupation with the new lower classes that emerged after the official end of slavery. This new formulation of the Criminal Code was very severe with social practices associated to those classes, such as vagrancy, prostitution and drunkenness, demonstrating the apprehension raised by the new social situation in which former slaves gained their freedom.

Through the *criminalization* of such social behaviors and practices, and from the beginning of the twentieth century, the Rio de Janeiro’s criminal justice system and police guided their actions towards vagabonds, beggars and rogues, focusing the repression against poor people circulating in the *espaço público* (public space).

Some police transformations that occurred in the first decades of the twentieth century have also highlighted the worry that the Brazilian elite had in relation to the lower classes. The fear of the lower classes or “dangerous classes” - as they were defined in the books of the French “Chef de Bureau de la Préfecture de la Seine”, a policeman, Honoré Antoine Frégier *Des classes dangereuses de la population dans les grandes villes et des moyens de les rendre meilleures* in 1840 and the American social reformer Charles Loring Brace *The Dangerous Classes of New York*, published in 1872 – based on the belief of their potential danger to commit crimes or to transmit diseases, because of the lack of sanitary conditions in their neighborhoods, motivated the creation of the Police Academy, The Forensic Services and the Department of Identification Services.

The influence of the medical discourse in institutions like the police and in urban policies of segregation became considerable as part of a social hygiene movement that was not confined only to Brazil. Some of those policies were very unpopular, as the demolition of popular housing as well as sanitary programs such as the one concerning vaccination. This caused the famous Vaccine Revolt in Brazil, a series of riots triggered by the federal campaign of compulsory vaccination against smallpox, using police force and invading the homes of the poor, forcing them to take an extremely painful vaccine. It was a medical procedure unknown to most of the members of the lower classes, and that caused several side effects. Despite the fact that the government objective was to combat a disease, the authoritarian way in which the program was implemented, against the population that was already upset with the state of violence, provoked a revolt that spawned dozens of deaths in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Carvalho, 1987).

From the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, the focus of police action started to shift with the definition of the kind of people who represented a danger to "national interests". The dictatorial regime known as the *New State*, led by president Getúlio Vargas, began to persecute individuals that, in his eyes, were a political threat to the government. Communists and anarchists became a relevant target of police action too.

The Criminal Code of 1940 (Brasil, 1940)³⁰ consolidated a form of policing oriented towards political purposes. Strikes were forbidden for public employees, subversion and incitement of social groups to revolt became a crime.

The Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1937 (Brasil, 1937)³¹ states that the Military Police in all states are complementary forces of the army³². The result is that they became subordinated to the army, reinforcing the military ethos in its practices.

The Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1967 (Brasil, 1967)³³ promulgated by the Military Dictatorship, that took over in 1964 and was strongly influenced and supported by the United States of America during the Cold War promoting extremely violent persecution of communist organizations, maintained the Military Police as complementary forces of the army, and created the General Inspectorate of Military Polices. It was an institution of the Army Ministry that administrates all of the Military

³⁰ Retrieved from <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/declei/1940-1949/decreto-lei-2848-7-dezembro-1940-412868-norma-pe.html>, last accessed on 2014-03-10. xyz

³¹ Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao37.htm. last accessed on 2014-03-10

³² Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao34.htm last accessed on 2014-03-10

³³ Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao67.htm last accessed on 2014-03-10.

Police across the country, increasing even more the Army's dominance over the military police.

The process that shifts the control of the military police from the society to the Army culminates in 1977 when the trial of a policeman accused of committing crimes against civilians becomes part of the mandate of the Military Justice. The military justice was also responsible for the trial of political crimes committed against the dictatorship, according to the Law of National Security³⁴ (Muniz, 1999).

Despite the fact that the Armed Forces lost power and influence in Brazilian society after the end of the Military Dictatorship (1985), the military police maintained its status as a reserve force of the Brazilian Army. The interdiction or prohibition for its members to organize themselves in unions is an example of the consequences of the military status today.

The military police faces a dilemma that they themselves call the *duck's dilemma*: an inferiority complex towards the Armed Forces and other police forces. The pejorative comparison with the duck, according to police members, is explained because the duck is an animal that has multiple capabilities but cannot fly well, besides swimming and running with several difficulties, dirtying everything on their way. The military police, according to this “native identity”, has a military formation, but it is not as military as the Armed Forces that can “swim” (Navy), “run” (Army) and “fly” (Air Force). For example, the Military Police can make investigations, but not as well as the Civil Police, the body legally responsible for criminal investigations. According to Silva (2011) this identity

³⁴ Retrieved from <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decllei/1960-1969/decreto-lei-314-13-marco-1967-366980-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>, last accessed on 2014-03-10.

dilemma causes a great difficulty for the Military Police to deal, as a police force, with the civilian population.

The references to its history can be found in the symbols of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro state. Its arms (see image 1) keeps the kings crown in its center. Beneath the crown, there are two pistols surrounded by two branches. In the left corner, the sugar cane is represented. The branch on the right side is coffee. Those are the main products cultivated by the slaveholders who financed the police since its beginning and who were the most economically powerful of the time. The letters GRP, in the center, beneath the crown and symbolizing the power of the state, is the abbreviation for Royal Guard Police. The number 1809 makes a reference to the year of the foundation of the police.

Image 2 - The Arms of Rio de Janeiro Military Police



Source: http://img1.wikia.nocookie.net/__cb20100324122448/heroisbrasil/pt-br/images/d/db/Bras%C3%A3o_da_PMERJ.PNG, last access 2014-06-10

The allusion to the monarchical power is also present, much after the proclamation of the Republic. In 1998, a decree determined that the School for Military Police Officer's Formation would be called the John VI Academy of Police³⁵.

The analysis of the history of the Rio de Janeiro's police and its transformations shows its commitment with and to economic groups that alternate in the exercise of power. Even after the proclamation of the Republic, it becomes evident that the unequal treatment the criminal justice system of Brazil and its police uses profusely to differentiate the citizens is explained by its origins.

Indeed, the history of the Rio de Janeiro's police enables us to understand its extremely violent action in the present. However, a clearer picture of the police is only visible when it includes a sociological explanation about the historical formation of the Brazilian state, and how the notions of *espaço público* (public space) and *cidadania* (citizenship) were culturally and symbolically produced orientating police action today. Therefore, police action is informed by this notion while the practices of this institution also helps to perpetuate the shape of Brazilian state.

For example, *samba*, a musical rhythm that is very popular nowadays and is very important as an element of the Brazilian cultural identity, inside and outside of the country, used to be a target of police repression in the beginning of the twentieth century. Over time, the *samba* gained the importance it has nowadays and, with its new economic and cultural value, it is no longer the target of police violence and of the criminal justice system (Araújo, 2013; Mattos, 2010; Vianna, 1995).

³⁵ Retrieved from <http://gov-rj.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/227501/decreto-24731-98>, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

In the present days, *funk* music – a musical rhythm that has the same name as the American one, but is played in a “Brazilian way” – contributes to the lifestyle of millions of people in Rio de Janeiro, especially young people from the *favelas*. But it became an issue of public security and police persecution (Facina, 2009). As it will be developed further down, *funk* is an important reference to understand the criminalization of the *favelas*. What is important for now is to comprehend how the police and the criminal justice system alternate their targets to maintain a certain social order.

At its origins, the police were an important tool to chase and repress slaves, but underwent changes to settle social control, in the present, over the spaces where the low-income classes inhabit, specially the *favela* (Bretas, 1997). The primary target shifted from slaves in the colonial and imperial era, to the *capoeiras* and the *sambistas*³⁶ in the beginning of the twentieth century. With the dictatorship headed by Getúlio Vargas, the anarchist workers became the new target and later the communist militants joined them. And today, in the political regime of self-defined democracy, the Brazilian *funk and the favelas* are the new objects of state repression.

However, it is crucial to understand that this process - that differentiates, in terms of priorities, the population as the object of violent repression undertaken by the state - is not a produce exclusively of the police. As a matter of fact, the police reproduce a juridical inequality that is found primarily in the legislation and that runs through law enforcement³⁷.

³⁶ People that play or admire *samba*.

³⁷ There are laws in Brazil that give differential treatment to its citizens, as, for example, the special prison, an unconstitutional privilege created for people that concluded undergraduate studies, judges, congressmen, military and Heads of State (Lima, 2004, September).

What turns the favela into a target of the violent state's repression after the military dictatorship is a set of social and physical transformations that was intensified through this authoritarian historical period. After the end of the military dictatorship and the beginning of the period that became known as democratization, from 1985 towards nowadays, the *favela* is progressively seen as the urban place (space and people) responsible for violence in the purest tradition of the ideology of "blame the victim", that biased look transformed in common sense.

The *favelas'* urban configuration reproduces the social and economic inequalities that are a striking feature of the Brazilian society, as the lack street lighting and sanitation that is often found in *favelas* but rarely observed in the high-income neighborhoods. Its environment is commonly seen as hostile, lacking public and private hygienic infrastructures, of difficult access, a socially and economically geographic urban space attractive "to be hideouts" for criminals. But it is not only the physical degradation of the space that helps to shape the prejudice that frames the fear of the "dangerous classes", and legitimates the violent state repression towards these territories and its inhabitants (Carballo Branco, 2002). The stereotypes and myths built over different historical periods about poverty, delinquency and social marginalization, as part of the social reproduction of dominant structures, produce fear that is encased by the commerce of drugs that happens in the *favelas*, creating a simplistic and homogeneous image about a rich set of urban configurations (Valladares, 2005).

4.2.1 Police Action and The Illegal Drug Market Today

This section will offer an explanation about the economic connection and political issues that establish the relation between drug dealers and police of Rio de Janeiro in the present.

Although the consumption and sale of illegal drugs are found virtually everywhere in Rio de Janeiro, the violent police repression against this trafficking/commerce occurs almost exclusively in the *favelas*. In these zones of the city, the narcotics commerce/trafficking settles fixed locations called *boca de fumo*³⁸, often protected by gang members carrying heavy weapons that are used to protect the spot against other gangs and/or the police (Barbosa, 1998).

The control of the *bocas de fumo* is decided with the power of the weapons and the economic negotiation between gang members and the police. Therefore, the unpredictability generated by those arrangements puts the population who lives in these areas in a very complicated situation. They are the objects of the often repressive action of the drug dealers, but are also constantly the victims of the violent dispute for this commerce/trafficking, often caught between the two sides: the traffickers and the police. The table below (table 1) indicates the number of deaths in the state of Rio de Janeiro caused by stray bullets demonstrating the damage generated by this policy of “war” on drugs.

³⁸ *Boca de fumo* or *boca* is a native category to refer to a place where drugs are sold. Though the literal translation to English would be “mouth of smoke,” it is quite usual to find marijuana, cocaine and other drugs in the *bocas*.

According to Dos Santos (2004), it seems that, with the war on drugs, public opinion agrees internationally that it is acceptable to suspend civil rights for several individuals in order to defeat the narcotic market, what helps to understand those deaths as “justifiable”. And, in Rio de Janeiro, the configuration of the drug commerce/trafficking and its relation with the police forces create a hostile environment in the *favelas*. The police traditionally do not stay permanently inside the territory of the *favelas*. When there is a disagreement between the police forces and the gangs, or when the police need to comply with a judicial warrant, an incursion or police operation “happens”. In such occasions, policemen go into the *favelas*, often exchanging fire with drug dealers, and go out as soon as possible.

Table 1 - Deaths caused by stray bullets in the state of Rio de Janeiro

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Victims	9	40	28	46	14	-	19	21	16	8	139

Source: Institute of Public Security from Rio de Janeiro <http://www.isp.rj.gov.br/>, last accessed on 2014-06-15.) (The Institute did not disclose the number in 2005)

This kind of social control promoted by the police, stimulated what Michel Misse (1999) called *social accumulation of violence*, through which criminals invest in heavy weapons to engage the police and to protect themselves against other gangs.

The reports of two Parliamentary Investigation Commissions, one made by the Legislative Assembly of Rio de Janeiro and the other by the Federal Chamber of Deputies³⁹ about the origins of the weapons found in possession of the criminals, indicate that in the whole country and in a sample of ten thousand weapons apprehended in a total

³⁹ Retrieved from <http://marcelofreixo.com.br/portal/docs/RelatorioCPIArmas.pdf>, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

universe of more than one hundred thousand, eighteen percent of the weapons were sold to state institutions (for example the Brazilian Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Federal Police, and the Civil Police, etc.). From the total weapons diverted from state institutions to the possession of criminals, approximately sixty percent came from the Military Police all over the country, of which forty-nine percent belonged to the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro alone.

The first and, so far, unique academic research that tried to track the origins of ammunition found in possession of criminals in the state of Rio de Janeiro⁴⁰, produced between the years of 2003 and 2006, indicates that a great amount of these ammunitions was produced almost exclusively for state institutions, particularly for police. Therefore, despite the difficulties to track the origins of weapons and ammunitions in Brazil, the data already collected indicates that there is an extremely significant participation of the Brazilian state institutions (especially police forces) in the process of weapons supply to criminals.

Despite the relationship of mutual and illicit interests for profits between police forces and the drug market, the discourses and social practices based on the violent “war” against criminality find great institutional and social legitimacy in Brazil. The *gratificação faroeste* (Wild West gratification) is the main example of a state policy based in the populist idea of the “fight against crime” or *crime control tradition* of retributivism in Rio de Janeiro. Created by the government of the Rio de Janeiro state in November of 1995, this gratification could increase one hundred and fifty percent the salary of a policeman according to the number of "criminals" he or she would kill or

⁴⁰ Retrieved from <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/yearbook/small-arms-survey-2007.html>, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

murder. After the creation of this gratification, the number of civilians killed by the police jumped from 3 per month in the first months of 1995 to more than twenty per month in the year 1996 (Cano, 1997).

This politics of violent police action achieved its summit in what Ramos (2010) calls “*Caveirão age*”. *Caveirão* is the popular name of the bullet proof vehicle that the famous *BOPE*⁴¹, Special Police Operations Squad of the Rio de Janeiro Military Police, received in 2002, to use in its operations when intervening in the favelas. The logo of this Special Squad is a big skull — *caveirão* in Portuguese — with spiked dagger in its top (see image 3).

Image 3 - The Special Police Operations Squad Logo in the center



⁴¹ Special Police Operations Squad or Battalion of the Rio de Janeiro Military Police, known by its abbreviation in Portuguese: *BOPE* (*Batalhão de Operações Especiais*). It became world famous with the awarded movies *Elite Squad* (Padilha, 2007) and *Elite Squad: The Enemy Within* (Prado & Padilha, 2010) that had the highest grossing in the history of the Brazilian film industry.

Source: Uol notícias. <http://noticias.uol.com.br/album/2013/01/19/osso-duro-de-roer-veja-imagens-dos-35-anos-do-bope-a-elite-da-pm-do-rio.htm> last access 2014-06-10

The skull with the knife, according to the *BOPE* members, represents the victory against death (Storani, 2008). However, for the population living in the *favelas*, this logo represents death. *BOPE* members - who are often called *caveiras* (skull in English) - are known as the elite of Rio de Janeiro's Military Police.

Especially until the end of the 1990 decade, the process to become a *caveira* was very hard and selective. The course for Military Policemen voluntary to become a *BOPE* member, a *caveira*, lasts 17 weeks. It is a process of military training that puts the aspirants in extreme situations of privation and physical and psychological pressure. If the candidate successfully concludes the course, he is no longer a "conventional" policeman. Unlike the rest of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro, *BOPE* members always wear black uniforms - due to the black uniform with the skull symbol, they are also known as "the men in black". They are recognized for their extraordinary capacity to accomplish missions, their ability to kill and by the fact that they act almost exclusively in the *favelas*.

The documentary film *Bus 174* (Padilha, 2002) reports on the first known action of *BOPE* outside a *favela*. In July 12th of 2002, Sandro Nascimento, a man visibly under the influence of drugs, was seen in a bus with a pistol. When the police were called to avoid a robbery, he kidnapped the bus with the intention to escape. The situation became broadcasted live on television for the whole country. The *BOPE* was called to solve the situation. However, despite the topnotch ability of the *BOPE* to pursue and to kill people

in the favelas, the Special Squad had no experience and expertise to deal with this kind of situation.

After several technical mistakes in the process of negotiation, the criminal, who pretended to have killed one of the hostages, but in fact had not hurt anyone, tried to surrender. When the situation seemed to be solved, one *caveira* undertook a clumsy attempt to shoot Sandro from behind, missing the shot and killing the hostage in front of the cameras. The kidnapper, that until then had not been hurt by any bullet, died asphyxiated in the transportation to the police station, according to *BOPE* members, because he was fighting policemen inside the car. This famous episode demonstrated how the *Elite Squad*, famous for its special skills, was incompetent to deal with a situation different from the violent repression in the *favelas*.

Therefore, inside the *favelas*, *BOPE* is well known and feared. Its bulletproof vehicle, the *Caveirão*, explains well what the *Elite Squad* represents in these areas of the city. The speech of a *favelada* makes it clear:

Imagine an official bulletproof vehicle, with the logo of a skull with a sword, with policemen that come in (in a favela) shooting on street lighting first and on neighborhood residents later (...). This is the *caveirão*. An eleven year old boy had his head torn off body with shots that came from *caveirão*. And, yet, it behooves us to prove that it was the police who did it⁴².

⁴² Amnesty International. (2006). Retrieved from <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR19/007/2006/pt/1d6bd373-d454-11dd-8743-d305bea2b2c7/amr190072006pt.html>, last accessed on 2014-06-10. Our translation.

The *Caveirão* is a vehicle similar to those used by banks and financial institutions to transport money, but adapted to military use (see image 4). It has a tower in the center that enables it to fire shots in three hundred and sixty degrees (full circle) and also with rows of holes to position heavy weapons on both sides of the truck. Around twelve policemen can be carried inside.

One emblematic feature of the *Caveirão* is that there is no place to carry suspects or someone that surrenders. There is only space for policemen. Therefore, it is a vehicle used not to undertake arrests, but to kill. A hunting vehicle, asserted Tomás Ramos (2010, page 31).

There are several movements of human rights that denounce the use of *Caveirão*⁴³. According to some of these critics, this vehicle produces not only physical illegal violence, but also symbolic and psychological violence. There are reports that the *Caveirão* gets inside favelas firing randomly and producing terror. And it also has speakers through which the policemen inside frighten and threaten the population in favelas saying sentences like: “*Go to your houses. There will be gunfire!*” or “*I came here to take your soul!*” (Souza, 2008; Ramos, 2010).

The *BOPE*'s symbolic violence, that, inside the *favelas*, is naturalized and appreciated by the media and by some sectors of society, becomes an object of criticism when employed in other regions of the city. It became news in the major newspapers of Rio de Janeiro, when the Special Squad started to do its gymnastics in the streets of a

⁴³ Retrieved from <http://www.redecontraviolencia.org/Documentos/17.html> and <http://www.desenvolvimentistas.com.br/blog/blog/2014/03/21/coletivos-e-ons-assinam-manifesto-contr-a-politica-militarizante-da-seguranca-publica/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

prime area of the city. The region's dwellers started to complain about the violent lyrics that they sang, rhyming in military style, while running⁴⁴.

The interrogatory is very easy to do
 You take the favelado and you beat him up until he feels the pain
 The interrogatory is very easy to accomplish
 You take the favelado and you beat him up until you kill him”

Favelado thug you don't sweep with a broom
 You sweep with grenade, rifle, and machine gun”

Man in black, what is your mission?
 Go to the favela to leave corpses on the floor
 Man in black, what do you do?
 I do all the stuff that scares the devil himself

The lyrics sang by the *caveiras* leave no doubt about how the *favelas* are the target of state's violent action. Yet, the fact that this kind of symbolic violence that occurs so often in the *favelas* becomes news only when it happens in a high class neighborhood - even if it is not against this neighborhood - indicates that this violence is socially accepted and legitimated when it happens in the "appropriate" social space.

Image 4 - A *Caveirão* with a special customized painting: a policeman inside a *Caveirão*.

⁴⁴ Theophilo, J. & Araújo, V. (2003, September 24). *Gr*
Globo. Retrieved from <http://oglobo.globo.com/jornal>
 Our translation.





Source: Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais, Bope blogspot <http://bope-elite-squad.blogspot.com.br/> last accessed on 2014-06-15.

Police violence becomes even clearer when its lethality is analyzed.

Despite the fact that the states' violence statistics are very unreliable (due to political issues), it is possible to use them as an indication of some kinds of crimes, as in the case of the *autos de resistência*⁴⁵, because those registers are made by the police act as the perpetrator and the enquirer. Therefore, even if these data are not accurate - in other words, even if the police did not register all its murders - all *autos de resistência* are registers of cases in which the police admitted to have killed someone.

According to Misse, Grillo, Teixeira and Neri (2013) there are no police in the world that kill more than Rio de Janeiro police. They made a comparison between the police from Rio de Janeiro and all the departments of police from the United States of America, between 2001 and 2011. They concluded that, during this period and in all of the United States, there were between 200 and 400 people murdered or killed by the police per year. In the same period, more than 10.000 people were murdered or killed by

⁴⁵ An *auto de resistência* (that can be translated as "juridical register of resistance") is an administrative way, created during the military dictatorship, to register deaths caused by police action. Despite the fact that they are homicides, the police classify those deaths separately because they allegedly occurred in a situation of physical confrontation and resistance to law enforcement. As those homicides undertaken by the police are classified as resistance in the *auto de resistência*, a juridical inversion takes place in which the victim becomes the suspect. Therefore, there is almost no investigation of those cases. In several situations, the prosecutor does not even initiate an inquiry (Misse, Grillo, Teixeira & Neri, 2013).

the police of Rio de Janeiro, a state that has around 16 millions inhabitants, against 300 millions in the United States of America.

Another research conducted by sociologist Ignácio Cano (1997) in Rio de Janeiro showed that in more than fifty percent of the *autos de resistência* he studied, the victims presented at least four bullet perforations, which indicates that they had been executed with shots from behind, in the head and with hand perforations or severed fingers, indicating that, instinctively, they tried to protect themselves with their hands. He also compared for the year 2003 the number of civilians killed by police in the state of Rio de Janeiro with some other countries in the world (see table 2).

Table 2 - International Comparison of Police Lethality

Locality	Year	Civilians killed by police
South Africa	2003	681
USA	2003	370
Argentina	2003	288
Germany	2003	15
United Kindom	2003	02
France	2003	02
Portugal	2003	01
Rio de Janeiro (state)	2003	1195

Source: CANO, Ignacio. (1997, p.37)

The *Relatório da sociedade civil para o relator especial das Nações Unidas para execuções sumárias, arbitrárias e extrajudiciais* (2007)⁴⁶ also shows that in Rio de Janeiro the number of people killed by the police is three times bigger than the number of people hurt by police action, indicating an obvious intention to kill.

The idea that the deaths caused by the Rio de Janeiro police are provoked by the violent action of the victims, attacking or resisting to the police, is very hard to sustain when one takes into consideration the disproportion between the murder of policemen and of suspects of committing a violent crime. In the state of Rio de Janeiro, and in supposed armed conflicts, there is one policeman killed per forty civilian dead. Some policemen have more than ten deaths in their CVs (Misse et al, 2013).

The absolute numbers of *autos de resistência* between the years of 1997 and 2013 give a better picture about the police lethality in the state of Rio de Janeiro (see table 3).

Table 3 - *Autos de Resistência* (civilians declared killed by police) in the state of Rio de Janeiro

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
<i>Autos de resistência</i>	300	397	289	427	596	897	1195	983	1098	1069	1330	1137	1048	855	523	419	425	12978

Source: Instituto de Segurança Pública (<http://www.isp.rj.gov.br/>, last accessed on 2014-06-10.)

The incarceration data are also impressive in the state of Rio de Janeiro and in Brazil. According to the National Justice Council, with a total of 567.655 prisoners,

⁴⁶ Special Rapporteur from civil society to United Nations on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions In English Retrieved from http://www.dhnet.org.br/dados/relatorios/a_pdf/r_soc_civil_br_relator_onu_philip_alston.pdf. last accessed on 2010-09-10.

Brazil has the fourth biggest prison population in the world (see table 4). The Rio de Janeiro state, counts for approximately 6,3% of this amount with 35.611 prisoners (Gomes & Bunduky, 2012)⁴⁷.

Unfortunately, the police lethality and the high levels of incarceration do not correspond to low levels of criminal violence in Rio de Janeiro and in the country. The homicide statistics are a good indicative to understand how violent Brazilian society is.

Comparative analysis indicate that, in the same periods, there were more people killed by firearms in the city of Rio de Janeiro than in countries that were facing situations of civil conflict or war like Yugoslavia (1998-2000), Angola (1998-2000), Sierra Leone (1991-1999) and Afghanistan (1991-1999). In the city of Rio de Janeiro 3.937 teenagers were killed by firearm shots between December of 1987 and November of 2001. In the same period, 467 teenagers were killed by firearms in the conflicts between Israel and Palestine (Dowdney, 2003).

Table 4 - Ranking of the 10 countries with the largest prison population

Ranking	Country	Prison Population Total
1	United States of America	2.228.424
2	China	1.701.344
3	Russian Federation	676.400
4	Brazil	567.655
5	India	385.135
6	Thailand	296.577
7	Mexico	249.912
8	Iran	217.000
9	South Africa	157.394
10	Indonesia	154.000

⁴⁷ Retrieved from <http://jus.com.br/artigos/21091/cinco-estados-compoem-62-da-populacao-carceraria-nacional>, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

Source: Brasil (2014) Retrieved from http://www.cnj.jus.br/images/imprensa/Pessoas_presas_no_Brasil_1.pdf, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

According to the data from the Brazilian Ministry of Health⁴⁸, the country went from 13.910 homicides in 1980 to 49.932 in 2010. An increase of 259% equivalent to 4, 4% per year. In the same period the national population went from 119 to 190, 7 millions. An increase of 60, 3%. It means that the rate went from 11.7 homicides per 100.000 inhabitants in 1980 to 26, 2 in 2010. Therefore, there was an increase of 124% in these three decades⁴⁹.

These extremely high homicides rates frighten routinely Brazilian society and the population of Rio de Janeiro state in particular. Perhaps the sensationalist news coverage of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro influences the elites to understand themselves as a specific target of this violence and associate the idea of greater danger to the *favelas* and the illegal drug market (Silva, E.M.A., 2010). The state violence in those urban areas helps to shape the image of *ghettos* and the *favelas* as the “enemy“, as well as linking “security” to a “war”. Amid this line of reasoning the main victims are the populations living in the *favelas*, where most of the deaths reported take place, among which those of young poor Afro- descendants take an important place (Melo, 2009).

⁴⁸ Retrieved from http://bvsmms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/impacto_violencia.pdf last accessed on 2014-06-15.

⁴⁹ Retrieved from [http://www.foa.unesp.br/include/arquivos/foa/pos/files/novos-padroes-de-viol\(1\).pdf](http://www.foa.unesp.br/include/arquivos/foa/pos/files/novos-padroes-de-viol(1).pdf) last accessed on 2014-06-15.

4.3 First Experiences of “Alternative” Policing in the State of Rio de Janeiro

As it was shown earlier, the special and extremely complicated situation of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro was developed simultaneously with the state’s history. With the passage of time, the general discontent with this reality has been producing permanent claims for changes in what became conventionally called the public security policies. On the one hand, conservative sectors of the *fluminense* society ignore the nonsensical levels of police brutality and “rigor” of the criminal justice and penal systems, crying out for more repression, less tolerance and even greater control over the *favelas*. This stance finds legitimacy in the mainstream media and in populist political discourses based on fear and intolerance. On the other hand, social movements, scholars, NGOs, some sectors of the population and even international organizations claim policies that ensure respect for human and civil rights, encouraging the development of universal citizenship values. Both of these opposing forces have been influencing some occasional and different experiences of policing in Rio de Janeiro. The alternatives that will be described below are the outcome of those yearnings. Therefore, they carry the contradictions presented in Rio de Janeiro society, and the idiosyncrasies resulting from those opposite struggles for change. In practice, none of them were capable to represent a real alternative to the harsh situation found in Rio, but they carry, in a manner of speaking, some embryos of hope for change in this reality.

The first attempt to develop a different policing was proposed by Police Colonel Carlos Magno Nazareth Cerqueira, who was the head of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro from 1983 to 1984 and later, from 1991 to 1994. He was enthusiastic about the possibility of implementing the idea of community policing in Rio de Janeiro, and sent

police officers abroad to learn from the experiences of other countries like Japan, the United States of America and some other European countries. Under his command, the Military Police translated and published in 1994 the book *Community Policing: How to Get Started* (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1994). Cerqueira also wrote one of the first books about community policing in Brazil (Cerqueira, 2001).

It is important to acknowledge the political and the historical context of this first attempt to build an alternative policing in Rio de Janeiro. Colonel Carlos Magno Nazareth Cerqueira, an Afro-descendant police officer, was chosen to be the Commander-in-chief of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro by Governor Leonel Brizola, at the end of the Military Dictatorship. Brizola, who played an important political leadership against the totalitarian military regime, returned from exile and was elected governor of Rio de Janeiro State in the beginning of the 1980s. With Colonel Cerqueira, he intended to oppose the policies of human rights restrictions that prevailed in the federal government during this period.

In order to institutionalize the human rights agenda, his local government created in 1983 the Council of Justice, Public Security and Human Rights. Some of the principal tasks of this Council, chaired by the governor himself, were to receive complaints and claims of human rights violations, and to find and develop solutions to the problems raised by such complaints and claims. But the main attribute of this initiative was a public message signaling that, thereafter, there would be investigations over police transgressions against citizens (Hollanda, 2005).

Concomitantly, the government of Rio de Janeiro sought to introduce several innovations in its public security policies. One of them was the Integrated Center for

Community Policing⁵⁰, the first attempt of community policing in Brazil, created in the *favela Cidade de Deus* in Rio de Janeiro City. The objective of this experiment was to bring the *favela* population to play an active role participating with the police as a partner. Associated with this Center, and to deliver social assistance, other agencies were brought to *Cidade de Deus*. A program of community vigilance, integrated by volunteers that supported policemen in organizing health campaigns, cultural and sports activities, was also implemented; neighborhood policing programs were developed in other areas, as well as partnerships with the Education Department of the State Government, designating the police to be “social fathers“ of seven to fourteen year old children registered in public schools; women were recruited to join the police and policing programs without firearms were developed, etc. (Melo, 2009).

Despite the attempt to develop policies to respect human rights and citizenship, the contrast between the state government and Military Police culture of violence was an obstacle to the implementation and dissemination of new policing practices. The refusal to adopt violent initiatives to combat crime was reported as a connivance with illegalities by the mainstream media. The latter made it seem like police were being unable to work due to political impositions to respect human rights (Cardoso, 2010).

In his second government, between 1991 and 1994, Brizola made another attempt to implement community policing in Rio de Janeiro with the implementation of the Group of School-Practical Application⁵¹ that sought to provide security to the *favela Morro da Providência* in Rio de Janeiro City. During this government, three other very

⁵⁰ *Centro Integrado de Policiamento Comunitário (CIPOC)* in Portuguese.

⁵¹ *Grupamento de Aplicação Prático Escolar (GAPE)* in Portuguese.

limited attempts of community policing were undertaken in three other neighborhoods of the state's capital: *Urca*, *Laranjeiras* and *Copacabana*.

In 1999, the government of Anthony Garotinho (1999-2002) brought back the idea of community policing. As a first step, in the *favela Vila Pereira da Silva*, a *Task Force for Peace*⁵² was created: a program that articulated police with several other government sectors responsible for traffic control, education, technical education, justice, environment, welfare, sports, etc. and the NGOs.

In 2000, the *Task Force for Peace* idea was developed and the *Group of Policing in Special Areas*⁵³ was created in the favelas *Cantagalo/Pavão/Pavãozinho*. According to its creators, the *GPAE* was also inspired by the principles of community policing. It was formulated to be an alternative to the conventional and extremely violent police of Rio de Janeiro, getting communities, in which it would act, closer to each other and seeking to preserve human life guaranteeing the democratic order and respecting civil rights. The *GPAE* directive determined that it should act in a preventive way and only exceptionally promoting physical repression (Carballo Branco, 2002). This program was the first attempt to implement an alternative to the conventional police that lasted longer and had a larger range.

Despite the resistance that the *GPAEs* would have to face - lack of institutional and political support, resistance from policemen unhappy with the control over their excesses and corruption - its initial results were surprisingly positive. The presence of firearms was almost extinguished as well as the occurrences of police abuse and

⁵² *Mutirões da Paz* in Portuguese.

⁵³ *Grupamento de Policiamento em Áreas Especiais (GPAE)* in Portuguese

corruption. For two years there were no victims of lethal violence in the *favelas* accustomed to the routine shootings (Albernaz, Caruso & Patrício, 2007).

The *GPAE*'s main characteristic was the permanent stay of police inside the favela, contrasting with the conventional police that act in *favelas* in a similar way to an army in enemy territory. The police also began to offer other services to the *favelas* such as sports classes, parties, medical assistance in emergencies, computer classes, etc.

Instead of the traditional relation with drug dealers - that alternate between financial deals and shootings - the *GPAE* adopted a strict stance against corruption and a less harsh repressive action against the drugs commerce/trafficking, but without admitting the presence of fire guns in the *favelas*. In the zones where the *Group of Policing in Special Areas* performed, the narcotics commerce/trafficking underwent a reconfiguration, becoming less visible and less violent.

Accordingly, the program began to be expanded to other *favelas*. However, this expansion was not oriented by criminal statistics, as the theory of community policing suggests (Bayley, 1991). The creation of other Groups was guided by crisis involving the police. All the *GPAsEs* created after the first one, were preceded by revolts against state arbitrariness.

In the *favela Morro do Estado*, for example, there was a slaughter in December 3rd, 2005. Fourteen years later, the military policemen convicted in 2011 for the assassination of Wellington Santiago de Oliveira, an eleven year old, Luciano Rocha Tavares, 12 years old, Edimilson dos Santos Conceição, 15 years old, José Maicom dos Santos Fragoso, 16 years old and Wedsom da Conceição, 24 years old, are still free, awaiting a new trial after their appeal, and working at the Military Police. The slaughter

of the innocent⁵⁴ young men provoked an uprising in *Morro do Estado favela*. This crisis pushed the government to create a *GP*AE in this *favela*. Besides *Morro do Estado*, all the other six *favelas* that received the Group of Policing in Special Areas experienced situations similar to this popular revolt against police violence and all of them are located in relevant areas of the Rio de Janeiro state⁵⁵.

Despite its success in reducing crime rates⁵⁶, the *GP*AE does not represent an evolution in the relationship between police and the population of the *favelas*. The asymmetries between both of them (police and population) continued to exist although less through the imposition of physical violence. The ethnographies made by Silva (2006) and Cardoso (2010) demonstrated that the historical prejudice over the *favelas* was still present in the conception of the policing undertaken by the *GP*AE. Instead of seeking to promote the development of the *favelados*' autonomy, those Groups from Military Police acted oriented by the idea that if the tutelage of the state was intensified in these environments, the violence would be reduced. The idea was that, if violence was avoided in *favelas*, through police control, but also avoiding that *favelados* would become criminals, offering them courses, social assistance, etc. violence in the rest of the city would decrease. It shows that the idea that *favelas* are responsible for the urban violence did not cease to exist. This social representation is very clear in the speech of a *GP*AE's

⁵⁴ Witnesses said that the executions took place because drug dealers had not paid the agreed bribe to police that undertook a retaliation against the *favela* (Barros, 2011).

⁵⁵ In total, eight *GP*AEs came into existence in the *favelas Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho, Morro da Casa Branca, Morro da Formiga, Vila Cruzeiro, Rio das Pedras, Morro da ProvidênciaI, Morro do Cavalão, Morro do Estado* (the last two of them in the city of Niterói).

⁵⁶ The *favela Morro do Cavalão*, for example, known for its violence, had the experience of five years after the program creation without a victim of violence and with not a single gun firing (Máiran, 2006, November 11).

sergeant in an interview: “Violence comes from top to bottom, from *favela* to the *asfalto* (as opposed to the *favelas*). If you decrease the violence up here, you will also decrease down there [outside the favela]” (Silva, 2006, p. 16).

From the *favelados*’ point of view, the main difference between *GP**AE* and the conventional police, is the fact that in *GP**AE* police stays permanently inside *favela* and there are no drug dealers holding heavy weapons around them (although the weapons have not been extinguished from their everyday life, because, with *GP**AE*, guns were seen every day with police). The *favelas* dwellers did not have an active role in the development of the policies developed or in the kinds of benefits that they received.

However, the decrease of violence and of shootings marked by the constant presence of deaths is something very significant in Rio de Janeiro. Soon, the “success” of this program started to bother the Military Police that saw the innovation as a threat to its traditional practices, which historically associates corruption to violence. The police themselves began to sabotage the *GP**AE* sending policemen known for their previously bad behavior to work in the program. The government tried to preserve the *GP**AE* as a jewel in the crown for its political propaganda, but kept the rest of the police force the way it has always been, untouched⁵⁷.

The *GP**AE*, that was significant because it represented another kind of policies could reduce violence in the *favelas*, was not able to constitute itself as an alternative police remaining restricted to the eight *favelas* in which it was implemented. With the government successions, this experience was abandoned.

Despite the fact that those Groups had never represented an effective shift in the states’ policies in relation to the *favelas* – they always existed as an exception to the

⁵⁷ Retrieved from <http://www.luizeduardosoares.com/?p=854> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

conventional police that kept its brutality in the rest of the state while the dramatic context of urban violence was intensified in Rio de Janeiro – with all its limitations, contradictions and sabotage, *GPAE* demonstrated in practice that it was possible to think about a different way to deal with the problem of violence in Rio de Janeiro.

4.4 The Advent of Pacifying Police Units⁵⁸

Sérgio Cabral – the governor who succeeded Anthony Garotinho in 2007, was reelected and stayed until 2014 – abandoned progressively the *GPAE*. However, his government developed what would be reported by the mainstream media – and some social scientists, as it will be shown – as a great novelty: the Pacifying Police Units (*UPPs*).

4.4.1 The Beginning

Cabral initiated his government stating that the armed confrontation against criminals would prevail in his administration (Tavares, 2008). The police incursion in the *favela Complexo do Alemão*, undertaken in June 7, 2007 was a clear sign of his strategy. Officially the police killed nineteen *favelados* in about ten hours of shooting. The commander of this police operation, Colonel Marcus Jardim, declared that he believed that his policemen had killed around forty people that day, but the “vagabonds” buried the bodies to deny the defeat⁵⁹. Colonel Marcus Jardim, himself, asserted later that “the Military Police is the best social bug spray”, reported Mr. Philip Alston, responsible for the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions of the United

⁵⁸ In Portuguese, *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora (UPP)*.

⁵⁹ Retrieved from http://www.uff.br/calese/banco_entrevista_operacao_alemao.htm. last accessed on 2014-07-11.

Nations (Alston, 2008). The Commission of Human Rights from the *Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil* (The Bar Association of Brazil) denounced that forty-four people were killed in this *favela* after the onset of shootings⁶⁰.

Despite the fact that 1.350 policemen were deployed for this operation and that only 14 firearms were seized (which indicates that, at least 5 of the 19 declared dead were unarmed)⁶¹, the government declared that the operation in *Complexo do Alemão* was a success and would be an example for future interventions. And it seems that it was materialized as a normal practice, as we can see through the analysis of the number of some police subsequent operations in Rio de Janeiro: on January 30, 2008, police murdered six people in one operation in a *favela*; on April 3 of the same year, police murdered eleven people; on April 15, fourteen was the number of people killed⁶².

Despite the initial support from the mainstream media, one year and a half after the inauguration of this government, the results of this old policy of confrontation did not show any positive impact on the governor's popularity. The government started to think about a "new" project that could work, because it had shown to be efficient before with *GPAEs*.

⁶⁰Folha de São Paulo (2007, July 7). Promotoria vai analisar laudos dos mortos no Rio. Retrieved from <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/cotidian/ff0707200721.htm> last accessed on 2014-07-11.

⁶¹Justiça Global (2007, July 19). Retrieved from <http://global.org.br/programas/manifesto-pela-apuracao-das-violacoes-de-direitos-humanos-cometidas-na-operacao-complexo-do-alemao/> last accessed on 2014-07-11.

⁵Justiça Global. (2008, May 29). Retrieved from <http://global.org.br/programas/politica-de-seguranca-publica-no-rio-de-janeiro-e-extermio-reforca-relatorio-da-onu/> last accessed on 2014-07-11.

On November 20, 2008, residents of the *favela Santa Marta*⁶³ woke up with the massive presence of policemen inside their *comunidade* (community). They imagined that this would be another police intervention in their neighbourhood, despite wondering about the great amount of police on site. Days passed and, unlike what usually happens, the police forces did not go away. So, on December 19 of the same year, without any consultation of the local population, the residents of *Santa Marta* and the rest of the population of the city were informed that police stayed and the Military Police's Pacifying Police Unit was inaugurated at *Santa Marta* (Cunha & Mello, 2011).

4.4.2 What is the *UPP*

Besides the name, it is possible to state that there is not much difference between the kind of policing undertaken by *GP* and the one that the *UPPs* do. As a matter of fact, the legal statute that regulates the *UPPs* is the same one that regulated the *GP* (Rio de Janeiro, State, 2010).

Beside this statute, there were also Decree 41.650 (Rio de Janeiro, State, 2009) that creates the Pacifying Units; the Decree 41.653 (Rio de Janeiro, State, 2009) that determines that the policemen who works in *UPPs* should be recently graduated and must receive a gratification of R\$500, 00 per month (around C\$ 250, 00).

Only on January 6, 2011, Decree 42.787 (Rio de Janeiro, State, 2011) stated something about the objectives and organization of the *UPPs*. Article 1 of this Decree determines that *UPPs* should practice “proximity policing”. Article 6 establishes that the

⁶³ *Santa Marta* is a favela located between the upper-middle class neighborhoods *Laranjeiras* and *Botafogo*. According to the Rio de Janeiro Governments' Department of Public Security, this *favela* has around six thousands inhabitants (see: <http://upprj.com/wp/>).

UPPs' policemen should be trained with an emphasis on human rights and "community policing doctrine". This Decree also establishes that those Units should be created only in poor communities with the presence of heavily armed criminals; the objectives of *UPPs* are to promote state control over those communities and to give back peace and tranquility to its population. The program of "pacification" is divided in four stages. The first one is "tactical intervention", when policemen from Special Forces, as the *BOPE*, should undertake tactical actions to "recover the territory". The second is the "stabilization", tactical actions to prepare the field for the "implantation". The third is the *UPP* implantation, the occupation of the territory by the policemen trained to "pacify" it. The fourth stage is "evaluation and monitoring" (daily policing).

It is important to note that the legal existence of *UPPs* is based on a fragile structure of a few Decrees promulgated by the executive power without dialogue with the legislative and with society in general. Consequently, it is clear the lack of formal consolidation for this policing model.

Even more impressive is the fact that all the regulations about the *UPPs* were settled after the program's implementation. Therefore, there were no plans to structure this program, but a set of practices followed *a posteriori* by a regulation that remains weak from the point of view of its formalization. The *UPPs* constitute a set of practices that vary from one Unit to the other. Its main feature is that those Units stay permanently in the *favelas*, reducing significantly the existence of shootings and the presence of heavy weapons in the hands of drug dealers in such locations.

4.4.3 The euphoria generated through the *UPPs*:

The announcement that the Military Police was going to occupy and stay in the *favela Santa Marta* generated great expectations in *fluminense* society. Mainstream media fed those expectations giving to the *UPPs* an unprecedented coverage in terms of policies of security. Soon, from bar tables to academic discussions, the theme *UPPs* was present in all the debates about violence and public security. It seemed that there was finally some hope to solve one of the main generators of fear nowadays in Rio de Janeiro^{64 65}: urban violence.

Vera Malaguti Batista (2011) highlighted the full support that the mainstream media gave to *UPPs*. In the newspaper *O Globo*, for example, the *UPP*'s propaganda is explicit. On December 12, 2010, this newspaper published a survey commissioned by the newspaper itself, stating that *UPPs* were very highly rated in the *favelas*, with or without those units, indicating that the program had conquered massive support in the *favelas*; on January 30, 2010, the benefits of *UPPs* for business were presented with the notice that the billionaire Eike Batista, and some other companies, had become sponsors of the Unities donating money and vehicles; on December 12, 2010, it was reported the inauguration, during christmas week, of the first 3D theater in a *favela*, that was going to take place in the pacified *Complexo do Alemão*; on December 30, 2011, the front-page headline of the newspaper *O Globo* said "Bulletproof Santa Claus" and that was followed by the picture of José Mariano Beltrame, the state's Secretary of Public Security,

⁶⁴ Retrieved from <http://dhojeinterior.com.br/pesquisa-revela-que-77-dos-brasileiros-tem-medo-da-violencia/> last accessed on 2014-07-11.

⁶⁵ Retrieved from http://www.observatoriouniversitario.org.br/documentos_de_trabalho/documentos_de_trabalho_13.pdf last accessed on 2014-07-11.

distributing gifts in a *caveirão* inside a *favela*; on December 31, 2010, the news was that the commanders of three *UPPs* (*Cantagalo*, *Chapéu Mangueira* and *Tabajaras*) had been invited to the New Year's Eve party of Bruno Chateaubriand, one of the main socialites of Rio de Janeiro. According to Chateaubriand “In this year, there is no bigger celebrity than they (the commanders)”; on January 11, 2011, it was reported that the first public act of the Minister of Culture would be to visit the “pacified” *favela Complexo do Alemão*; but one of the main reports glorifying the Pacifying Police Unities was called “Democracy in the *Favelas*”. It was published in 2009, in *O Globo* front pages, every day from August 9 to August 16. The content of the news story covered several aspects of the *pacified favelas* (the escape of drug dealers, the changes in the real estate market, how the policing was undertaken, etc.) making an analogy between the territory’s resumption promoted by the *UPPs* and the period of the country’s democratization in the 1980s, after the end of the Military Dictatorship.

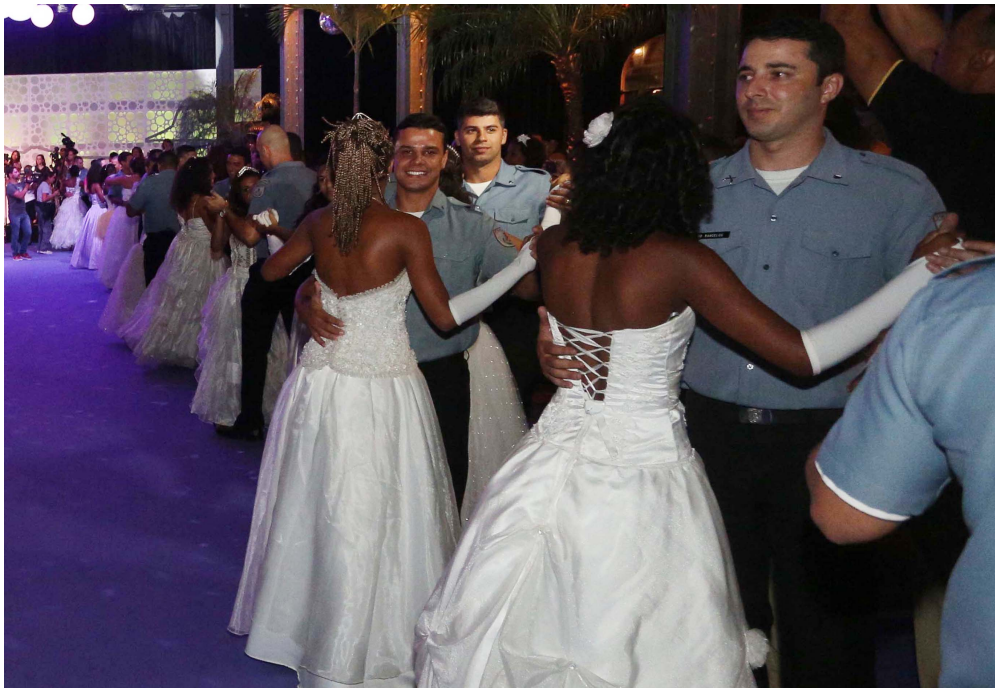
The *UPP* fever was extremely wide. In January of 2010 the *S!* Magazine elected the state’s Secretary of Public Security, José Mariano Beltrame, the LGBT muse “due to his work on peace consolidation”. Even a famous lingerie brand used the popularity of the *UPPs* for its advertisement.

However, it was not only the media that generated the euphoria. Despite the low reliability of official numbers in Rio de Janeiro, it was obvious that there was a difference in the *favelas* that received Pacifying Police Units. The drug dealers holding heavy weapons were no longer seen in those territories. And even more impressive, daily incursions with several victims to establish this new reality were not necessary. The permanent presence of the police was enough to keep the shootings away.

Therefore, the progressive occupation of the *favelas* won instantaneous support from different sectors of society. The most conservatives applauded what seemed to be the expulsion of drug trafficking and the territorial reconquest undertaken by the state. Those more liberal were enthusiastic with the popularity of a policing that finally was not promoting mass killings in the *favelas*.

Instead of the *caveirão*, now the Military Police was in the *favelas* offering sports classes, welfare programs and even debutante balls (see image 6).

Image 6: UPP's military police dance with debutantes in a ball organized by a Pacifying Police Unit



Source: Imprensa RJ (2013, December 19) Retrieved from <http://www.rj.gov.br/web/imprensa/exibeconteudo?article-id=1902026> last accessed on 2014-07-

The “new” policing strategy had its impact. Sérgio Cabral was re-elected in 2010 with an overwhelming vote, having more than three times the votes of the candidate who

came in second. With the public health (in 2010 Rio de Janeiro had one of the three worse health systems in the country⁶⁶) and education (the state of Rio de Janeiro, the third richest of the country, had its public education evaluated as the penultimate worst of the country in Cabral's first administration⁶⁷) systems in crisis in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the focus of the candidate's propaganda on the "Pacifying Police Units" guaranteed him an easy victory.

4.4.4 The concept of pacification

The choice for the new policing program's name is an indicative that the government intends to put its own signature in its policies, collecting all the political dividends that it may generate. But the name "Pacifying Police Units" also has a strong symbology in the Brazilian culture. The term "pacificar", in Portuguese - unlike in English, where it is used to call the object used to soothe babies -, is constantly referred to termination of conflict, often through the employment of force as it is linked to the ultimate purpose of making war (paz = peace = pacificar). The *favelas* where *UPPs* were implemented are called, by the government, the mainstream media, by the population in general and even by some social scientists, "pacified territories". It gives, at first sight, the impression that these places that once were dominated by violence had finally conquered peace. But some critical reflections must be made about this concept.

⁶⁶ Retrieved from

http://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/cidades/2012/03/01/interna_cidadesdf,291628/sistema-de-saude-no-df-e-o-20-pior-entre-todos-os-estados-do-pais.shtml last accessed on 2014-07-11.

⁶⁷ Retrieved from <http://brava.org.br/projetos/governo-do-rio-de-janeiro-educacao/> last accessed on 2014-07-11.

Firstly, in a general way, the idea of pacification brings to mind its opposite sense: the idea of “war on crime”, as Silva (2010) pointed:

The simple idea that those areas need to be pacified indicates that its residents are seen with great suspicion, by the rest of the population and by the public order (...). War and peace are binary references that typify friends/enemies, presence or absence of danger (p.4)⁶⁸.

Therefore, the *favelas* – the spaces to be pacified – are understood, from this perspective, as territories of war. This finding can impose the following question: What is peace according to this point of view? Or, what the idea of pacification represents for law enforcement institutions and in Brazilian society, in general?

The reference for the idea of pacification is often present in significant moments of the Brazilian history. In the decade after the Brazilian independence⁶⁹, several republican and abolitionist rebellions moved by the ideas of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* took place all around the country. The process of territory centralization received the name of pacification. Unlike the Spanish America that was divided in several countries, the Brazilian pacification kept the Portuguese America unified in one country of continental dimensions. Only in the state of Para, for example, half of the population was decimated to extinguish the conflict and maintain “peace” in the unified territory (Batista, 2003).

⁶⁸ Our translation.

⁶⁹ According to the official historiography, Brazil became an independent country in 1822.

The Patron of the Brazilian Army, Luís Alves de Lima e Silva, the Duke of Caxias, known for his military conquests and for his capacity to eliminate his enemies in many campaigns that he commanded defending the unity of the Brazilian territory, especially, in the war against Paraguay (the War of the Triple Alliance, that occurred from 1864 until 1870) where about seventy-five percent of the Paraguayan population was decimated (Chiavenatto, 1988, p. 150), was also called The Pacifier (Bento, 2003). The main medal offered by the Brazilian Army to honor military and civilian, was made in Caxias tribute and it is called Medal of The Pacifier.

The term “pacificar” is also present in the vocabulary of Rio de Janeiro’s law enforcement institutions. Even after several protests against the use of the bulletproof vehicle *caveirão*, the government decided to expand its use due to its popularity with the more conservative sectors of society that always demand for more repression against crime. So, the Rio de Janeiro State’s government decided to buy *caveirões* for the Coordination of Special Assets of Civil Police. To avoid the polemic generated by the name of the vehicle that makes reference to a skull, the government decided to give a new name to the bullet proof vehicle used as a hunting machine in the *favelas*: Pacifier Vehicle (Ramos, 2010).

Besides the understanding that a subject of public security is seen as an issue of war, the promise of peace generates an excessive expectation over the *UPPs* because it sets a complex goal: the cessation of social conflicts. As Simmel (1955) points out, conflict is a form of socialization. It means that, according to him, conflict is a mechanism of interaction that keeps the balance of social systems creating connections and linking people to each other. Therefore, it is a normal element that constitutes life in

society. When individuals engage in a situation of conflict, each adversary affirms his or her distinct identity preventing of being absolutely crushed or unrecognized by the other.

Therefore, when police adopts the imposition of pacification as an objective – with all the historical and cultural significations that this concept carries – it is flagging with the possibility of an authoritarian control over the social life in the *favelas*. However, the following analysis about *UPP* practices demonstrates that it presents more sophisticated features of governance. If it is much less violent than traditional or conventional police, those Units, and all the transformations that come with them, can be inserted in the set of government technologies, institutions and organizations that Michel Foucault (1991) called governmentality:

(...) an ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of [a] very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population (...) and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security. (p.102).

Consequently, the *UPPs*' practices must be understood as inserted in “micro-domains of power relations formed and sustained by government” (Merlingen, 2003, p.377) in which the “subjects” are governed, not by the exclusive use of violence anymore, but through a set of private and public policies that control and reward them at the same time. This means that a balance between the government interests and those of its “subjects”, seen not as state property or “nationals” but independent and free citizens,

is pursued so that, looking for benefits, they tend to act according to the government's institution of common good.

Therefore, the “novelties” described above give support to the following analysis that intends to identify how the UPPs can be understood, by some, as an emancipation of the *favelas* when those Units, and the transformations implemented with them, actually represent a reconfiguration of the relations of social control over those spaces and are inserted in a broader model of population's governance.

4.5 Some Important Observations About the UPPs

In order to provide appropriate conditions for the understanding of analyses about UPPs, a brief contextualization about the historic and economic conjuncture around the implementation of this policing in Rio de Janeiro is required.

Hosting part of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the World Youth Day⁷⁰ of Catholic Church, the 2016 Olympic Games and some international exhibits, the city of Rio de Janeiro has regained international economic importance. The UPPs are part of the set of transformations in the state's policies that are directly or indirectly associated with those political and economic changes that ensure the adequate social environment for this new *commodity city* (Lima, Pires & Ribeiro, n.d).

4.5.1 UPPs and business

The way in which mainstream media report the results of UPPs' policy is an important component of the influence on the social perception about this policing. We've

⁷⁰ Retrieved from <http://worldyouthday.com/rio-2013> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

seen how the media make constant references to the commercial benefits that the *UPPS* would generate in the economy of the city of Rio de Janeiro. As the *favelas* and its social stigma affect negatively the real estate market in Rio de Janeiro (Cano, Sento-Sé, Ribeiro & Souza, 2004), the implementation of the *UPPs* was reported as an element that changed this reality and offered new business opportunities.

The *UPPs*' benefits for the economy are often mentioned discreetly in the media, but in several occasions, it becomes the subject of the news. In general, it makes reference to the economic enhancement, associating this policy to the increase in value of real estate, as in the following examples: the newspaper article “*UPP* Makes the Price of Real Estate Goes Up in Rio”⁷¹ (Junior, 2011, March 15) states that real estate in some areas around the *favelas* that received the *UPPs* had their prices duplicated and the prices of car insurance would be going down; the article entitled “The *Favelas* Pacification in Rio is Valorizing Neighbourhoods Around Those Communities and Opening a New Market for Builders and Real Estate Developers”⁷² (Reis, 2012, February) presents several data and graphics to guarantee that the real estate market is being benefited by *UPPs*; in the article “Business in Pacified Areas Grows Until 30% in 5 Years”⁷³ (Rocha, C., Schimidt, S. & Ramalho, S. (2013), among other information, declares that cheap bars are being substituted by restaurants featured in gastronomic guides; another article informs us that the result of researches presented in the workshop “*Cidadania* and security – The results and future of the policy of pacification”⁷⁴ concluded that the “*UPP*

⁷¹ Our translation.

⁷² Our translation.

⁷³ Our translation.

⁷⁴ Our translation.

effect” on the valuation of the property reaches 15% and that the drop of 10% in the homicide rate in an area increases, on average, 1.8% the price of real estate.

These articles are a short sample of the media’s tendency of reporting the *UPPs* as the responsables for a great economic transformation in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Even if the information about the valorization of commercial goods in Rio de Janeiro is accurate (and the repetition of this kind of information certainly influences the price of commodities), it seems that the limits of the range of this inflation has not been taken into consideration. As the traditional policing practices remain the same in the vast majority of the city and in the rest of the state, it is presumable that those areas do not obtain the alleged economic benefits generated by the *UPPs*.

4.5.2 The *UPPs*’ Map

The choices of the places that received *UPPs* and its distribution through the territory of the city of Rio de Janeiro reveal significant characteristics about this sort of *policing*. First of all, despite the *UPPs* being units of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro State (which means that the police is responsible for the whole territory of the federative unit) they exist only in the capital of the state. Since its beginning in 2008 until the end of 2013, there was no *UPP* outside of the city of Rio de Janeiro. The *Social UPPs* (the program that stimulates the implementation of social programs – vocational courses, sports lessons, cultural activities, etc – in *UPPs* that received those units) are implemented by the City Hall of Rio de Janeiro. The government of the state’s capital also pays for the gratification that the policemen receive to work in *UPPs*. Those elements indicate that this policing was not created to act outside the city of Rio de

Janeiro, and even if an *UPP* is created in another city it tends to present several differences in relation to the rest of *UPPs* since the “civic” aspect of this program is implemented by the City Hall.

The analysis of the localization of *UPPs* in the city of Rio de Janeiro also reveals significant data. The rates of violent criminality were not the criteria for choosing the *favelas* that received *UPPs*. Other regions of the city and the state presented a significantly worse register of violent criminality than the *favelas* chosen for the implementation of *UPPs* (Leite, 2012, June 2). On the other hand, the *favelas* contemplated with this policing are strategically associated to the mega events that the city will host. Those *favelas* are located in the highest-class neighborhoods where the most important hotels of the city are located, around the port region that has been the object of several construction works of revitalization⁷⁵ for those events, nearby the road that connects the city to its international airport and in the region around the sports stadiums renovated for those events.

The preoccupation with the Olympic Games of 2016 and the 2014 FIFA World Cup were, in some occasions, expressed by the creators of *UPPs*. After the incursion perpetrated by the *BOPE* in order to create a *UPP* in the *favela Mangueira* (the last one that received a *UPP* in the region around the famous stadium *Maracanã*), the security secretary of Rio José Mariano Beltrame declared that the goal planned for that area was

⁷⁵ Porto Maravilha. Retrieved from <http://portomaravilha.com.br/web/esq/summary.aspx>. last accessed on 2014-06-10.

completed: “We concluded the belt of security”⁷⁶. The official website of the FIFA World Cup published an article in which it is written:

According to the state’s government, the arrival of *UPP* in the *Favelas Mangueira, Tuiti, Candelária and Telégrafos* completes the belt called *Complex of Tijuca*. (...) The *Maracanã* stadium, that will receive the Fifa World Cup of 2014 and the Olympic Games, is located in this area⁷⁷.

4.5.3 The transformations of urban settings

The contemplation of some urban setting transformations undertaken concomitantly with the implementation of *UPPs* is also substantial and essential for the identification of this policing as a project that attends to the necessity of the new configuration of the city oriented to the market. Four of the most significant of those transformations are: the acoustic barriers, eco-limits, the *makeup works* and the relocation of populations.

The acoustic barriers are walls made of acrylic, polystyrene, concrete and steel. Those kinds of walls are often used in several cities of the world to control the noise pollution produced by the traffic in large roads. In the city of Rio de Janeiro 7.6 kilometers of those walls were built for the first time in 2010 with the alleged purpose of

⁷⁶Our translation. *UOL Notícias*. Secretário do Rio diz que ocupação da Mangueira é histórica e conclui 'cinturão' de segurança. Retrieved from <http://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2011/06/19/secretario-do-rio-diz-que-ocupacao-da-mangueira-e-historica-e-conclui-cinturao-de-seguranca.jhtm>. last accessed on 2014-06-10.

⁷⁷Portal 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.copa2014.org.br/noticias/7317/POLICIA+CARIOCA+INSTALA+UPP+ESTRATEGICA+PARA+SEGURANCA+DA+COPA.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10

protecting the population of some *favelas* against road kills and the noise produced by the automobiles⁷⁸. However, the construction of those walls was not followed by the implementation of other services and works as sanitation, garbage disposal, health assistance, etc. The government preoccupation remained restricted to hearing health of the *favelas*' dwellers and to the aesthetics contemplation of the passers-by. The road where those barriers were built connects the city to its international airport and the three meter high walls hide the *favelas* behind it from the international visitors that arrive in Rio de Janeiro.

The so-called eco-limits are walls constructed around *favelas*. The first *favela* that received an *UPP* was also the first to be surrounded by an eco-limit. In 2004, when the government proposed the construction of walls around *favelas* to limit its growth, several social movements protested affirming that it would be a fascist policy (Camargo, 2012, January 25). But in 2009 the state government announced that 9 of those walls were going to be built in *favelas* located in the richest neighbourhood of the city, the Zona Sul or South Zone, but instead of walls, they were called eco-limits and their alleged purposed was to protect eco-systems. The construction of walls around *favelas* represents an idea of state's control over these urban spaces. It is hard to understand it as a policy of rupture with the segregation that the *UPPs* affirm to promote.

Makeup works is how I classify the set of renovations and constructions in *favelas* offering eventual benefits to its inhabitants, but which main outcome is the improvement

⁷⁸ O Estado de São Paulo (2010, March 12). Rio põe barreiras acústicas na frente de favelas. Retrieved from <http://www.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,rio-poe-barreiras-acusticas-na-frente-de-favelas,523193> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

of *favelas*' image for outsider observers. Some of the most important *makeup works* are the facade paintings of the *favelas* houses that are exposed to external observers, the *Mirante da Paz* (Viewpoint of Peace) - a circular touristic panoptical building constructed with bullet proof windows in *Cantagalo favela* (Nobre, 2011, December 4, p.6) – and the gondola (a kind of lift or cable car) built in *Complexo do Alemão* – inaugurated in 2011, those gondolas cost 210 million *Reais* (around 105 million Canadian Dollars) and receive a subsidy of 2 million *Reais* per month to offer free transportation for two rides per day to 55% of its users. The rest of the population must pay 1 *Real* per trip. Only ten thousand people per day (11% of the local population) use those gondolas and, despite the *investimentos públicos* (public investments), this service is administrated by a private company (Gomide, 2012, March 8). The modernity of this construction that can be seen by distant observers (*Complexo do Alemão* composes part of the Rio de Janeiro's international airport sight) contrasts with the lack of infrastructures and housing precariousness verified within this *favela*.

The construction of highways and sports facilities has been accompanied by the relocation of *favelas*. With the lack of official data about the amount of relocations, social movements, arguing that such evictions are not necessary for those constructions, estimate that more than seven thousand families have been already evicted in this process (Freire, 2013).

5 Discussing some notions about the UPPs

In this chapter we chose some analyses, relevant to the object of our research, made by social scientists about the *UPPs* to be brought into discussion. Our purpose is to show and problematize that certain patterns of evaluation were often found in some of those works indicating, at different levels, the naturalization of the notion of *espaço público* (public space) discussed in the theoretical chapter. It is important to highlight that these works, some more than others, are informed by a critical reading of the studied conjuncture. In other words, there are several elements that indicate that they are concerned with the high levels of lethality and violence present in the historical constitution of the police force in Rio de Janeiro. Therefore, it is possible to say that, such analyses do not intend to legitimate the police repression over the *favelas*, but to think about the possibility of alternative policies more concerned with the implementation of human rights, *cidadania*, and another configuration of the *espaço público*. However, the naturalization of those categories, in some cases, could imply the reproduction of “symbolic structures” (Bourdieu, 1989) as an instrument of knowledge and communication failing to perceive some features found in the *UPPs*, that give continuity to the old logic of police action with some new configuration.

In order to reflect about the implications of the native categories’ naturalization in the outcomes of the academic studies examined, it is important to look how, in some occasions, the scholars who produced such studies converge with the idea of *segurança pública* and *cidadania* found in the mainstream media⁷⁹.

⁷⁹ When we mention here *segurança pública* and *cidadania* we are referring to the way these two concepts are considered in the Brazilian society.

In order to show effectively how some of those works, while intending to think alternative possibilities of democratic police action, ended up, in certain cases and circumstances, reproducing the logic of the “criminalization” of the *favelas*, the following notions recurrently found in those analyses will be discussed as possible categories helping us to better understand our object: the *UPPs* as a novelty or as a revolution; the state’s resumption of the territory vs. the drug trafficking/commerce’s control over the territory, and absence of the state; the dissatisfaction of the policemen with their work in *UPPs*; the *UPPs* as a rupture in relation with the logic of a segregated city, and the idea of a breach or fracture between what existed before the *UPPs* and what came into existence afterwards.

5.1 The notion of the *UPPs* as a novelty or as a revolution

One of the first characteristics that draw attention in the analysis that tend to acclaim the supposedly democratic achievements of the *UPPs* is the perception of the Pacifying Police Unit as a novelty in the policies of *segurança pública* (public security). Some studies tend to interpret the *UPPs* as an innovation sometimes echoing the mainstream media and the enthusiasm around the *UPPs*.

The spectacularization of the alleged innovations of the *UPPs* is more evident, and contradictory, in the media. A news report with the headline “*Young former drug dealers look up for Military Policemen in UPPs to obtain a job*”⁸⁰ sustains that the

⁸⁰ Our translation. O Dia (2001, December 16). Retrieved from <http://odia.ig.com.br/portal/rio/ex-trafficantes-jovens-procuram-pms-em-upps-para-obter-emprego-formal-1.240167> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

implementation of the *UPPs* is changing “radically” the life of the youth who used to be part of the “world of crime” and that, “they start to demand for police aid to find new jobs”. This news was later spread and promoted by the online newspaper *GGN* with the headline *The Carioca Revolution*⁸¹ given by journalist Luis Nassif. Even more interesting than the use of the term *carioca*⁸² is the notion of revolution associated to a program that practically only gave a new name to preexisting practices.

Eventually, the media conveys the opinion of social scientists as in the case of the political scientist Fernando Abrucio (2011, November 18) who wrote an article about the *UPPs* entitled “The Beltrame’s Revolution in Public Administration”⁸³. Affirming that the *UPPs* have a reserved place in the history of Brazilian public administration, the political scientist uses almost the entire two pages of his article making compliments to the originality of the *UPPs* that, according to him, were able to implement a “new sociability” in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. One should recognize that this political scientist presents a particular uncritical position about the police action, but his article, published in a nonscientific magazine, is interesting for the “spectacular definition” of the *UPPs* as a revolution at the same time that it absolutely ignores the existence of many “revolutionary” elements in several other experiences that preceded the *UPPs*.

⁸¹ Our translation. *GGN*, O Jornal de todos os Brasis (2010, September 14). Retrieved from <http://jornalggn.com.br/blog/luisnassif/a-revolucao-carioca-das-upps> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

⁸² Name used to define someone who was born in the city of Rio de Janeiro, or something belonging to this city.

⁸³ Our translation. As we mentioned before, José Mariano Beltrame is the secretary of *segurança pública* of Rio de Janeiro’s state. He is often reported as the “father” of the *UPPs*.

An interesting and deep research about the impacts of *UPPs* in Rio de Janeiro was made by a team coordinated by Ignacio Cano (2012)⁸⁴, a sociologist and professor at the Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ). The notion of *UPP* as novelty is also found in this work: “In short the *UPPs* constitute an innovator model inside of police, almost revolutionary, and the policemen assume several positions in relation to it” (Cano, 2012, p 143)⁸⁵.

In the same work, we curiously found that “Studies about previous experiences of permanent policing in *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro, as in the case of *GPAE* that preceded the *UPPs* and that were absorbed by them, reveal that keeping the same policemen working in those places guarantee a mutual social control (...)” (Cano, 2012, p 21)⁸⁶. It seems that that by mutual social control, he intends to say that police control the community and community controls the police. Ignacio Cano himself has made research about the *GPAE* (Morales & Cano, 2007). Therefore, it is interesting to note that, despite the recognition of the existence of a preceding experience that was absorbed by the *UPPs* without any great innovation, this policing is described as an “almost revolutionary” novelty.

One should note that in the introduction to this same work, the following statement: “The state of Rio had the experience of other alternative policing models as the Community Police in *Providência* and *Copacabana* and, more recently, the *GPAE*, but none of those projects received enough investments or had its continuity assured for

⁸⁴ Ignacio Cano is one of the most important social scientists that developed research about *autos de resistência*. His work is a reference for our research and to several other studies about police violence, but is also used as a support to social movements defending human rights and criticizing police brutality in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil.

⁸⁵ Our translation.

⁸⁶ Our translation.

long enough to have a significant impact” (Cano, 2012, p 4)⁸⁷. In this passage it is perceptible that, to the authors, the main elements that differentiate the *UPPs* from other experiences of “alternative” policing are its continuity in the course of time and the investments that it receives.

This report was published in May of 2012 (Cano, 2012) and the first *UPP* was created in December of 2008. It is, therefore, possible to say that to assume the duration of *UPPs* as an element of difference in relation to its precedent models would be something, at least, precipitated. As a matter of fact, the *GPAE* was created in September of 2000, and started to be replaced by the *UPPs* only in 2008. Therefore, the longevity of this program, at least until the present, cannot be appointed as an element of differentiation.

The report does not present any data comparing the investments made in *UPPs* and in *GPAE*. It is hard to make this comparison and even to understand what the authors mean by that, because they do not present any data about the investments in the *UPPs*.

Another study that presents a similar portrait about the novelty that *UPPs* would represent is the report to The World Bank (2012, October) about the *UPPs* produced by the Sociology Department of Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. This report does not deny the existence of former attempts of “alternative” policing:

Several attempts have been made to change the brutal state of affairs [observed in Rio de Janeiro]. Over the past three decades, these policies have manifested in periodic, often violent, police incursions into the favelas, many of them organized around the

⁸⁷ Our translation.

hosting of international events. Until the *UPP*, these policies had largely failed to end traffic control within the favelas and establish a consistent state presence (p 34).

It is interesting to note that, at the same time that the *UPPs* are presented as the first successful policy, the other attempts to “end traffic control within the *favelas*” are described as failures, and are associated with the “hosting of international events”. Indeed the difference between the *UPPs* and the extremely lethal police incursions must be recognized, but the relation between the policing and international events is not an element that differentiated the *UPPs* from those incursions. The same report recognize the connection between the implementation of *UPPs* and international events when it states that the map of *UPPs*’ occupation “proceeded along (...) the ‘Olympic belt,’ focusing on *favelas* located in strategic areas around the locations where Rio will host the final of the 2014 World Cup and the Olympic Games in 2016” (World Bank, 2012, October, p.88). Recognizing this bond between the *UPPs* and these international events, the report itself demonstrates that this connection does not differentiates the *UPPs* from older policies.

The reference that this report makes to *GPAE* depreciates this experience, as well as it does with the other former “alternative” policies experiences: “as with earlier initiatives, the *GPAE* was eventually undermined by reports of police corruption, and its failure to put a stop to drug trafficking or the presence of armed dealers in the slums” (World Bank, 2012, October, p. 35). The reports of police corruption and failure to put an end to the supposed control of the drug trafficking within the *favelas* that had *GPAEs* are

observed in several other studies (Cardoso 2010; Albernaz, Caruso & Patrício 2007). However, despite the *UPPs*' short time of existence, some significant cases of *UPPs*' policemen involvement with corruption were already noticed. The prison of twelve policemen accused of drug dealers' extortion in the *UPP* of *Mangueira*⁸⁸, the involvement of thirty policemen with the drug trafficking/commerce in the *UPPs* of *Coroa*, *Fallet* and *Fogueteiro*⁸⁹, and the prison of five policemen from the *UPP* of *Rocinha* accused of involvement with the head of the local drug dealing⁹⁰, are some of the most well known cases of corruption in the *UPPs*. Those and some other occurrences of corruption within *UPPs* can refute the idea that this policing was able to overcome the issue of police involvement with bribery, or some other forms of corruption. However, it would be presumptuous to predict the end of corruption in a police institution that coexists with the culture of negotiation between state's agents and society (Pires, 2010), negotiation that most of the time end up in particular deals.

Despite the noticeable reduction of confrontations between police and drug dealers in the *favelas* with *UPPs*, the existence of shootings did not cease to exist in such urban spaces⁹¹. The report about the *UPPs* sponsored by the World Bank does not present any comparison between this kind of occurrence between *favelas* with *GPAE* and those

⁸⁸ O Dia. (2012, June 27). Retrieved from <http://odia.ig.com.br/portal/rio/policiais-da-upp-da-mangueira-s%C3%A3o-presos-acusados-de-corrup%C3%A7%C3%A3o-1.456754> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

⁸⁹ R7 Notícias. (2011, September 11). Retrieved from <http://noticias.r7.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticias/pm-admite-corrupcao-na-upp-da-coroa-fallet-e-fogueteiro-e-afasta-comando-da-unidade-20110911.html>.last accessed on 2014-06-10.

⁹⁰ G1 Rio de Janeiro (2014, March 31). Retrieved from <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2014/03/pf-prende-mulher-de-nem-e-seis-pms-da-upp-da-rocinha-no-rio.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

⁹¹ G1 Rio de Janeiro (2014, June 2). Retrieved from <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2014/06/policiais-de-upp-sao-baleados-no-alemao-no-rio.html>. last accessed on 2014-06-10.

with *UPPs* that assures that it is plausible to assert that the *UPPs* outperformed *GPAE* in this aspect.

Siqueira et al. (2012) also describes the *UPPs* as a novelty:

For three decades the Military Police procedure in the *favelas* was reduced to a unique strategy: military occupation with armed confrontation followed by the evacuation and abandon of those areas until the next operation. (...) The creation of *UPPs* is the first approach that escapes this pattern (...). To start with, as it is known, this is an occupation that avoids the armed confrontation to preserve life (p.135).

The attempts to describe the *UPPs* as a novelty vary. André Rodrigues and Raíza Siqueira (2012, p. 9-51) also recognize the similarities between *GPAE* and *UPPs*, and they perceive the first one as an unenthusiastic reference. They say that, in their fieldwork in the *favelas*, the “*GPAE* appears as negative precedent of the *UPPs* (...), a similar recent experience whose results demonstrate dissatisfaction” (Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012 p. 22)⁹². So, they assume another strategy to differentiate the *UPPs*:

It is interesting to note that, concerning several aspects, the description and expectations generated by the *GPAE* are similar to what is observed in the case of the *UPPs*. (...) Even avoiding detailed comparisons between those two forms of policing, we selected some aspects as comprehensive references of the *UPPs*

⁹² Our translation.

and as indicators of its dilemmas and challenges. The first, and more immediate one, is the existence of a pre-existent frustration that, on the one hand, unmakes the novelty (so frequent in the way that governors make reference to their initiatives), and on the other hand, raises more subjects of reflection to the debate about *UPPs* (p. 23)⁹³.

This passage expresses a preoccupation to distance *UPPs* from *GPAE* (assumed as a bad experience) in a paradoxical way. According to it, the *UPPs* would be different because they are not presented as a novelty. But this difference would make the *UPPs* a novelty in the same way that *GPAE* was presented in the past. Therefore, what is presented as a difference, as a matter of fact, approximates the *UPPs* from the *GPAE*. Yet, this argument is hard to be sustained for two other reasons. The first one is that the *UPPs* are also frequently presented as a novelty by governors, by the media and even by scholars. The second one is that, though the *UPPs* were preceded by the *GPAE*, this one was not the first experience of “alternative” policing in Rio de Janeiro, as it was explained before.

The next element of comparison is the “ceasefire”. Rodrigues and Siqueira claim that, in the statements that they obtained during the fieldwork they undertook in the *favelas* with *UPPs*, there is a perception that the Pacifying Police Units achieved success doing what *GPAEs* were not able to do: to put an end to the shootings and to the alleged armed control of the *favelas* by criminal organizations (Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012, p. 24). But, at the same time, the researchers themselves recognize that the variation of

⁹³ Our translation.

shootings does not constitute a contrasting element between *GPAE* and *UPPs*. In other words, the *UPPs*' "superior capacity" to decrease shootout pointed out by the people living in the *favelas* they studied, cannot be validated by the research.

Rodrigues and Siqueira (2012) state that the lack of external control was an important element. They consider it to be crucial for what they define as a failure of *GPAE*:

The consequence of the lack of mechanisms of this kind of control is that all the responsibility is deposited in the integrity of the commander supervisory. Any change of commanders can compromise the rigorous treatment regarding corruption. And this is what happened with *GPAE*. The removal of the commander Carballo Blanco and the expansion of those groupings to other areas without the institutional consolidation of this policing had a process of degradation as an outcome (p 25)⁹⁴.

If it is assumed that the lack of external control over the *GPAE* is an element that contributed to its degradation, it is possible to conclude that the *UPPs* also present a great risk of failure, because there is no effort to create mechanisms to guarantee this kind of control in the *Pacifying Police Units*. Still, the institutional consolidation of the *UPPs*, as we have shown before, is very precarious. The regulation of these units was made only two years after its implementation, when thirteen of them were already being implemented. Therefore, even if one could consider the *UPPs* as something positive,

⁹⁴ Our translation.

according to this evaluation, these particular or special units of policing have not yet succeeded in developing strategies to avoid the degradation observed in the *GP*AE program.

Rodrigues and Siqueira (2012, p. 26) describe the strategies adopted by the police and government of the state of Rio de Janeiro to avoid the corruption of police and policemen under the *UPPs* policy. The Pacifying Police Units engage new recruits and personnel to avoid the reproduction of the old practices of informal and illegal economic negotiation between police and criminals. After saying this, the authors recognize that “there is no formal mechanism or any kind of explicit directive indicating that the control of police corruption (in the *UPPs*) is a priority”⁹⁵.

Another strategy observed by Rodrigues and Siqueira (2012, p. 26) to prevent corruption is the distribution of the telephone number of contact of the *UPP*’s commander to the local community so that the *favelados* can denounce or present complaints about police deviance straight to the commander. But the authors also recognize this tactic as a “continuation of what happened in the *GP*AE, and is happening in the *UPPs* in a similar way”⁹⁶. Because *GP*AE had already tried the same thing, there are no novelties observed in the *UPPs*’ mechanisms to fight and control police corruption.

After analyzing these problems, Rodrigues and Siqueira (2012, p.26) still insist that: “the continuity of *UPPs*, beyond ‘personal vanity’ and governmental susceptibilities, is more promising than the *GP*AE’s (...). A comparative advantage is the relative maturity of the *opinião pública* (public opinion) and the governmental position

⁹⁵ Our translation.

⁹⁶ Our translation.

facing the changes represented by the *UPPs*⁹⁷. However, the authors do not explain what they understand by “*opinião pública*” and what the new position of the government is.

And they add that

Even without objective elements that corroborate this kind of evaluation, we believe that it is possible to say, in a very impressionist way, that both the police institution and the common sense have experienced discrete progress, in the last decade, towards a more modern and democratic position in the field of *segurança pública* (Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012, p 26)⁹⁸.

Recognizing the lack of objective elements to make this kind of statement aesthetically comparable to the images produced by “Impressionist painters”, it looks as if they are talking more about their own “aspirations” than about what they observed in their research.

Their conclusion about the differences and similarities between the two policies seems to say that basically the same problems continue:

There are other delicate issues related to the possibilities for the *UPPs* to be consolidated as *políticas públicas* surpassing their present configuration of differentiated policing practices. (...) One of *GPAE*'s difficulties (...) was the lack of institutional support so that those groups of policing could become *políticas públicas*. (...) The *UPPs* still lack formalization so that their

⁹⁷ Our translation.

⁹⁸ Our translation.

practices are consolidated in a better and defined policy.
(Rodrigues & Siqueira, 2012, p. 26-27).

One wonders as though the declared purpose of Rodrigues and Siqueira research (2012) was to show the difference between the *UPPs* and *GPAE*, they end up presenting so many “facts” that seem to contradict their own analysis, refusing what they pretend to be real differences between the two models of policing. From our perspective, their conclusion expresses the dilemma of the Brazilian *espaço público*. After their attempt to demonstrate the difference of the *UPPs*, they recognize that there are great difficulties to develop a real alternative policing model, one of them, and not the smallest, are the impediments to develop a policing that can work as a public policy. In other words, a police formulated to act in a collective free and democratic space, controlled by the totality of different individuals, social groups and institutions participating in it, offering them equal treatment and responsibility. Without this notion, the attempts to develop an alternative police, remain something isolated and fragmented as it occurred with *GPAE*.

Therefore, the several attempts to describe the *UPPs* as a novelty seem to express more the observers’ desire for a more democratic and less violent police, than a verification of something actually new. Some narratives about the *UPPs* simply ignore the experiences of “alternative” policing in Rio de Janeiro that precedes them, while some other acknowledge the existence of those practices, but nevertheless try to present the *UPPs* as supposed innovations that, after a careful look, are not sustained as substantive differences in relation to the *GPAE* experience.

The presentation of *UPPs* as a novelty allows the construction of some expectation for change and a different reality. The “innovation” seems to be much more attractive than the idea of reproduction of old experiences, even by giving them new names but very little modifications. As the populist speech advocating for police hardening conquers so many supporters in Brazil, the diffusion of the idea of a superior effectiveness of a less lethal police seems to influence some analyses about the *UPPs*.

The observation of the different analyses about the *UPPs* does not allow the affirmation that the outcomes of the social scientists’ work we presented reflect a conscious desire to describe the *UPPs* as a novelty, in order to collect support for a less violent police. It is more plausible that, in some cases, the proximity between the scholars and their object of study – especially if it is taken into consideration the short period of the *UPP*’s existence – hinders a broader contemplation of the Pacifying Police Units. However, if some old experiences and challenges are not taken into consideration by the analysis about the Pacifying Police Units, the researchers take greater risks of “advertising old novelties”, reducing the possibilities for the construction of public policies that would otherwise bring social democratic change.

The theoretical support used in these studies, or the lack of it, is another element that influences them into some sort of frenzied attitude of “admiration” to what some have alleged as democratic innovation in policing. Bringing the state back into the *favelas*, and especially through policing as it has done, does not mean necessarily bringing democracy with it. When the authoritarian character of the Brazilian state and the peculiar notion of *espaço público* (public space) that prevails in the country (Lima, 1999) are not taken into consideration, it seems that the adoption of different policies

cannot produce a new democratic order. However, if the notion of public space continues to be understood as a space controlled by the state, with its abstract rules created by an elite to maintain its privileges, different policies – even if they are more democratic - tend to remain isolated, and to weaken over time in a society historically marked by segregation, as it occurred with the *GPAE* .

5.2 The notion of state’s resumption of the territory with *UPPs* vs. drug trafficking/commerce’s control over the territory and absence of the state

The notion that the state was absent in the *favelas* before the implementation of the *UPPs* is very recurrent in the analysis about the Pacifying Police Units. This belief is often associated with the idea that, without the state’s presence in *favelas*, the drug dealers assume the control over the territories, hindering the distribution of *bens públicos* (public goods). Hence, the *UPPs* would have the important function of recovering the control over these territories to place them under the state domain, as if the state did not have any relation with the *favelas* and its people before.

Indeed, administrating the illegal commerce of narcotics, the drug dealers impose an authoritarian set of rules within the *favelas*. However, what is discussed here is the common sense notion that often reproduces the idea that the possession of weapons is equivalent to the possession of political power in the *favelas*. According to this point of view, when drug dealers administrate the illegal drug trafficking/commerce in the *favelas*, they are replacing the “democratic state”, and keeping those areas out of its domain or realm. This peculiar idea is often found in sensationalist newspapers and also reproduced by some social scientists (Zaverucha & Oliveira, 2007). They understand the

drug dealers as founders of a *poder paralelo* (“parallel power”) or *Estado paralelo* (“parallel state”) ignoring the character of the Brazilian state and how it organizes its presence in the *favelas* in confluence and coexistence with the drug dealers.

Some may presume that to blame violent action of the drug dealers for the absurd precariousness of basic services in education, public health, social care, recreation, and so on; and of infrastructures related to sanitation, paving, streetlights, garbage collection in the *favelas* is a hypocrite strategy of governors and the state to avoid the responsibility for their actions. As a matter of fact, it is possible to find this kind of argument in the discourse of some government administrators. As in the occasion that one of them, to defend the *UPPs* said that “With the peace [conquered by *UPPs*] the bad functioning of the state in the *favelas* is not justifiable anymore” (Rodrigues, Casanova, Siqueira, Mendonça & Guariento, 2012, p.77). It is interesting to remark that the belief that the lack of services and infrastructure in the *favelas* occurs due to the control of the drug dealers is broadly shared in the Brazilian society. This statement may cause confusion, and may be difficult to understand to someone who is not familiar with the symbolic meaning of the state in Brazil. Thus, one should look into this category through its specificity by relativizing it to understand that, once this notion is constructed and disseminated through society, the evaluation of police tends to occur in relation to the law enforcement agencies’ capacity to eliminate the supposed drug dealers control over those spaces: “(...) the *UPPs* project seems to have achieved an evident success in its central goals of reducing significantly the lethal violence in embattled territories and of practically putting an end to the control of the territory by criminal groups in the *favelas*.” (Cano, 2012, p.184)

The idea that the drug dealers possess the political control of the *favelas* is associated to the idea of private ownership of those territories. It is common to make reference to the leadership of the group that administrates the drug commerce in a *favela* as the “owner of *favela*”. This category is reproduced in the title of the report made by the Brazilian Forum of Public Security (Cano, 2012) about the impact of the Pacifying Police, Units, “The Owners of The *Favelas*”⁹⁹, that makes reference to the drug dealers as their effective “owners”.

The idea of drug dealers controlling a territory where the state would not be able to act can be contrasted with the notion of the city as a bazaar, whereas or taking into consideration that those cities would “acquire” the aspect of an oriental market with constant bargains taking place in the urban environment (Ruggiero & South, 1977). Such exchanges are not regulated by the official rules of the state, while their legality and morality are constantly negotiated. For Misse (2002), in developing countries this negotiation is organized in a peculiar way, with a significant resort to violence as a tool of political control over the value of the merchandise and the services. More specifically in Rio de Janeiro, bribery occurs as an imposition made by the state’s agent that requires money in exchange for not using violence against people marketing illegal products.

The concept of “*political commodities*” (Misse, n.d.) is used to designate the informal market where the trades combine the economic and political dimensions. Hence, in this market, the political costs are negotiated monetarily. In other words, the prices in

⁹⁹ The Owners of *Favelas* is a free translation to the original title in Portuguese “*Os Donos do Morro*”. The word *morro* – that can be literally translated to English as slope - is a synonym of the word *favela*. Due to the fact that in the historic process of *favelas*’ formation, the relocated marginalized population had to occupy the slopes of the city.

this market do not depend only on the negotiations regulated by the law of supply and demand. The strategic evaluation of power – the capacity to use violence to enforce the will – is fundamental to the political calculation that will be commercialized. Therefore, police corruption is a peculiar example of *political commodities*, because the merchandise is produced through the expropriation of the state’s power when the policeman uses political resources, as the authority that the state grants him or her, to acquire private goods. This kind of political negotiation occurs, for example, when a policeman relinquishes his power to arrest a drug dealer, requiring money to set him free.

The use of violence expropriated from the state’s monopoly, or the threat to use it, is something necessary to allow the existence of *political commodities*. According to Misse (n.d, p.3): “It is a way of ‘invasion’ of the principle of states’ sovereignty by the deregulated market”¹⁰⁰. Thus, the police illegal use of “state” power conditions the development of the commercial activity that builds webs of illegitimate domination.

As the commerce of drugs is not legal, the dealers need to develop their way to get protection. The policemen sell this protection by using their own capacity to harm the dealers, to negotiate weapons, drugs seized and even the freedom of the criminals. Apparently, once the drug dealers can buy these political goods, they “own” the territory where they act. If this negotiation of *political commodities* is not taken into consideration, the drug dealers “control” the territories, keeping them out of the state’s range, while they are buying their permission to act from the agents (police) that appropriate the power held by the state. Therefore, the idea that the *UPPs* retrieve to the state the territories that were dominated by the drug dealers is very recurrent:

¹⁰⁰ Our translation.

With the departure of the drug dealers, a vacuum of power takes place. Until the implementation of formal tools of arbitration, mediation and decision, particular from the democratic state, become recognized (...) in the space that used to be controlled by the drug dealers, several configurations of power are possible: the most important is the one that associates the power of the weapons with political power (Rodrigues & Siqueira, p. 44)¹⁰¹.

The authors we just mentioned seem to be concerned with the possibility that the *UPPs* assume a totalitarian control of the *favelas* by replacing the alleged control of the drug dealers. Logically, they think that the “democratic state” must avoid this possibility by making more use of its democratic institutions.

While society is not reduced to the state and its unique authority, supposedly above the other social bodies, one must recognize that the state itself has never been absent in the *favelas*, but really present through the negotiation and exchanges undertaken by its agents,¹⁰² and that this kind of political and economical process is a characteristic of the state. This perception “makes possible” an acknowledgement of multiple forms of political participation through popular democratic power as an alternative to the regulation performed by state’s institutions, and the insistence in demanding the “return” of the state though it was never absent.

¹⁰¹ Our translation.

¹⁰² It is important to understand that the police corruption is only the more visible part of the *political commodities*’ negotiation. It is like the tip of an iceberg because this permanent negotiation involves several other agents, but it is the police that will negotiate directly with the retailers of illegal products and services.

As the negotiation of *political commodities* in Rio de Janeiro is connected to the notion of social inequality, that segregates the society in layers; that legitimates the unequal treatment between individuals; and that this inequality is even present in the law - as in the case of the special prisons previously discussed - some spaces like the *favelas*, will be “more propitious to the criminal subjection”. As the people who live in marginalized and precarious urban spaces are often devoid of personal relationships that would facilitate a “privileged” acquisition of a social status, which could eventually guarantee the immunity they need against the unequal enforcement of *state law*, the inhabitants of the *favelas* were historically constituted as an object of the criminal justice system. This process, we have called “*criminalization of the favelas*”, occurs through extremely violent methods used by police, and also through the “priority” they are able to get from criminal law’s treatment¹⁰³.

We are not saying that the “*autos de resistência*” and arbitrary arrests only happen in the *favelas*, but that the stigma attached to these spaces and its population is fundamental to “justify” and legitimize, and, at the same time, to explicit, the unequal treatment of state’s actions towards this reality. That is why the use of *caveirão* in favela *becomes* something socially acceptable, though its presence in other areas or neighbourhoods of the city of Rio de Janeiro is almost unimaginable and unprecedented.

Misse (n.d.) makes a meaningful remark when he reminds us that the state’s agents (policemen) are not bought or controlled by the drug dealers. They impose their conditions to the traffickers/drug merchants, while the demands for repression of this

¹⁰³ Orlando Zaccone Filho (2007) showed how deviance is classified differently according to the social constitution of the place where they occurred.

illegal commerce/trafficking increase the police power of negotiation, and consequently, the drug dealers' need of protection.

As Pires (2010) explains, the *arrego*¹⁰⁴ in Rio de Janeiro is not something stipulated by a voluntary negotiation, but determined in an asymmetrical relationship between the state's agents and the operators of the illegal trade/trafficking of goods. The following citation illustrates the difficulty to understand sociologically the consequences of such social and political process, as the *arrego* implies an interpretation that underestimates the characteristics of the state's presence in the *favelas*:

(In a different way) and in relation to the *arrego* (when the policeman acquires money but not the power to run the community), the police corruption in the *UPPs*, if it happens, will be associated with the high level of control over the affairs of everyday life. In the traditional form of the *arrego* the policeman does not become a partner in the business. (...) Besides the gravity of the police's abuse of power in a *UPP*, there is also the inherent risk of the association between deviant conduct and territorial control (Rodrigues & Siqueira, p.44).¹⁰⁵

The authors do not consider the political dimension of the *arrego*. According to their interpretation, police would merely receive money to not interfere in the drug business that takes place in the *favelas*. Following their reasoning it would be hard to

¹⁰⁴ *Arrego* is a native category used to define the payment in money that the police receives in order not to use its power to repress something they consider illegal.

¹⁰⁵ Our translation.

understand why the drug commerce/trafficking in Brazil takes on the peculiar configuration of the *bocas de fumo*. The use of this commercial strategy of drug sales in fixed locations - places the products and the exchanges in a specific, pre-defined location that does not change - generally known by the police and the society, instead of the bulk sales, so common in the streets of different cities of the Western world. This strategy can be explained precisely by the necessity of protection against the state's agents, which impose the acquisition of protection against them as a *commodity*. This way, the drug commerce/trafficking does not produce those *commodities*. Instead of it, the dealers only tend to buy this protection according to the capacity of the police to impose its power through violence. When the state practically grants not only the physical and material capacity for police to kill, but also the moral and legal support – what makes the police of Rio de Janeiro the most lethal of the Western world (Misse, Grillo, Teixeira & Neri, 2013) – this same situation becomes the entitlement to possess the power not to kill, or to sell to drug dealers the “right to remain alive”. Thus, life becomes a *political commodity*.

The understanding of the drug commerce/trafficking payments to the police in order to avoid trouble gets “weak” when the concept of *political commodities* is adopted, because the *arrego* is not an expense of the drug dealers to improve their business or reduce risks. The *arrego* is a necessity imposed by the state's agents to allow their permanence in the territory of their trade. As the labor force to operate the commerce of drugs is abundant, the police can improve the value of the *political commodity* “protection” by increasing successively its lethality. The value of this commodity is not determined only by its offer, but mainly through its political dimension - the capacity to

impose its power - that is balanced through the use of force. In short, if the police can kill more, it can also charge more money to give protection.

Therefore, the state's control of the *favelas* as an urban social space does not require a physical permanent presence, as the title of the report sponsored by the World Bank "Bringing the state back into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro: Understanding changes in community life after the UPP pacification process" (World Bank, 2012, October) tries to suggest. If in the *favelas* without *UPPs* the police act making incursions, exchanging fire and leaving the place after it, it does not mean that the state gets inside and outside the *favelas* inasmuch as police is present or absent in these territories. As well as the lack of distribution of infrastructure and services to satisfy basic rights of the inhabitants, which is so common in the favelas, does not mean that there is a lack of state or that the latter is absent from such spaces. The absence of education, health, paving, sanitation, and other civil and human rights that go with citizenship, is an important feature that gives shape to the presence of the state in the *favelas*, and that says a lot about their relation.

The notion of the state as the provider of citizenship affects directly the sociological interpretation about the *UPPs*' action: "This pacification was intended to shift control of the *favelas* from the drug gangs and militias to the Brazilian state – literally from one day to the next – and provide their residents with the same kind of citizenship rights enjoyed by the rest of the city." (World Bank, 2012, October, p.12). If one considers that the social rights are benefits granted by the state, instead of collective achievements that guarantee equality of opportunities, the police can be understood as an institution able to provide *cidadania* (citizenship). And this notion is not something

isolated since it is frequently found in the media, as in the report news¹⁰⁶ whose headline is *UPP do Chapéu Mangueira e Babilônia, no Rio, resgata a cidadania* (*UPP Chapéu Mangueira and Babilonia, in Rio, rescues the cidadania*)¹⁰⁷, and in several different studies about the *UPPs*:

The implementation of *UPPs*, besides converting the commander in an important mediator (“problem solver”) who guarantees the functioning of *Social UPPs* (what is only possible due to the installation of *UPPs*, since the precarious action of *poder público* [public power] is associated fundamentally to the control previously exerted by the criminal groups), also facilitates the access of other nongovernmental organizations into these *favelas* (Rodrigues, A., et al., 2012, p. 77)¹⁰⁸.

This suggests that *UPP* is what brings the effective action of the public power, meaning the state, to the *favelas*, what makes explicit the equivalence between *espaço público* and state in Brazil. This notion is “brought back” when police stays permanently in the territory, what only happens with the *UPPs*. It was symbolically expressed with the action that was stamped in the front page of the Rio de Janeiro’s newspapers: the raising of the Rio de Janeiro’s Police flag and the Brazilian flag at the *favela Complexo do*

¹⁰⁶ R7 Notícias (2010, December 7). *UPP do Chapéu Mangueira e Babilônia, no Rio, resgata a cidadania*. Retrieved from <http://noticias.r7.com/rio-de-janeiro/balanco-geral-rj/videos/upp-do-chapeu-mangueira-e-babilonia-no-rio-resgata-a-cidadania-07072014> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹⁰⁷ Our translation.

¹⁰⁸ Our translation.

Alemão after the police intervention that preceded the implementation of an *UPP* in this *favela* (see image 7).

Image 7: The flags of Brazil and Rio de Janeiro Civil Police hoisted at the gondola of *Complexo do Alemão*.



Retrieved from

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_eU9RiQXsC3I/TPTxnHNalXI/AAAAAAAAAHk/UlrC7NfsRYs/s1600/28_PHG_ALEMAO_FOTO39.JPG, last accessed on 2014-06-10.

This cinematographic incursion undertaken in November, 28, 2010 with 2.600 men from the Brazilian army, military, civil and federal polices and even with the use of military tanks was acclaimed by the media (Oliveira, 2010). The media consensus about this incursion reported it as a great historical event of the Brazilian state territory's recovery. It was possible to read everywhere stories like "The recovery of *Complexo do Alemão* undertaken by the forces of *segurança pública* (public security) represents a

landmark for the public security of the state of Rio de Janeiro”¹⁰⁹ (Griesinger, 2014, July 16), “The recovery, as the name already indicates, consists in the police penetrating into the *favela*. It seems to be simple, but this was one of the main impediments in combating the drug trafficking”¹¹⁰, “The recovery of *Complexo do Alemão* on this Sunday, 28 was the biggest offensive against the drug traffic in Rio de Janeiro”¹¹¹. Even the president of the Republic, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, expressed about the state lack control over the territory: “I think that this operation is a success. Obviously it is not over yet. It is just beginning. (...) Anyway, we took the first step. We entered *Complexo do Alemão*”¹¹². A book entitled *A Retomada do Complexo do Alemão* (The Recovery of *Complexo do Alemão*)¹¹³ was written by Grecco, Monteiro & Bettini in 2013 about this operation. And an article written by journalist Ricardo Setti (2010, December 15) makes this notion even more explicit:

The approximation of the holidays, which softens our hearts, is removing from the headlines the great event of the year – the recovery of the set of *favelas* in *Complexo do Alemão*, in Rio,

¹⁰⁹ Our translation.

¹¹⁰ Our translation. *Folha de São Paulo* (2011, November 16). Para entender o processo de pacificação das favelas do Rio. Retrieved from <http://direito.folha.uol.com.br/4/post/2011/12/para-entender-o-processo-de-pacificacao-das-favelas-do-rio.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹¹¹ Our translation. *GI RJ*. Veja a estratégia usada para a ocupação do Complexo do Alemão. Retrieved from <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/rio-contr-o-crime/noticia/2010/11/veja-estrategia-usada-para-ocupacao-do-complexo-do-alemao.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹¹² Our translation. Brasil (Presidência da República, Secretaria de Imprensa). (2010, November 29). Programa de radio “Café com o presidente” com o Presidente da República Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Retrieved from <http://www.biblioteca.presidencia.gov.br/ex-presidentes/luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva/programa-cafe-com-o-presidente/29-11-2010-2011cafe-com-o-presidente201d-com-o-presidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹¹³ Our translation.

hitherto demoralizing impregnable stronghold and fortress of the crime to the sovereignty of the Brazilian state¹¹⁴.

All the applause about the “recovery” of the “marginalized” territory undertaken by the state, which would finally allow the *poder público* (public power) to distribute its goods in the “territory once controlled by the drug dealers”, has hidden the fact that the site chosen for the theatrical raising of the flags, the gondola (cable car) of *Complexo do Alemão*, was built by the same state which allegedly was unable to enter the *favela*.

Later, the imprisonment of forty policemen, who participated in the well known operation of “resumption” of territory in 2010, shook the jingoism that surrounded it. It was discovered that the drugs and weapons seized in this “operation of war”, that found no resistance from the drug dealers, were being sold back to the “criminals”. Telephone recordings registered the conversations between policemen who used the term “El Dorado” to make reference to *Complexo do Alemão* and the products seized and resold. Even the head of the Civil Police (criminal investigation police) of Rio de Janeiro - as his predecessor that was arrested after the disclosure of his involvement in criminal activities¹¹⁵ - was accused of involvement with the scheme of resale of weapons and drugs discovered by the federal police¹¹⁶. In a Sunday evening, two days after the

¹¹⁴ Our translation.

¹¹⁵ JusBrasil. (2013). Ex-chefe da polícia civil é preso em flagrante (publicado por Expresso da Notícia em 2008 e extraído por JusBrasil). Retrieved from <http://expresso-noticia.jusbrasil.com.br/noticias/139863/ex-chefe-da-policia-civil-do-rio-e-preso-em-flagrante> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹¹⁶ Uol Notícias. (2011, February 15). Entenda a Operação Guilhotina e suas implicações no Rio de Janeiro. Retrieved from <http://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2011/02/15/entenda-a-operacao-guilhotina-e-suas-implicacoes-no-rio-de-janeiro.htm> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

operation to arrest the policemen, and claiming to have received an anonymous letter denouncing “irregularities”, the civil police head ordered the sealing of the police station in charge of the investigation of the policemen accused of corruption in the *Complexo do Alemão*¹¹⁷ case. This attitude was understood as an attempt to preclude the investigation of police involvement with illegal activities, and the scandal became even bigger, as it was also reported by newspapers from outside Rio de Janeiro (Grillo, 2011, February 21). All this internal disputes put in evidence the economic relationship between the drug dealers and state agents that, selling *political commodities*, help to shape the presence of the state in the *favelas*.

According to Misse (n.d.), the commerce of *political commodities* allows the control of territories without the necessity of direct and permanent presence in those segmented spaces. As those relations are not exceptional or occasional, it is possible to say that they are a significant part of the interactions that characterize the drug commerce/trafficking in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro.

5.3 The notion of policemen dissatisfaction with their work in *UPPs*

The dissatisfaction of “conventional”¹¹⁸ policemen with their work has been the object of Brazilian studies and researches (Souza & Minayo, 2005; Sento-Sé, J.T & Silva, A.M.C., 2009). However, several studies were also made on policemen involved with the *UPPs*. And they were able to verify that there is a high level of policemen dissatisfied

¹¹⁷ G1 Rio de Janeiro. (2011, february 14). Retrieved from <http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2011/02/chefe-de-policia-diz-que-encontrou-irregularidades-na-draco.html> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

¹¹⁸ “Conventional policemen” or “traditional police” are terms used to make reference to the regular state military police (all the police that is not *BOPE* or *UPP*).

with the specific conditions and characteristics of their jobs in the Pacifying Police Units (Cano, 2012; World Bank, 2012; Rodrigues, Siqueira & Lissovsky, 2012). A research made by the Center of Studies on Security and Citizenship (Soares, Lemgruber, Musumeci & Ramos, 2010), with a probabilistic and random sample of 359 policemen, from all the nine *UPPs* that existed in 2010 when the study was undertaken, demonstrates that 70% of the interviewed preferred to work in the conventional police. The reasons invoked as causes of this disapproval in *UPPs* vary, and the elucidation of the patterns of economic relation between police and society (the commerce of the *political commodity* police protection, for example) in Rio de Janeiro will help understand the meanings of the arguments that justify the police discontentment in *UPPs*.

In order to propose an explanation for the reason and consequences of *UPPs*' policemen dissatisfaction with their work, the kinds of police complaints reported by the studies (due to their recurrence in multiple analyses) can be divided in two categories: structural dissatisfaction (a disappointment with the wages and conditions of work in the *UPPs*) and operational dissatisfaction (the frustration with the elements associated to the police of proximity proposed by the concept of pacification that, in the *UPPs*, prevent the logic of permanent open warlike confrontation with drug dealers). These two categories are complementary, as they are connected and influence each other mutually.

The principal motive for dissatisfaction among the policemen from the *UPPs* is their wages. According to one of the studies on *UPPs* policemen's opinions (Soares, Lemgruber, Musumeci & Ramos, 2010), only 6.4% of the policemen from *UPPs* are satisfied with their salaries. The Military Police from the state of Rio de Janeiro receives the fourth worse salary of the country (Simas, Aderaldo & Motta, 2012). And the

policemen from *UPPs* receive a gratification of five hundreds *Reais* paid by the City Hall of Rio de Janeiro. As these policemen are so underpaid and the *UPPs* receive a gratification, it would be presumably that the policemen from *UPPs* should be happier than the rest of the corporation. But this gratification is often paid with delays and it is taxed by the government, which makes their salaries to be very similar to the traditional police.

The uniforms is another element of dissatisfaction. According to the research made by the Center of Studies on Security and Citizenship (Soares, et al., 2010), only 21, 7% of the policemen from *UPPs* are satisfied with their uniforms. The research on *The Owners of Favelas* (Cano, 2012) tries to explain the reason of this dissatisfaction. The uniform that the policemen from *UPPs* use is that created for ceremonies. It is different from the dark grey uniform that the traditional military police from Rio de Janeiro wear, created with the intention of being an operational uniform. The policemen who complain about their uniforms argue that the ceremonies' cloths - chosen to make the presence of police less hostile and to create a good image of the *UPPs* for people that live in the *favelas* - is inappropriate for their work because they need to jump walls, walk between bushes, climb, etc.

The traditional policemen downplay the policemen from the *UPPs* calling them Smurfs, due to the blue color of their uniforms and the supposedly less belligerent attitude of the *UPPs*, what is repudiated by the culture of confrontation (Tostaa, 2012). Apparently the complaints about the uniforms express a structural dissatisfaction, but it is also explained by the operational dissatisfaction, due to the cultural belief that the work of police is "to fight and combat crime", "eliminate criminals", but the *UPPs* policemen

are dressed to interact with the *favela* in a different way, helping to solve problems, to administrate conflicts. The discourse of an *UPP* policeman makes it clear:

I am not fighting criminality. I am just stagnated here as a vigilant, unable to do something. This (the *UPPs*) is just a feeling of security. This is what the *UPP* does, it gives a sensation of security to the city when, as a matter of fact, inside the alleys, all the stuff is still going on freely because the quantity of police is not enough to control everything in the *favela*”(Carvalho, 2012, p181)¹¹⁹.

Police dissatisfaction with their work in the *UPPs* is frequently seen as an obstacle to act as a community police. For *UPPs*' policemen, policing is the combat against crime, and community policing is the work of a “second-class police” (Cano, 2012, p.139). And yet, different sort of research and institutional documents recommend that the principles of community policing should be valued and implemented across the *UPPs*, as this should be their real objective (Cano, 2012; Soares et al., 2010). On another registry, “the consideration of the need for a war against drug commerce/trafficking is at the basis of what makes armed confrontation a reality” (Rodrigues, 2012, p. 131)¹²⁰, and the conflict between police and the *favelas* understood as a failure of the *UPPs*.

Police ethos must be taken seriously, as part of the ethics of policing, in order to understand how police values and principles influence their work (Muniz, 1999). Issues of honor and proudness manifest in different ways and shapes, and can even explain

¹¹⁹ Our translation.

¹²⁰ Our translation.

criminal deviant behavior. But, from a sociological perspective, it seems that the dissatisfaction of the *UPPs* policemen could be explained by their “need” or “desire” of “fighting crime with violence”, if this contradicts all that they are taught about ethics and constitutional law:

It is well known that young men who join the Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro have the expectation of experiencing situations of armed confrontation. The *UPPs*, besides not offering this kind of experience (the armed confrontations are extremely rare in the *UPPs’ work*) lead policemen to a situation of proximity in which several problems are taken before them to be solved “peacefully”, almost without making arrests, put people in prison, or take part in situations of shootings. Even if their activities look closer to the service that the Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro should actually offer to its population than those of the conventional or traditional police, such activities do not correspond to the expectations of young policemen towards their profession (Rodrigues & Siqueira, p. 39)¹²¹.

¹²¹ Our translation.

The research *The Owners of Favelas* (Cano, 2012) expresses the understanding that the frequency of “*desacato a autoridade*”¹²² is a thermometer that indicates the quality of the relation between the *UPPs* and the population of the *favelas*:

(...) the *desacato* is an indicator of loss of police legitimacy, especially in a police inspired by community policing. It reveals that the relation with the community is not working. In other words, the existence of *desacato* represents the failure of police intention. It is a simple equation: the more *desacatos* happen, the worse is the mood of the relations between the policemen and the people living in the *favelas*. Several commanders recognize the problem of *desacatos* proliferation, and try to induce the policemen they command to appease their differences with the *cidadãos*, before getting to the point of arresting someone for *desacato* (Cano, 2012, p.163).

The same research notices that “the register of *desacato*, considered essential for the policemen to keep their authority, actually weakens it because it undermines their legitimacy with the population, as several commanders can easily realize.” (Cano, 2012, p. 183). The sociological conclusion that the register of “crime of *desacato*” weakens the authority of the policeman, seems to be based on the idea that either the policemen share the same interests with the researcher or that they automatically change their expectations

¹²² “*Desacato à autoridade*” (contempt of authority) is a controversial crime that typifies the situation in which a *cidadão* (citizen) disobeys an *autoridade pública* (public authority), someone that works for the Brazilian state.

when the government decides that the police should act differently, according to the principles of community policing. In other words, despite the fact that the government and the police put forward an *UPPs* “program”, “emphasizing the ‘community policing’ aspects that should be integrated by new officers, encouraging them (...) to build a closer relationship with the community” (World Bank, 2012, October, p.45) and that “(...) the overall message and government guidance is still one of building trust and respect between this new police and the community” (World Bank, 2012, October, p. 45), it does not mean that the policemen will automatically start to be more interested in building this kind of relationship.

As the *UPPs* are conceived to be “different” from the rest of the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro, even if this difference can sometimes be almost imperceptible, it is not surprising that the policemen, prevented from using physical violence, use other strategies (as, for example, arresting people for *desacato*) to impose their authority.

The dissatisfaction with this guidance is connected with the police monetary discontent in the *UPPs*. Indeed, the culture of confrontation is important to reaffirm a certain police ethos, and this can partially explain the resistance of policemen from *UPPs* to establish a culture of respect with the community. But the understanding of the police culture of open warlike confrontation and the discontentment with payment are not enough to explain their dissatisfaction.

The use of the concept of *political commodities* is essential to explain this state of affairs. A study of all the declared killings committed by the Rio de Janeiro police in the year of 2005 (Misse et al, 2013) was able to verify that, in 707 “*autos de resistência*” (with 510 registers of occurrence, because in some occurrences there were more than one

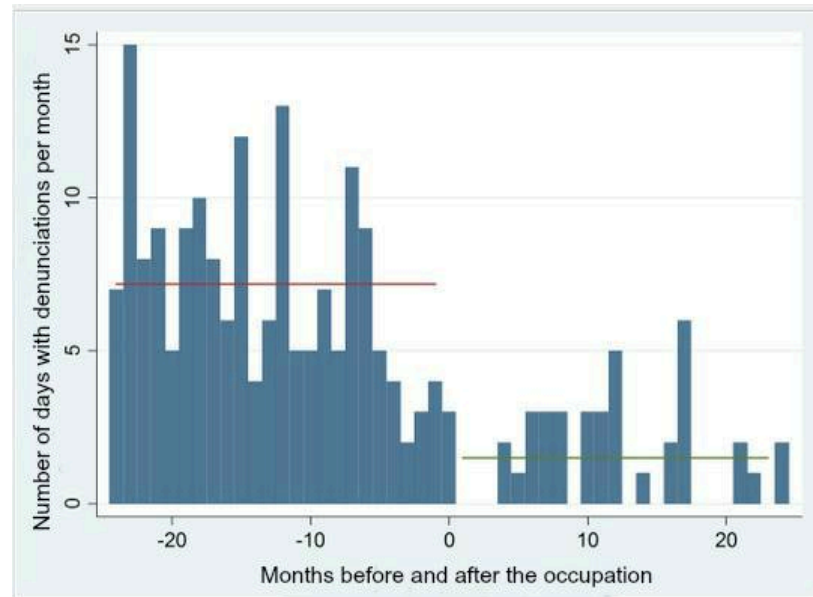
killing), only 355 inquiries had been launched. The prosecutor took only 19 of those 355 inquiries to the court of justice. From those 19 cases, the prosecutor requested the filing of 16 and, in only three of them, there was a denouncement. It means that, in 510 registers of police killings made by the police itself, there were only three trials in courts.

The 99.2% of filings indicates that the killings promoted by police are hardly put to trial by the judiciary. With this almost inexistence of investigation and judgment, the Rio de Janeiro police have virtually the full permission to kill granted by the state. Therefore, they also have the power not to kill and to negotiate this decision, making the life of individuals become *political commodities*.

In the case of the *UPPs*, the control of the police behavior is incomparably greater than in the case of traditional police. It is probably too soon to state that the justice system treats differently eventual killings committed by policemen from the *UPPs*. The space and attention that this police gained in the media enhanced substantially the consequences of police action in the *favelas* that were intervened by *UPPs*. In other words, “errors” committed by policemen from *UPPs* tend to have more space in media. Even if the police keep the same kind of action in the rest of the state of Rio de Janeiro, the bad repercussions that a shooting has, if it involves the *UPPs*, certainly is an important factor that influences the decrease of armed conflicts in these *favelas* (see graphic 2).

If the capacity for the police to kill is limited, its possibility of being paid by the profitable drug commerce/trafficking not to kill decreases considerably. In other words, the *political commodities* become devalued once its political dimension or the capacity of using physical force to increase its value become less relevant.

Graphic 2: Incidence of shootings before and after the occupation in *favelas* with *UPPs*



Source: Monteiro (2014, March 21) Retrieved from

<http://oagentepincipal.wordpress.com/tag/pacificacao/> last accessed on 2014-06-10.

Underrating the importance of the negotiation of *political commodities* between police and society, several studies express that the success of *UPPs* depends on the struggle to explain to the *UPPs*' policemen the importance of their proximity with the community, as “(...) a policy that values explicitly the *UPPs*, treating it as the elite troops, is needed, in the same way that it happens with the combat police (traditional police) (...), a mechanism of external control, specific to the *UPPs*, must exist” (Rodrigues & Siqueira, p. 50).

If the features of the Brazilian notion of *espaço público* (public space) - as something controlled by the state, in which privileges and benefits are distributed only to those that can take possession of its goods (Lima, 1999) - are taken into consideration, it

becomes possible to understand that the incentive to create a “different” and less lethal police tends to generate dissatisfaction among the membership, influencing its “failure”. If all the rest of police remains the same, it will not be surprising that the *UPP* policemen will be discontented with the idea that everyone else but them are taking advantages with an illegal commerce/trafficking of drugs that exists all around Rio de Janeiro (and in the rest of the world).

The implementation of *UPPs* as a police to be less violent and different from the rest of police, so that its units become “islands of excellence” in Rio de Janeiro’s Military Police, is a strategy that may reduce violence in those areas temporarily. Nonetheless, it is important not to forget the lessons of former “alternative” policing experiences in Rio de Janeiro, so to remember that if the police keep acting with its traditional violence there is a probability that the positive results, as the decreasing of shootings and the rate of homicides, may not last long, even in those areas under the eye of the *UPPs*.

5.4 The notion of *UPPs* as a rupture with the logic of segregated city, and the idea of rupture between “before and after” the *UPPs*

The idea that the *UPPs* are breaking the historical paradigm of Rio de Janeiro as a segregated city is also often found in several studies about the Pacifying Police Units. According to this notion, the *UPPs* would represent a disruption, by moving away from the stigma that the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro have been carrying for a long time.

Even if *UPPs* were successful in promoting a different kind of policing, it does not mean that the Rio de Janeiro Military Police have abandoned their traditional practices as some studies seem to suggest: “It is fundamental, for the police work in the

favelas (with *UPPs*), according to the new premises, that the police from the present do not pay for what the other police did in the past” (Rodrigues & Siqueira, p. 35)¹²³. The distrust that the *UPPs* face in the *favelas* is explained not only by the historical background of this institution, but also, and maybe especially, for its practices in the present. Hence, if the police keep their traditional practices in the *favelas* without *UPPs*, it will be difficult for the population to cease to have a position of suspicion towards the police work. It is almost imperative that the police forces of Rio de Janeiro actually change their ways and objectives, otherwise the concerns that the *UPPs* will have the same end as the *GPAEs* will become true.

The necessity of the *poder público* (public power) to act equally in different regions of the city, without distinction between *favela* and *asfalto*, is observed as a need to put an end to the social segregation observed in Rio de Janeiro. Conversely, some studies put forward the idea that this segregation can be undermined through the police action if the *UPPs* are implemented:

Bringing peace to the *favelas* was seen by many as a first step towards their full integration into the *asfalto* (*asphalt to designate the better off* formal part of the city). This was seen as a kind of pre-condition that would facilitate the transition from the *cidade partida* (split city) to the *cidade integrada* (integrated city), and from the stigmatized resident to the citizenship with rights (World Bank, 2012, October, p. 92).

¹²³ Our translation.

The *UPPs* are also presented as an institution able to reduce the stigma about the *favelas*:

One of the most positive effects of the (*UPPs*) program seems to be the decline of the stigma of the *favelas* with *UPPs*, that is materialized by the introduction of the rest of the city to these communities, and in the fact that the people living in the *favelas* do not need to omit where they live, when they look for a job. This strengthening of the local identity and self-esteem made possible a greater integration of *favelas* with *UPPs* in the urban environment (Cano, 2012, p.181)¹²⁴.

If the people who live in *favelas* with *UPPs* do not have to hide the place where they live anymore, it does not mean that the stigma about *favelas* is decreasing. Indeed, it is better for the person looking for a job, to have better opportunities to get it, but two other aspects of this stigma must be taken into consideration: the first one refers to the idea that, if the *favelas* need police control not to be perceived as a socially depreciated place, such perception may generate fear and prejudice. The stigma will not go away or decrease, but it will probably be reinforced; the second one is that the *UPPs* do not represent a real fracture in the policies of security in Rio de Janeiro. Even if “a new policy with new practices” has been adopted, they are not abolishing the old mode of action of Rio de Janeiro Military Police, but coexisting with it. The “requalification” and re-designation of the *favelas* that received *UPPs* evidently does not reach the *favelas* that

¹²⁴ Our translation.

did not have the presence of this policing. Therefore, the old stigma still exists with a new configuration as

It seems that a new duality is emerging beyond the traditional between *favela* and *asfalto*. The new polarity is manifested in relation to the ‘*pacified favelas*’ and the traditional *favelas*. The first ones allow an unrestrained entrance and tranquility; they do not have to face shootings, while the others are condemned to be forbidden territories, locus of violence, danger and, ultimately, evil. So, several witnesses pointed to a clear reduction of the stigma in *pacified favelas* (Cano, 2012, p. 131).

But this new duality does not overcome the existence of polarization. A “new” set of public policies (*políticas públicas*) that keep fragmenting the social environment of Rio de Janeiro is not able to overcome the segregation that stigmatizes its *favelas*. Without policies based on the idea that everybody deserves equality of treatment, though they are different, the dualities may change, but they keep existing and generating tragic consequences, as the history of Rio de Janeiro and the violence unequally distributed in its territory are the norm.

5.5 Articulating those notions

The notions of *UPPs* as a novelty or as a revolution; the state’s resumption of territory; policemen dissatisfaction with their work in *UPPs*; and *UPPs* as a rupture with the history of segregation in Rio de Janeiro, represent together a set of ideas that

help to understand the instantaneous success that *UPPs* have achieved in the media and also the risks for its interpretation. In those three works analyzed it seems that there is a necessity to report *UPPs* as novelty in order to create the expectation for a less lethal police in Rio de Janeiro. As a considerable amount of the population is often claiming for police harshening, the novelty would present a possibility for a change in this situation. If *UPPs* are presented as something old with a new name, the belief in the capacity of police to use violence to bring more security to the city (and Rio de Janeiro is a great example that police violence is not only innocuous to reduce social violence, but also helps to increase it) seems to be unchanged. However, it is important to have in mind that diffusing the impression that *UPPs* represent a rupture with the segregation reproduces the idea that *favelas* are social spaces that need police control in order to function according to the western standards of democracy, which may end up reinforcing the criminalization of *favelas*.

It is necessary to try to understand the dissatisfaction of *UPP*'s police officers according to police traditions that are deep-rooted in the Brazilian juridical culture. Therefore, according to this culture, the *agente público* (public agent) is someone that works for the state and not for the public, which means that is someone who traditionally assumes the state's power to his or her own benefit. As the *UPPs* seem to limit this power, the police officer that work in those units tends to feel harmed by his or her specific situation. It is through this power that police helps to shape the presence of the state in *favelas* without *UPPs* even if the police agents are not permanently physically present in those places. Therefore, the impression that the state is only present in *favelas* when the police is over there, orientates the notion that

the *UPPs* are bringing back the state to favelas and recovering territories from drug dealers. As it was demonstrated, the absence of public policies is a feature of the Brazilian state's presence in *favelas*. Therefore, it is necessary to question the state's action inside and outside *favelas* to think of possibilities to overcome the logic of segregated city instead of disregarding the contribution of Brazilian state to implement this segregation.

6. Conclusion

The sociological narrative adopted in this work to explain the historical formation of the Brazilian state allows the comprehension of the symbolic elements that inform the Brazilian *sui generis* notion of equality. As it was demonstrated, this juridical notion of equality associated to the idea of similarity and, therefore, fairness is perceived as to treat differently the unequal and not to offer equality of opportunities and treatment to the different.

Another important verification about the origins of Brazilian society is that the notion of *espaço público* (public space) is permanently associated to the domain of the state. The process of Republic proclamation without popular participation and controlled by the elites in order to keep privileges and inequalities resulted in a peculiar concept of *cidadania* (citizenship), in which the values of inequality from the old regime prevailed and the inequality of treatment continued to exist even in the law.

The association of the notions of *espaço público* and *cidadania* contributed to the daily practices of Brazilian society in which the idea of public space was not developed as a domain shared by the collectivity. Those features made it to be seen as something distant, obscure and as a space where the private relations prevail and everything is possible according to the particular relations that the individuals hold.

If state's violence is not a peculiarity of Brazil, the conjugation of those ideas is fundamental to explain the specific way in which it occurs in this society. The verification of high levels of Rio de Janeiro's police lethality, the lack of criticism toward it and the use of the Brazilian army against the national territory are some of the elements that put in evidence certain specificities of the Brazilian notion of *espaço público* and that

demands a sociological explanation. Without these explanations, all the states policies are understood as *políticas públicas* (public policies) and this perspective hampers the understanding of the objectives that orientate those policies. Therefore, social scientists that do not recognize the sociological reflection about the Brazilian constitution of *estadania* and the nature of those policies, assume the risk of believing that what they consider to be a successful policy coincides with what the individuals in their interaction think is positive. In other words, when those scientists do not take into consideration the perspective and desires of the individuals in their relations – the police interest in using the state's legitimacy to negotiate non-punishment of illegal activities, for example - there is a risk that those scientists project their beliefs into the practices of the individuals that are being analyzed. This transposition of the social scientist's will into his or her object of analysis explain why the use of *desacato de autoridade* in *favelas* with *UPPs* are understood by the analyst as a failure while the policemen think that it is necessary for their activity.

The theoretical framework adopted in this thesis describes and explains how the juridical and cultural inequalities were built in Brazilian society. When it is used to analyze the *UPPs* it becomes clear that it is not a policy that intend to offer autonomy to *favelas* and its population. The formation of citizenship as an imposition of the state, instead of the outcome of a process of struggle for social equality and rights, implies the way that Brazilian citizens are understood nowadays. When a policeman calls someone a *cidadão* (citizen), it means, then, that this person does not hold social connections to assure a special treatment. Therefore, he or she will hardly have the rights respected by

the police officer. If the *UPPs* intend to spread citizenship without questioning this notion, it is more plausible that the inequalities will prevail gaining a new face.

Accordingly, it was necessary to demonstrate that the unequal treatment that the state offers to *favelas* is constantly perceived as something fair and natural in Brazil. When the *UPPs* appear gaining a great space in the media, several social scientists highlighted the specificities of this policing – even if some of those specificities, as the originality of this policing, exhaustively repeated in the mainstream media and in some sociological analyses are easily refuted – as if they represented a new paradigm in Rio de Janeiro supposedly attempt to regain territories allegedly controlled by drug dealers.

As a matter of fact, the *UPPs* presented a reconfiguration of the state's policy in some of those territories that were never controlled by “criminals” that constantly need to negotiate with state's agent – who are the tip of this relation – the illegitimate permission to act in those places. This negotiation does not occur through a symmetric relation. On the contrary, it is a result of a unilateral imposition that requires the constant use of violence to equilibrate this political market. Thus, police need to prove constantly who holds the power to overwhelm the illegal market of drugs in order to charge for the permission for it to continue existing.

Even if *UPPs* limit, in the territories where those units act, the police capacity to use violence to obtain profits, the existence of this policing concomitantly with the traditional practices that continue to exist in the rest of Rio de Janeiro's Military Police generates a dissatisfaction in the *UPPs*' policemen. The cops who act in *favelas* that are strategically important to the new economic development experienced by the city of Rio de Janeiro do not have the same power of imposition and collection of *political*

commodities that their colleagues detain working in other battalions. This discontentment is one of the elements that can undermine the *UPPs* as a police able to offer a more democratic treatment to the population, as some believe.

Yet, it is fundamental to take into consideration that it is very unlikely that, through the armed facet of the state (its police), the overcome of the segregation that marks the urban configuration of the city of Rio de Janeiro will be possible. The insistence on this strategy that resorts to the police to solve this historical problem, even if it is with a less lethal police, only reifies the division of the social spaces in territories. If the policies are not public, if they are not conceived by a collective that understands the individuals as deserving equal treatment despite their differences, the experiences of a less lethal policing may remain as a privilege of some *favelas* while the inequalities continue to exist adopting new forms.

Rio de Janeiro, internationally known for its epithet “The wonderful city”, is unquestionably a pretty scenario for a town. However, the beauty of its hills meeting the sea obfuscates the inequalities observed through a closer look. In order to be wonderful, the city must recognize its historical injustices and overcome them through policies that all conceived by all and for all.

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