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## The space biopolitics of the political being denial: spatially constructed strangeness and spatially forged dehumanization in the Morro da Providência-RJ

### La biopolítica espacial de negación del ser político: extrañeza espacialmente construida y deshumanización espacialmente forjada en el Morro da Providência-RJ

### A biopolítica espacial de negação do ser político: estranhamento espacialmente construído e desumanização espacialmente forjada no Morro da Providência-RJ

Felipe Rangel Tavares<sup>1</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0482-6865>

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<sup>1</sup> PhD in Geography PUC-Rio, Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brasil, [tavares.geo@gmail.com](mailto:tavares.geo@gmail.com)

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#### Abstract

We understand the metropolization of space as a biopolitical socio-spatial process. Based on the analysis of the evictions that took place in Morro da Providência-RJ, in the scope of the Consortium Urban Operation of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro and the Morar Carioca Program, we aim to analyze the biopolitical spatiality in the contemporary metropolis. After relating the process of metropolization to the power relations that inscribe biopolitics in space, we sought a dialogue between Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre, around the concepts of "milieu" and "instrumental space". We propose the inscription-prescription-ordering analytical triad to examine urban projects and interventions that promote "spatially constructed strangeness" and "spatially forged dehumanization," spatial processes that empty the political substance that constitutes the social being.

**Keywords:** metropolization; biopolitics; evictions; Morro da Providência; Rio de Janeiro.

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#### Resumen

Entendemos la metropolización del espacio como un proceso socio-espacial biopolítico. A partir del análisis de los desalojos que tuvieron lugar en Morro da Providência-RJ, en el ámbito del Consorcio Operación Urbana de la Región Portuaria de Río de Janeiro y del Programa Morar Carioca, pretendemos analizar la espacialidad biopolítica en la metrópoli contemporánea. Después de relacionar el proceso de metropolización con las relaciones de poder que inscriben la biopolítica en el espacio, buscamos un diálogo entre Michel Foucault y Henri Lefebvre, en torno a los conceptos de "medio" y "espacio instrumental". Proponemos la tríada analítica de inscripción-prescripción-ordenación para examinar los proyectos e intervenciones urbanos que promueven la

"extrañeza construída espacialmente" y la "deshumanización forjada espacialmente", procesos espaciales que vacían la sustancia política que constituye el ser social.

**Palabras clave:** metropolización; biopolítica; desalojos; Morro da Providência; Río de Janeiro.

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### Resumo

Apreendemos a metropolização do espaço enquanto processo socioespacial biopolítico. A partir da análise das remoções ocorridas no Morro da Providência-RJ, no âmbito da Operação Urbana Consorciada da Região Portuária do Rio de Janeiro e do Programa Morar Carioca, objetivamos analisar a espacialidade biopolítica na metrópole contemporânea. Após relacionar o processo de metropolização às relações de poder que inscrevem a biopolítica no espaço, buscamos um diálogo entre Michel Foucault e Henri Lefebvre, em torno dos conceitos de "meio" e "espaço instrumental". Propomos a tríade analítica inscrição-prescrição-ordenação para examinar os projetos e intervenções urbanas que promovem o "estranhamento espacialmente construído" e a "desumanização espacialmente forjada", processos espaciais que esvaziam a substância política que constitui o ser social.

**Palavras-chave:** metropolização; biopolítica; remoções; Morro da Providência; Rio de Janeiro.

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### Introduction

The discrimination and criminalization of favela residents can be verified since their origins, with Morro da Providência (historically recognized as the first favela, including being called Morro da Favella) being the target of hygienists, sanitarians, engineers and journalists, who considered - through cartoons and chronicles - "a place infested with vagrants and criminals", as suggested by *Jornal do Brasil* in 1900 (VALLADARES, 2011). Removals accompany the history of favelas in the city of Rio de Janeiro. According to Guterres and Barros (2015), in the third generation of government programs, removal returns to the scene with the "Morar Carioca" Program (Municipal Plan for Integration of Informal Precarious Settlements) - devised in the first term of Mayor Eduardo Paes (2009-2012). It is under this program that a series of interventions will be carried out: the provision of mobility infrastructure oriented to the mercadification of the city, public-private

partnerships, the discourse of risk, gentrification, especially through the discourse of "revitalization".

The main projects for Morro da Providência, announced by the program<sup>2</sup>, were 921 housing units to serve more than three thousand residents of the hill and the port area, revitalization of Praça Américo Brum, installation of a cable car, construction of an inclined plane to facilitate accessibility for residents, a sports center, water and sewage network infrastructure, equipment and services, slope containment and resettlement of families living in at-risk areas. There was also a proposal to transform the favela into a tourist attraction, with the construction of a historical and cultural center in the area that includes Ladeira do Barroso, Nossa Senhora da Penha Church, the old reservoir and the Cruzeiro Chapel<sup>3</sup> - or which it would be necessary to remove all the families living around the site. Of the 832 houses marked (1/3 of the favela) by the acronym SMH (municipal housing secretariat) for removal, 140 were demolished in 2013, according to a report by International Amnesty<sup>4</sup>. The report also points out that families were resettled in housing developments in the west zone (Cosmos, Realengo and Campo Grande), in areas dominated by militias. According to the housing secretariat of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, by 2013, 196 families were "resettled"<sup>5</sup>.

It is in this context that this article aims to discuss the removals in the context of a broader process that determines the urban history of today (LENCIONI, 2017), namely, the metropolization of space, understood here as a biopolitical socio-spatial process of denial of political being. The present work is part of the unfoldings of the author's doctoral research, which had as methodological procedures, literature

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<sup>2</sup>Source: Official audiovisual advertisement of the program. Available at:

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tw1f0zESqdk>>. Accessed: 4/13/2018.

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <<http://www.rio.rj.gov.br/web/guest/exibeconteudo?article-id=1466234>>.

Accessed: 4/13/2018.

<sup>4</sup>Available at: <[https://anistia.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/AmnestyInternational\\_AnnualReport2013\\_complete\\_br-pt.pdf](https://anistia.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/AmnestyInternational_AnnualReport2013_complete_br-pt.pdf)>.

Accessed: 1/27/2020.

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <<https://veja.abril.com.br/brasil/anistia-internacional-destaca-remocoes-forçadas-para-obras-da-copa/>>. Accessed: 1/27/2020.

review, document analysis, field work and interviews with residents of Morro da Providência.

In the first section, we tried to relate metropolization to the mechanisms of biopower, which conceive population as a multiplicity of individuals whose existence is biologically defined, therefore, emptied of political content. It is from this dynamic that we see the proliferation of the discourse of risk and "security" measures that aim to control flows, or "regulate disorder" (AGAMBEN, 2002, p.145). In the second part, based on the proposal of the analytical triad inscription-prescription-order, we develop a dialogue between Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre in order to highlight the spatial biopolitics of denial of political being, through the spatially constructed estrangement and the spatially forged dehumanization. In the final considerations, we point out four aspects of biopolitical metropolization. We aim, therefore, to unveil a spatial (bio)politics of denial of political being, in the context of the metropolization of space. The metropolis space, product of the amalgam between financial and real estate capital, evidenced by public-private partnerships, reveals the emergence of what Vainer (2011) calls "city of exception": the management of the city is directed to business, in a systematic process of depoliticization and disqualification of politics, denial as polis. Understanding such processes is fundamental to overcome that city project.

### **Metropolization of space, biopower and biopolitics**

Although Santos (1993) has addressed the problem of metropolization when focusing on urbanization in Brazil, it is Sandra Lencioni who deepens and unfolds the theme, becoming a reference on the subject, within the Brazilian geographic science. Her intellectual trajectory is recognized in Ferreira (2016), who states that the concerns of the author "have always been interconnected and the process that played the role of agglutinating nexus was the metropolization of space". The emphasis on new forms of management and localized interventions, the emergence

of a hybrid spatiality that overcomes the rural-urban dichotomy, the empire of flows, the densification of certain areas, the sprawl of the metropolis, the urban operations of "requalification", reveal the metamorphoses in the territory that are illuminated by the metropolization of space, "which has generated strong gentrification (...) produces segregation and unequal appropriation of urban space" (FERREIRA, 2016).

For Lencioni (2006a), the aspect that stands out among the different conceptions of metropolis is situated in the concentration of private and public services, "which seek to ensure the management of the reproduction of capital and its political viability. Although the concept of metropolis is associated with the concept of city, since its origin, as Lencioni (2006a) shows us, it is related to urbanization, since the metropolis is linked to the concept of metropolization and relates to space. The process of metropolization is constituted as a phase of urban development, however, of a distinct nature, since "it is about developing metropolitan conditions that are indispensable for the reproduction of capital (...) denying the city". In this sense, according to the author, the metropolization process submits the urbanization related to the city and constitutes a determination of the present moment.

The metropolis can also be apprehended as "the virtuality of constituting itself in a survival of capitalism" (LENCIONI, 2017), since it is placed as a condition, means and product of the reproduction of capital, which becomes even more evident from the author's notes, when she verifies the real estate changes arising from urban renovations - as is the case of the Consortium Urban Operation of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro - and the accentuated development of segregation within the city region,

making a contrast between the production of increasingly elite neighborhoods and the growth of increasingly impoverished slums and favelas. The social and spatial segregation typical of the contemporary metropolis is much more accentuated than in the

metropolis linked to the previous industrialization and urbanization process. (LENCIONI, 2017, p.85).

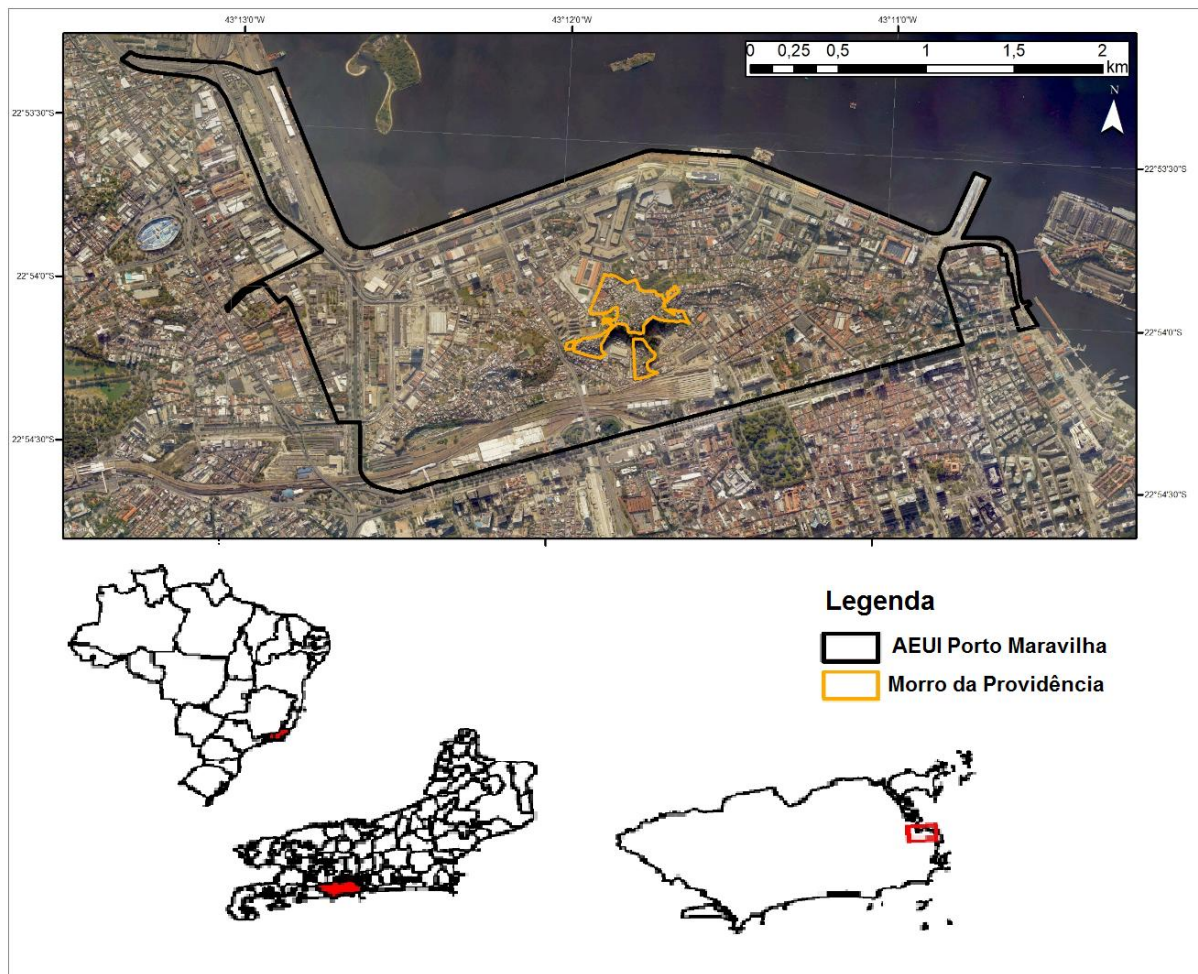
When she affirms that the contemporary metropolis expresses the survival of capitalism, Lencioni (2017) points to the metamorphosis related to productive restructuring that, in the face of the amalgamation between real estate and financial capital, instrumentalizes the metropolis for the reproduction of capital: under the imperative of rents, financial capital directs and dominates the process of reproduction in general (LENCIONI, 2017, p.58).

The real estate-financial logic that determines the reproduction of capital is translated, according to Lencioni (2017), in the growth of the participation of the service sector, the expansion of real estate production to house these services (mainly through corporate buildings and office towers), the renewal of neighborhoods (gentrification) and the creation of buildings as a reserve of value and land as "land banks". Among such evidence, the author draws attention to the fact of the (re)production of the city as a business, or, of space as a commodity to be commodified, since: "what matters least is the use (...) the main purpose is the production of the property itself, aiming at its market value. The main achievement is the exchange, the realization of the merchandise, overriding the purpose of use" (LENCIONI, 2017, p.65).

This new moment of capital reproduction, marked by the hegemony of financial capital, causes social inequalities of great magnitude, revealing a violent process of dehumanization via gentrification, the production of spatial simulacra and "the profusion of new urban spaces that have nothing to do with the city" (LENCIONI, 2017, p.69).



Map 1- Localization of Morro da Providência in the Area of Special Urban Interest of the Port Area



Source: Felipe Rangel Tavares; Matheus Cavalcanti Bartholomeu (2019).

In light of Sandra Lencioni's contributions and considering the objective of this article, which is to unveil the evidence of metropolization as a spatial biopolitics of negation of the political being in the contemporary urban, we can state that, with the overdetermination of exchange value in detriment of use value in the scope of the hegemony of financial-real estate capital, space as merchandise triumphs over space as work (in which use value has preeminence). The metropolis as a strategy for the survival of capital, a fundamental mediation for the management and political viability of capital, and a financial marketplace par excellence, reveals to us the horizon toward which the social relations of production are directed in relation to the subject: deprived of the substance of social and

political being, therefore, in an inversion of Aristotle's "political animal," a being conceived as a biological species - only and only an animal. For such reasons, the need to discuss biopower emerges, since what defines the species being and, therefore, its political character - the teleological putting that has an irrevocably ontological character (LUKÁCS, 2013) - is losing substance in the face of the emergence of devices, techniques, and strategies that depoliticize the human (eliminating intentionalities) by inserting the biological of the human into a politics.

The concept of biopower is elaborated between 1974 and 1979, talking about a new organization of power from the 17th century - a power that is concerned with the management of life - and that establishes a contingent of knowledge, laws and political measures aimed at controlling phenomena such as urban agglomeration, epidemics, transformation of spaces and liberal organization of the economy (FURTADO & CAMILO, 2016). According to Furtado and Camilo (2016), the origins of the biopower problematic in Foucault go back to the conferences at the Institute of Social Medicine of the State University of Guanabara, currently the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), when he dealt with the generalization of medicine in public spaces. Biopower is subdivided into two poles, namely, the anatomo-politics of the human body (disciplinary mechanisms) and biopolitics (security mechanisms) and, according to Danner (2010), the constitution of the modern state leads to the establishment of these poles as institutional procedures for modeling the individual and managing the collectivity.

The debate about social medicine is fundamental for us to observe, from the point of view of spatiality, the power grab over man as a living being, a "statization of the biological" - which mobilizes spatial strategies, that is, a management of collective life whose concern of power in "making live" unfolds through mechanisms centered on the individual body (the disciplinary spaces) and on the population (the security spaces). Foucault discusses this bio-politics in more depth in the course taught between 1975-1976, entitled "Society must be defended".



In this way, Foucault (2008) asserts that, if discipline works in an empty, artificial space, which will be entirely constructed, security will rely on a certain number of material data, with the arrangement of space, that is, on something that is given. Another fundamental point is that security maximizes positive elements and minimizes what is risky or inconvenient, using not only material data, but also probability. Polyfunctionality is contemplated in the characteristic planning of security: the city has multiple functions. Security also works with the future - openness to a future that is neither controlled nor controllable - "good city planning will be precisely: taking into account what might happen" (FOUCAULT, 2008, p.26). Therefore, according to Foucault (2008), the techniques of security bind themselves to the problem of the undefined series of elements that move and produce themselves. Since they are open series, they can only be controlled by an estimation of probabilities.

It is through the concept of "milieu" that Foucault will discuss "security spaces," a kind of environment created as a function of possible events or series of events that are to be regularized in a multivalent and transformable context. Security devices, according to Foucault (2008), work, create, organize, plan a milieu even before the notion has been formed and isolated:

The space proper to security refers therefore to a series of possible events, refers to the temporal and the random, a temporal and a random that it will be necessary to inscribe in a given space. The space in which the series of random elements unfold is, I believe, more or less what we call the milieu. The milieu is a notion that, in biology, only appears - as you know very well - in Lamarck. (...) What is the environment? (...) The environment will be, therefore, that in which circulation takes place. The milieu is a set of natural data, rivers, swamps, hills, and a set of artificial data, agglomeration of individuals, agglomeration of houses, etc. The milieu is a certain number of effects, which are mass effects that act on all those who reside there. (FOUCAULT, 2008, p.27-28).

It is important to realize that the "milieu" is a set of data on which security devices (calculations, statistics, probability) work, create, organize, and plan, thus are of the order of representations of geographic objects handled to account for the problem of circulation. The milieu is a representation of space, conceived in terms

of data over which causes and effects circulate, and if it exists concretely, it is in the capacity of an instrumental space, where systems of objects and systems of actions are controlled and regulated to "make live," that is, to reduce threats and ensure the circulation of the population. In this sense, Foucault (2008, p.28) states that the milieu is a field of intervention that affects a population, that is, "a multiplicity of individuals who are and who exist only profoundly, essentially, biologically linked to the materiality within which they exist." Although Foucault (2008) passes "over" the spatial issue - of security spaces -, his discussion contributes to raise some notes about the biopolitical spatiality, treated from the concept of "milieu" and "population". Expanding the debate about the "problem of space" in Foucault, the geographer Rogério Haesbaert (2014) highlights the scheme of characteristic spatialities in each type of society, calling "territory of sovereignty" to focus on the legal-legal type power technologies that predominated from the Middle Ages to the 17th-18th century, "disciplinary space" - referring to what Foucault calls "modern" and which is deployed from the 19th century on, and the milieu, which is the contemporary system and which

(...) will be concerned above all with circulation spaces (close to the concept of network), inserted in new territorial forms (within a much broader conception of territory, which includes several modalities of network-territories), where the basic problem will be (...) the containment of circulation. (HAESBAERT, 2014, p.169).

Still in relation to the concept of environment, we highlight an important point that Michel Foucault brings when addressing it as a field of intervention: this field of intervention that is the milieu does not reach individuals as subjects of rights capable of voluntary actions (FOUCAULT, 2008, p.28), but the man biological species, that is, the man deprived of its political, cultural, social and ethical dimensions. In this way, we can deduce that the biopolitical security devices, when acting from (spatial) representations and a space conceived as an instrument, empty the political content of man. It is in this way that the author observes the "naturalness of the human species within an artificial environment" as fundamental

to apprehend the implementation of security mechanisms as this political technique that addresses the environment, animalizing man.

This biopolitical metropolization engenders, thus, a spatial biopolitics of negation of the political being that unfolds from a single movement consisting of three moments - a triad that we call inscription-prescription-order, promoting a spatially constructed estrangement and a spatially forged dehumanization. The inscription unfolds through the provision of infrastructures that consist of strange and even undesired forms-contents (cable car, inclined plane, historic center), disqualifying the political being by denying his needs, demands and desires. Prescription acts by pre-establishing functions, uses, rhythms and activities alien to the daily life of the residents (tourism and entertainment for visitors), denying the ability of the political being to put purpose. The ordination establishes modes of behavior and conducts strange to the way of belonging built in the experiences, memories and trajectories of the residents.

### **Spatially forged dehumanization, spatially constructed estrangement**

The notion of milieu, therefore, intends to contemplate the phenomena related to the regulation of disorder manifested by circulation and flows, fundamental aspects in the process of metropolization and metropolitan characteristic, as pointed out in Lencioni (2006b). Therefore, the organization and programming of spaces favorable to circulation and to the political feasibility of capital reproduction is what is sought with the notion of milieu. According to Michel Foucault, in "The History of Sexuality: An Introduction vol.1" (1999), the explosion of diverse and numerous techniques for the administration of bodies and for the management of the calculus of life inaugurates the era of a biopower, an indispensable element for the development of capitalism. This development,

(...) could only be guaranteed at the cost of the controlled insertion of bodies in the production apparatus and by means of an adjustment of population phenomena to economic processes. But

capitalism required more than this; it required the growth both of its reinforcement and of its usability and docility; it required methods of power capable of increasing the forces, the aptitudes, life in general, without making them more difficult to subject; If the development of the great apparatuses of the State, as institutions of power, guaranteed the maintenance of the relations of production, the rudiments of anatomy and bio-politics, invented in the 18th century as techniques of power present at all levels of the social body and used by very diverse institutions (the family, the army, the school, the police, individual medicine, or the administration of collectivities), acted at the level of economic processes, of their unfolding, of the forces that are at work in such processes and sustain them; The adjustment of the accumulation of men to that of capital, the articulation of the growth of human groups to the expansion of the productive forces, and the differential distribution of profit, were, in part, made possible by the exercise of bio-power with its multiple forms and procedures. The investment on the living body, its valorization and the distributive management of its forces were indispensable at that time. (FOUCAULT, 1999, p.133).

When production is no longer limited to its strictly economic aspect, therefore to the factory, and expands on a broader front, as Lefebvre (2016) observed - to the entire space - the mechanisms of surveillance, monitoring and control pass through an improvement whose purpose was the adjustment of population phenomena to economic processes, requiring, therefore, a spatial conception and practice that would meet such purposes. We can relate the biopolitical space of security to the organization-programming of everyday life and the instrumental space advocated by Henri Lefebvre (1991; 2016). Considering that the capitalist mode of production takes place through everyday life, in the context of the re-production of production relations, Lefebvre (2016) states that the common orientation of all activities in neocapitalist society is implied in and by space. However, this space is the one configured by scientists, which contains a certain number of attributes and variables and which presents itself as a model of coherence. We believe that there is a close relationship between the Foucauldian notion of milieu and the Lefebvrian notion of instrumental space:

This space has the following characteristics: empty and pure, the place of numbers and proportions, for example, the number of gold;

it is visual, therefore, designed, spectacular; it is populated belatedly with things, with inhabitants and "users"; insofar as this demiurgic space has a justification, it is close to the abstract space of the philosophers, of the epistemologists. Its confusion is not without risks. Let us repeat that the greatest danger and the greatest objection is the evacuation of concomitantly historical and lived time. (LEFEBVRE, 2016, p.43).

Space as medium and instrument, in Lefebvre's (2016) perspective, is an intentionally manipulated political instrument, a power "in someone's hands," populated according to decrees of power that can react on "historical settlements." This instrumental space imposes a certain cohesion, which the author defines as a "regulation sought, intended, projected, which does not mean obtained." The Foucauldian notion of milieu comes close to Lefebvre's propositions when a space is conceived as a political instrument to intervene on settlements, which brings us back to Foucault's famous commentary:

Man, for millennia, has remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal and, moreover, capable of political existence; modern man is an animal, in whose politics, his life as a living being is in question. (FOUCAULT, 1999, p.134).

The dialogue between Foucault and Lefebvre also takes place when the latter states that the instrumental space is power and knowledge: power, ideological, because it is political; knowledge, because it holds elaborated representations. Because it implies a project and strategy, Lefebvre (2016, p.45) calls instrumental space as rational-functional and functional-instrumental, to say that: "it is the environment, the milieu, at the same time, of an organization of consumption (...) of the bureaucratic society of directed consumption". By using this expression to denominate society in the 1960s, Lefebvre (1991) calls attention to an indirect planning and a certain global organization that, through the activity of offices, public bodies and attached institutions, organize everyday life. For the philosopher, "some gifted and intelligent men (...) have realized the possibility of acting on consumption and through consumption, that is, of organizing and structuring

everyday life" (LEFEBVRE, 1991, p.67), exploiting each fragment of everyday life (work, private life, family and leisure) in a rational way. Biopolitics and security devices take over everyday life, and this can be observed when Lefebvre (1991) talks about the contradiction between cyclical time and linear (rational) time of capital accumulation. The everyday life does not have a cumulative character: social use of the body, gestures, and physical expressions are transformed, however, "the body does not metamorphose", that is, Lefebvre emphasizes that the psychological and biological needs and activities have a certain stability, even if they receive the mark of styles, cultures, civilizations. Daily life is transformed according to rhythms that do not coincide with the time of accumulation and in spaces that are not identified with the fields of cumulative processes (LEFEBVRE, 1991, p.69-70). For the philosopher, modern society faces the problem by organizing the change of everyday life to ensure its unity or cohesion. In this way, according to the author, the conflict between the non-cumulative and the cumulative is resolved by a methodical subordination of the non-cumulative, "by a rationality that touches the streaks of the absurd, but which is optimal in the manipulation of things and people" (LEFEBVRE, 1991, p.70). In this way, everyday life tends to organize and program not only psychological activities, but even that which in the human constitutes its biological dimension.

Still with respect to the organization of everyday life, Lefebvre (1991) verifies "the deviation of the creative energy of works for the spectacular visualization of the world," which promotes a "loss of substance," which becomes clearer when the author works the dimension of programming, that is, the cybernetization of society through the path of everyday life. According to Lefebvre (1991, p.73), the "higher activities" (forms, models and applied knowledge) take the everyday life as an object, to structure it and make it functional, transforming it into a plan "on which the light and the dark, the empty and the full, the strengths and weaknesses of this society are projected. The organization of territory, the institution of vast devices



and the reconstitution of urban life according to adequate models (centers of decision, circulation and information at the service of power), are aspects of what Lefebvre calls the cybernetization of society - the emptying of the political content of the social being, the imposition of a single thought, and creative impotence. What for Foucault has the image of an animal, for Lefebvre has the image of a robot, because both are affected by a biopolitical project that makes them lose their political substance. It is a project that has in space and territory its *modus operandi*, completely different from the disciplinary spatial mode, but correlated to it:

Thus, the clipping, still visible in the new cities, comes to an end. It tends toward a practical reconstitution of a kind of unity. This tendency is officially called "urbanism". The problem of synthesis returns to the foreground. The search is on for "the man of synthesis. There are many candidates: philosophers, economists, sociologists, architects, urban planners, demographers, technocrats of various denominations. Almost all of them bet, without acknowledging it, on a "robotization" of which they would be the programmers, because it would run from the synthetic model created by them. The more intelligent ones envision a "spontaneous," that is, democratic and non-authoritarian, realization of their model. (LEFEBVRE, 1991, p.74).

It is in the instrumental space of a programmed everyday life that, according to Lefebvre (2016), the coercive connection is made, a conceptualization that he uses to articulate the joint-disjoint character of the space to the "realm of norms", which prescribe the uses of time. In this space of modernity, homogeneous, fragmented, and hierarchical, the "synthesis men" who operate on the medium want to ensure not only cohesion, but coercion, since the imposition of power decrees is fundamental to managing the reproduction of capital in the metropolis.

Photo 1- Providência cable car with the boarding gate blocked with bricks bricks<sup>6</sup>



Source: Felipe Rangel Tavares, 2019.

It is in this sense that we speak of a spatially forged dehumanization, because when Foucault (1999) states that modern man is an animal whose life as a living being is implied in a politics, the distinguishing factor is political existence - that is - without political existence, the human being is reduced to his biological dimension, he becomes an animal. Space is political because it is a social product, therefore, space does not do without the human and there is no humanity without space. However, when space is taken as an instrument, it becomes "the place of reification, a place outside time, outside life and praxis" (LEFEBVRE, 2016, p.26), therefore, a space that extracts the political substance that constitutes the existence of the human, a space that dehumanizes.

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<sup>6</sup> The inscription of the cable car content-form in Providência already consisted in the negation of the demands and will of the residents; the use that the cable car prescribed did not meet the circulation needs of the residents, much less the ways of belonging - which were much more tied to recreation in the sports court, surrounded by bars and the Américo Brum square. The construction of the Cable Car thus consists of a spatial biopolitics of denial of political being; the cable car is the social objectification of this policy that currently continues to serve this purpose, since it is not useful to the residents, thus constituting a biopolitical spatiality.

On the one hand, we have the spatially forged dehumanization, which seeks to illuminate the content-forms that act as security devices in order to regulate the mass of individuals that only exist biologically; on the other hand, we also speak of spatially constructed estrangement, to illuminate the content-forms that act in the distortion of consciousness and that participate in/in the alienating production of the city. We draw on Carlos' (2017) discussion of the dialectic of estrangement-recognition to discuss what we mean by "spatially constructed estrangement." According to the writer, it is a mismatch between the transformation time of the metropolitan space and the time of an individual's life, causing the imposition of new ways of using the space to limit its possibilities:

This contradiction produces what I call strangeness, which in turn is the direct consequence today of the process of spatial reproduction that produced the explosion-implosion. Facing a metropolis where the urban morphology changes and transforms very quickly, the referentials of the inhabitants, produced as a condition and product of spatial practice, change at a different speed, producing the sensation of the unknown and the unidentified. Here, the marks of the life of relation (and of the referentials of life) tend to disappear, or to be lost forever. The idea of estrangement is linked to the idea that productive activity tends to erase, in capitalism, its traces, marking the mismatch between subject and work. (CARLOS, 2017, p.284).

Considering the morphology of São Paulo, the author talks about a "space without thickness", i.e., beset by the forms of modernity, with an apparent absence of traces of the past, which act on the constitution of the identity citizen/city, redefining social relations. For Carlos (2017), the new needs imposed by economic reproduction in the metropolis impose themselves as a rupture in morphology, and it is in this process that the non-recognition of the inhabitant with the places of life and with the other is gestated. The estrangement marks a mismatch between inhabitant-city, a mismatch between subject-object (work) (CARLOS, 2017, p.285-286).

The moment of alienation of man in the world, trapped in the universe of the world of merchandise, where space itself acquires

this condition, is reinforced in the spatial dimension, in the emptying of the possible meaning of the appropriation of space. The standardization of space indicates a trend on the horizon - man ceases to assert himself in the activity of appropriation. The estrangement is placed as a relationship with the other of the relationship in the city. The intervention in the space subtracts from the inhabitants the spaces where life unfolds and reveals itself in its deepest human desires. In this context, the city becomes a phantasmagoria - it rises independently and autonomously from its social and human production. (CARLOS, 2017, p.292).

The interventions and transformations in the metropolis, in the scope of the place, in addition to producing the loss of spatial references, according to Carlos (2017), tend to dissipate the urban consciousness, changing habits, behaviors, and forms of appropriation: loss of memory, stories, trajectories; accentuation of feelings of anguish, fear, and loneliness by the dissolution of bonding and affection relations built by the spatial practices experienced in everyday life. The spatiality of social relations that is inscribed in a space that is reproduced without references consists of the process that Carlos (2017) conceptualizes as "amnesic space", marked by the constant reconstruction of space and the modifications of use, increasingly standardized. In these processes are imbricated both an anatomo-politics and a biopolitics, therefore, they are processes impregnated with biopower, since the citizen - subjugated by the power of abstraction - "is subjected to the banalization of the sense of the human by exacerbated standardization" (CARLOS, 2017, p.306).

Space and time become abstract and empty of meaning, contributing to the production of a new identity, the abstract identity as a consequence of the loss of referentials, of the impoverishment of social relations; and as an imposition of the development of the world of merchandise, defined by the parameters of capital reproduction at the present moment. (CARLOS, 2017, p.302).

Thus, the spatially constructed estrangement refers to the spatial processes that, from an abstract-instrumental space, aim at spatial forms capable of subtracting and eliminating memories, experiences lived and rooted in the place, relations of



affection and meaning, identities and belonging. The spatially constructed estrangement is a mark of the alienating production of the city.

Photo 2: Project for historical and social center in Morro da Providência<sup>7</sup>



Source: Revista Porto Maravilha, n.3, 2010.

As stated earlier, biopolitical metropolization is characterized by a spatial biopolitics of negation of political being, which unfolds from the joint movement of inscription-prescription-order in the promotion of spatially wrought dehumanization and spatially constructed estrangement. The examination of the urbanistic projects and removals that took place in Morro da Providência allowed us to evince this biopolitical spatiality in the metropolis, observing inscription-prescription-order as a prism for a reading of the processes at hand. Constituting itself as a triad, it enables the analysis of the moments of infrastructure provision, pre-establishment of uses, and organization/programming of experiences of/in the

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<sup>7</sup> Another project that raised a lot of polemic was the construction of a Historic Center and a social area around it. According to the official advertisement of the Morar Carioca Program, the construction of an inclined plane would facilitate the accessibility of the residents and the collection of garbage. However, many families would have their houses removed, so they would not be the ones contemplated by the urban intervention - so, what "historical" was this "Center" intended to value?

place that negate the demands, desires, activities, and ways of belonging of the subjects.

### **Conclusions**

The spatial biopolitics of negation of political being becomes evident when we observe the inscription-prescription-order movement, either through virtual images inserted in the landscape, or through the provision of forms-contents alien to everything that constitutes the experience of place and the daily life of the residents: both promote what we call spatially forged dehumanization and spatially constructed estrangement - to emphasize the spatiality of the investigated phenomena. Thus, we conclude that the biopolitical metropolization presents four aspects: I) the discourse of risk (and insecurity); II) the problem of circulation/mobility; III) the exposure to death, the multiplication of its risk and racism; and IV) the relationship between calculation/probability and financialization.

About the first aspect, the biopolitical statement, or the power of regulation, later called security by Foucault, is to "make people live", that is, to act in defense of society. The discourse of risk is functional to meet this demand, whether through pacification and removals, or through the construction of containments, the installation of sirens or monitoring cameras, in short, a range of control technologies that aim to ensure the life of the population. Biological life, let's remember. Therefore, from the constitution of an intervention field, from which the Foucauldian notion of milieu emerges, the State - in its new prerogative - must proceed in the task of reducing damages, threats, and crises. This field of intervention - the instrumental space of programmed daily life - is made up of countless data that will support decision making: cartographic, geological, census, criminality, etc. data. Interventions will be justified based on the joint analysis of the information obtained about the environment, to protect life and ensure circulation.



In Morro da Providência, the relocation of 832 houses<sup>8</sup> was justified by Rio de Janeiro's City Hall based on the presentation of a technical report that condemned the houses, especially those on Pedra Lisa. However, as we saw earlier, a series of major construction projects had been announced for the hill, which led one resident to ask: if the residents are going to leave, who will the construction projects be for? The questioning makes clear the discursive strategy that mobilizes risk and insecurity: to eliminate bad circulation in order to promote good circulation (tourist circulation) - which leads us to discuss the issue of circulation and racism.

The second aspect - the circulation/mobility problem - focuses on the metropolis made up of dense networks through which capital, people, information, goods and services circulate. The biopolitical problem of the metropolis concerns the circulation of population, more specifically, how to manage the mass of individuals, how to control it, how to contain it. We have seen, in the first place, that it is by relying on statistical and probability data, because this is a management of random and open series. Secondly, it is by letting it circulate so that the normalization mechanism acts to control the spontaneous, that is, it takes into account what is normally expected in order to control what happens and program what will happen. Third, by making a given phenomenon occur, within the scope of this normalization, it is necessary to delimit the phenomenon within a framework of acceptability, until it is annulled. Take as an example the Pacifying Police Units (UPP), which reveal pacification as militarized guardianship of the territory, discussed by Oliveira (2014): according to the author, imprisonment and death are naturalized phenomena in the city of Rio de Janeiro - "in the period from 1995 to 1997, the Rio police killed more than the sum of all U.S. police, being responsible for about 10% of the homicides that occurred in the city" (OLIVEIRA, p.135, 2014). "If in the year 1998 the deaths by police operations in the slums were 20 people per

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<sup>8</sup> According to the municipal Plan of Integration of Informal Precarious Settlements, baptized "Morar Carioca", 317 houses should be relocated for "urbanization" reasons (for being in the way of infrastructure works) and 515 for geotechnical, structural and insalubrity risk reasons, totaling 832 houses.

month, in 2007 these deaths reached about 1,300" (RIBEIRO DIAS & CARVALHO, 2008 apud OLIVEIRA, 2014). The media assists in the task of naturalizing the stigma of the slums as the center par excellence of violence by circulating information, whether through printed newspapers or sensationalist news reports - conferring to the threat of a geography, a body, and a color: the young black peripheral and slum-dweller. They are searched, "confused", walk as if they have a target stamped on their backs<sup>9</sup>. Their circulation in the metropolis is not without constraints, blocks, and interdictions - material/functional or immaterial/symbolic. In the empire of flows of the biopolitical metropolization, the question of mobility is crossed by an economic, social, and, above all, racial asymmetry.

When Foucault (2008b) addresses the issue of "letting die" through racism, the exposure to death and the multiplication of the risk of death for certain groups of the population is one of the ways in which indirect murder, the power to take life, operates - this is the third aspect. Racism establishes a cleavage among the population and makes the "warrior relation" work - in order to live, one must kill - in this way it acts as a condition of acceptability to be able to take the life of someone/others. Racism ensures the function of death in the economy of biopower (FOUCAULT, 2008b, p.308). As an aspect of biopolitical metropolization, it presents itself from police operations (which take place in slums, usually on the way to work or school) to the programmed situations of abandonment and neglect of housing and sanitation issues. The repercussion of the case of the death of three young men from Providência, who were handed over by Army soldiers to drug dealers from a rival faction, lamentably illustrates this dimension. David Wilson Florência da Silva (24), Wellington Gonzaga Ferreira (19), and Marcos Paulo Campos (17) were arrested, accused by the military of contempt for authority, and taken to the slum of Mineira-RJ, where they were tortured, killed, and found in a landfill<sup>10</sup>. The military

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<sup>9</sup> For more information on racial lethality indicators, see Atlas da Violência, IPEA, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/cotidian/ff1706200801.htm>> Access: 2/22/2020.

occupation in Morro da Providência establishes this deadly dynamic, where a state of exception is installed as a paradigm and death operates as a racialized policy. The invasion of the homes of favela residents also exposes this aspect: with violence and truculence, carrying weapons of war, military police officers, without orders to inspect, kick doors, depredate real estate, and instate terror in the name of searches and seizures in the "shacks," a spatial representation that disqualifies and indignantly denotes the houses that are located in the zone of permitted violation, not de jure, but de facto. The violent exposure to death, however, is not only the responsibility of the armed arm of the state. We observe that the removals that took place left in the landscape of Morro da Providência a devastated scenario, like the images we have of cities bombed in the Middle East or ravaged by the technique of disabling the enemy, of making razed land. Biopolitical metropolization produces what Mbembe (2016) calls a "proliferation of the spaces of violence" when addressing the dynamics of vertical sovereignty and colonial occupation, leading to a "infrastructural warfare"<sup>11</sup>.

These spaces of violence, whether functional or symbolic, can be observed as families continued their lives, in the face of succumbing degradation, amidst the rubble of demolition in Providence:

A group of residents began to speak out, but most were still trying to understand. Most of them think that they can't fight against this State, so they fight for the minimum, which would be something like compensation to be able to move to another place. Not to mention the issue of having to abandon a whole history and experience in the place, the samba school, among other things, has a whole emotional and historical value, and outsiders don't know this value, and want to take you away from your place thinking that

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<sup>11</sup> An orchestrated and systematic sabotage of the enemy's social and urban infrastructure network complements the appropriation of land, water, and airspace resources. A critical element to these enemy disabling techniques is to bulldoze: demolish houses and towns; uproot olive trees; sieve water tanks with gunfire; bomb and jam electronic communications; dig up roads; destroy power transformers; wipe out airport runways; disable radio and television transmitters; smash computers; loot cultural and politico-bureaucratic symbols of the Palestinian Proto-State; loot medical equipment. In other words, to carry out an "infrastructural war. (GRAHAM, 2002 apud MBEMBE, 2016, p.137).

everything is fine. There was even an increase in deaths, people with stroke problems, heart problems and so on because of the psychological shock and the shock of the news, which even Eduardo Paes was aware of all this weight of the removal, and still did it. (VERBAL INFORMATION)<sup>12</sup>.

It is by exposing to death and proliferating spaces of violence and risk that biopolitical metropolization, through the device of racism, promotes spatially wrought dehumanization and spatially constructed estrangement, that is, it denies political being also in the dimension of its elimination and extermination. "Living the metropolis," for whom?

The fourth and last aspect, the relationship between calculus/probability and financialization, leads us to recover the comment of Foucault (1999) when verifying the techniques for the administration of bodies and for the management of the population as indispensable to the development of capitalism, we note the calculus/probability as an instrument of planning and programming of space, fundamental to the hegemony of financial capital in the process of reproduction in general, but mainly in the restructuring of central areas of cities, revealing the amalgam between financial and real estate capital. Real estate speculation relies on statistical-mathematical support to create optimal scenarios for accumulation, or, to predict where the climate is favorable for extraordinary profits. Urban renewal or revitalization projects reveal this dimension, since they are produced aiming at the realization of merchandise in detriment of use. This aspect becomes evident when we observe the facilitation of financial capital circulation through the issuance of securities, as in the case of Additional Construction Potential Certificates (CEPACS, in Portuguese), whose proceeds from their sale would fund infrastructure works in the region, as demonstrated by Dametto (2018). According to the author, the Consortiated Urban Operation of the Port Region of Rio de Janeiro delimited its perimeter through the design of different spatial clippings that reveal a strategy of the municipal government to foster future valuations and real estate investment in

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with resident C, in June 2019. Interview conducted by Felipe R. Tavares (June, 2019).

certain spaces of the perimeter. Each portion of the space corresponds to an offer of CEPACS, that is, each square meter of urban soil in a sector corresponds to an amount of CEPACS to be acquired for construction in it, which Dametto (2018) verifies as a "differential valuation projected in this perimeter; (...) spaces to have greater power in capital accumulation". This dynamic, of the city as business, of the parcelling out of urban land for financial business, promotes the segregation of space and gentrification, processes that must also be read from the point of view of the cleavage that racism operates within the economy of biopower. Territorial planning in the form of consortiated urban operations through public-private partnerships establishes functional and/or symbolic territorial restrictions that will determine the circulation of the population in a given portion of the city. The spatial denial of political being is affirmed when the geometric-financial calculation and its accumulation forecasts aim only at the realization of market value to the detriment of other dimensions of life, such as those related to use and to the city as a work, therefore, which do not dispense political activity.

Although revealing a perverse dynamic that is established in the everyday life of the metropolis, these aspects also point to the need to hold a debate that considers the geopolitical and body-political place of the subject that speaks (GROSOFOGUEL, 2008), especially because, if for Lefebvre (1986) the urban space is the territory where modernity and everydayness are developed in the modern world and, if the contemporary metropolis is a kind of urban translation of the socio-spatial manifestation of globalization (LENCIONI, 2017), it is also where coloniality develops, "since the idea of race and racism becomes the organizing principle that structures all the multiple hierarchies of the world-system" (QUIJANO, 1993 apud GROSOFOGUEL, 2008, p. 123 ). Thus, if we are dealing with a "space in modernity" it is essential to talk about "coloniality", since it corresponds to the counter-face of the modern world. Coloniality, as a more general form of domination in today's world (QUIJANO, 1992), complexifies the discussion about

racism as a biopolitical device, leading us to shift the locus of enunciation and develop a new lexicon to explain the multiple hierarchies of power that determine our experience in the space-time of place. Given the limitation of pages, we intend to present the effort around this task in another occasion, considering that this debate is not exhausted and requires other developments.

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