Postsecular pacification

Pentecostalism and military urbanism in Rio de Janeiro

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Introduction

On the morning of November 26, 2010, several *favelas* (shantytowns) that together form the *Complexo do Alemão* were surrounded by soldiers of the federal Brazilian military.[1] The complex of *favelas* in the peripheral *zona norte* of the city was commonly portrayed as the hotbed of the infamous Red Command (*Comando Vermelho*), one of several large criminal organizations in the city that control the drug trade. In the course of the day, television spectators were able to follow on their screens the real-time advancement of military forces into the complex up until the celebratory moment that soldiers planted the Brazilian flag at the highest point of the neighborhood to signal that the Brazilian state had retaken this *wild* territory from the gang that had ruled it for many years. While many city residents remember this iconic event, not many people know that the military had given the entire operation a strikingly religious title and had baptized it: 'Operation Archangel'. Likewise, not many people know that in the months of military occupation that was part of Operation Archangel, the military collaborated closely with religious organizations embedded in the *favelas* to 'pacify' the urban zone and to make sure no violent confrontations would occur in the period leading up to the FIFA World Cup final of 2014 and the Olympics of 2016, both held in Rio de Janeiro.

The described representations of loss and recuperation of urban territory point to what Diane Davis has termed 'fragmented sovereignty' (Davis), a concept that denotes the state's limited capacity to monopolize the means of coercion in the face of irregular and private armed organizations (Hansen and Stepputat). Moreover, the military operations also demonstrate how the restoration of state rule over Brazilian urban territories draws on a religious repertoire, laying bare the prominence of a particular political theology that envisions the reestablishment of state sovereignty in terms of a divine (angelic) intervention.

This chapter shows that this political theology is related to what can best be called religious-military urbanism. The main argument of the chapter is that the continuum between this political theology and a particular 'religious governmentality' (Garmany; Lanz) amounts to what we call 'postsecular pacification', which

we roughly define as the fusion of military interventions on national soil under democracy on the one hand and religious modes of governing urban territories on the other. To make this argument, this chapter by and large engages with two contemporary scholarly discussions – one centered on the militarization of urban life (Graham; Wacquant) and the other on postsecular urbanism (Beaumont and Baker; Berking et al.) – and we argue that insights harvested from these discussions should be united if we want to understand contemporary power and rule in Rio de Janeiro.

'Pacifying' Rio de Janeiro

Reflections on military interventions in urban civil life in Brazil should not disavow Brazil's military rule that started in 1964 and lasted till 1985, yet in this chapter we focus on the post-dictatorial era, marked by the first democratic elections in 1988 and the embracement of a neoliberal economic ideology. Whereas the democratic transition reestablished boundaries between police and military action, theoretically preserving the latter for foreign threats, separations between the two were never absolute. In Brazil, police tasks are divided between the *Polícia Civil* – members of which perform investigations – and the *Polícia Militar* – members of which carry out surveillance and maintain public order. As the name suggests, the *PM* is closely connected to a military tradition of maintaining law and order, and in Rio de Janeiro the *Polícia Militar* has been responsible for many of the state's 'pacification' projects.

Beyond a questionable separation between police and military action, military forces have regularly been employed in urban security interventions. Rio de Janeiro, the second largest city of Brazil after São Paulo, has experienced different models of military occupation since the democratic turn, starting with the 1992 military occupation of Rio's *favelas*, implemented to 'preempt incidents' during the May 1992 International Earth Summit sponsored by the United Nations. Between 2008 and 2016, military forces were regularly employed in service of the so-called Pacification Policy, designed to maintain the city 'under control' during the Mega Events period – a period of successive events starting with the Pan American Games in 2007 and ending with the Olympics of 2016. Recently, in response to the bankruptcy of the state of Rio de Janeiro and the demise of the state security program, the city witnessed the so-called Military Intervention (2018) – a federal dispositive that put the army in charge of the city's police force for the first time in Brazil since it introduced its new Constitution in 1988. Though we find it very important to monitor the effects of this dispositive, this chapter focuses on the Pacification Policy and its effects.

The Pacification Policy by and large consisted of a public security strategy with three phases: first, the occupation of violent urban areas by military or other security forces (special forces of the state of Rio de Janeiro, for example); second, the (re)establishment of state presence via local police units – so-called UPPs (*Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora*/Pacifying Police Units) set up by the *Polícia*

Militar of Rio de Janeiro; and third, the implementation of social programs – at some point called 'social UPPs'. These social UPPs were designed as means to reorganize daily life in the occupied urban territories and to provide public services to the locality (electricity, water, education, medical support, etc.). Nevertheless, social UPPs were never truly installed, and during the course of the city-wide UPP program, the 'nonviolent', social face of the Pacifying Policy was formulated randomly, mainly in cooperation with cultural and religious actors, sometimes with state support and funding but certainly not always. Later, we analyze what the consequences were of this cooperation, but first we want to highlight what the focus on 'pacification' and the employment of the Brazilian military in urban territories tells us about the contemporary government of urban citizens.

As argued by different scholars in their recent book *Militarization in Rio de Janeiro: from pacification to intervention* (Farias et al.), the militarization of urban zones of Rio de Janeiro serves to shape a specific model of the neoliberal city, by means of a violent and warlike "governing of the poor" (Wacquant). Instead of investing in social programs, health and welfare, the ruling powers essentially maintain that private parties are better equipped to offer public services, since they have the capital and the expertise to do so. In effect, however, the neoliberal state primarily protects the flow of capital and the interests of businesses, while keeping the labor costs low. As stated by Wacquant:

> the promotion of the market as the optimal contraption for organizing all human activities requires not only a minimalist "small government" on the social and economic front, but also, and without contradiction, an enlarged and diligent penal state armed to intervene with force to maintain public order and draw out salient social and ethnic boundaries.
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> (111)

In contexts where such boundaries and interventions are enmeshed with criminal violence (exercised by non-state *and* state actors), urban conflicts regularly take the shape of warlike combat, and representations of urban violence are frequently formatted to resemble warfare.

Stephen Graham has extensively described what he calls the "new military urbanism", which according to him entails "the extension of military ideas of tracking, identification and targeting into the quotidian spaces and circulations of everyday city life" (xii), focusing on "the task of identifying insurgents, terrorists and an extensive range of ambient threats from the chaos of urban life" (xiii). Graham draws our attention to the fact that this new military urbanism "incorporates the stealthy militarization of a wide range of policy debates, urban landscapes, and circuits of urban infrastructure, as well as whole realms of popular and urban culture" (xiv). We find his focus on everyday mediated urban culture especially enlightening. Graham warns us not to underestimate the reproduction of the experience of urban war via TV shows, movies and video games (Der Derian; Stahl),

since these media help to bring "military ideas of the prosecution of, and preparation for, war into the heart of ordinary, day-to-day city life" (Graham xiv).

Whereas we largely agree with Graham's take on military urbanism, his analysis appears to be embedded in a secular(ist) framework. When he discusses religious ideologies and organizations throughout his book, they feature predominantly as destructive forces that fuel the desire to annihilate city life (Graham 36–59). When he pictures religious groups, the adherents are fundamentalists that have entrenched themselves in urban zones (AlSayyad). Moreover, the governmental apparatus, including the military, is assumed to be non-religious or at least non-partisan. Our short introduction and our earlier work (Lanz and Oosterbaan; Machado, "É muita mistura") show that such a secularist presumption is problematic. Social life in many large cities throughout the world display fusions between neoliberal and religious ideologies that reshape the urban infrastructure and produce new types of religious subjects that are both thoroughly urban and pious (Deeb and Harb). Instead of presupposing that religion is to be found outside the processes that comprise new military urbanism, we propose to open up our perspective and investigate when and how religious groups, practices and ideologies become part of the "militarization apparatus" (Farias et al.). As we will argue in more detail later, one especially has to take the spectacular growth of Pentecostalism into account when discussing the urban transformations of Rio de Janeiro of the past decades.

Before discussing in more detail what Brazilian Pentecostalism is and how it has become part of Rio's new military urbanism, we want to draw attention to an approach commonly known as 'postsecular urbanism'. By and large, scholars that adhere to this approach (Beaumont and Baker; Cloke and Beaumont) offer a model of contemporary urban life that includes religion and helps us to understand neoliberal cities such as Rio de Janeiro. As we will see, this approach can be helpful but also displays a certain bias towards Western societies, or, at least, appears to have certain presuppositions about what kind of roles religious organizations can adopt.

At the heart of postsecular urbanism lies the acknowledgement that theoretical reflections regarding religion and urban space should move beyond the secularization thesis that has reigned in urban studies for a long period (Olson et al.) and to recognize religion as a constitutive force of modernity. Contrary to the expectations, contemporary cities around the world exhibit the (re)emergence of public forms of religion, and we are witnessing new cross-fertilizations between social domains that were formerly understood as separate (Braidotti et al.). As Justin Beaumont, one of the first scholars to write on 'the postsecular city' has argued, a new conceptual frame was indispensable to describe the "interconnectivities between diverse social realities [. . .] that were limited to hitherto totalizing and prevailing notions of modernization and secularization" (7). We agree with those who state that the category 'postsecular' can be misleading when it is taken to mean that religious practices and institutions did not form part of the modern governmental apparatus in the recent past (Stack et al.), but we believe

the concept has currency precisely because it can highlight that categories such as 'religion' and 'the secular' are part of governmental (state) practices. Moreover, a postsecular *perspective* (Oosterbaan, "Public Religion") brings attention to the recent changes in the relations between state and religious institutions and the ways in which these relations are perceived and represented (in popular media and in scholarly reflections).

Although postsecular urbanism has developed in different directions, the fore-runners of the approach pointed out that, in the face of weakening welfare states under neoliberal policies, governmental agencies in cities in Europe and the United States started to turn to religious institutions ('faith-based organizations') and invited them to provide care, welfare and justice to city dwellers (Beaumont; Beaumont and Baker; Cloke and Beaumont). According to several of the pro-ponents of this take on postsecular urbanism, the turn could be understood as a 'rapprochement' of secular and religious institutions involved in the regulation of social life (Beaumont; Cloke and Beaumont).

Whereas we do not regard religion primarily as a reactive force to neolib-eralism, and we think there is great historical variation to what extent religion was separated from state institutions, we do see that one of the effects of urban neoliberalist adjustments is that governmental agencies that are constitutionally described as secular actively seek new collaborations with religious institutions in an attempt to regulate social life. Nevertheless, in order for us to perceive these collaborations we have to shed the assumption that the goals and effects primarily involve care and welfare; the rationale of the rapprochements can also be security and control, for example. Here, we aim to elucidate how state and religious institutions collaborated and conjointly formed the 'pacification appa-ratus' characteristic of the Pacification Policy era of 2008–2016. This pacification apparatus, or "governance dispositive" (in Foucaultian terms) consists of dis-courses, practices, institutions, groups and moralities entangled in many different ways (Machado, "É muita mistura"; "The Church Helps"), with the general aim of identifying, targeting, transforming and/or removing particular violent actors from urban neighborhoods.

Operation Archangel and Pentecostal pacification

Religious groups and practices were mobilized by means of many different strate-gies during the pacification period in Rio de Janeiro, and the Brazilian army was one of the state institutions that planned and managed the incorporation of reli-gious actors in the pacification process. During the first phase of the Pacification Policy, which focused on the 'occupation' of urban territories, the Brazilian mili-tary played a very important role in cooperation with various other public security forces. This was especially noticeable in two conglomerations of *favelas*: Com-plexo do Alemão and Maré. Military involvement in the securitization of these two areas caused an unprecedented situation in Brazil: military forces remained in the Complexo do Alemão for 19 months with a contingent of approximately

1,800 soldiers, which is by far the longest period of urban occupation by national military forces on Brazilian soil. In Maré, military forces remained 15 months, and during this period they stationed a total of 2,400 soldiers in the area.[2]

From the outset, the military operation at Complexo do Alemão involved Pentecostal actors and practices. In March 2011, not long after the military forces had entered the complex, the military helped to organize a spectacular rock music concert at the biggest football field of the complex – ironically known as '*o Campo do Sargento*' (Seargant's Field). The show was formally presented as part of a health campaign against *Dengue* – a tropical virus carried by mosquitos – and the show's official title was 'Rio against Dengue'. Besides the military, the event was supported by the state's secretary of health, the well-known NGO called *Afro-Reggae* and a cosmetics company. Strikingly, the show headlined a famous Brazilian evangelical band called *Ministério Diante do Trono* (Before the Throne Ministry). While both the religious field and the music market are rapidly changing in Brazil, in 2011 distinctions between so-called *música gospel* (evangelical music) and *música secular* (regular/secular music) were still drawn relatively sharply, and at the time one would not easily encounter performances of evangelical bands at events that were not explicitly known as evangelical or Pentecostal, let alone at an event organized by different state institutions and non-religious organizations.

Based on our earlier work on the rise of Pentecostalism in the city's *favelas* we see the choice to invite Diante do Trono as an outcome of the cultural dynamics that made Pentecostalism popular in the first place. In the decades before the pacification, Pentecostalism had started to present itself as one of the few (if not the only) answers to the violence that haunted *favelas* as a result of police corruption and gang competition (Oosterbaan *Transmitting the Spirit*; Teixeira). Conversion within a born-again Christian frame allows for a powerful experience of personal salvation, and it is one of the few accepted explanations that gang members can employ to negotiate their withdrawal from gang life. Armed with a language of redemption, *favela* residents that have been involved in illegal activities regularly preach that only God can end the misery and hardship of a life of crime, and this message has attained currency outside Pentecostal circles, such as, for instance, in the state institutions involved in Rio's pacification project.

The pacifying potential of Pentecostalism finds its material manifestation in a number of cultural practices, and *gospel* music is one of the major amplifiers of the popular religious sentiments related to urban violence (Oosterbaan, "Sonic Supremacy"). During Rio's 'pacification' years, Diante do Trono revealed itself as part of the gospel industry, which the Brazilian state could employ as the 'cultural' element of their physical presence. Moreover, the Diante do Trono repertoire reflected both the soothing, pacifying gesture of the state's institutions *and* their forceful capacity to produce order. This was very visible and audible during the 'Rio against Dengue' event, which both authors witnessed live. Before the start of the performances and speeches, armed soldiers and several tanks surrounded the *Campo do Sargento* site where the event took place. The somewhat grim ambience of the cultural event provided the counterpoint *and* enforcement of crucial

elements of the Diante do Trono performance. Ana Paula Valadão – singer, leader and pastor of the gospel band – has a very sweet voice, and in gospel circles she is generally known as one of the singers that has the 'voice of an angel'. The opening songs of the show reflected this quality of her voice as she sang softly and comfortingly, while her lyrics emphasized God's forgiving nature in the face of sinners. Meanwhile, the tanks and soldiers formed a disturbing counterpoint to the band's soothing tone. However, during the performance, Ana Paula's lyrics emphasized less God's compassion and more His wrath. Simultaneously, the stage lights became more intense, the tone of her voice turned from sweetness to braveness, and the musicians started playing fiercer and louder. All of a sudden, the gospel performance became much more confluent with the military environment and the army's display of power. As we see it, Diante do Trono's performance on the one hand outlined and legitimized the state's forceful presence as representation of God's order – referring to His sovereign position as King of Kings – yet on the other hand maintained a Christian model of subjectivity that is frail and vulnerable, always at risk of becoming part of the "world of crime" and thus in need of guidance.

These sketched religious elements remained integral parts of public security strategies during the entire pacification period, even though they were not very visible to the broader public of the pacification spectacles we briefly painted in the opening of this chapter. Spectators that followed the state's display of power via mainstream media were rarely confronted with the messiness of daily life in the *favelas* or with the local understanding of the transformative powers of Pentecostalism. Nevertheless, on the ground, Pentecostalism was central to the military 'occupation' of territories, bodies and souls, and arguably the military's appropriation of Pentecostal tropes and practices produced a new form of *favela* governance that leans heavily on both military and Pentecostal references.

This new governance dispositive came into being as the result of the (*gospel*) events and staged performances we described earlier but also as the result of a number of other kinds of state interventions. Following their spectacular arrival, the Brazilian military drafted a long-term strategy to remain at Complexo do Alemão for a considerable amount of time. However, being trained as combatants and not as policemen, military personnel encountered a major difficulty during their urban intervention on their own soil: how to identify the 'enemy' outside the context of war. In the words of Colonel Vladimir Schubert Ferreira:

> The greatest difficulty we have here is to act against Brazilians. It is different from other typical military operations, where we have a definite physical enemy in uniform. In urban confrontation, we cannot see the enemy on the other side. The trafficker, the thief and the suspects are among the people.[3]
>
> (Zaluar)

The possible involvement of everybody and anyone with drug trafficking (an image frequently reproduced in mainstream media) made the task of identifying

the "good citizen" very complex in the eyes of the military. Faced with the difficulty to identify the "enemy", military intelligence officers defined religious belonging as the key moral indicator that could separate the "good guys" from the "bad guys". Local communitarian engagement, political action, and even the local status of "*trabalhador*" (worker) could not count any more as defining features of the good citizens and religious identification emerged as an important marker of difference.

Moreover, during the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti, the Brazilian army learned that pacifying practices demand more than enemy identification, weapons and brute force. One also needs symbolic, cultural and political devices to secure and control occupied territories.[4] To employ such devices, military intelligence planned and executed strategic actions that are formally known as ACISO – an acronym for Civic-Social Actions. These actions consist of events held inside occupied territories, where the extensive logistic-human military structure makes way for different activities and projects, such as medical, dental, veterinary, legal, educational, recreational and religious services. Such events became extremely common in Haiti, and they were later replicated in Complexo do Alemão, and Maré (Gonçalves).

In line with the prevalent religious identification of the good citizen, the military also sought active collaboration with local religious leaders in Complexo do Alemão.[5] The Eastern Military Command (*Comando Militar do Leste* – CML), in charge of Operation Archangel, understood that local religious actors could play an important role in mediating tense relations between soldiers and residents. At the time of Operation Archangel, the Eastern Military Command had eight chaplains in the field: five priests (Catholic) and three pastors (Protestants), who along with the chaplains of the military police of the state of Rio de Janeiro (also only priests and pastors), carried out the religious assistance of the troops. Relatively quickly after the occupation and the 'Rio against Dengue' event, in mid-August 2011, the Eastern Military Command extended the tasks of their evangelical and catholic chaplains and made them establish relationships with local religious leaders – most notably Catholics and Evangelicals – to establish partnerships that would allow the organization of Civic-Social Actions.[6] The choice to establish partnerships with religious interlocutors in the field was due to the military's explicit distrust of inhabitants associated with local residents' associations and NGOs. According to the military, members of these organizations were "conniving with the traffickers" and therefore considered 'contaminated'.

In the course of Operation Archangel, three types of actions were designed by the Eastern Military Command chaplaincy: 1) local events of a religious-civic nature, on dates such as Children's Day, Christmas day and Easter, to organize and publicize the partnership; 2) training courses for local religious leaders, aimed at strengthening their participation in the pacification process, which covered a diverse range of topics such as: mediation of conflicts to establish a so-called Culture of Peace, substance abuse, domestic violence, Christian social doctrine and themes related to entrepreneurship such as management and fundraising;

3) the formation of local chambers of religious leaders that were involved in the pacification to deliberate on territorial issues and to communicate their wishes with the public authorities. To this end, local religious leaders were invited to meetings at the main base of the Operation Archangel, near Complexo do Alemão (Esperança).

The military-religious partnerships during the pacification period bring us back to elements of the new military urbanism that Graham described and to discussions on postsecular urbanism. According to Graham, such military urbanism commonly involves the extension of military ideas of *tracking*, *identification* and *targeting* into the quotidian spaces and circulations of everyday life in the city in order to identify *insurgents*, *terrorists* and an extensive range of ambient threats in the 'chaos' of urban life (Graham). While most analyses on the relation between religion and policies in the context of postsecular cities focus on policies of care, the pacification era in Rio de Janeiro demonstrates that neoliberal urban transformation (under the umbrella of upcoming sports mega-events) forged new relations between religion and *policies of order and control*. Religious belonging was activated as a meaningful strategy of military *tracking* during the military's presence at Complexo do Alemão, and religious leaders were *identified* as 'trustful partners', not contaminated by crime and violence. After the identification of religious leaders as 'good partners' in the field of battle, agents of the Brazilian military started to train religious leaders to secure their roles as mediators, warranting a future sociability in the *favela* based on a 'Culture of Peace'. In other words, instead of identifying religious actors as a danger to the city, the Brazilian military employed religious ideologies and organizations as a path to peace and discipline in the context of a militarized city.

In no way do we want to suggest that the Brazilian army turned 'religious' in itself or that the strategies they developed to occupy the urban territories were homogenous or entirely planned before their entrance into Complexo do Alemão. However, it is clear that Brazilian army chaplains involved in Operation Archangel quickly changed from actors employed to take care of the troops to actors that could better be understood as members of the army's intelligence team, strongly skilled in the task of reshaping local associative networks, cutting dangerous connections between suspicious groups and establishing safe and fruitful partnerships with religious actors in a pacified context. In addition, it is striking that the Brazilian military employed Christian Salvationist nomenclatures for their urban operations on home soil. Four years after the start of Operation Archangel, the title of the occupation of Complexo do Alemão, the Brazilian military commenced *Operation San Francisco*, which entailed the recovery and occupation of another infamous set of *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro – an urban area known as Maré. Both operation titles employed a markedly Christian understanding of subservience and sovereignty in a supposedly secular context and also came very close to Christian promises of rebirth, projected on whole urban territories.

The *counter strike* pastor

While the relations between the Brazilian military and urban Pentecostal churches are new, the Pentecostal churches in Rio de Janeiro have been employing a language of warfare for a considerable time now (Montes; Mafra). In accordance with historical trajectories of Christianism worldwide, Brazilian Pentecostal churches recurrently frame their urban presence as part of a 'spiritual battle', and this frame is full of quasi-military references. Beyond the generic deployment of warfare symbolism, Pentecostal churches in Rio de Janeiro embed their language and practices in a social context of actual lethal violence that is the result of armed struggles over urban territories and the drugs market (Oosterbaan *Transmitting the Spirit*).

Nevertheless, we perceived a transformation and a strengthening of the cultural cross-fertilizations between Pentecostal practices and organized violence in the urban peripheries in the past decades. Pentecostal drug dealers (Cunha), Pentecostal police officers (Machado, "Morte, perdão e esperança") and Pentecostal pastors (Machado, "Conexões e rupturas urbanas") gradually have become *the* central characters in the urban contestations in cities such as Rio de Janeiro, and Pentecostal practices have become increasingly more characterized by explicit military elements such as uniforms, guns and vocabularies. Moreover, the bridges connecting church practices and state security policies have become ever stronger.

One of the Pentecostal churches that is exemplary of the religious-military urbanism we encounter in Rio de Janeiro is the *Assembléia de Deus dos Últimos Dias* (*ADUD*, Assemblies of God of the Last Days). ADUD is well known in Rio de Janeiro as the 'ex-bandit' church. Its pastor – Marcos Pereira – was one of the first Pentecostal leaders in the city who spectacularly showed his presence in territories perceived as violent and dangerous. Pastor Marcos Pereira preached in prisons and police stations, interrupted *carioca* funk parties in *favelas* and turned them into open-air Pentecostal services, and he and his missionaries were well known in the peripheries of Rio because they frequently 'rescued' bandits from the so-called drug gang death courts.

Over the years, pastor Marcos created his own type of exorcism ritual aimed at a particular target population: criminals that reside inside the overpopulated prisons or in the city's *favelas*. He customarily waves his jacket over a row of people lining up, who subsequently fall to the floor, a sign that they are demon-possessed. In order to expel the devil, he successively blows in the direction of these people, who then stand up, liberated of the evil spirits that possessed them. While some people lay down calmly, others display demonic possession explicitly and (performatively) resist the pastors' attempt to expel them. Those evil spirits whose presence has been revealed frequently display criminal behavior, mimicking the use of guns with their hands and challenging the pastor with offensive words. In such cases, the exorcism ritual can become more violent and more military-like. The pastor frequently impersonates a soldier, a spiritual police officer fighting

against the spirit of crime, holding and shaking the person's head, or even 'shooting' the person with his Bible while mimicking gunshots (shouting '*pow, pow, pow'*) until the 'devil of crime' leaves the subject's body. With his performance, pastor Marcos communicates that the subject is not a criminal, but someone who is possessed by a spirit that forces him or her to commit crimes and he signals that it is necessary to use force to free the possessed soul. At one point, the pastor claimed he had a '66 caliber gun', referring to the Bible and its 66 books. In the past years, individuals have produced video clips about the pastor in which they creatively used his image to parody his exorcisms. In the clips, which can be found online, he is called the 'police pastor', the 'machine gun pastor', or even the '*BOPE* pastor', a reference to the feared and loathed *Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais*, a special operations battalion of Rio de Janeiro's military police that is frequently praised by hardliners for taking on drug traffickers with lethal force (Rocha). In some of these videos, a fictional image of pastor Marcos appears who is dressed as a policeman, shooting demon-possessed people with a real gun.[7] In others, the fictional image is shooting together with the police. Sometimes people edit the sound, adding real gunshot sounds to footage of pastor Marcos' exorcisms, and one of the online videos mixes real footage with video game images, while calling pastor Marcos the 'CS [Counter Strike] Pastor'. *Counter-Strike* (also known as *Half-Life: Counter-Strike*) is a first-person shooter video game in which players assume the roles of members of teams of governmental counter-terrorist forces in combat and various terrorist militants opposing them.

By itself, the playful yet serious mixing of popular video games, representations of urban violence and Pentecostalism point to a gap in the existing literature on the militarization of public life and popular media. In the aftermath of 9/11 many scholars have noted an alarming rapprochement of US militarization of public life and military combat representations in US popular culture (Der Derian; Stahl). Ranging from a host of Hollywood movies and television series focused on heroic US military interventions abroad and on American soil to violent video games that persuade so called first person shooters to identify with American soldiers in international military conflicts, celebrations of spectacular military culture have taken center stage in globally circulating mass media. Not surprisingly, Graham states that "the divisions between military simulation, information warfare, news and entertainment are becoming so blurred as to be less and less meaningful", (69) and "the profusion of digital video sensors in turn provides an almost infinite range of material for reality TV shows like *Police, Camera, Action!*, which provide the citizenry with voyeuristic and eroticized experiences of urban violence" (69).

Here we will not expand on the particularities of the Brazilian mediascape – which displays an abundance of crime shows – or on the fact that bottom up modifications of the video game *Grand Theft Auto* (GTA) appeared in Brazil that allowed players to act as *BOPE* officers. These and other phenomena demonstrate that the blurring of boundaries itself is not particular to the US or Hollywood and that similar process are taking place in Brazil, be it under different structural conditions than in the US. More importantly for us here, the inclusion of pastor

Marcos within such video game simulations of urban warfare points to the fact that religious groups can also be included in the new media of military urbanism as an imagined counterforce to insurgent subjects. In such a scheme, pastor Marcos' exorcism performances are presented as a social technology able to discipline bodies and souls in the urban war of Rio de Janeiro. Religiously minded audiences receive a "voyeuristic and eroticized" live experience of Rio's urban spiritual battle.

For the purpose of this chapter, it is important to highlight that beyond the religious interferences in urban warfare, ADUD also established a formal alliance with a UPP in Rio de Janeiro during the pacification period. This alliance was mediated by what is formally known as a *therapeutic community*. Therapeutic communities in the state of Rio de Janeiro are commonly understood to be rehab clinics for those who suffer from drug addiction. In practice, however, they are hybrid institutions of which the majority is operated by religious institutions. Rehabilitation clinics in Rio are employed by state and non-state parties to manage the violence and to control the 'dangerous populations'. Those who are taken to these 'therapeutic' facilities may suffer from different predicaments, but definitely not only drug addiction. Undisciplined members of Rio's drugs gangs (*comandos*) are frequently brought there by their peers in order to give them a time-out which allows them to take a step back from the mess they are involved in, and to help them to avoid severe corporal punishment or even death. Police officers sometimes take a troubled person to a therapeutic community instead of taking him or her to a police station, offering the opportunity of rehabilitation, and a warning that next time it might go down differently. Strikingly, many of the therapeutic communities in Rio de Janeiro are run by Pentecostal churches. In general, the long-lasting alliance between the state and the evangelical churches in the field of drug dependency control and prevention is widely accepted in Rio de Janeiro. Pentecostal churches generally preach abstinence from alcohol, smoking and chemical substances and the Rio de Janeiro state and municipal governments depend on close partnerships with religious institutions to run the extremely precarious public programs for the treatment of drug addiction.

Despite the emphasis on treatment, recuperation and therapy, the formal responsibility for the state-religion partnership embodied in the therapeutic communities lies not with the (Federal) state ministry of health but with the (Federal) state ministry of justice. The state ministry of health is responsible for the inspection of these facilities, but the process of establishing funding criteria and selecting those communities that will receive public funding is carried out by the state ministry of justice. This bureaucratic structure reveals the implicit goals of the state policies regarding the rehabilitation clinics: therapeutic communities serve as important governmental-religious intervention technologies aiming at governing the poor and 'dangerous' populations of the city's peripheries and *favelas*.

In May 2010, ADUD's institute for drug addiction treatment was officially declared a state public utility, which also opened the way for a formal partnership between an UPP in the *favela* Turano (located in the neighborhood Tijuca)

and ADUD. During the pacification period the UPP-ADUD relationship was primarily mediated by the church's therapeutic community. As part of the alternative management of urban violence, therapeutic communities receive and shelter populations living at the margins of the state, inhabiting the folds of the legal and the illegal. In line with the previous description, church members involved in the therapeutic community effectively served as an auxiliary force of the state in the government of the populations of pacified areas. Nevertheless, such governance attained a particular Pentecostal twist in the process. Adding religious (born-again Christian) conversion and exorcism to the treatment of people that arrive at the therapeutic community seemingly produces a win-win situation *and* a multi-purpose treatment. The analogy between demonic possession and addiction – inflictions that both can be presented as involuntary afflictions instead of signs of immoral character – allows parties to transform the dichotomous frame that unequivocally separates the good citizens from the bandits, while also presenting the cure to crime and addiction at the same time. More than a simple disease, drug addiction is closely connected to spiritual evil, and beyond treatment alone, Pentecostal therapeutic communities provide a form of care that tackles all evils at once: physical, moral, spiritual and social. Subsequently, the dangers posed by crime can be translated into the dangers posed by drugs, and treatment of addiction became a path to moral recovery for the (perceived) *comando* member or affiliate.

As a kind of recuperation machine, ADUD manages to include in their activities hundreds of so called 'ex-bandits' who – even though belonging to a Pentecostal church – deliberately remain 'in action', facing the challenges of Rio's violent urban scene. As discussed before (Birman and Machado), ADUD does not ask the recuperated 'ex-bandits' to forget their past but to constantly relive it in order to testify and act like a living testimony. Their stories – generally brought with much fervor – are considered priceless tools that can rescue others who, just like them, are desperately hoping to live a different life outside criminal gangs. Instead of fully closing off their past, their criminal life becomes part of their new redeemed life as a potency to act and to mediate. As such, they continue to be part of the game, not changing sides, but operating as a new and third component. They are neither bandits nor policemen, but remain in the field to rescue those who desire spiritual exile. In some cases, gangs of 'ex-bandits' actively interfere when *comando* members want to punish members that have broken a code or are suspected of betrayal or theft. In such cases, they plea to take them off *comando* hands, to extract them from the scene, to pacify them. The church's crew of 'ex-bandits' can thus be perceived as a kind of spiritual urban militia operating in the peripheries of the city, helping to protect local communities.

Conclusion

Although we could only sketch a number of transformations that took place during the so-called pacification years of Rio de Janeiro, the material presented here

demonstrates that the urban transformations that occurred in light of the consecutive mega events in Rio de Janeiro spurred a widespread militarization of city life, be it in the form of the previously inconceivable military occupation of whole urban areas or in the form of pacification units (UPPs) run by the military police. These transformations by and large confirm Stephen Graham's suggestion that we are dealing with what he has coined "new military urbanism" (Graham). Nevertheless, we find the framing of urban religion in Graham's work insufficient to understand the new kind of quasi-military regulation of urban social life. While Graham recurrently pictures religion as something that stands outside military urbanism or as something 'threatening' that fuels its emergence, the developments in Rio de Janeiro in the past decade show that in many cases we are actually dealing with something we might better call religious-military urbanism. This religious-military urbanism entails the fusion of military interventions on national soil under democracy and religious modes of governing urban territories and – in the spirit of Grahams new military urbanism – also entails the proliferation of mediatized (pop) cultural events and products. In the cases presented here, these range from television shows to music events and video games. To frame our understanding of religious-military urbanism we engage with an approach that has become known as postsecular urbanism (Beaumont and Baker; Berking et al.). Whereas this approach helps us to address some of the flaws we identify in Graham's work, to understand better how state, religious and commercial parties together produce a new kind of urban social life we want to add that the rationale for such collaborations is not necessarily care or welfare in the manner often described in the existing literature. In a context of "fragmented sovereignty" (Davis) such as encountered in Rio de Janeiro where armed gangs and *milícias* control urban territories, military and police forces teamed up with Pentecostal and Catholic leaders in *favelas* to regain control of the urban areas. This religious-military cooperation combined two powerful tropes of sovereign power: the Brazilian nation state and divine supremacy. Our cases show that even when religious-military cooperation is framed as 'therapeutic', the forces that drive such cooperation regard the cityscape as a worldly and spiritual battlefield riddled with criminals and bandits. Maneuvers on this battlefield predominantly aim to *pacify* the urban population and implicitly and explicitly refer to the possibility of highly violent interventions that eliminate rather than recuperate urban citizens.

Notes

2 The main operation that served as reference for the army's role in the Peace Policy actions in Rio de Janeiro was the United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of Haiti

(MINUSTAH). In operation since 2004, the UN Peace Mission in Haiti has enlisted soldiers from different countries, including Brazil.

3 See the online Globo article: "Para Exército, ocupar Alemão é mais difícil que guerra e missão no Haiti", http://g1.globo.com/brasil/noticia/2012/08/para-exercito-ocupar-alemao-e-mais-dificil-que-guerra-e-missao-no-haiti.html. Translation ours.

4 Clearly, military practice aimed at winning 'hearts and minds' of populations in occupied territories is not confined to Brazilian Military forces. For example, John D. Kelly et al. point to the US military 'cultural turn' following the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to the authors, this turn involved the revitalization of counterinsurgency practices that support US control of occupied territories (Kelly et al.).

5 Both Gonçalves and Esperança (2016) did important research on the relationship between the Brazilian army and religious actors in Complexo do Alemão in the context of Operation Archangel. Much of the ethnographic data we discuss here are part of the collective findings in the context of the research project "Crime e religião: mediadores sociais do processo de pacificação na região metropolitan do Rio de Janeiro" (2010–2016), under the coordination of Carly Machado. For more, see Machado et al.

6 Gonçalves' work focuses specifically on the actions involving the chaplains in the field.

7 Strikingly, in the original footage of the scene where the pastor 'shoots' with his hands, he shouts: "I'm going to trade a shot with him [the devil]. I'm angrier than a BOPE police officer."

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