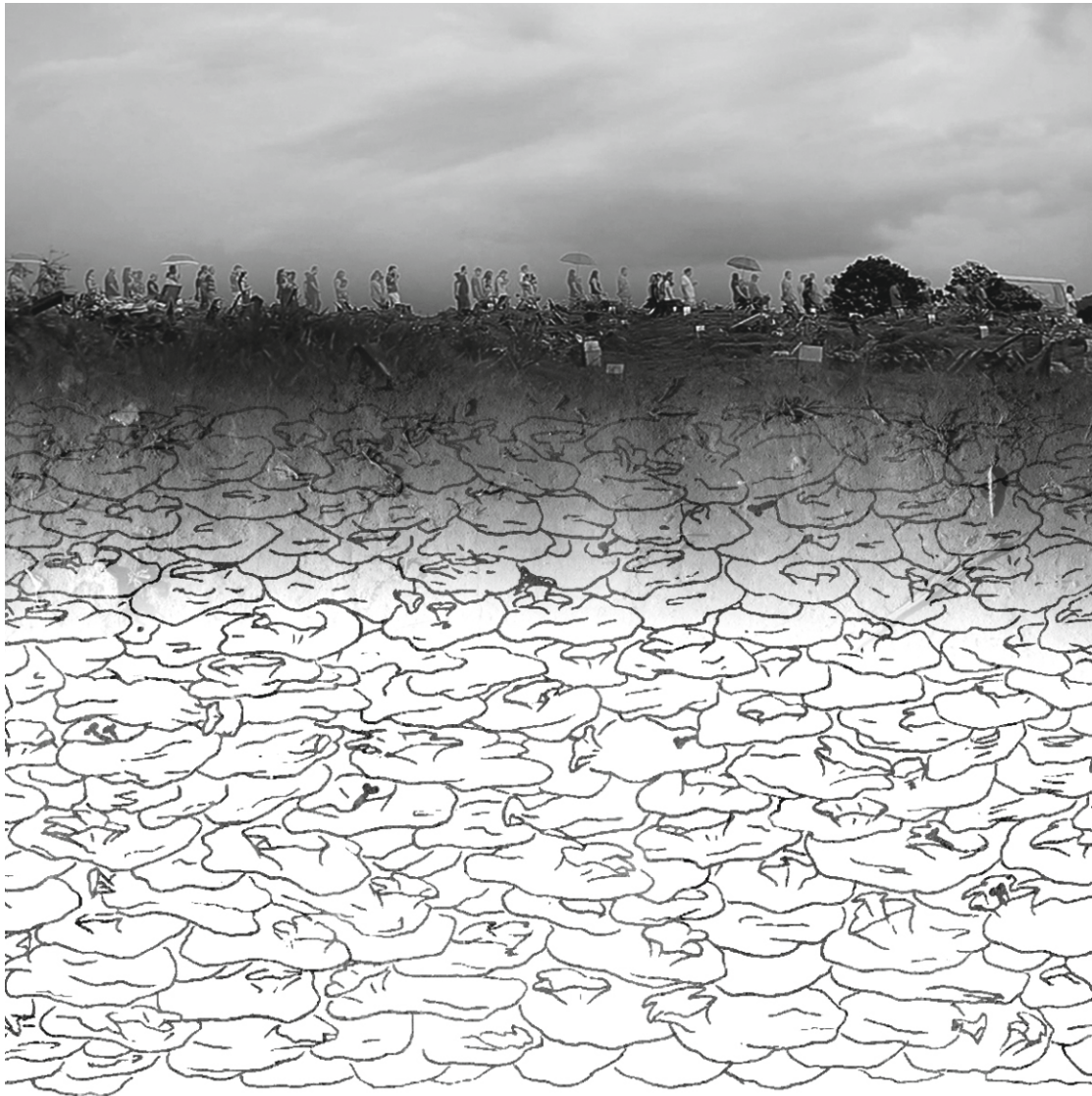


AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF NECROPOLITICS

Omission, disappearance and legacies
of dictatorship in Brazil



Márcia Lika Hattori

Supervisor: Alfredo González-Ruibal

2021



Universidad
del País Vasco

Euskal Herriko
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Uma arqueologia da necropolítica: Omissão, desaparecimento e legados da ditadura no Brasil

Márcia Lika Hattori

Orientador: Alfredo González-Ruibal

2021



To my parents Youko and Yuji (*in memoriam*), my brother Yugo and my son Joaquín

Abstract

This thesis explores the continuities of the forms of disappearance in Brazil during the dictatorship and today. It investigates whether or not it is possible to materialize the precariousness of life at the moment of death. It specifically asks: ‘what forms of citizenship are constructed in the bureaucratization of death?’ and ‘what technologies have been deployed in these strategies?’ Drawing upon contemporary archaeology to address these questions, this work considers how different bodies, individuals and populations are variously categorized as undesirable, dangerous, and deviant, through the different forms of treatment they have received throughout their lives and deaths. It was found that, if during life these populations are over-controlled by the State through its institutions and forms of policing, they are then also neglected and abandoned in the construction of their citizenship in death. A major approach of this work was to observe how material elements linked to individuality, a fundamental concept in the identification process, were lost on the way to burial. It is argued that institutional omission is one of the techniques of making people, whose bodies are not considered important, disappear. Further, when racism, sexism and classism essentially crossed paths, in the form of negligence and omission by officers and the State itself in the treatment of those people who are deprived of their status as political subjects, such people can only attain a socially acknowledged status of ‘*disappeared*’ when their fate is exposed by the mass media, social movements and/or family groups. This thesis confirms the idea that the normality of state violence is, in fact, the normality of a broad process of genocide and of annihilation of entire groups, reaffirming these groups’ status of subalternity. By doing this investigation, this work strongly contributes to the critical scholarship of violence studies that explore other forms of disappearance in the heart of one of the countries affected by Operation Condor during the Cold War and the spectrum of the violence from dictatorship established in institutions and in their everyday practices.

Keywords

State violence, disappearance, contemporary archaeology, Brazil, legacies of dictatorship, omission, necropolitics.

Resumen

Esta tesis explora las continuidades de las formas de desaparición en Brasil durante la dictadura y en el presente. A lo largo de la tesis cuestioné si es posible materializar la precariedad de la vida en el momento de la muerte. ¿Qué formas de ciudadanía se construyen en la burocratización de la muerte? ¿Qué tecnologías se han utilizado en estas estrategias? Partiendo de la arqueología contemporánea busco en diferentes cuerpos, individuos y poblaciones categorizados como indeseables, peligrosos, desviantes, las diferentes formas de tratamiento a través de la vida y la muerte. Si durante la vida estas poblaciones son sobrecontroladas por el Estado a través de sus instituciones y formas de vigilancia, en la muerte son descuidadas y abandonadas en la construcción de su ciudadanía. Mi interés era observar cómo los elementos materiales vinculados a la individualidad, un concepto fundamental en el proceso de identificación, se perdían en el camino hacia el entierro. Sostengo que la omisión institucional es una de las técnicas para hacer desaparecer a las personas cuyos cuerpos no se consideran importantes. Si el racismo, el sexismo y el clasismo se entrecruzan esencialmente en forma de negligencia y omisión por parte de los funcionarios y del propio Estado en el tratamiento de estas personas privadas de su condición de sujetos políticos, las mismas sólo alcanzan el estatus de desaparecidas cuando su muerte es expuesta por los medios de comunicación o gracias a los movimientos sociales y grupos de familiares. La normalidad de la violencia del Estado es, de hecho, la normalidad de un amplio proceso de genocidio, de aniquilación de grupos enteros para reproducir su estatus de subalternidad. Al realizar esta investigación, contribuyo al estudio crítico de la violencia que explora otras formas de desaparición en el corazón de uno de los países afectados por la Operación Cóndor durante la Guerra Fría y el espectro de la violencia de la dictadura establecido en las instituciones y sus prácticas cotidianas.

Palabras clave

Violencia del estado, desaparición , arqueología contemporánea , Brasil, legados de la dictadura, omisión, necropolítica.

Resumo

Esta tese explora as continuidades das formas de desaparecimento no Brasil durante a ditadura e no presente. Questionei ao longo da tese se é possível materializar a precariedade da vida no momento da morte. Que formas de cidadania são construídas na burocratização da morte? Que tecnologias têm sido implantadas nestas estratégias? Partindo da arqueologia contemporânea procuro em diferentes corpos, indivíduos e populações categorizados como indesejáveis, perigosos, desviantes, as diferentes formas de tratamento através da vida e da morte. Se durante a vida estas populações são sobrecontroladas pelo Estado através das suas instituições e formas de policiamento, as mesmas são negligenciadas e abandonadas na construção da sua cidadania na morte. O meu interesse foi observar como elementos materiais ligados à individualidade, um conceito fundamental no processo de identificação, se perderam no caminho até a inumação. Defendo que a omissão institucional é uma das técnicas de fazer desaparecer pessoas cujos corpos não são considerados importantes. Se racismo, sexismo e classismo se cruzam essencialmente sob a forma de negligência e omissão dos oficiais e do próprio Estado no tratamento destas pessoas que são privadas do seu estatuto de sujeitos políticos, as mesmas só atingem o estatuto de desaparecidas quando o seu destino é exposto pelos meios de comunicação social ou graças a movimentos sociais e grupos familiares. A normalidade da violência do Estado é, de fato, a normalidade de um amplo processo de genocídio, de aniquilação de grupos inteiros para reproduzir o seu estatuto de subalternidade. Ao fazer esta investigação, contribuo para o estudo crítico da violência que explora outras formas de desaparecimento no coração de um dos países afetados pela Operação Condor durante a Guerra Fria e o espectro da violência da ditadura estabelecida nas instituições e nas suas práticas quotidianas.

Palavras chave

Violência de estado, desaparecimento , arqueologia contemporânea , Brasil, legados da ditadura, omissão, necropolítica.

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I. Introduction

While I was writing this thesis, the world was being devastated by covid-19. The ways in which different governments reacted and took action had a decisive impact on the pandemic in different contexts. In Brazil, one of the most affected countries in the world, the first fatal victim was a domestic worker who had caught the virus from her employer who had travelled to Italy. In the middle of a pandemic, this person understood that, even being a possible vector of the virus, she could not do without the services of her maid (M. L. de Melo, 2020). A perverse anecdote of inequality and how class, gender and race relations converge in Brazil.

The number of infections and deaths reinforced the profound inequalities that already prevailed in the case of Brazil. Negationism and inaction were deliberate choices of Jair Bolsonaro's extreme right-wing government regarding the decision to let people die, especially those living in the most peripheral regions, as shown by many studies on the maps of the places with the highest number of people infected by the coronavirus. The pandemic has shown in the cruelest possible way how omission can be one of the most deliberate and systematic strategies of necropolitics. This thesis explores the state technology that has made, and is continuing to make, identities and bodies disappear.

In Hualla, in the countryside of the province of Ayacucho in Peru, I once heard from an admirable militant and family member of a missing person, Gisela Ortiz, that activism is gradually forging itself, in the urgency of the struggle, in the relationships we establish and in specific interactions with people. This very well-articulated woman, with an ability to show strength and sensitivity at the same time, said that even the way she expressed herself had gradually been learned in the numerous demonstrations and social movements in which she participated.

This is how I see the process that involved my initial contact with the subject, in the interior of Brazil, in one of the regions where conflict over land and forms of

exploitation continue today. In this place, different forms of violence against peasant, indigenous and *quilombola*¹ populations remains. These forms did not emerge in the military dictatorship, but militarization and state violence were decisive in this period of Brazilian history.

This research involves a pathway and an activism that has been built up throughout my experiences working in the context of human rights violations, as has the investigative process itself. There is an endless number of people who have inspired, and inspire, me every day. In academia, if we choose to struggle against forms of Eurocentrism, sexism, colonialism and racism in society, it necessarily involves thinking and acting in the ways we recognize the people who challenge, motivate and help us reflect on our work. This extends through the forms not only of acknowledgement, but of recognition in the reflective process, as part of the bibliography. In this sense, the reflections of this thesis involve the possibility of learning from people with whom I have had the privilege of living or even those who have inspired me through their texts, making the research process more stimulating. For this reason, and contrary to standards and formats, the acknowledgements, somehow, flow from the introduction.

For my family, I can only express my thanks for their patience, motivation and love - Quino, Youko and Yugo. To my father who has witnessed, at the beginning of the 21st century, how his know-how and profession have risen and then disappeared completely. To Suyami, Juliana, Amanda, Lígia, Luana, Louise, Candela and Daniel, thank you for always being with me. To you, I owe the tenderness and softness of my days. The dear people in Santiago who have made this city a home – Marcelo, João, Luiza, Isabely, José Luis, David, Daniel, Kristie, Silvana, Manuela, Jakson, Yara, Mauricio, Luís, Patri, Marta, Márlío, Jamile, Nelly and her family. I also thank the people who have made this thesis much better - my supervisor Alfredo González-Ruibal, Ana Tauhyl, Daniel Conde, Felipe Criado Boado, Candela Martínez-Barrio, David Barreiro, Pastor Fábregas, David González-Alvarez, Anxo Rodríguez-Paz,

¹ A Quilombola is an Afro-Brazilian resident of quilombo settlements first established by escaped enslaved people in Brazil.

Douglas Mansur, Adriano Diogo, Guilherme Santos, Maurício Paiva, Louise Alfonso, Maurício Silva and Jocyane Baretta for the comments at different moments. And my English proof-reader, Paul Lacey.

The theoretical framework of this thesis originates from studies on disappearance, modernity, racism, state violence, from an archaeology of the contemporary past. To think of continuities in the ways disappearance occurs was a means to understanding part of the legacies of dictatorship, structural violence and racism. The pathway begins with the forms of disappearance in the dictatorship and culminates in considering the disappearance and management of dead bodies at the beginning of the 21st century under the aegis of the “democratic” South American states and understanding this new model of reconfiguration between state, neoliberal market and citizenship. By looking at legacies and continuities, I explore a material perspective of these post-conflict processes, which are also ways of memorializing and how they are inscribed in the landscape, from a genealogy of these landmarks in the city which also unveils these legacies and forms of exclusion. How do these spaces that recognize the monuments and plaques created by the State continue to exclude those who were victims of structural violence and not just of the period of exception?

If at exceptional periods, new categories of “subversives” are invented by state violence, as occurred during the Brazilian dictatorship, with those considered communists classified as terrorists, this exception is ruthless and intensifies even more with groups that were already considered “dangerous classes” (Wacquant, 2010a), such as the poor and black people. This violence, brought forth by the modern period, started with forced displacement from Africa to the Americas, the horrors of slavery, which forged the Brazilian republic and its institutions, which are built on the persecution of free Africans and Afro-descendants (Chalhoub, 2011; Martins, 2014). The police stations created in this period functioned to maintain “order” against the threat of enslaved individuals and their different forms of struggle for freedom, which became especially frightening with the ghost of the Haitian Revolution (Pedretti, 2020).

The 20th century is crucial in understanding the consolidation of modernity and the bourgeois nation-state. In the case of Africans enslaved in Brazil, once they were free and legally equal, new instruments and apparatuses were created from within the institutions to socially hyper-marginalize them, something akin to a reaction to a beginning of inclusion. This is true throughout the West - the different forms of criminalization of black people in the Brazilian case, with the creation of *delegacias de vadiagem*² (Martins, 2014), or even in the example of civil rights in the USA and the response from the white power movement (Belew, 2019; Cunningham, 2013), the prison industry and mass incarceration (Davis, 1997).

In Brazil, with the Republic (1889) and the end of slavery, legal equality was established and people became citizens (previously, enslaved Afro-descendants were considered commodities). The category of undesirable people, although extensively used against different populations, was consolidated at the end of the 19th century, with the beginning of state immigration policies and modernization (Menezes, 1996). The idea of “undesirable” is a substitute for marginalization in order to classify certain people as dangerous classes and to justify repression and expulsion in the case of foreigners.

It is the establishment of institutional and structural racism to replace the doctrinal racism of the 19th century, according to sociologist Antonio Sergio Guimarães (2020). It exemplifies the extensive use of the ideal of racial democracy to hide racial and class inequalities. This domestic and state use ended up spreading throughout Latin America where the region’s governments activated it to counteract the black protests that emerged in the 1990s, especially in countries with large black populations, such as Cuba or Colombia (Guimarães, 2020; Wade, 1993).

² *Delegacias de vadiagem*. Specific police stations dedicated to holding those arrested for committing vagrancy. This diffuse categorisation of vagrancy was used as an umbrella for the imprisonment of countless people based on a norm that has its roots in the Criminal Code of the Empire, the first to treat vagrancy (art. 295) and begging (art. 296) as a contravention. With the same purpose, the 1890 Penal Code devoted two chapters to the subject, entitled "Beggars and drunks" and "Vandals and *capoeiras*."

I am inspired by the reflections on the 20th century, supermodernity and the destruction of forms of life by the researcher Alfredo González-Ruibal. Besides being a constant source of inspiration and my supervisor, he has supported me at very difficult moments in this journey. This archaeologist, who often writes about violence and destruction, describing the unspeakable, has the sensitivity and openness to make anyone feel comfortable, sharing my excitement about the research process and also about my everyday life as a researcher and as a mother.

To him, I also owe the possibility of participating in two exciting projects. The first one was the “Spanish Modern Warfare” project in Madrid, where I had the opportunity to form part of an incredible team in 2017 and 2018: Candela Martínez, Carlos Marín, Manuel Antonio Franco-Fernández, Carlos Tejerizo, Josu Santamarina, Pedro Simón, Rui Coelho, Bárbara Bermúdez, Carla García, Javier Marquerie, Xurxo Ayán and Álvaro Falquina. The second was the enormous privilege to be accompanied on the Ethiopian borderland and the opportunity to learn about the Benishangul-Gumuz region with two great ethnoarchaeologists - Álvaro Falquina and Worku Derara.

I was made to feel that I belonged in Galicia by Xurxo Ayán-Vila, who knows better than anyone how to make people feel at home, even when they are an ocean away. Cereixa is a place of affection for many people who arrive thanks to Xurxo. To him, I owe my experiences in the community archaeology project of *Castro de San Lourenzo*, with the *Asociación por la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica - ARMH* (Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory) and in the investigations about the guerrilla insurgency during the Franco dictatorship in *Casa do Repil* in A Pobra do Brollón and in the village of Cambedo, in the north of Portugal with him, Rui Coelho, Carlos Otero, Sonia García and Rodrigo Paulos.

The two exhumation cases at A Pobra do Brollón seem very symbolic of how historical memory is made in Galicia: In the case of Jesús Casas, known as Inverno, the exhumation was impossible because the most likely location of his body would be below a vertical niche structure and, in a more absurd way, the human remains of the

perpetrator, a *falangista*, would be above his body. In the other case, Gervasio, at Fornelas Cemetery, shares the same cemetery with the perpetrator, although the latter had a dignified burial with his name inscribed in one of the niches. This was not the case for Gervasio and Inverno, both of whom are still missing.

To Graham Willis for the discussions about mundane mass graves and to David Lehman and Monica Figueroa for the invitation to debate at the Cambridge Latin American Studies Centre. The company (virtual and physical) of Jessica Hernández de Lara, who helped me to reflect on my own position in the debates on racialized bodies in the midst of a pandemic that has exacerbated forms of racism that have always been present, but which have become more direct and violent (Chun, 2020; Hong, 2020). The very diverse group of activists who called themselves Yellow Peril³ and Coletivo Labibe Yumiko, a reference to reflect on the racialization of yellow bodies and concepts such as yellow face, model minority, micro-aggressions and, how to be part of an anti-racist struggle. These collectives made me understand my experiences with my own body and identity and how we can educate ourselves in our place against racism, oppression and privilege, from intersectional readings.

I also thank Dacia Viejo Rose, who received me in the University of Cambridge. Part of the reflections on traumatic heritage and the genealogy of landscapes in the post-conflict process are influenced by different research that has been developed in the Cambridge Heritage Research Centre. The ways in which I write about heritage can also be attributed to the *Critical heritage studies and the future of Europe* project that funded this research. I thank Kristian Kristiansen for his suggestions at the meetings and his energy, Rodney Harrison who commented several times on my work and the many places and professionals where I had the opportunity to learn - University of Gothenburg, UCL, University of Utrecht, University of Amsterdam, Bologna, University of Hasselt and the University Institute of Lisbon. This perspective, deeply

³ A resignification from the racist expression coined by Wilhelm II, the emperor of Germany, who commissioned a painting, completed in 1895, which called on the “civilized” nations of Europe to defend against Asian conquest. The theory of yellow danger was employed during the beginning of East-Asian migrations to the United States, and now makes the Chinese their main target. These people are portrayed by the “West” as dangerous, with strange and dirty habits.

rooted in the global north and the Anglo-Saxon school, often disregards a huge theoretical production not only developed in Latin America, the context in which practically all of my academic training and professional experience took place, but also in areas of Europe itself such as France, Spain and Portugal.

Speaking of heritage, my dear “Marie” fellows Anne and Nevena. I do not know how to thank you. For more *tarta de queixo* celebrations. The institution and the friends who welcomed me in these four years: Felipe, Ana, Joan, Lupe, Rafa, David Gonzalez, Pau, Andres, Sirio, Jorge Canosa, Raquel, Elena Barrio, Elena Cabrejas, Pepe, Thibault, Cristina Tejedor, Pastor, Anxo, María, Iñaki, Cesar Parcero, Cesar GG, Cesar G Perez, María Faro, Cristina Sanchez, David Barreiro, Lois, Chicho, Cristina Incio, Sonia, Gail, Jorge de Torres. To those who have also become friends on a journey that began in Gothenburg - Nermin, Mela, Marcela, Carlota, Vittoria, William, Lukacs, Hannah, Janna, Moniek, Khaled.

This research is deeply influenced by the practice of Latin American Forensic Anthropology. I thank Rafael de Abreu e Souza for the first invitation, in 2013, to participate in the search for the disappeared people of the Araguaia Guerrilla in the Amazon region. That work was a turning point for me in a world of ongoing violence in one of the most conflictive regions of Brazil. I would also like to thank him for inviting me, in 2013, to form part of what would later become the Working Group created by the Brazilian state to identify politically disappeared people in the Perus Mass Grave. This case is so representative of how the Brazilian State has operated in regard to memory, truth and justice. I am grateful for sharing this experience with this resistant, mostly female, team: Patricia Fischer, Luana Alberto, Ana Tauhyl, Mariana Inglez, Marina Gratao, Marina di Giusto, Aline Oliveira, Candela Martínez, Rafael de Abreu e Souza, Douglas Mansur, Jacob Gelwan, André Strauss and Felipe Quadrado for the intense experience that sent us to different places.

Through my interaction with José Pablo Baraybar, Valeska Martinez, Gisela Ortiz, Franco Mora, Óscar Loyola, Feliciano and Percy Rojas of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team - EPAF, Luis Fondebrider of EAAF and contact with the Latin

American Association of Forensic Anthropology, I have seen how a different approach is possible in which the search for the disappeared is not predominantly medicalized, police and male. This Forensic Anthropology, predominant in Brazil until then, also began to appropriate a humanitarian discourse, deeply marked by the influence and action of international organizations and NGOs. That discourse is also potentially dangerous. Humanitarian rhetoric, like all other forms of discourse, is also used and appropriated for the most diverse purposes, especially in the make-up of deeply colonial actions, as we can see in the US relationship with Venezuela and humanitarian aid, or in direct action and invasion as was carried out in Afghanistan and Iraq by US troops together with other NATO countries.

In one of the debates in which I participated with Jose Pablo Baraybar, he asked me if I thought that, by studying the techniques of disappearance by omission, with the elaboration of all the procedures, the descriptions and the protocols carried out, this would put an end to these forms of disappearance. The answer to the question is related with how I understand archaeology in these contexts of human rights violations. It is not a question of searching for the perfect bureaucracy and thinking with which disappearance by omission would end. It is more about carrying out archaeology that is capable of providing the physical evidence of today's realities, the conditions that created them and the impact of material culture on the lives and bodies of contemporary human beings.

If Latin American Forensic Anthropology frames this research, so too does the human rights movement, to which I owe my political and social formation: groups such as the *Comitê Paulista pela Memória Verdade e Justiça* (CPMVJ), formed by many former political prisoners, whom I was able to meet every Tuesday for four years, and the group formed by the Truth Commission (*Comissão Estadual da Verdade Rubens Paiva*) chaired by my dear friend Adriano Diogo and the admirable and tireless fighters for truth and justice Amelinha Teles, Crimeia Almeida, Suzana Lisboa, Ivan Seixas, Vivian Mendes, Pádua Fernandes, Janaina Teles, Edson Teles, Eliana Vendramini, Carla Borges, Cristina Schein, Eugenia Gonzaga and so many others who have shown, from within the State, how it is possible to resist. I am also grateful by the fruitful

conversations with such inspiring social/cultural anthropologists: Flavia Medeiros and Lucia Eilbaum. From contact with these groups in Rio de Janeiro, I have been able to reflect on the different moralities applied to different categories of citizens in life and death. Also, to the Anthropology and Human Rights group that made me aware of the discussions on the economy of mass incarceration (Gilmore, 2007), prison industry complex (Gilmore, 2007; Wacquant, 2010b), the drugs war and race from a feminist approach (Davis, 1997, 2003), and provided the opportunity to meet amazing activists for prison abolition like Penha (I. Souza, 2019)

In this context, Flavia Rios, raised a central question: the consideration of historical contingency. If we see violence against black and poor people as something structural originating from a historical process dating back to the Brazilian Empire, how can we see the changes? This reflection seemed fundamental to me, because if, on the one hand, I understand the historical roots of what the historical militant of the Black movement, Abdias do Nascimento (2016), called black genocide, what are the specificities we perceive in different historical moments? This is also a question that I try to answer throughout the thesis. What has the consolidation of modernity and later supermodernity meant in the specific developments of state violence?

To conclude, I dedicate this reflection to Ednalva Silva's struggle, my friend who passed away in the course of writing this thesis. A leader of the Bahia movement of mothers who suffer from state violence in the present, Ednalva was a black *sertaneja* woman. Her son was executed by the military police (Polícia Militar) of Bahia while having a shower at home in early 2019. She subsequently founded a group of mothers against state violence and organized the national network of family members, in dialogue with many leaders of Rio de Janeiro. She pursued justice from the different instances of the State in order to investigate those actions of the military police that seemed systematic. Every month, poor young black men were executed in the city in very similar circumstances to that of Ednalva's son, and she attempted to collect these individual stories and gather the relatives of these victims so that, collectively, they would have more strength to demand what they needed.

One year after her son's murder in March 2020, Ednalva died from a heart attack at the age of 34. Following her son's death, she started having health problems, such as diabetes, lung disease and so on. Ednalva did not die from a heart attack, she died from the effects of state violence.

I learned from Ednalva, in the worst and most terrible way possible, that when a person disappears, or when they are eliminated by state violence that acts on the young, poor and black population, it is not only the body that disappears or is eliminated. An entire community is affected by state violence. As Almudena Hernando states, when thinking about our individuality, we are relational beings. Ednalva, who was one of the leaders of the movement, died. Her other two children who had already lost their brother, also lost their mother. In *La Racionalidad del Terror*, Abós (1979) coined the term "irradiated violence". When state violence occurs, we often focus on the individual, but in reality we are talking about a whole network (Padrós, 2012), not only the generation that lives in the present, but also the following generations. Marianne Hirsch (2008, pp. 103–108) argues that second generations often connect so deeply with the traumatic memories of survivors that these experiences seem to be transformed into memories of their own (Hirsch, 2008, pp. 103–108). Moreover, she argues that the ways in which these next generations invoke the past is different from the way contemporary witnesses do. In the former cases the past "is not mediated by memory, but by imaginative investment, projection and creation" (Hirsch, 2008, p. 107).

This haunting legacy, known as intergenerational inheritance of trauma (Abraham & Torok, 1994), is the most intangible form of violence, in which a person can manifest symptoms that do not directly spring from their own life experiences but from a parent's or ancestor's psychological conflicts, traumas, or secrets (Schwab, 2010). During different interviews with relatives of politically disappeared people from the last dictatorship in Brazil, sometimes the closest available relative was the grandchild of the victim. They had never met personally, but we observed how the trauma was so vivid, recognized and experienced by those who were born after the end of dictatorship.

I conclude by warning readers that the writing of this thesis arrives late. At least 40 years late. I have seen a lot of relatives die before obtaining an answer or seeing justice done. One example which I will always remember is that of a visit I made to a cousin of a disappeared person. One month after my visit, the cousin died in a car accident. I also remember the sister-in-law of Aluizio Palhano, who spent her whole life participating in social movements, such as the group *Tortura Nunca Mais* (Torture Never Again), fighting to discover what had happened to her brother-in-law and where he had ended up. Sadly, she died a few months before the identification of Aluizio's body was confirmed at the end of 2018. I also met a man of more than 80 years of age participating in an exhumation while waiting for an answer from the Brazilian State about whether or not the body belonged to his brother. The slowness of the state's actions has not allowed this man to obtain any response, even if it were negative (Hattori, 2019). Three years after the exhumation, we still do not know whether or not those human remains belonged to his brother. I receive messages, gifs or emojis from relatives. One of them, right after we said goodbye in one of the interviews, made a deep impression on me: I will write to you so that you will not forget about us and our struggle. Every day she sends me a good morning message. This thesis is part of the effort to continue this struggle.

I.I. Research context

The best way to do science is from life, or from the need to respond to the challenges of reality. As I have already mentioned, from 2014 to 2017, I was part of the forensic team that worked on the investigation of a mass grave containing the bodies of more than 1,500 people in the center of Brazil's main financial city, São Paulo. Over those three years, the work involved a systematic research of the documentation of the Medico-Legal Institute of São Paulo - IML-SP.

The Perus mass grave contained thousands of human remains, the result of a long process of occultation and disappearance that affected, and still affects, the population of São Paulo. Among them, there are victims of the military dictatorship, many of

whom were buried as unknown, a category that, although it involves the production of documentation with a view to a possible restitution of identity, the bureaucracy and lack of systematization results in processes of the “legal” removal of the identity of the subjects, since such a process is located within a state system.

This investigation began with the suspicion pointed out by the *Comité de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos* – the name of the relatives’ association, that the missing person Aylton Adalberto Mortati, would be noted in the cemetery burial book as an “unknown”, with a place and date of death close to those of his disappearance. Thus, the possibility was suggested that many of those disappeared by the forces of repression of the military dictatorship entered the cemetery as “unknown”, having their identities denied and erased within the state institutions that had to do with the bureaucracy of death and the pathway of the body, as is recurrent in several Latin American countries.

The logbooks had been consulted by different people searching for clues about the disappearances of the dictatorship, including relatives, journalists, officials and those involved with human rights issues since the 1970s. With the framework and knowledge generated by this information, the team chose to systematically examine all the pages of the books, collecting all the data in order to be able to carry out a statistical analysis, generating data in which it was possible to raise hypotheses about a universe of 41 missing persons, with different degrees of probability, concerning who could be in the mass grave. This would also make it possible to cross data with other documentary series, such as those referring to the Instituto Médico Legal de São Paulo (IML) and DOPS/SP, the police station established for cases considered to be political crimes.

However, much more emerged in the analysis and data collection. It was possible to notice mechanisms of disappearance in operation formed by links in an institutional and bureaucratic chain that perpetuates the untraceability of bodies and, consequently, their concealment. We named this phenomenon “administrative disappearance”. It became clear that the system of repression and the strategy of

dictatorial disappearance made use of a mechanism which was already in place to effect forced disappearances (Franco, 2018; Hattori et al., 2016)

This path to unveiling these different forms of omission also revealed that the omission of officials carrying out the technical work in the social construction of the unknown dead was visible, especially applied to black and poor people. In the photography books of corpses, we handled in the search for political disappearances, class and race were decisive in the way in which these identities were formulated.

I emphasize that, unlike analogical and epistemic logics that start from top to bottom, with an abstract theoretical framework and a question that fits different case studies, this thesis originated from the data itself that led and evoked these reflections. From the raw evidence of omission and its relations with social class and race, quite naturalized in Brazil, I attempted to verify whether it was one of the disappearance techniques that permeated the structure of state institutions dealing with death.

I.II. Research Problem

After giving up forensic investigation in Brazil and starting a PhD, I was interested in exploring the ways in which these legacies of the dictatorship could be materialized and evidenced in the present society. As I stated above, there are many legacies in the democratic context, but I wanted to understand if these forms of disappearance by omission are perpetuated up to the present day.

In that sense, my research questions are:

- **Is it possible to materialize the precariousness of life at the moment of death?**
- **What forms of citizenship are built up in the bureaucratization of death?**
- **What technologies have been deployed in these strategies?**

Some basic structural starting points for my reflections are: 1) notions of race and class; 2) the idea of the precariousness of life and death; and 3) the different categories of citizen that are mobilized in the social construction of the dead body. My understanding on these points is also a political attitude for the different silences that I want to disturb.

Here, I assume full recognition of the necessarily provincial status of our discourse and the necessarily regional nature of our concepts, as Achille Mbembe (2018) categorically states in relation to the production of knowledge. Therefore, far from having the pretension of global thinking, I pursue the urgency of the analyses and the audacity to expose and materialize State policies and how they are structured for the control of populations, more focused on death.

I.III. Positionality

In the light of these foundations, reflexivity and positionality are necessary to understand radical questioning about the creation of the place of the researcher and the researched and to claim false objectivity and epistemic neutrality (Grossfoguel, 2007).

Perhaps Haraway's (1988) classic text *Situated Knowledges*, paves the way to how I proceed with this research. The inevitability of positionality, in her opinion, is due to the *embodied nature of vision* in opposition to the "*objective conquering gaze*" that has long dominated the fields of knowledge production in the social sciences. Haraway, along with a long line of feminists, has critiqued the claims of objectivity in scientific knowledge, arguing that it is impossible to look from nowhere. They argue that positioning is the key practice in grounding knowledge that was once organized around the imagery of the "*objective eye*" long claimed by the master scientist who holds the power to categorize and inscribe people as "*others*". They challenge this practice of power through: "*arguing for politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims.*" (Haraway, 1988, p. 589).

I am aware that this text is written in a colonial language, English, an academic imposition the structure and formats of which modify my argumentation and also make this work less accessible, especially for the Brazilian reality. In addition, there is the relationship with English-speaking countries such as the USA, whose support and influence were decisive for the South American dictatorships. If in the translation processes we uproot ourselves, I try to subvert this by maintaining the long phrases characteristic of Latin languages and also understanding translation as indispensable ‘world’-travelling (Lugones, 1987), in political and theoretical terms, for the formation of post-colonial/post-Western feminist alliances (Anzaldúa, 2017; Costa, 2012, p. 49).

At this point, I argue that in the geopolitics and body-politic of knowledge, I position myself as a yellow Latin American woman, researcher from a diasporic and working-class family producing this study in the European context, which will inscribe itself in my world views. While I identify myself among the racialized “minorities” who experience forms of racism, which have intensified and become more tangible during the coronavirus pandemic, I argue that they are also groups living in different privileges, especially regarding state violence in the Brazilian context, which is the topic of this thesis. I argue here for the need for this constant vigilance in relation to my assumptions, biases, privileges and blind spots – blindness (Gallagher, 2003; D. Ribeiro, 2017) to understand how whites and non-whites sustain this unequal and oppressive system, especially towards black bodies. Not to speak for, but to be part of the anti-racist solidarity permeates the readings and forms of analyses that frame this thesis.

I.IV. Research Objectives and Significance

This research comes at a moment in which academic scholarship needs to critically investigate forms of state violence that are not directly related to forced disappearance, given the rise of the extreme right in the world, especially in Brazil, and, increasingly, forms of state violence in so-called democratic contexts among marginalized groups.

Countless studies are needed, along with the opening of archives to understand the links and ways in which the forced disappearance of people in exceptional contexts occurs. But how can we demonstrate the different techniques used by governments and police, to control and eliminate entire categories of people?

I situate these debates at the level of specific practices carried out by state technicians in which racism and institutional classism format disappearance by omission as part of state violence in dictatorship and democracy. The central focus of this research and its main contribution lies in the understanding of forms of disappearance that are naturalized in society. Authoritarian governments in Brazil have always used the idea of defending freedom and “true democracy” in their discourse, as does national-populism (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018). This state violence persists in democratic contexts based on forms of racism and institutional classism that are not visible in the bureaucratic labyrinth that deals with death. I argue that institutional omission is one of the techniques of making people whose bodies are not considered important disappear.

By investigating the continuities of forms of disappearance in Brazil during the dictatorship and today, I contribute to the critical scholarship of violence studies that explore other forms of disappearance in the heart of one of the countries affected by Operation Condor during the Cold War and the spectrum of the violence from dictatorship established in institutions and in their everyday practices.

I.V. Methodological Framework

When I started the investigation as part of the forensic team, our aim was to use different tools from History, Anthropology and Archaeology to understand the bureaucratic pathway of dead bodies in the city of São Paulo to see if it was possible that some of the people who were part of our search universe had been buried without identity, known in the bureaucracy as NN, *Nomen nescio* (Hattori et al., 2016).

During my fieldwork in 2017, 2018 and 2019, I turned my gaze from the politically disappeared and the search for *guerrilleros* to understanding the mechanisms of repression and to what some researchers call “mundane disappearance” (Willis, 2020b); this technology of power complexified during dictatorship and applied to different populations, mostly psychiatric patients, homeless people, victims of death squads, etc., who are buried as NN.

By working with contexts related to state violence and very recent periods, this has entailed numerous methodological issues and important adaptations, which also relate to political changes in the Brazilian context. Archaeological research must indicate not only the layers from which the findings come, but also and above all, those that had to be crossed to reach them (Didi-Huberman, 2014). I will try to describe these layers in the following lines.

The first refers to my relationship with relatives, associations, human rights groups, memory committees and institutions. In terms of building the relationship of trust that is established with different subjects of the research, I consider that my previous contact with many of the civil associations, human rights activist groups throughout the country related to the right to memory, truth, and justice, and with the relatives of disappeared persons, with whom I have collaborated in previous years, was crucial for the time needed in this process, from an ethical perspective. In addition, getting to know the archive institutions that hold the documentation of the Medico Legal Institute, the cemetery, among so many others, enabled me to carry out fieldwork that would certainly have made it impossible to map out, get to know, and develop this research in the three and a half years of my PhD.

I emphasize this example of my relationship with interlocutors with the aim of not normalizing forms of precariousness and in order to criticize structural transformations in higher education (Gill, 2013). This logic, to which many of us are subjected in profoundly unequal ways (Vatansever, 2020), has affected researchers, and I would like to point out here that in the case of archaeological and

anthropological research, fieldwork is one of the most affected stages in relation to the time and resources required for its development.

Most of my fieldwork took place in 2018, in a conflictive context in which the municipality was being questioned due to the imminent cremation of human remains held in the collective ossuary. This occurred in 2018 following the coup against President Dilma Rousseff. The political situation had already raised tensions for any work related to “Human Rights”, seen in that context as belonging to “left-wing” groups, when it is known that the human rights agenda is related with a liberal tradition.

During the research, I used pseudonyms and changed some personal details to protect identities to guarantee the trust given by different people in their daily work, which is threatened by neoliberal politics and the political context. The analysis of recent periods in the city of São Paulo - the years of the Brazilian dictatorship and 2018, certainly implied reflections to ensure the physical, social, political and psychological safety of my interlocutors, hence the confidentiality of names (De León, 2015; Denscombe, 2010). It is also true that, where possible, and with authorization from the families, I made a point of individualizing and naming first and last names. In contexts in which there are death tolls all the time, whether due to pandemics, repressive contexts or even the normalization of massacres against specific populations, names must be written, in an effort to evoke what social movements have been doing for years - to give the victims faces and names (figure 1).

Figure 1: Demonstration at the University of São Paulo organized by social movements in 2017. Credit: Maurício Paiva



From 2019, access was compromised to the archives of the “Serviço Funerário” and the “Secretaria de Obras”, where the plans of the collective ossuary built in the 1990s in various public cemeteries were kept. From that year, it was no longer possible to return to do fieldwork with the necessary authorizations. Contact with, access to and possibilities for research in the public archives were interrupted in the context of the rise of the extreme right in the federal government and the neo-liberal right-wing party in the state and municipal spheres of São Paulo, further reinforcing the difficulties for any work connected with these topics. How can research like this be conducted in the context of authoritarian governments? How can access to public documentation be ensured?

What is certain is that I have rarely, if ever, received a straightforward rejection as an answer from an employee. E-mails were never answered, and phone calls often went into an infinite loop of being put through to the communications staff or directly to the secretary who then had to wait for an answer from the superintendent that never reached me. After 2019, I needed better pictures and I also wanted to take some aerial pictures with the drone. After more than five months of weekly calls, and mails I was defeated by tiredness and the drone equipment was not available anymore after so long. It is interesting to observe the inconsistencies of how a neo-liberal government

that has as its discourse the transformation of the inefficient bureaucratic machinery of the state into a company demonstrates precisely the opposite process. As Mark Fisher (2016) affirms, with the triumph of neoliberalism, bureaucracy should become definitively obsolete as a sort of unredeemed vestige of the Stalinist past. However, this statement contradicts the experience of most people who live and work in late capitalism. The fact is that, instead of disappearing, bureaucracy has changed form, and this new decentralized form (Deleuze, 2006) has allowed it to proliferate.

In spite of this, or taking into account all these nuances and layers that involve fieldwork related to contexts of violence, throughout the research process, I have borrowed in full various methods and theories from the anthropological and archaeological toolbox, deeply influenced by four fields: Anthropology – Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, Physical Anthropology and Linguistics. On the other hand, in the case study of the cremation of human remains in a collective ossuary, the forensic perspective was undoubtedly present, where the evidence and results of my fieldwork were used in a legal context.

This toolbox of many fields, implies coming up with traditional archaeological methods of investigation: map-making, note-taking, description, and photography, in addition to the use of map regression and aerial photographs and the integration of historical and oral historical sources (Harrison & Schofield, 2010, p. 63). At the same time, considering that the two case studies I worked on, one during the Brazilian dictatorship and the other in the democratic context, are related to human rights violations, this methodological approach included the analysis of the victims' remains and the existing documentation through physical anthropology and associated artefacts; the mapping of the physical remains of the disappearance (Jarvis, 2002).

In this sense, another field that I used specially to analyze the material conditions of the ossuary was taphonomy, considered the science of post-mortem processes or even the study of phenomena affecting biological organisms at the time of or after death. This perspective is well described by the anthropologist Shannon Dawdy (2019) "Taphonomy describes the complexity, the mix of accident and manipulation,

the silences and erasures, the constraining structures, and the sudden ruptures that all go into the creation of history and into the formation of the ethnographic present”. As Jason de León (2015) proposes for post-mortem events affecting the bodies of migrants in the desert as forms of necroviolence, I attempt to examine this carelessness in the context of cemetery bureaucracy.

The intertwining with the documentary analysis, both of the cemetery records and the necropsy reports, is influenced by the work of the historian Carlo Ginzburg. His contribution to microhistory and his methodological proposal based on a reduction in the scale of analysis, which he calls magnifying glass analysis, for approaching everyday elements, which are indicative of minimal elements that, if well observed, could offer interesting results. As he states, the idea of an interpretative method is based on the apprehension of marginal and irrelevant details as revealing evidence. A method in which details previously considered trivial and unimportant, “imperceptible”, “short of attention”, provide the key (Ginzburg, 2016, p. 23).

For this research, set in the context of the city of Sao Paulo, I conducted countless interviews with relatives of disappeared people, social movements acting against the actions of the city government, experts from the Sao Paulo Medical Legal Institute, cemetery workers and administrators. I have used ethnography, understood here as a method of investigation, based on observation and participation in places and social relations and, as a form of writing, concerned with entangling theory and analysis with the voices, perspectives and “views” of social actors (Geertz, 1994; Guber, 2004).

One of the elements of the ethnographic method is participant observation, which enables the anthropologist to explore distinctive aspects of local culture in order to interpret different social phenomena. What is at stake is not the assumption of the point of view of the “native”, but the recognition that the anthropologist’s description derives from that point of view its relationship and sharing of the spheres of “cultural intimacy” (Herzfeld, 2016; Strathern, 1987; Viveiros de Castro, 2002).

My concern was to bring together the practices and discourses of the subjects most involved, not only from the perspective of an analysis of the large-scale state institutions dealing with death, but also by incorporating the more everyday and experiential dimensions of those who work in daily life, where data emerge from the “daily flow of everyday life” (Malinowski, 1986) and also from individual and collective experiences of forms of disappearance and the different impacts which included interviews and participation in many demonstrations.

I.VI. Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters that address the disappearance of people due to omission by the state and differences and similarities over time. The first, entitled “An Archaeology of Necropolitics”, presents a proposal for an archaeology that makes it possible to develop forms of analysis of state violence, the reduction of people to precarious conditions of life and death. The second chapter explores key points of the recent history of Brazil in order to contextualize how the institutional apparatus was structured during the first years of the Republic and in different periods of the country’s history. The third chapter discusses the efforts undertaken by the State in the search for the politically disappeared and how this process in itself led to an increase in the disappearance of information, the mixing-up of human remains and a prolongation of the suffering of relatives. The fourth chapter reflects on bureaucracy and systematic methods of state violence during brazilian military dictatorship by the treatment of NN bodies, In chapters 5 I closely examine the persistence of those forms of disappearance during the democratic and neoliberal regimes. Chapter 6 examines the aftermath of the conflict and the material forms of visibility from plaques and monuments. I end by summarizing what I have learned from these cases and giving my assessment of what remains to be done in future research.

Thesis structure

<i>Chapter 1</i>	An Archaeology of necropolitics
<i>Chapter 2</i>	Controlling life and abandoning in death: a historical context

- Chapter 3* Forensic teams and the search for disappeared people of Brazil's last dictatorship (1964-1985)
- Chapter 4* Clothes and papers: the de-characterisation of persons in dictatorship
- Chapter 5* Democracy and disappearances by omission: legacies from the structures of dictatorship
- Chapter 6* The aftermath of dictatorship – Material forms of visibility from plaques and monuments

Chapter 1. An Archaeology of necropolitics

The archaeology proposed here attempts to dialogue with the many studies that trace the genealogies of modern global inequalities, more specifically in differential treatment in death and the technologies of power employed to make people disappear (Colombo, 2017; Ferrándiz, 2014; Gatti, 2017; Mbembe, 2008; Medeiros, 2015). Broadly speaking, the invasion of America transformed epistemology, ontology and ethics, which contributed to the foundation of modernity/coloniality and sciences (Maldonado-Torres, 2019). According to Escobar (2011) the myth of superiority and universality allowed the West to define the identity of the other, through its referents. Subjects different from this standard were considered ugly, deviant, strange, and classified based on notions where race, gender, and class crossed each other and delimited who would have some kind of right in the colonial structures and in the formation of national states.

The world of the 20th and 21st centuries is very different from that of previous centuries. The capacity of societies and states to transform their physical environment and themselves is greater in many orders of magnitude than before. The most relevant issue for the discussion of mass murder and elimination is the emergence and consolidation of the contemporary nation-state. The power of the state has increased enormously thanks to wealth, communications and mobility. The contemporary state - which includes not only the government but also its many agencies and the armed forces - is much larger than before. With increased communications - radio, television, telephone, roads, air travel, computers, internet, satellites and GPS - it is easier to mobilize and coordinate these increased numbers of state officials and employees, including the military. This state and the scale of global transformation has no parallel in history. The end of the 20th century, called 'late capitalism' by some authors, is characterized by a highly mobile labor force and capital in a "time and space compression" (Harvey, 1990).

According to Marc Augé (2017), this excess has three modes of manifestation: spatial, temporal and subjective. A fourth is suggested by Alfredo González-Ruibal, namely

the material manifestation expressed in its limits by overconsumption and abundance. For González-Ruibal (2019):

"(...) I find supermodernity useful as a concept because, unlike postmodernity, it accepts that modernity has not been overcome, but has acquired gigantic, even threatening, proportions. It is also more accurate than late modernity, which is perhaps the most common term among sociologists (e.g., Giddens 1991) insofar as it does not presuppose a chronology for the modern period".

Many archaeologists who engage with this contemporary context have been interested in the relationships of inequality, power, and class, and resonate with a long tradition of sociopolitics of the past in the present, exploring the genealogies of modern global inequalities (Hall 2000, Hall and Silliman 2006, Leone 2005, Leone & Potter 1999, Matthews 2010, McGuire & Paynter 1991, Mullins 1999, 2010, Singleton 1999, Tarlow 2007, Voss 2008). Others highlight forms of exclusion, such as the Undocumented Migration Project (De León, 2015) and homeless people (Kiddey, 2017; Kiddey & Schofield, 2011; Zimmerman, 2016). Similarly, there is a strong orientation within historical archaeology towards a critical engagement with colonialism and postcolonial theory (e.g., Silliman 2004, Lydon 2009, Leone 2009, Croucher & Weiss 2011). Buchli and Lucas suggest that some themes have been unveiled and frequently raised due to these archaeological approaches to the contemporary world.

If contemporary Western society has as one of its main characteristics its own destruction and consequent oblivion, the archaeologist of the recent past has an important contribution to make: de-banalizing that recent past (Thiesen, 2013, p. 225) by retracing the traumas and legacies of our authoritarian experience. In particular, I am interested in the theoretical entanglements that come from an archaeology of the contemporary past and explore supermodernity in postcolonialism, where the racial capitalism of the 20th and 21st centuries creates new technologies of power to control populations, eliminating their existence by disappearance. It is the *post-mortem* lives of

those who are buried as NN that I am most interested in. How do state institutions operationalize disappearance?

I posit that it is the empirical realities of colonies and post-colonies, and thus specifically the structure of racialized colonial capitalism, that raise particular questions around the continuities of forms of violence from the authoritarian context to contemporary realities, and that archaeology has the potential to unveil these often naturalized, trivialized or hidden forms.

This research is situated in the scope of the archaeology of the contemporary past, with a particular approach in order to understand the intersection between race, class and gender and how these are used in the management of dead bodies and forms of disappearance. This archaeology explores the hidden characteristics of supermodernity engaged in materializing these remaining legacies of the dictatorship by examining the technologies of disappearance developed by states. This way of understanding persistence (Olivier, 2008) is seen in the ways we experience different forms of state (democratic, authoritarian and their different shades) and the incomplete rupture in the transitional processes. It is necessary to accept that “There is not 21st-century archaeology, but only 21st-century archaeology and all its past, mixed and entangled” (Gonzalez-Ruibal, 2008: 262). In other words, these pasts are never truly “finished” because they are deposited within all successive presents (Harrison & Breithoff, 2017).

My interest is in exploring an archaeology of necropolitics that analyzes abandonment, from the *post-mortem* treatment of human bodies. This is one form of structural violence, which is part of deliberate and systematic state policies towards certain groups, rather than conflict or more direct forms of violence, such as forced disappearance. This other form of structural violence that is related to disappearance by omission is neither random nor senseless, but rather part of a strategic and deliberate plan. At this point, it makes it possible to provide more data on structural violence that is more constant than episodic and results in people’s premature death. In other words, I am concerned with what should be considered exceptional, a tragedy

and a disgrace, but is not and is often portrayed as “natural”, and easily denied by state actors and erased by bureaucracy. Violence here is not so much the violation of the everyday but the reduction to bare life, that is, life in its most biological form (Gupta, 2012, p. 21).

Mbembe’s conceptualization of necropolitics (2008) is inspired by Michel Foucault’s reflection on biopower and the radical anti-colonial theory of Franz Fanon (Fanon, 2008). Drawing on Fanon’s insights, Mbembe points out that sovereignty and the processes of subjectivation in the colonies were based on violence and whiteness, while post-colonial power takes the form of necropolitics since “it makes the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective” (Bassichis & Spade, 2014; Hartman, 2008; Mbembe, 2006).

His theory of necropolitics refers to more than just a right to kill; the right to expose other people (including a country’s own citizens) to death (or to let them die), including the right to impose social or civil death, and other forms of political violence. In that sense, it is not about getting killed or producing death but managing the conditions to do so. It is about making certain regions and groups permanently subject to a control of the conditions necessary for survival at minimum or almost borderline levels. What is totally material is the existence of a society that is attached to being able to violently classify, categorize, order, and manage its people. The philosopher contributes by incorporating the capitalist power system of the world in terms of both colonial contexts and modernity - two inseparable axes in the functioning of the power system. Thinking through necropolitics on the terrain of disappearance brings into view everyday worlds of death, from the perhaps more expected sites of death-making (such as war, torture or imperial invasion) to ordinary and completely normalized violence. I am inspired by the research conducted by Jaime Alves (2014), who understands the persistence of police killing as part of racialized urban governance in Brazil. For him:

(...) the necropolitical comes into play as a signifier of the juridical order that renders blacks as outlawed subjects. The legalist/human rights approach, therefore, fails to protect the

favelados, for as the place inhabited by “no-bodies”, the favela is a political region with/out law in which the state’s right to kill is always-already legitimate” (Alves, 2014, p. 4)

These concepts have been drawn on by scholars of institutional forms of racism to describe the politicization of the racialized body, for example, from sociology, anthropology, philosophy, but not from archaeology, which, in recent decades, has focused on the archaeology of repression and resistance and the conflicts of the 20th century. Focusing on different engagements with dead bodies, I analyze how violence is performed and produced through the specific treatment of corpses. What should be the “social construction of the dead person” by the state which, from the 20th century on, has become responsible for the control and identification of corpses, is perceived as the misconduct of certain procedures. However, these relationships with bodies considered less human and less worthy of grieving are observed in the material forms of abandonment and disappearance of the little information that could be obtained from the encounter with the body. This differential treatment in death, a reflection of the judgments of what the person was in life, evidences this precarious citizenship and its social and political position.

The archaeological approach to necropolitics must take into account supermodernity, the coloniality of power, feminist approaches in contexts such as the “we want us alive” struggle of feminicides, forms of mass imprisonment, state violence in an approach that accounts for these crossings of forms of racism, class struggle and sexism, not as separate entities, but as structural to the intrinsic forms of exploitation of capitalism. Racism is not just a question of individual prejudice, hostility or antagonism. Rather, it operates as a justification and form of structural organization for the exercise of power and the distribution of historically developed privileges (Gilmore, 2017).

I argue that the understanding of this unequal treatment of people lies in the state control of bodies during life - biopolitics - as well as state control of the dead. An archaeology of necropolitics should attempt to unveil the mechanisms and techniques that are naturalized in the management of death by the state and to understand how

the nation-state and its ways of controlling populations in a capitalist system are forged and consolidated. European slavery was one of the forces that shaped the modern world. Brazilian society was founded on both slavery and genocide and never stopped reproducing itself through them.

Such an archaeological approach to understanding and elaborating these *post-mortem* biographies (De León, 2015; T. W. Laqueur, 2018; Verdery, 1999) and collective stories of groups marginalized in life and death could raise specific issues from the materiality and it is important, therefore, to consider central concepts – racism, state, bureaucracy and disappearance. I will try to explain how each one of these is interpreted in this research.

State and bureaucracy

Two other central concepts that I use throughout my thesis are state and bureaucracy. I synthesize here some of the references I use for each of them, although I devote a whole chapter to the subject of bureaucracy, in which I elaborate my ideas and investigate a genealogy of institutions, officials and the production of papers dealing with death.

Far from trying to theorize the state, I explore the categories that intersect in the analysis of state mechanisms and the production of technologies of subjectivity that converge in the relations of accumulation and dispossession and the unequal distribution of citizens' rights. In the Brazilian case, where negligence and forms of disappearance are not necessarily related to the relationship of belonging to a national identity and where, legally, all people are categorized as citizens with the same rights, in reality this is not observed. Citizenship is not simply a matter of having or not having legal membership; one does not exist solely within this binary formulation. Citizenship is defined and solidified precisely through those who mark the limits of citizenship – temporary, transient, transnational, yet entrenched subjects. It is a shifting and dynamic form of legality, membership, state-making, and governance (Vora, 2013, p. 5). More than the legal notion of belonging or not in the nation-state,

I have attempted to understand the production technologies of subjectivity inspired by Foucault's debate about the constitution of the subject.

An initial concern when I discuss state regards how it is conceptualized. Today, in both popular and academic discussions about the politicization of history, the state is often still reified in Weberian and Hobbesian terms as something monolithic—almost tangible—separated from and above (civil) society, simplistically representing the state as an integrated container of institutions, a unitary force producing public policies (Plets, 2016). The most recent literature has conceptualized the state as a disaggregated composite reality and a mythicized abstraction (B. Anderson, 1994). In turn, Foucault (2007) argues that state is a practice and is inseparable from the set of practices by which it actually became a way of governing, a way of doing things, and a way of relating to government.

Since its beginnings, archaeology as a disciplinary field has studied the origins and the formation of states, from the perspective of materiality. Classic works developed from different paradigms of archaeology, such as historical-culturalism, processualism and post-processualism, have focused on monumentality as evidence of the differentiation and formation of states. It is also possible to observe research related to different forms of representation of the elite, in iconography, in sculptures, mural decorations and in funerary monuments such as the pyramids (Flannery & Marcus, 2012; Trigger, 1990). As Routledge (2013) points out, for much of the past 30 years reflections about state in archaeological discourse have suffered from an extended neo-evolutionary hangover. For many, the very term state is synonymous with neo-evolutionism in which different “traits” (such as warfare, trade, population pressure, etc.) were used in different archaeological interpretations about the formation of the state.

On the other hand, it is also true that archaeological and anthropological studies inspired by anarchism (Clastres, 1987; Graeber, 2004; Scott, 2010, 2020) and other perspectives, based on an analysis deeply influenced by Michel Foucault, have also contributed to reflections on the state. The latter, however, focus very little, or not at

all, on the state, but rather on power structures in an archaeology of disciplinary institutions and forms of repression.

I argue that contemporary archaeology can contribute deeply to these reflections of archaeology on the state. From the 19th century onwards, the sovereign state has manifested its power in another way, as Michel Foucault brilliantly demonstrates in *Discipline and Punish* (1992). If in the previous period, power was very visible, manifested in public punishments and executions, in the 20th century there was a radical reversal of how sovereignty manifested itself. It is not necessarily in great monuments or public displays of power, but it can be in the plastic, documents, or the identifying labels - small mundane disciplinary materials. The archaeological analysis of state power is to excavate the mechanisms used in deploying power in everyday practice.

I take Antonio Gramsci's work on hegemony as my starting point for thinking about the state. The concept of hegemony he formulated allows us to understand relations of social domination from the perspective of the exercise of the coercion of the dominant classes towards the dominated classes. Hegemony goes beyond ideology as false consciousness to, instead, understand it as a political project based on norms, values and ideas that form a convincing worldview. This worldview is what allows a ruling class to exercise power, particularly material power. Hegemony, then, is the result of the production of consent and the ability of a ruling class to embed coercion within that consent – a 'consensual political practice' that differs from brute coercion. Consent and coercion always exist together, and any deployment of coercion must be grounded in consent; in other words, it must be seen as legitimate (Salem, 2020).

If we "stretch" the concept of hegemony in the context of the global south, it could be affirmed that the ways in which the colonies were incorporated into the world capitalist system involved extreme amounts of violence, which made it possible to manufacture consent, legitimacy or certain support, with the use of racial theories. The birth of post-colonial nations has also included enormous amounts of violence, the aftershocks of which continue to reverberate around us today.

Hegemony is thus formed on two levels – the political and the civil. The power of the ruling class is not just centered on the state but exists throughout society: ‘In reality civil society and the State are one’ (P. Anderson, 2018). The distinction between civil and political society reproduces a relationship of coercion versus consent in spatial terms, with consent lying in the realm of civil society and coercion in the state (Salem, 2020). A hegemonic project, then, sees the emergence of different norms, values, and ideologies, as well as the creation of different material conditions.

In this sense, domination goes beyond violence, using different strategies to produce consensus for subordinate groups. To deal with conflicts, the dominant group will have to ensure control of the institution and legitimize its political power. And not only by using violence, but also by producing consensus on its domination and forms of control. In this case, some historical examples can be used: the fight against drugs, security and hyper-incarceration (J. Borges, 2019; Davis, 1997; Wacquant, 2006), all of which still have a structural basis in racism and classism.

In dictatorial regimes, as in the Brazilian case, the consensus was based on a discourse of economic miracle, development projects and coercion, applied on the basis of the logic of state terrorism. This was understood in the following way: Firstly, there had to be recognition of a vertical war against an enemy present at all levels of society who was attacking the values of those who assume power. Secondly, the imprecise delimitation of repression and the dismantling of judicial processes valid for judging these crimes. Thirdly, the clandestine application of punitive measures prohibited by the official legal order, such as homicide, torture and detention. A fourth element could be the indiscriminate application of violent measures on innocent victims, depriving them of their liberty, property or life, omitting the identity of those responsible. As a fifth and final characteristic, instilling in the population the belief that nobody is safe, since there is a diffuse character of the groups persecuted as subversives (Cañón, 2012, p. 30). According to recent studies on contemporary forms of disappearances or, as Graham Willis (2020a) calls it, mundane disappearance, state terror now has two aspects: it is direct violence which many tolerate by recognition

or omission, a form of consensus on killing, or even minimally acknowledged through pseudonyms or socially acceptable metaphors, such as the War on Drugs or hyper-incarceration. It is also the space of abandonment, and a practice of abandonment as a rule, in which direct violence becomes possible, logical and indisputable (Taussig, 1984).

This consensus extends to the majority of Brazilian society, in which the state apparatus is used by police stations, legal medical institutes and courts regarding the murder of young black people or to justify their murder under the diffuse category of suspect and justifications that everyone knows to be false such as the use of “killed in the midst of gunfire”. In the same way, like this hegemonic model, the structuring basis of which is racism, techniques of disappearing are maintained and normalized, even after the end of dictatorial regimes.

My focus is on the bureaucracy of death and how citizenship is built through it by the state during dictatorship and in the democratic period. The modern state becomes responsible for the social construction of the unidentified dead body through its institutions, such as police stations, legal medical institutes, cemeteries, hospitals, notaries, etc. This effort to establish the identity of the corpse is carried out by a group of technicians who will, in their day-to-day work, act to manage the dead body, establishing the cause of death, history, registration, etc. This bureaucracy, used to control, is that which will also demonstrate how this network of professionals and institutions establish distinct moralities based on what the life of these subjects was possibly like - the lack of effort in the identification will intersect with all those categories that, in life, marginalize and exclude an individual from any right to citizenship or a social existence.

The omission and neglect of officials and institutions are understood as technologies, invented and improved power mechanisms. From a Foucauldian perspective, I am interested in how these power networks work and how each individual and institution assumes a position, that is to say, how it affects power and at the same time how it exercises it (Foucault, 1999: 253). If there is a series of legal procedures established in

regulations and laws, where the treatment of death would be sought to treat all the bodies in the same way, when examining this in day-to-day life, many of Foucault's proposals on the relationship with the law are observed. Foucault (1977) proposes replacing the image of the law as a demarcation of the legal/illegal sphere with that of a law that manages illegalities. It is clear that the law tolerates certain illegalisms (those of the dominant class) while pursuing others as a mechanism of domination. The novelty of this approach is that it understands that illegalisms are not failures or imperfections of the system, but, on the contrary, are functional within a general strategy of society, as is the case with forms of disappearance by omission. The law, therefore, does not seek to prevent certain behaviors, but to distinguish the forms of violating the law itself (Permuy Rodríguez, 2015).

Racism

There is a broad consensus among anthropologists and human geneticists that, from a biological point of view, human races do not exist (AAA, 1998; Nat Genet, 2001). In other words, human 'racial' categories are not biological entities, but a socially constructed reality that structures social relations and defines not only differential access to citizenship but also the right to life. If 'race' in biological terms is a fiction, the same cannot be said of its material implications in the lives of racialized populations (Alves, 2011). Another fundamental aspect is that racism is a modern phenomenon, developed in the 17th and 18th centuries in order to justify the systematic use of African slave labor in the great plantations of the New World which were central to the original emergence of capitalism as a world system (Callinicos, 1993).

To debate racism is to address whiteness, a place of symbolic, subjective, objective, tangible material privileges that collaborate towards the social construction and reproduction of racial prejudice, "unfair" racial discrimination and racism (Cardoso, 2010, 2011). The treatment of racism as a relational problem, and not as a black problem, permanently focuses on the legacies of both groups and recognizes/confronts white racial identity (Bento, 2002; Hall, 2002, 2003). As

Lourenço de Cardoso (2010) reminds us, in critical studies of whiteness, there is a growing production on the whiteness that practices racism that does not reach homicide, while there are practically no studies examining the uncritical whiteness that has a homicidal characteristic, which acts like someone who says: you are “different”; therefore, it is justifiable that you are murdered.

Silvio Almeida (2019) characterizes three forms of racism: 1) individualistic, in the relationship between racism and subjectivity; 2) institutional, based on the established relationship between racism and state, and 3) structural, in the relationship between racism and economy. Although they intersect in the relationships of individuals who act as officials for the state, etc., I wish to highlight the institutional conception. For the author, racism is a form of domination and therefore, power is a central element of the racial relationship. In institutional racism, discriminatory parameters based on race are established, serving to maintain the hegemony of the racial group in power, using institutions for this purpose. Here, at the individual level, officials of the morgue services, the notaries, the cemeteries which, in their different subjectivities based on the relations of race and class, will be part of this apparatus that will, by omission, disappear bodies and make them practically impossible to identify.

Structural racism is “a historical and political process, [which] creates the social conditions for racially identified groups to be, directly or indirectly, discriminated systematically” (S. Almeida, 2019, p. 39). An archaeology of necropolitics could demonstrate the continuities in biopolitical processes between the period of exception and “normal” times, which underlines one of Agamben’s (1998) key arguments, while at the same time highlighting the intimate connection between omission, state and repression. An archaeology of necropolitics is also to perform an archaeology of the different forms in which the state operates directly, from police forces in the categorization of dangerous classes, and also to understand the indirect ways in which the state manages, with excessive permissiveness, the actions of paramilitary groups such as the death squads of the 1970s in the city of Sao Paulo (Barcellos, 1992), in the strategies of inaction and use of barriers such as the desert (De León, 2015) or the Mediterranean Sea.

Disappearance

When the body of an individual - dead or alive - does not appear, the word 'missing' is used. The word is significant: it implies that any trace of that person has been erased. Bodies, identities of the victims and the information of the forms of violence employed are hidden. The disappearance of people implies a profound and sustained rupture of fields of meaning and action at both the individual and social levels.

If disappearance is a reality in many parts of the world, it is important to remember that there is no such thing as the missing. No one is a missing person; they are simply missing. Disappearance is not a physiological, genetic capacity, but part of a political and social architecture that has made the body of the one who subverts order, the target of a ferocious hygiene strategy that would "clean" the indigenous, the black, the woman, the communist from society. Disappearance is physical as well as social, it erases both spheres of a person's existence and its effects mark an entire community in the face of a lack of clarity as to how investigative procedures are carried out, how to act, insecurity and a sense of impunity (Baraybar & Blackwell, 2014).

This way that a person's existence is erased reminds me of one of the most impressive examples of these policies that extends beyond bodies. Moreno (2019) reminds us how people's names are modified to erase the republican and communist memory – Ostroski o Trotsky becomes Jerónimo, Germinal becomes Antonio, Olina and Libertad lose their names to the saint of the day or, worse, are re-named as Victory, in reference to the coup participants who took power. These children of the 1930s had not only lost fathers and mothers, but also any traces to do with the history of struggle and political positioning of those who gave them their name.

This disappearance not only of the body, but also of name and memory can be seen in another measure in the disappearances of the Brazilian dictatorship. In São Paulo,

still during the dictatorship, the aunt of Iara Xavier Pereira, an ALN⁴ militant who had lost her two brothers, murdered in the repression, discovers in the cemetery on the borders of São Paulo city that one of them is buried under a false name (João Maria de Freitas). Later, groups of relatives, influenced by this case, discovered many others who had been buried under false names - Hiroaki Torigoe as Massahiro Nakamura; Flávio Carvalho Molina as Álvaro Peralta, Francisco José de Oliveira as Dario Marcondes. A strategy of repression of not only hiding the body, but also of creating all forms of erasing the existence of these people.

The effects of repression on discursive performance regarding moments, dates and places also remain present for a long time. In one of the interviews I conducted at the end of 2017, Maria Helena reminds her aunt Aglaé that decades after the end of the dictatorship, when she had been interviewed for a documentary about the life of her missing husband, Elson Costa, she never mentioned dates and places. This permanence of fear is one of the traces of the dictatorship in her way of speaking, in her behavior and in her way of building her narrative. Disappearance has been used as a mechanism of repression that inhibits truth and memory.

It is also a strategy that operates from multiple and heterogeneous devices that have been generated by the different institutionalized fields of our societies. For some authors, one of the best strategies is to make people and their ideas die. According to Graham Willis, though deeply historically congruent, disappearance matters now because it is an inexpensive means of deterrence, one contiguous step further than 'make live and let die' (2020a). On the contrary, I argue that, unlike an inexpensive scheme, it was a learned and complex technology that also involved exchanges between techniques applied in the colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria (Duarte-Plon, 2016) and in the case of the Latin American dictatorships, the training of officers in the School of the Americas (Weld, 2014). To be carried out, the different technologies of disappearance require a broad and complex institutional

⁴ The clandestine guerrilla group: Aliança Libertadora Nacional

materialization based on institutions, standards, laws, persons in charge, i.e. a physical and administrative structure (Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2020).

Even when we think of necropolitics and the idea of letting people die, which seems to be pure abandonment, this also implies a significant material structuring. This is shown by Jason de León (2015) in relation to landscapes and in the politics of how to conform that the main entrances of immigrants are funneled to the desert areas. These material structures and practices used by officials and institutions are of interest to this research to understand the complexities of a type of disappearance which is this apparatus of state institutions under an aura of legality in which the necessary procedures for identification are apparently carried out.

In any case, I understand disappearance as a specific technology from the 20th and 21st centuries that involves knowledge and structures focused on specific groups of people considered to be dangerous. The 20th century represents this enormous capacity to destroy individuals. Thinking about this specificity, Gonzalez-Ruibal (2020, p. 6) affirms that, during the 20th century, power was not dedicated exclusively to constituting subjects, but also to deconstructing them, expelling them from the social body or disintegrating them completely: the shadows of human bodies left by the atomic bomb explosion in Hiroshima are the clearest manifestation of this tanatopolitics, the negative of biopolitics (Gatti, 2017).

Forced disappearance in Brazil

The technique of forced disappearance was used during the military dictatorship, which lasted from 1964 to 1985. It was considered, as in many other contexts, to be part of the repressive strategy against certain sectors of the population, such as students, trade unionists, opponents, militants and left-wing groups. Eliminating the physical and social existence of the enemy should be dialogic to the occultation of the bodies, which occurred with countless people linked to political militancy and different organizations, murdered by the repressive agencies and many of them buried in municipal cemeteries.

However, the most recent studies on repression in Brazil show that the forms of violence have extended to large sectors of society. Violence against indigenous people, peasants, workers, among many other groups marginalized in life and death, has long been silenced and little information is available about the matter. Indigenous groups, such as the Waimiri-Atroari and Sateré-Mawé, who were categorized as “internal enemies” during the dictatorship, suffered forced displacement, arbitrary arrests, were placed in concentration camps (like the so-called Krenak Reformatory), tortured and massacred, in a repressive state policy in line with the “development” projects of the 1970s, the fruit of alliances between private and state companies for the exploitation of resources (Valente, 2017). To all these, categorized as subversives, the state gives itself the right to torture, to concentrate and, in the last or first instance, to eliminate in a logic of radical corporal dispossession, which reaches such a point in cases of disappearance that the recovery of the body is not even possible for the relatives.

If we analyze the cases of people recognized by the Brazilian State as missing during the dictatorship and try to understand the logic of how repression and disappearance functions, it is well-known that until 1973, repression used the bureaucratic machine and included what they classified as “internal enemy” in this logic of disappearance by omission. Throughout the 20th century, this machine was already structured in a way in which the identity and destiny of the bodies was lost through a lack of care in filling in information, making those classified as “lesser citizens” disappear (people from psychiatric hospitals, homeless people, among many others defined as undesirable classes).

After 1973, especially in the context of São Paulo, a change took place in the forms of elimination by political repression: from “official death” recognized by the repressive institutions (C. S. de; Almeida, 2009) to total disappearance with the fate of the victims unknown. No false documents were produced to forge a certain air of legality.

It is noteworthy that the political proximity of Brazil to France enabled knowledge transfer about the application of terror that has its core in the Nazi “Night and Fog”, applied by the French against the wars of independence in the colonial world, such as Indochina and especially Algeria, and the presence of French soldiers to teach torture and disappearance at the beginning of the decade, knowledge which was perfected and contextualized by the Brazilian dictatorship (Duarte-Plon, 2016). Indeed, Paul Aussaresses arrived in Brazil in 1973 just after the Pinochet coup in Chile.

For decades, researchers, family groups and activists used two categories: the “officially dead” and the “missing” in reference to this change in repressive strategy. The term “officially dead” defined the situation of people who were arrested, whose death was publicly recognized by the repressive agencies. This did not imply that there was no need to locate their human remains, as many were buried under false names or delivered in sealed coffins. The term “disappeared person” was used to define people over whom government authorities have never assumed or disclosed imprisonment or death, despite the fact that they had been kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by the organs of repression (C. S. de; Almeida, 2009, p. 22).

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s the term “political disappearance” was used for both cases recognized by the Brazilian State. More recently, the term “disappeared” has been used due to the hierachization of the former term, basically based on state recognition and the demands of other collectives as victims of the actions and omissions of the state. This is especially the case in the context in which many of the cases are questioned, such as the case of indigenous people and in cases related to state violence in the present. These new regimes of disappearance must go through a dialogue with the techniques used over time and it is fundamental to understand the social life of this category (Gatti, 2017). I consider it fundamental to propose an archaeology of necropolitics that challenges the limits of the concept of forced disappearance and of what has been called the disappearance of people, while, at the same time, demanding an in-depth analysis of the rather complex forms of categorization and taxonomy, such as that of the disappeared. This archaeology is in dialogue with the debates on contemporary disappearances in Colombia and Mexico.

Carolina Robledo-Silvestre (2016) argues, concerning the Mexican context, that if a common element were to be pointed out in this series of events linked to the disappearance of people, it would be the transition from a merely political motive to one of an economic, territorial and tactical nature, which coincides with a neoliberal model that has intensified in recent decades.

In the specific case of the disappearance of persons, it is mainly the relatives who begin the task of building camps of dispute around the representation of the disappeared. And it is from this process of social restitution that the categories begin to be framed in order to socially define the boundaries of forced disappearance (Robledo Silvestre, 2016). The different movements of relatives of the disappeared, known as “the disappeared of democracy”, were certainly decisive in this dispute, such as the “Mães da Sé”, “Mães de Maio” and the “Rede de Comunidades e Movimentos contra a Violência de Estado”.

This mechanism of repression was so effective that what we are seeing today is the exacerbation of violence and the permanence of these structures of repression applied to other sectors of the population. In this ‘continuum of violence’ (Scheper-Hughes, 2002), in which war crimes gradually seep into civilian life, death is not recognized as a violation in any respect. There is no investigation, there is no violation of a norm, a rule, a law, a constitutional principle, nor even perhaps of the idea of justice.

And when we refer to disappearance in the contemporary Brazilian context? Forced disappearance? Administrative or omission disappearance? Disappearance of people? Currently, we see these different categories intersecting either by the omission of the state in the treatment of human remains or by forced disappearance by groups of or related with the state (such as militias or even paramilitary groups). What is certain is that even categorization is complex when it comes to giving a precise definition to disappearing.

It is the material structures and practices used by officials and institutions that I am interested in unveiling in order to understand the complexities of a type of disappearance equipped by state institutions under an aura of legality, in which the necessary procedures for identification are apparently carried out.

Some characteristics that have been highlighted in different studies relating to disappearance by omission as one of the techniques used include:

1. An air of legality in the production of documents which would have identification as their first objective and which, in the end, are not completed (Ferreira, 2009; Gupta, 2012)
2. Race, gender and class - Moralities in the classification of the dead (Medeiros, 2016, Kant de Lima, 1995; Alves, 2011)
3. Non-traceability - the network of institutions that do not engage in dialogue (Vendramini 2016, Hattori et al, 2017)

Materiality

a) Absent landscape

I argue, from the research carried out throughout this thesis, that there are three representative places in this necropolitical landscape where excess and hidden structures are two sides of the same coin. They are the hidden collective ossuaries, landfills and potter's fields. Unlike mass graves, these spaces are on the borderline between what is considered legal and illegal. By being normalized, trivialized and part of the day-to-day bureaucracy of death, they are naturalized insofar as they do not disturb the senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing) of those who pass through these places. They are sites that do not have memorials or commemorative plaques, since they are not places of memory (Ayán-Vila, 2008; Nora, 1993). Rather, they are one more element of a vast landscape that is absent and marginalized in official history. An archaeology that investigates necropolitics is to make a familiar landscape unfamiliar, uncanny (Buchli & Lucas, 2001), and to engage people to see the traces of

the past and to engage with their ordinary environments in a more critical manner (Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2007).

The potter's field is a category and practice that has existed for centuries, characterized as an indigent cemetery, paupers' burial ground or pit grave. It is a place where the most worthless are buried, usually in "communal" conditions. It is a location where the everyday techniques of governance, and their by-products, are concentrated and made material (Denyer Willis, 2018). In São Paulo, this place *par excellence* is in the "unknown" square, an area destined to those without identity in the Dom Bosco cemetery, where there is no separation between graves and the possibility of finding the human remains of a specific person in a universe of thousands of human remains without identity is practically impossible.

Graham Willis (2018) investigated one of the best-known potter's fields - Hart Island in New York City. It is abstracted from public view. Insurance firms, old age homes, hospitals, and the prison system shape these subjects of a condition in which the inability to pay to be laid to rest defines the result. On Hart Island, these bodies are buried in mass graves dug by industrial machinery and filled in by prison labor paid at 50 cents an hour, often after "benefitting science" at elite New York City Medical Schools (Bernstein, 2016). The bodies of the potter's field, like those who bury them, are deeply marked by race, evidenced as much in the lives left to die as in their ultimate condition of material disposal, a space of mass disposal (2018, p. 539).

Figure 2: “Unknown” people square at Dom Bosco cemetery. A “clean” and green area where thousands of unidentified human remains are buried. Credit: author



The second type of place are landfills, well described by the researcher Mariano D Perelman (2019) as disposable spaces and also often as a scene of murders. Human remains discovered in landfills become socially differentiated from the moment they are recognized as people. In the landfills, Perelman (2019, p. 49) reveals how the dehumanization of those bodies that are abandoned in those places, when they are recognized can go through the process of dehumanization again depending on class relations and, I would add here, race. As he points out, inequalities in life are often reinforced by death, because each death is associated with life.

If, throughout the 19th century, notions of hygiene, asepsis and detachment from death take us completely away from burial spaces, in the 20th century and hypermodernity, we make the periphery the main space for disposal, of both rubbish and human remains. This landscape is sanitized in the eyes of most of the population and little or no attention is paid to the fact that many of the individuals found there,

who have sometimes suffered violent deaths, do not receive public attention and are even politicized.

Figure 3: Caieiras landfill is the main destination of most of the rubbish produced in the city of São Paulo. The landfill is located in the city of the same name in the metropolitan area of the city of São Paulo. The city borders the District of Perus, where the Dom Bosco cemetery is located. Credit: Danilo Verpa/ Folhapress



The third are the collective underground ossuaries. In the following chapters I will develop an analysis of these structures in one of São Paulo's cemeteries. Their use is an ancient practice in Europe and the Near East, and these structures can be anything from a small container to an entire church. Ossuaries are common in Catholic countries, and, in the medieval and early modern periods, they were used to save space after a cemetery became full. Several other religions also use them due to their spiritual beliefs. The collective subterranean ossuaries are hidden in the cemetery landscape so as not to create any kind of disturbance (either of discomfort, the idea of dirt or disgust) for those who pass. There, overpopulation is hidden, and those that are considered as excess are removed to make room for new burials. In contemporary society, the collective ossuary is used in most cemeteries and is legally institutionalized in the daily practices of cemeteries. However, what makes this place in the city of São

Paulo an abject structure relates to the politics of the state in unequal treatment in death, such as the loss of identity in the ways in which the remains are stored and preserved and its structure, used to pile up human remains in order to make space for new graves for speculation and profit. In other words, one of the apparatus used in neoliberal contexts and authoritarian states, for the use of public cemeteries to be used as commodities.

Figure 4: Dom Bosco cemetery and the underground ossuary with no sign except for the trapdoor. Credit: author



Figure 5: The construction of the ossuary in 1990s. Credit: Itamar Miranda/Estadão Conteúdo/Arquivo



These different places challenge the notion of a corporeal epistemology (Ferrándiz, 2014; Klinenberg, 2001) because the evidence of the violated body as an essential social truth does not occur for these categories of citizens. The different modalities of building evidence – judicial, scientific or genetic (Crossland, 2013) – through the dead bodies and mass graves of the last dictatorship in Argentina, or in other contexts, do not always have the same repercussion when dealing with so-called “indigents” and the places where they are placed. They are places of abjection (Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2008a), spaces apparently obliterated from collective memory.

Despite this certain normalization on the part of institutions and society, these are non-places (Augé, 2017), spaces that destroy identities, transforming those placed in these spaces into disappeared people. However, as Xurxo Ayán-Vila (2008) reminds us, the social context and the historical situation affect an aspect which ontologically defines every landscape: its capacity for transformation, its dynamic character and its power to adapt.

b) Objects

Não é fácil eliminar um corpo. Uma vida é fácil. Uma vida é cada vez mais fácil. Mas fica o corpo, como o lixo. Um dos problemas desta civilização: o que fazer com o próprio lixo. As carcaças de automóveis, as latas de cerveja, os restos de matanças. O corpo bóia. O corpo vai dar na praia. O corpo brota da terra, como na Argentina. O que fazer com ele? O corpo é como o lixo atômico. Fica vivo. O corpo é como o plástico. Não desintegra. A carne apodrece e ficam os ossos. Forno crematório não resolve. Ficam os dentes, ficam as cinzas. Fica a memória. Ficam as mães. Como na Argentina.

Seria fácil se o corpo se extinguisse com a vida. A vida é um nada, acaba-se com a vida com um botão ou com uma agulha. Mas fica o corpo, como um estorvo. Os desaparecidos não desaparecem. Sempre há alguém sobrando, sempre há alguém cobrando. As valas comuns não são de confiança. A terra não aceita cadáver sem documentos. Os corpos são devolvidos, mais cedo ou mais tarde. A terra é protocolar, não quer ninguém antes do tempo. A terra não quer ser cúmplice. Tapar os corpos com escombros não adianta. Sempre sobra um pé, ou uma mãe. Sempre há um bisbilhoteiro, sempre há um inconformado. Sempre há um vivo. (...)

Os meios de acabar com a vida sofisticam-se. Mas ainda não resolveram como acabar com o lixo. Os corpos brotam da terra, como na Argentina. Mais cedo ou mais tarde os mortos brotam da terra.

(Luís Fernando Veríssimo, A mãe do Freud, L&PM Editore Ltda., Porto Alegre, 1985)

This fragment displays a part of a short story by Luís Fernando Veríssimo and it summarizes with depth and sensitivity the technology of disappearance. No matter how much effort there is to eliminate all traces of existence, something always remains. One of the cruelest strategies in the different contexts of human rights violations are the forms of objectification of subjects. This can be seen in mass graves, ossuaries and in the disposition that these are placed. In the context of the civil war and dictatorship in Spain, Laura Muñoz (2019) shows how women are categorized as second-class citizens whose bodies are, while still alive, understood in the patriarchal universe as a territory from which man projects his desires of victory or domination.

From the analysis of numerous exhumations of mass graves, her investigation reveals *post-mortem* forms of harassment, where several women were buried naked among the men, with a high symbolic component.

Different cultures have different ways of caring for and treating the dead body in their funeral rituals and involve different materialities in their treatment of dead people. If, on the one hand, cultures and religions make use of nothing other than a sheet, as is the case with Muslims (Sajid, 2016), whose treatment of bodies involves numerous rituals and attitudes that do not necessarily demand a materiality beyond the body, in others, such as the case studies analysed, care for the dead necessarily involves material forms – different types of coffin, clothing (often or almost always the best clothing), personal objects and necro makeup for the body. These forms of *post-mortem* care obviously refer to a generalization of the Western, Brazilian and urban context.

So, what is considered to be a lack of care in this framework? It involves precisely the opposite of all this. In the past hundred years we have seen the stitisation of death and the monopoly of medical expertise (Assmann, 2016; Esposito, 2010). This realm of technocrats (in its moral authority of datafication) is dominating the death of others according to technical norms of which they possess the authority of its definition and control (Elias, 1994). In the case of unidentified bodies, the technical team has the responsibility of socially constructing the dead person, that is to say, obtaining information, describing him/her, giving meaning to him/her. It is also part of the responsibility of this group of technocrats to provide the necessary care for the dead body so that, with luck, it can be identified. Evidence of negligence in this context therefore begins with the bodily fluids, the open coffin, the undressed body with no personal objects (R7, 2015). The bodies arrive completely naked with the numbering given by the Medico-Legal Institute, written in permanent marker on a limb (on the upper thigh or arm), a means of identification that will probably disappear as soon as decomposition begins. It is a certainty that almost nobody will look for that person. This is a form of dehumanization of these subjects. Rather than viewing these types of actions as senseless or random, as a “technique of terror”, body mistreatment is a

recurrent theme in the construction of state authority and sovereignty, a point long recognized by archaeologists (De León, 2015, p. 70).

What are the limits between subjectification and objectification? In the Holocaust, the reduction to ash affected the material composition of remains in their very thingness – their substance and shape – leading to the de-constitution of the corpse as an object with an easily identifiable and recognizable form. The human corpse, turned into a pile of ashes, mixed with those of others, not only loses all traces of its individuality (as a subject), which bones and skulls, preserved for a long time always bear, in most cases at least to a certain extent, but this also oscillates on the “borderline between [material] being and nothingness” (Dziuban, 2016, p. 269).

Beyond the body, material elements such as those mentioned by Veríssimo himself, are forms of resistance in the face of concealment; the sole of a shoe, a wedding ring, a button, a pendant, a seam (Theune, 2017). All these examples show objects of individuals who, by the very act of resisting detention, concealment, disappearance, have kept their belongings or have created forms for them. What persistence of materials shows precisely the opposite? What remains or is left over? What materialities beyond the body are related to necropolitics and constitute this political economy of death (Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2020)? It is estimated that a plastic bag can take 400 years to decompose, depending on the conditions. Throughout this thesis, I present how the persistence of this material frequently represents the few traces that remain and the attitude of eliminating the existence of subjects.

As a material, plastic represents one of the most iconic social and environmental challenges. From the first fully synthetic plastic - Bakelite, developed in 1907 - to the current proliferation of polymers, we produce, consume and dispose of plastics in untold quantities. The introduction of plastics is crucial in the post-World War II logic of consumption when this material became cheaper and more available. It is one of the most representative materials of the 20th century and was developed and massively used in the period of World War II to meet the demand for light and strong materials for the military. The volume of plastic material tripled between 1940-1945. After the

Second World War, plastics were used to make a multitude of cheap products, such as toys (G.I. Joe and Barbie) and household products, among others. Today, there are more than 1,000 different plastics, used for the most diverse purposes (Miranda, 2010).

The idea of plastic as something disposable and ephemeral is related to our relationship with consumption in a very recent way. The plastic rubbish bag was created in the 1950s and, as it was much more resistant than the paper that had been used until then, it had the idea not only of hygiene and non-contact, but also of durability. If plastic originally came with the idea of “sustainability”, because paper implied the massive destruction of forests, today we relate it to something highly disposable and polluting – the ethos of disposability (Hawkins, 2018). In the chain of use and refuse, plastics refuse to go away, and their material reluctance forces us to acknowledge the ways in which plastics persist long after their value is exhausted (Gabrys, 2011). In his 1957 essay “Plastic”, Roland Barthes (2012) connects the history of plastic to the rise of bourgeois capitalism, and specifically to the bourgeoisie’s espousal of imitation materials used to cheaply reproduce rare substances, such as diamonds, feathers, fur, and silk.

Plastic, more specifically the rubbish bag, is related to notions of hygiene and uncleanliness that were formed at the end of the 19th century with the more widespread use of paper and disposable materials. Throughout the 20th century, plastic has been one of the main materials related to the idea of hygiene and cleanliness needed when the notion of “invisible germs” began to gain widespread popular attention and the modern hygienic imagination grew, fueling the growing use of these products. These changes in plastic usage occurred under a discourse and establishment of medical knowledge added to the consolidation of the modern state and the control of bodies (M. Foucault, 1977). As Norbert Elias (1994) states, never before in human history have the dead been so aseptically removed to the backstage of social life, never before have corpses been sent so odorless and with such technical perfection from the deathbed to the grave (T. Laqueur, 1983).

For some authors (Miller, 2010), the notion of disposability as a useless commodity is a simplistic view of pure and prior unsullied humanity. Actually, plastic is a flexible, manageable and reusable material. From a postmodern perspective, the notion of plasticity provides particular ways of thinking about and advancing understandings of materiality as process (Gabrys et al., 2013).

However, and in order to gain a necropolitical perspective, I look at the physicality of the rubbish bag as something that is contradictorily contaminant and non-contaminant, something that has a dialogic relationship between the ephemeral rubbish bag, highly disposable, with the idea of the resistance it proposes to non-contact with the flesh, body, fluids and human remains. Eradicating flesh and bone is now part of the postmodern “politics of disappearance”. Assuming an archaeological perspective of the *chaîne opératoire* of disappearance, what remains at the disposal stage are the human remains and the plastic bag, an out-of-place substance, contaminating the “natural” (Olsen, 2010) with its sticky persistence (Figures 6 and 7).

In institutionalized death in São Paulo, in the processes of exhumation, plastic represents this non-contact with human remains, whether via the plastic bag of exhumation, a high-density polyethylene or by the exhumation box. At the same time, it represents the possibility of maintaining individuality. In this logic, loose human bones, the use of rubbish bags, the symbolic or literal meaning of which is evident, soil, dirt, non-individualization, lack of care and negligence. A context that does not affect people who own a burial deposit.

Figure 6: The discovery of the mass grave of Perus. Credit: FOLHAPRESS



Figure 7. Pile of bones accumulated in the cemetery ossuary. Credit: Eliana Vendramini



Plastic is what is left, the non-contact with what is abject and with what we wish to eliminate. Thus, it is the rubbish plastic bag that, due to its waterproofness and sealing qualities, allows our senses to get away as quickly as possible from what we want to conceal (figure 8).

Figure 8: Two types of plastic bag that were found in the mass grave and ossuaries.



The afterlife of this worthless and highly disposable commodity is what remains in the mass graves and collective ossuaries. One for contaminating waste and the other a domestic rubbish bag. This is the material radicality of dispossession, a material that profoundly separates society, from what we find disgusting, repulsive; in this case, certain sectors of the population.

Chapter 2. Controlling life and abandoning in death: a historical context

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter situated this thesis within its theoretical context and briefly introduced the analytical view on forms of continuity in the techniques of disappearance from the dictatorship to the democratic context. An understanding of how the institutional apparatus was structured during the early years of the Republic and in different periods of Brazilian history is essential to fully understand contemporary forms of disappearance. Although the case studies have a comparative cut-off between the context of the last Brazilian military dictatorship and the contemporary situation, forms of disappearance, omission and negligence did not start there. They are related to forms of control and abandonment towards certain social, racial, gender and sexual orientation groups that date back to the end of the 19th century and the early years of the Republic. Understanding this historical process is fundamental in order to avoid creating a bias that all forms of control and violence began in the dictatorship.

This chapter aims to introduce key points of recent Brazilian history as these pertain to the development of ideals and models of police, forensic and burial practices, control, punishment and abandonment, as well as to the intertwined development over time of ideas of criminality and uncleanness and of who is an enemy or an indigent. The purpose is to show how bodies classified in life as undesirable or deviant are over-regulated by disciplinary institutions and, after their death, a lack of care replaces all these forms of control.

Despite the “new” technologies in the training of the police and armed forces formed in the French and Italian school (Duarte-Plon, 2016; Martins Filho, 2014; L. Oliveira, 2018; L. F. dos Santos, 2014) and the effects of this “modernization” carried out against those groups that were converted into enemies, I argue that the practice of

torturing and summarily executing (and disappearing) in Brazil long predates the military regime. Embedded in racist theories, eugenic movements and hygienic discourse, the most horrendous practices were already widely used against common criminals or people and groups categorized as “suspicious subjects and communities” (Ramos et al., 2005) from the popular classes, Afro descendants, indigenous people and the LGBTIQ+ population.

These forms of violence do not only occur at moments of exception, in dictatorships, conflicts or wars. From a simple quantitative point of view, violent deaths in Brazil today surpass those of many contemporary wars. The supposed peace is the place where the ghost of death and violence is constantly projected onto the peripheries, the borders and the frontiers of capitalism. According to Lilia Schwarcz (2019), in the conflict in Syria, which has been devastating the country since 2011, there were 60,000 deaths per year; in the war in Yemen, which began in 2015, there are about 25,000 annual homicides; in Afghanistan, where conflicts began in 1978, the average is 50,000 per year. Such rates correspond to the order of magnitude of the Brazilian “war”, in which, in 2018 alone, 57,956 homicides occurred (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2019). As I will discuss below, this context authorizes us to speak of the genocide of young black men. These numbers reveal patterns of mortality, related to historical issues of short, medium and long duration.

The text follows a chronological structure starting with the 19th century and the institutions created in the first years of the Republic, continuing up to the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas, the Death Squads and the military coup.

2.2. “Undesirable bodies” – From Brazilian Empire to Republic

Brazil was the last country to abolish slavery in the Americas - after the United States, Puerto Rico and Cuba - having received 5.85 million Africans from an estimated total of 12.52 million people embarked, who were forcibly removed from their continent for this immense Atlantic diaspora: the largest diaspora of modernity which completely changed human geography on a global scale. If we consider only those

that disembarked and survived, the total, according to the Slave Voyages website (Borucki et al., n.d.), was 10.7 million, of whom 4.8 million arrived in Brazil (Schwarcz, 2019, p. 22). Slavery was much more than an economic system: it shaped behaviour, defined inequalities, made race and class fundamental social markers of distinction, ordained labels of rule and obedience, and created a society conditioned by a Catholic paternalism under a very strict hierarchy (Hahner, 1986; Thompson, 1991). For Grada Kilomba (2019), the politics of colonialism is the politics of fear. This fear, through the creation of an ‘other’, considered to be dirty (Stoler, 1995, 2006), frightening and terrible (Elias, 1994; M. Foucault, 1990) sets up the discourse of defending ourselves from them by marginalizing or creating barriers. She considers three dimensions intrinsic to colonialism: the marginalization of certain bodies and identities; the capitalization of land, nature and the environment; and the militarization of human relations.

This does not mean a single reading based on notions of degeneration, and cultural loss that often silences the voices and erases the actions of indigenous groups and African peoples and descendants (Noelli & Ferreira, 2007; Silliman, 2009). It is not a question of relativising a violent process of genocide, forced displacement, but focusing on a more comprehensive analysis in order to fully understand how people acted within colonial processes, not only to understand the relational co-production of the colonial order, but also to comprehend the roles of resistance, exchange and alliance (Sallum & Noelli, 2020; Viveiros de Castro, 2002).

Previously, during the colonial period and the arrival of the Portuguese royal family in Brazil, numerous institutions were set up, such as the *Intendência Geral de Polícia*, created with the purpose of exercising control over urban populations. The royal family had transferred to Brazil along with other Portuguese institutions. (Varnhagen, 1962: 221-223). Political independence in 1822 did not bring about much innovation in institutional terms, but consolidated a clear objective: to structure and justify a new nation, albeit a quite peculiar one in the context of the American continent: a monarchy surrounded by republics (Schwarcz, 2019, p. 13). In other words, even during the Empire, the normative role attributed to the police was one of constant

support for the status quo, which meant unrestricted support for slave masters in punishing and persecuting fugitives (Martins, 2014; Vargas, 2012). Recurrently, the conduct of the police in the cities was to arrest free Afro-Brazilians under the suspicion that they were fugitive slaves (Reis, 1996).

Sidney Chalhoub (2010, p. 41) recalls that while slavery was still in place, those who were free Africans, besides being limited by their foreign status, were given the same treatment as slaves regarding travel by the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Empire of 1832. They had to carry a passport, even when accompanied by their masters. There were also significant restrictions on their movements and activities established in municipal ordinances throughout the country. In the city of Salvador, for instance, there was an ordinance dating from 1859 that fined Afro-descendants who went out at night on the streets without a ticket stating the name of the bearer, the destination of the journey and his/her place of residence. In other words, a free African could not even move around the city at certain hours without the protection of a free man, someone willing to pay for his/her conduct by means of a ticket.

The end of the 19th century, the first years of the Brazilian Republic and the recent new nation state represent the establishment and consolidation of institutions, which in some way, were part of the control of the maintenance of the status quo of the dominant classes. Public policies and legislation would control these new groups of immigrants (many of whom were anarchists and communists and needed to be watched and controlled), marginalize those of African descent and, in the case of indigenous groups, a systematic effort was made on the part of the government and institutions either to “integrate” them into national society or to eliminate them (Chalhoub, 2011; Martins, 2014).

As ordering mechanisms, concepts such as race, sexuality and bodily disciplines emerged along with the bourgeoisie in Europe and expanded into the colonies using the notion of “hygiene” and “danger” as a gendered and racial “micro-site” of political control. It provided a context for appraising racial membership and designating “character”, “good breeding”, and proper rearing (Colloredo-Mansfeld, 1998).

All of this provided a theoretical basis that justified control and unequal treatment on the part of state institutions, in their modes of conduct and in the way different individuals were treated. These new forms of state control could be observed in relation to the dead with cemeteries no longer being controlled by the churches (Reis, 2003), in the professionalisation of the police⁵, and in the creation of asylums and hospitals, prisons; in particular, hygiene policies based on medical knowledge would become pillars for understanding how impoverished segments of society were marginalized by modern public policies.

Margareth Rago (1985), in “Do cabaré ao lar: a utopia da cidade disciplinar”, recalls that, from the end of the 19th century, cities were growing and going through a series of renovations, in terms of urban standards, and transformations, with the construction of avenues and boulevards, of fountains and other public services, the paving of streets, the installation of gas lighting and the creation of new neighbourhoods in line with a modern architecture and hygienist policies. In this period, hygienist theory gained ground in the institutions and different privileged urban groups (the government and bourgeoisie) started to use the discourse of hygiene as the “solution to all problems”, such as: poorly aligned streets, narrow avenues, the poor and homeless, badly built houses and buildings. Public sanitation programs were designed not only to improve public health but also to promote morality. Cleanliness was necessary for respectability, while the filth and smells associated with poverty were perceived as evidence of degeneracy (Voss et al., 2013; B. Williams & Voss, 2008). The conception of uncleanness was a perfect ally to control “bodies” and behaviours and with the institutionalisation of hygiene, its discourse also became a governmental representative.

In addition to outlining in greater detail the façade of buildings, the size of pavements, construction materials and width of streets, the Code of Postures of 1879 explicitly expanded the surveillance of the medical authorities. Giving more space to hygienic

⁵ Municipal Law n° 1 from September 29th, 1892.

practices, the new code provided rules for cleaning up the city, prohibited the breeding of certain animals, regulated adequate places for faecal waste, reinforced the care taken with the purchase and sale of food commodities and strengthened the obligation of vaccination (Rios, 2014). The popular practices of life and leisure of the working class, the so called vagrants, the poor, women and children wandering abandoned in the streets, became an object of deep concern for hygienist doctors, public authorities, sectors of the industrial bourgeoisie, philanthropists and social reformers. Perceived as savages, ignorant, uncivilized, rude, ugly and dirty, urban workers were gradually subjected to a vast moralization campaign. Thus, as cities modernized, little by little, the streets were cleaned both physically and socially.

Luciano Goés (2015) investigates the relationship between the theory proposed by Césaire Lombroso and the strategies of its application in the Brazilian context articulated by Nina Rodrigues. Based on assumptions of an evolutionist thought that divides people from different places into a supposedly evolutionary scale, the apex of perfection and civilization, a model for all other people, would be precisely the white, European, Christian, heterosexual, cisgender man. All other people are measured by this parameter, in an epistemological fiction that justifies actions such as colonialism, massacre and genocide. This technical scientific knowledge would legitimize and form the epistemological basis for the establishment of the Forensic Service.

It was in 1886, still during the period of the monarchy, that the Forensic Medical Institute (IML) was created in São Paulo, the oldest technical institution of the São Paulo Police under the name of *Serviço Médico Policial da Capital*⁶. This institution worked with two doctors who acted as forensic doctors and clinicians in public jails. The functions of the *Serviço Médico Policial da Capital* were: to examine living individuals and corpses sent by the authorities, producing reports (named *corpo de delito* and *cadavérico*) from the analysis of victims' injuries and wounds; to perform toxicological evaluations of substances; to conduct exams on exhumed bodies; to administer first aid to injured people brought to the institution; and to clinically treat prisoners in

⁶Law n° 18, April 7th, 1886.

public jails. Identification systems such as *bertillonage* were initially employed, from 1898 onwards, only in prisons. Cardoso de Almeida set up an Anthropometric Office and a technician from Rio de Janeiro gave a demonstration to teach the techniques to São Paulo experts (Martins, 2014). Bertillon's records required a detailed description, which contributed to the professionalization of the police and to the cataloguing and archiving of an extraordinary number of records and files.

Death came to be seen as a point of view from which it would be possible to establish truths about specific pathological phenomena and about the human body in general. From "the stable, visible and legible background" (Elias, 1994; M. Foucault, 2007) of death, embodied by the inert corpse, open and ready for dissection, the medical gaze would be able to reveal the truth of diseases and the physical life of the human body. More than the embodiment of the phenomenon of death, therefore, the corpse delivered for dissection would conform, in Foucault's terms, the discursive space in which the unveiling of this truth would take place (Ferreira, 2011). As far as cemeteries are concerned, the first public ones in São Paulo, Santo Amaro (1857) and Consolação (1858), date from the second half of the 19th century. The growing process of secularization meant that the dead left the centrality of communal places such as churches, to gain their own destination via the institutionalization of illness and death. The dead came to be managed by the state, due to the debates on decomposition, contamination and hygiene, which were used to remove death and the related funerary rituals from sight. The secularization of death started to take place in environments characterized by asepsis and the use of techniques performed by undertakers (Ariès & Lloyd, 1985; Cymbalista, n.d.).

In the first decades of the 20th century, the São Paulo police force began to modernize, with the professionalization of its members, the adoption of recognized standards of policing, the division and specialization of its activities and the development of scientific investigation techniques. The modernization of the European, North-American and South-American police forces in the same period was the response of the states to global transformations. In the words of the historian Marcelo

Quintanilha (2014), the police needed to be reinvented to control heterogeneous, fluctuating, threatening and potentially revolutionary populations.

In São Paulo, the destination of a large contingent of immigrants from abroad and of people moving from rural areas to cities, and the birthplace of the emerging labour movement, the police forces would have operated as instruments of the elites to guarantee compliance with labour contracts on the plantations in the countryside. In the more densely populated urban centres, such as the capital, Santos and Campinas, they would have undertaken a deliberate policy of social control, arresting (often without further judicial process) poor men, women and minors on allegations of vagrancy, drunkenness and disorder. Under the auspices of these same elites (Viotti da Costa, 1998), such correctional prisons aimed to coerce this population - the “dangerous classes” - into taking formal employment and leading a life under the standards of morality, decorum and hygiene dictated by the “modernity” of the new period.

New laws were drawn up, from 1890 on, that reconfigured the control and repression of vagrancy in relation to the Empire’s Code, defining that those classified as vagrants who could not find work should be taken to correctional colonies. Thus, the requirement to find a job became even more rigorous, and the Code of 1890 stipulated the creation of a network of institutions to house those who broke it, be they adults or minors. Professionalized police control over vagrants and vagabonds through the imposition of work became quite explicit, including the structuring this network of institutions designed to restrain, contain, control and shape this set of individuals. They surveilled public space from the central streets of the metropolis to the far corners of the nation.

In São Paulo, as a result of the Code, institutions were created such as the Disciplinary Institute for minors, the Judicial Asylum attached to the Juquery Hospital in Franco da Rocha, the *Asilo dos Inválidos* in the Guapira neighbourhood and the Correctional Colony on Ilha dos Porcos; places destined for social groups that could no longer

remain in the urban environment, engendering the logic of the sanitization of public space by removing the undesirable (Teixeira et al., 2016).

As Alvarez et al (2003) point out, criminology would be appropriated by the discourse of the judiciary and the police during the First Republic. Thus, intellectuals and public officials, to a great extent, began to accept as being of their interest a science that solidified social categories with explanatory notions leading to normalization policies of individuals based on forms of racialization. In this way, historical and social differences came to be biologically justified (Kerr Pontes et al., 2018).

The transformations by modern project in São Paulo unleashed the innumerable tensions with a growth in the number of workers that, confronted with the working conditions they experienced on a daily basis, began to organize themselves into unions, parties and associations, creating situations with explosive potential (Sevcenko, 2001, p. 60). One such situation was the strike that took place in 1917, which forced the São Paulo businessmen to face the terrible situation of thousands of workers (Martins, 2014, p. 79).

Known as the 1917 General Strike, it mobilized more than 50,000 people in São Paulo, which at that time had a population of 400,000. Violent police action was organized to bring the strike to an end. The repression of the workers' movement under a strong anarchist influence, which demanded better working conditions, resulted in the death of strikers and the persecution of militants who later suffered expulsion, in the case of foreign nationals, and various forms of repression. According to reports from the time, dozens of people died in the clashes, being buried in the Araçá Cemetery (Del Roio, 2020; Tauhyl & Hattori, 2020).

During this same period, the first experiments with concentration camps also took place in 1917 and later, in 1932, as a policy of social hygienization. A population of rural inhabitants, known as *sertanejos*, was arriving in the state capital escaping from drought and famine. Installed near the train stations, more than 20,000 women, men and children were imprisoned in these spaces, and of these, 2,000 people died and

were buried in mass graves (L. A. S. de Melo & de Sousa Freire, 2021; Giovannazi, 2013; Rios, 2014).

On the other hand, resistance and counter-narratives have also been possible from an archaeological perspective (Lino & Symonds, 2021; Zanettini, 1988). The first major rebellion against the state was a movement in the countryside of the state of Bahia, known as the Canudos War, led by Antônio Conselheiro. The settlement gathered thousands of people marginalized by the new republic, including indigenous people, peasants, *caboclos*, Afro-descendants, and resisted military attacks for some time, until its eventual destruction. Archaeological research has shown that, more than a “primitive ‘Hobsbawmian’ rebellion” (...), Canudos was a more ambitious project of community life, demonstrated by the defensive capacity of the settlement, also expressed in the countless burrows and lines of trenches implanted on the half slopes and hilltops. It rapidly exposed a refined geostrategic concept, capable of sustaining active and efficient communication systems that kept the “headquarters” permanently informed about the advances of the troops” (Zanettini, 1996).

For the indigenous groups, the strategies of control over their bodies and territories from the beginnings of colonization have also been outlined. With the consolidation of the nation state in the first years of the 20th century, in 1910 the *Serviço de Proteção ao Índio e Localização de Trabalhadores Nacionais* (SPI/ITN, later becoming known only as SPI) was created. It was responsible for managing the territories in which the indigenous groups would live under guardianship, until their eventual transformation and dissolution into “national society”, a process that was seen as inevitable (Ribeiro, 1962; Souza Lima, 1993; Maguire, 2020). The relationship that the SPI instituted between indigenous people and their officials was always one of legal guardianship and, during the 1950s and 1960s, complaints of arbitrary punishments multiplied (Brazil, 2014). One example of state policy in the state of São Paulo was the expulsion of the Kaingang from their lands. Resisting the colonization process of their own territory, their areas were devastated by the “expansion” of the West with the construction of railways (e.g. *Noroeste do Brasil*) and a historical conjuncture of violence and oppression experienced by them on the part of Brazilian society with paramilitary

groups known as *caçadores de bugres*, who murdered entire families (Fidalgo et al., 2019). Museums and related researchers were in consonance with this policy. Hermann Von Ihering (1850-1916), director of the Museu Paulista, published an article in 1906 in which he stated:

The present Indians of S. Paulo do not represent an element of labour and progress. As in the other parts of Brazil no serious and continuous labour can be expected of the civilized Indians and as the savage Caingangs are obstructing the colonisation of the forest regions inhabited by them, no other final result seems possible than that of their extermination. (Ihering, 1907, p. 215).

2.3. “Deviant bodies” and the Vargas dictatorship (1937-1945)

The 1930s and 1940s in Brazil were the period governed by Getúlio Vargas, who launched a coup d'état in 1937 which introduced a conservative and totalitarian political programme, revealing Brazilian society's full insertion into the political and ideological battles being waged around the world. It was the advent of a political project that had totalitarian aspirations in content and action which was not only of internal, but also international, political importance as the country had great strategic relevance in geopolitical terms and was perfectly incorporated into the social and political dynamics of Western nations and their fight against communism.

One of the instruments of the state used in this period was the political police known as DOPS (Department of Political and Social Order). Although it was created in 1925, it was during the “Estado Novo” that this institution was widely used for the repression of communists, anarchists, unions and social movements. Therefore, the practice of “deploying open violence as an instrument of politics” not only became specialized and intensified in the 1930s, but received new meaning, dynamics, and a political and social role. Brazil changed from being a policed society to a police state during this decade (Cancelli, 2003).

The research carried out by the historian Elizabeth Cancelli (2003, 2005) shows the intense level of exchange among the different police forces around the world. In 1931, two experts from the New York police were hired to offer technical and specific knowledge to enable the São Paulo police to fight the enemies of the regime, together with the need to convince the nation that there was, indeed, a worldwide conspiracy promoted by communists. Relations with the United States became constant, even as, in 1930, the North Americans themselves started a deliberate period of repression against communists, anarchists and other “politically undesirable” groups.

Torture was put at the service of a political design directly related to the government. The Vargas regime repressed the insurrection promoted by the National Liberation Alliance in 1935, known as the Communist Revolt. Once the revolt had been dominated, strong repression targeted not only the communists, but all government opponents and was a strong pretext for the coup d'état of November 10, 1937, which closed Congress, cancelled elections and kept Vargas in power instituting a dictatorship. All political parties became illegal, including the Brazilian Communist Party and the Brazilian Black Front.

Following the immigration policies and racist theories already in place since the end of the 19th century, Getúlio Vargas and part of the Brazilian elite were convinced that the ‘non-white’ ethnic composition of most Brazilians was the explanation for the country’s underdevelopment and difficulties (Fernández, 2019). According to the historian Fábio Koifman (2006, 2017), it was in the 1930s, supported by eugenicist theories, that a constitutional amendment came into force to restrict the number of Japanese immigrants allowed to enter the country. This regime of immigration restriction lasted until 1980 on the grounds of “not dirtying the Brazilian race”.

In her book “The World of Violence”, Elizabeth Cancelli (1993) cites the inaugural lecture in 1940 of Oscar de Godoy, professor of Criminal Anthropology and forensic doctor for the São Paulo Identification Service:

(...) there is no country of immigration which does not attempt to guarantee the future of the anthropological constitution of its people by means of laws regulating the entry of foreigners. The regulations ensure, in the best possible way, the racial formation, the political stability of nations and the welfare of individuals.

(Cancelli, 1993, p. 149).

With the beginning of World War II and Brazil's support for the Allies, the citizenship guarantees of foreigners were restricted; their property was confiscated, and their movement was controlled, while their daily lives were watched and their access to information was limited. The situation of oppression and loss of individual guarantees culminated in the imprisonment and internment of citizens labelled as "*súditos do Eixo*" (subjects of the Axis). The internment of these individuals in prisons, penal colonies and incarceration camps (Hirabayashi, 1994; Okamura, 1982) varied according to arbitrary decisions made by the police, the government and Brazilian diplomacy. One particular camp, Tomé-Açu, the only one known located in the Amazon region, differed from the others as mainly Japanese immigrants were imprisoned there. They lived under strict rules, with energy rationing and curfews, as well as being subjected to censorship of correspondence and the prohibition of grouping together. In another of these camps in the south of Brazil, Granja Canguiri in Paraná, they were visited by students who made jokes and even offered them grass, imitating animals (making mooing and neighing sounds) (Milan, 2010). While it is true that Germans and Italians were also sent to the incarceration camps, the number was infinitely smaller than that of the Japanese, whose phenotype and racial theories made them direct targets.

The same occurred elsewhere, including the United States, one of the most well-known and widely studied contexts, where, in 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order paving the way for the mass relocation and incarceration of individuals of Japanese heritage, even though the majority of these individuals were naturalized American citizens (Camp, 2016; Kamp-Whittaker, 2010; Shew, 2010).

A climate of border defence based on a strong nationalist discourse, provoked by rumours of interest in the Amazon by other countries, culminated in Brazilians being sent to the interior of the country so as not to hand it over to a supposed invader. One of the measures adopted to send migrants to the interior was the creation, in 1938, of the March to the West. This project contemplated the creation of agricultural colonies in the states of Amazonas, Pará, Mato Grosso, Paraná and Goiás which were “intended to receive and establish, as rural owners, Brazilian citizens who show aptitude for agricultural activities [...]” (BRASIL, 1941). However, more than a project to create agricultural colonies, the March to the West was a “development” policy based on the idea of progress entering the “uninhabited” West of the country, from an expansionist policy of national integration. The idea was to defend the frontier, occupy and develop the land in order to make the state present (N. A. de Oliveira, 2015).

Expeditions such as the Roncador-Xingu were organized in 1943 and were responsible for opening tracks and building the first roads in the region. According to the Villas Boas brothers (1994), who participated in this endeavour and were instrumental in the creation of the Xingu Indigenous Land, the Roncador-Xingu Expedition also had the specific task of contacting the indigenous peoples of the region, and the *Brasil Central* Foundation, created in the same year, had the task of establishing settlements at the ideal points marked out by the Expedition. Such policies resulted in the expulsion of indigenous groups, forced displacements and often deaths, in addition to a new configuration with new urban centres generating conflicts with local populations. The new configuration in these territories can be observed materially in the cutting of roads through sacred places, the imposition of language and institutions, and in the presence of the state: the insertion of its agents, new materials and, certainly, new practices (Alfredo González-Ruibal & Hernando, 2010). Revolts took place, such as the “Guerra do Pau de Colher”, a community formed by poor *sertanejos* accused of being violent religious fanatics and communists, who were violently repressed by the army and police forces during the Estado Novo period. The aforementioned movement has been the object of archaeological research carried out with the aim of mapping the spaces of antagonism, the remaining material

culture and its influences on the perception of the landscape, as well as the re-significations and appropriations of that place and the movement in contemporaneity (M. A. Ribeiro, 2019).

Before the regime of the generals in 1964, the first known death squad was created by civilian police officers in Rio de Janeiro. The paramilitary organization, named “Scuderie Le Cocq”, carried out extrajudicial executions and other violent acts against clearly defined individuals or groups of people (Bicudo, 1976; Mattos, 2016). This death squad and all others created in different Brazilian cities represent this clandestine facet of police violence. Among the accusations and suspicions that weighed on its members were the summary executions of alleged delinquents, homeless people, poor children and adolescents, trade unionists, community leaders, journalists, lawyers, witnesses to crimes committed by the organization’s members, and even police officers who tried to investigate it (Bittencourt & Dadalto, 2017, p. 194).

On the relationship between urban violence and the privatization of policing in Brazil, Martha Huggins (2010) draws attention to the contrast between the formal militarized organization of public policing and the decentralized, semiformal, and commercial organization of private policing. Huggins’ central idea is that forms of partnership and symbiosis have been developed in contemporary states between state police and private groups and that these partnerships are not always within democratic legality. Informal security services to satisfy private demand are often offered by agents or former public security agents, who may act as employees, entrepreneurs, or freelancers, constituting a clandestine surveillance market that often slips into extortion, corruption, and gun-running. In the years of the dictatorship, this clandestine police violence of “extermination groups” grew in direct connection with the military regime.

Analysing the way in which the control and repression of vagrancy, a social category forged by legal discourse between the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, operated in the city of São Paulo, Alessandra Teixeira and other authors

(2016) show how, during the Vargas government, the number of arrests remained quite high. They point out the forms of cooperation among the police, judiciary and private welfare institutions (in this case those belonging to the Catholic Church), in the management of such groups. In 1935, the police forces made no less than 2,228 arrests of beggars, of which 1,174 were considered false and were sent to the Specialized Police Station, with the others distributed between the Vila Mascote Shelter and the Bussocaba Agricultural Colony. Some others were sent to their families in other states.

Figure 9. Police Station for the Repression of vagrancy. Lunch at Cantina Balilla, the name of which paid tribute to an Italian fascist organisation in the Brás district, São Paulo city, 1960. Credit: Facebook page - Memória da Polícia Civil de São Paulo



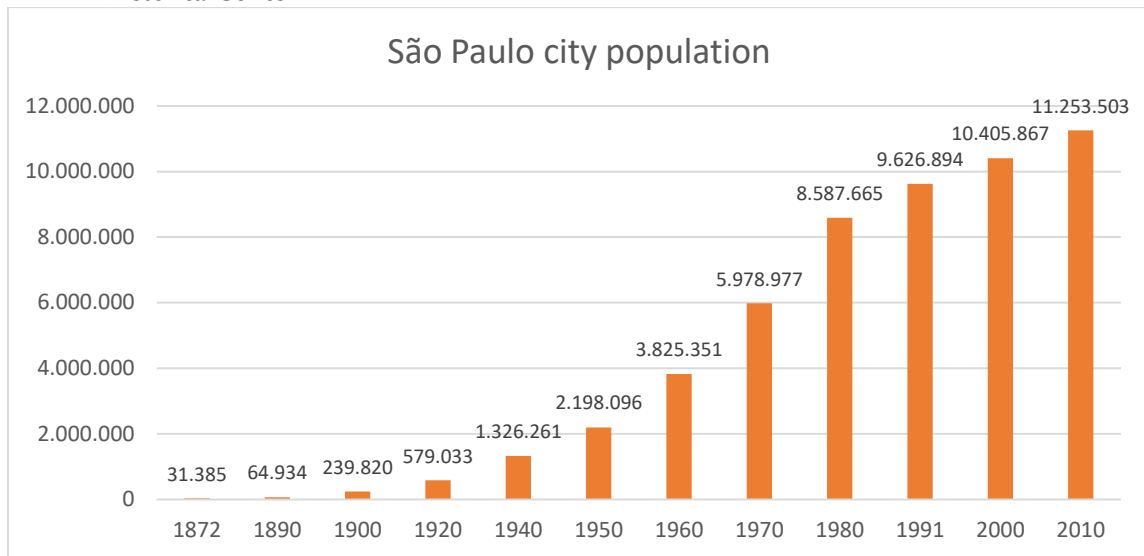
2.4. “Subversive bodies” and Military Dictatorship (1964-1985)

The 1964 coup d’état in Brazil instituted the regime of the generals, based on a series of events that took place in Brazil on March 31, 1964, culminating on April 1, 1964, with the dismissal of democratically elected president João Goulart.

Brazilian historiography considers that the coup, and the subsequent dictatorship, should not be considered exclusively military, but rather civil-military, since it was supported by important segments of society: the large rural landowners, the São Paulo industrial bourgeoisie, a large part of the urban middle classes, and the conservative and anti-communist sector of the Catholic Church, which promoted the March of the Family with God for Freedom (*Marcha da Família com Deus para Liberdade*), held a few days before the coup, on March 19, 1964. This support was undeniable, but throughout the thesis, I refer to the dictatorship as military, following interpretations that claim caution in diluting the coup among businessmen, when it was essentially military. Coups and dictatorships only occur with some support from sectors of society (Campos, 2014; Pomar, 2012).

São Paulo at the beginning of the 1970s was one of the world's main urban centres with a population of almost six million inhabitants (Graph 1). In the middle of the 1960s, the ratio between rural and urban populations was inverted, with the latter becoming the majority from then on. As a global process after World War II, metropolises expanded around the world, financed by debt with new financial institutions and fiscal models (Harvey, 2008; Lefebvre & Fortuna, 2001), projects that would change the scale of thinking about the urban process.

Graph 1. Population of the city of São Paulo in absolute numbers. Data source: IBGE Historical Series⁷



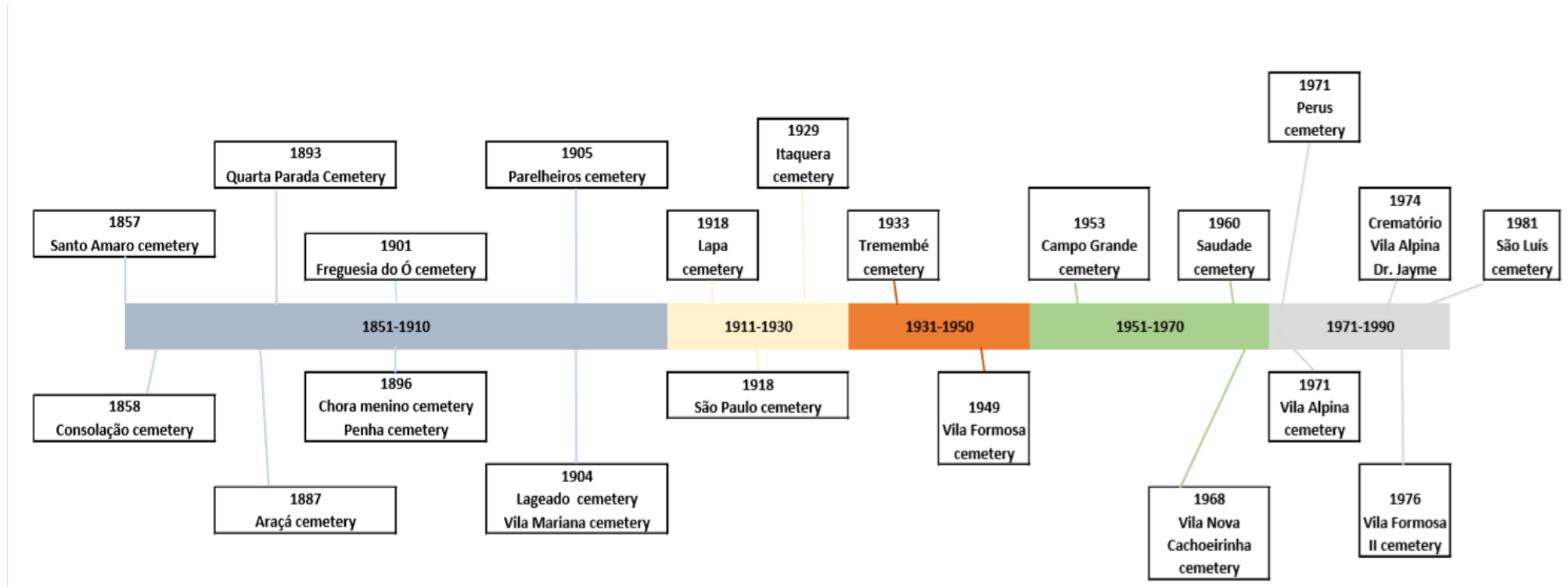
According to Raquel Rolnik (1997), in 1970 São Paulo became the largest Brazilian city in terms of population and the country's most important financial centre. The opening of new highways in the 1940s – named Presidente Dutra and Anchieta – changed the form of the city's territorial expansion. There was a new industrial boom, which intensified in the 1950s, with the implementation of metallurgical, electrical, automobile and petrochemical industries.

A large contingent of people became part of the city during this period: immigrants from other countries, but mainly migrants from the countryside. If, on the one hand, there was extremely strict state control on the treatment given to foreigners in relation to where they were going and where they came from, the same did not occur in this internal migration. An example of this policy that remains until the 2010s is the lack of cross-checking of the information contained on identity cards. If a person has an identity card made in one state, this information is not shared with the other states, making it possible to have more than one identity number as you move from one Brazilian state to another.

⁷ Source: Recenseamento do Brasil 1872-1920. Rio de Janeiro: Directoria Geral de Estatística, 1872-1930; and IBGE, Censo Demográfico 1940/2010. Until 1991, table extracted from: IBGE, Estatísticas do Século XX. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2007 in the Anuário Estatístico do Brasil 1994. vol.54, 1994.

To understand the socio-political management of the living, it is essential to also comprehend the socio-political management of the dead. It is from the 1970s onwards that we witness the creation of new cemeteries in the city. Until the end of the 1960s, the city had 18 municipal public cemeteries. In the 1970s new burial places were opened, such as Dom Bosco cemetery, Vila Alpina cemetery (the first crematorium), and Vila Formosa II cemetery, the largest cemetery in Latin America (Figure 10). In other words, only during the years of the dictatorship six new municipal cemeteries were created. If, on the one hand, the population increase demanded new cemeteries (R. A. Souza et al., 2015), on the other, these new cemeteries were also widely used for political repression in the concealment of dissidents' bodies, as is the case of the Dom Bosco cemetery in the Perus district, Campo Grande and Vila Formosa cemeteries. Even today, these are the cemeteries used to bury the bodies of unknown persons.

Figure 10: Timeline of the public cemeteries of São Paulo⁸. Credit: Márcia Hattori.



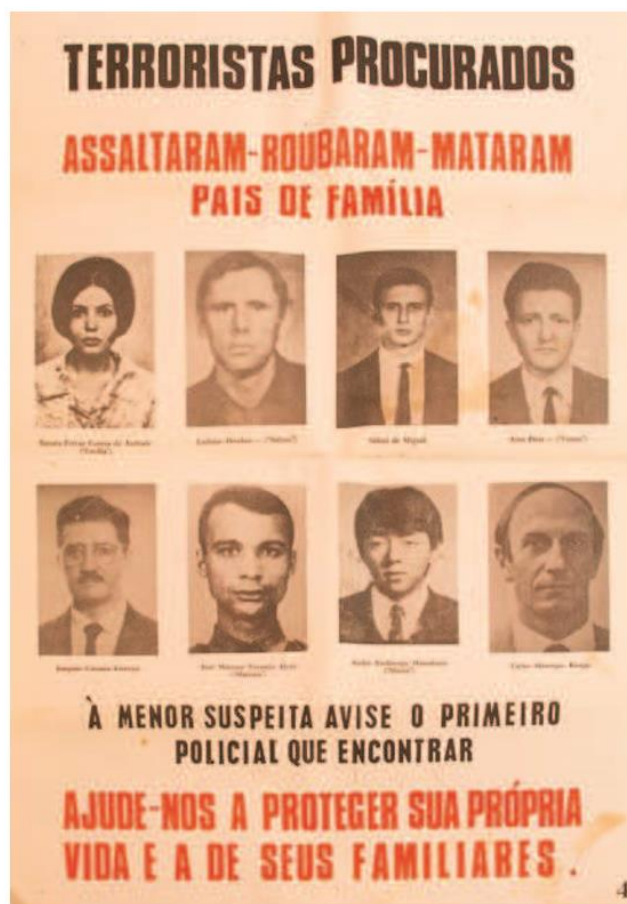
⁸ Source : http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/obras/servico_funerario/enderecos/index.php?p=3572. Accessed April, 10th, 2018.

The ideal model of the Brazilian citizen's body, attitudes and behaviours for the authoritarian government was supported by a Christian ideology of family and morality. All those categorized outside this ideal were classified as internal enemies (Padrós, 2012) and considered subversive, deviant and abject. This idea of degeneration included all members of the LGBTQI+ community, communists, prostitutes, “drunks”, drug users, intellectuals and artists, among others, who were associated with the idea of pathology and/or social disorder.

The military regime constituted an extensive legislation of exception and a broad administrative-institutional structure was produced, in which pre-coup laws and new legislative acts were combined. This legislation gave legal meaning to a sphere of action that was itself extra-legal, characteristic of the state of exception (Giorgio Agamben, 2005; J. de A. Teles, 2020). Indeed, the dictatorship was able to move with a certain degree of skill in the blurred zone between the legal and de facto situation materialized in a network of military, political and intelligence agencies, some of which were institutional and others clandestine (Soares, 2016). Based on the idea that the internal enemy could be any person or group of people, the principle of the rule of law was inverted, and everyone became suspect until proven the contrary (M. A. de A. Teles, 2015).

The Brazilian dictatorship was characterized by the use of selective strategies of repression, the practices of which oscillated between hiding and displaying state violence, combining the regime's intention to legitimize itself with the need to spread fear. The “terrorist” threat was built up by the media and one form of displaying this threat was with posters of “wanted terrorists” (Figure 11). Adriana Rolim (2018) argues that many of these reproductions offered an outdated image of the wanted person, with others being blurred, making it difficult to memorize and identify the person. More than recognition, the idea of the posters involved institutionalising their existence, making them a real threat, disseminating insecurity and fear among citizens, as well as discouraging social movements.

Figure 11. Example of one of the printed posters produced by public security and information agencies composed of images and slogans related to people considered “terrorists”, publicly displayed from 1968 to 1975, during the period of military dictatorship. Credit: Levy Leiloeiro IN: (Rolim, 2018, p. 120).



The repression against the opponents of the regime was coordinated among the upper levels of the hierarchy of the armed forces and was divided between its different intelligence agencies; the Army Intelligence Centre (CIE), the Security and Aeronautical Intelligence Centre (CISA) and the Marine Intelligence Centre (CENIMAR), always under the command of the Army. Their teams worked daily and intensively on imprisonment, torture, deaths and disappearances (Godoy, 2015; Joffily, 2013). During the 21 years of military dictatorship, this legal and clandestine apparatus perpetrated a huge number of human rights violations.

In addition to the clandestine centres created for this purpose, the forensic institutes (IML), funeral services, public cemeteries and the Military Justice (particularly in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco) were involved in operations carried out in order to cover up the assassination and disappearance of political persecuted persons.

These operations led to the creation of mass graves in cemeteries, such as the Perus mass grave in São Paulo and the Ricardo de Albuquerque mass grave in Rio de Janeiro (C. S. Almeida, 2009).

Within this context, there is a double movement which should be highlighted in relation to other periods and that has to do with the training and formation of the police forces, the army and the emergence of new technologies related to repression. Percival de Souza (2001), the biographer of police chief Sergio Paranhos Fleury, one of the major representatives of repression and of the Death Squadron, recalls that “much of the know-how of the repression was civilian” (2001, p. 33). On the other hand, disappearance techniques and forms of torture with the assistance of doctors to provide advice on how much the tortured person could resist (Vasconcelos Moreira et al., 2014) required not only an architecture of facilities prepared for the application of such techniques, but also paraphernalia such as shock machines and other instruments. All of this required organization on the part of the state, as has been revealed in different archaeological investigations (Lemos, 2019; Sousa, 2015; Zarankin & Niro, 2009).

The collaboration of the United States included courses on counter-insurgency given at the “School of the Americas” as well as sending “experts” such as Dan Mitrione in 1966 by USAID’s Public Security Section to create a shock unit in the Military Police of Rio de Janeiro in order to repress student demonstrations and to control the state’s slums. Mitrione taught espionage, counter-espionage and “jungle survival”. His orientation was to “shoot to kill” at night, just as the French had done in Algeria (Martha K Huggins, 1998). Another specialist was General Paul Aussaresses, a French soldier who had fought in the anti-colonialist wars in Indochina and Algeria in the early 1960s and was an instructor of Latin American soldiers in the counter-insurgency schools based in the United States, and later, between 1973 and 1975, in Brazil, where he continued to teach his courses (Duarte-Plon, 2016).

This repression did not occur in the same way with all groups. An analysis based on feminist theories and archaeology shows that in a female prison in Rio Grande do Sul,

the prison landscape was used by the apparatus of repression to maintain the dehumanizing condition to which women political prisoners were submitted, relegated to isolation outside the main building and the implications thereof. The research carried out by Jocyane Baretta (2020, p. 190). demonstrates the paradigms of colonial capitalist modernity, such as hatred towards women, used as a weapon against the bodies of the political prisoners. If female and male prisoners entered the DOPS/RS⁹ as enemies and subversives, the way in which architectural spaces and the objects were used made it possible to identify the distinction in the treatment of these bodies. The procedures were guided by a misogynistic logic which authorized the reduction of people through stages of breaking them based on gender relations until they were dehumanized, such as the use for political prisoners of the area that was once a kennel.

In parallel, the resistance of the feminist movement occurred at the apogee of the dictatorship. Between 1970 and 1978, the number of affiliations of women in trade unions grew 176%. This was the birth of women's work within the trade unions and, not without resistance, they began to form groups, departments focused on women and their demands. In this period, the feminist press also appeared, publishing important alternative newspapers: *Brasil Mulher* (1975-1980), *Nós Mulheres* (1976-1978), *Maria Quitéria* (1977) and, in the 1980s, *Mulherio* (1981-1988), *Mulher liberta* *Mulher* (1980) and *Chana com Chana* (1981) (Almeida Teles, 2018). From 1975 to 1981, there were several moments in which women unified their actions, strengthening the organization and the success of the movement: in 1978, in the Movement for Amnesty, initiated by women; in 1979, in the Movement for the Struggle for Day Care Centres in Housing; and, in 1979, 1980 and 1981, in the three Congresses of the Women of São Paulo, whose decisions supported the Constituent Assembly process (Herzog, 2020).

This double dehumanization is also reported by the historical communist militant Clovis de Castro, "In the DOPS São Paulo, a man said: *vamos negro comunista. Se você*

⁹ In Portuguese: Delegacia de Ordem Política e Social do Rio Grande do Sul.

*fosse um ladrão seria melhor. Gritava: negro comunista!*¹⁰ (M. G. dos Santos, 2014, p. 400).

The repression of the black movement began with the dismantling of different groups following the military coup of 1964. In the early 1970s, several movements served as a basis for the creation of a national black movement, the Unified Black Movement Against Racial Discrimination (MNU). According to Lélia Gonzalez (1988), this was a significant qualitative leap in the struggles of the black community, having been officially launched in 1978 in response to discriminatory acts that had occurred in São Paulo.

Municipal and state governments carried out a real hunt for the LGBTQI+ population in Brazil. The process of “cleansing” and “sanitising” was mainly carried out through “rondões”¹¹, police patrols and censorship actions. However, human rights violations by the police did not cease with the transition to democracy. In 1987, amid the peak of the AIDS epidemic, the mayor of the city of São Paulo, Jânio Quadros, with the support of the Civil and Military Police, initiated Operation Tarantula. Again, the goal was to attack the LGBTQI+ population under the pretext of fighting the disease, leading to numerous arrests and murders (Ocanha, 2018, p. 89). Despite living under the fear generated by repression and by the control of dissidence aimed at compulsory heterosexuality, the 1970s represent a greater freedom conquered by the LGBTQI+ movement, with spaces being opened up to the public, like the publication of the alternative newspaper *Lampião da Esquina* and the rise of the first organized group of the Brazilian Homosexual Movement (MHB), SOMOS, in 1978. If, on the one hand, having a homo-affective relationship was not considered a crime by the Penal Code, the legal instrument used to persecute this movement was vagrancy, which gave power for the police to decide who should be arrested (Vieira & Fraccaroli, 2018).

These new strategies were also aligned with a decline in the regime’s legitimacy and the use of forced disappearance to eliminate militants who opposed the regime. It was

¹⁰ Author’s Translation: “Let’s go, you black communist. If you were a thief it would be better. He shouted, black communist!”

¹¹ Round-ups

not in the government's interest to publicize the existence of communist-sponsored armed conflicts in Brazil. From 1973 onwards, the number of murders falsely presented as suicides, car accidents or the result of shootouts diminished, and the figure of the disappeared person (about whom there was no news of the death, body or death certificate) emerged with force. With the disappearance of a person and the inexistence of a moment of mourning, the distinction between past and present was erased (J. de A. Teles, 2020).

Hundreds of peasants and indigenous people were killed or disappeared in the midst of disputes over land ownership in the country. It is estimated that at least 1,196 peasants and 8,350 indigenous people (originating from 10 nations of native peoples) died as victims of the direct or indirect action of the Brazilian State in this period. The integrationist mentality of the State and its truculence are further revealed by the creation of the infamous Guarda Rural Indígena (Grin) and the plan of the Interior Minister, Maurício Rangel Reis, to “emancipate” the indigenous groups, removing their right to land. In addition, the project of major national integration works such as the Trans-Amazonian Highway, the Grande Carajás project (Treece, 1989), along with other highways, which have had fatal consequences for the Parakanã, Asurini and Waimiri-Atroari, for example, were being discussed at the time. There was also evidence of the State favouring groups of miners, ranchers and contractors with interests in indigenous lands. With the publication of the Figueiredo report, countless abuses were described in detail against the indigenous groups. In Minas Gerais, internment was literally crystallized in a project of arbitrary or exceptional prisons. As a “political solution”, the project involved the institutionalisation of punitive violence against indigenous peoples by the military police in favour of local landowners (Maguire, 2020). In the midst of all this, Rubens Valente also shows that the connivance of institutions such as the SPI and Funai with the offensive of the dictatorship did not imply the agreement of some of their employees, who often reacted vehemently, coordinating anthropologists and members of civil society and, especially from the 1970s on, with the support of a large majority of international public opinion.

2.5. Some reflections

Figure 12: Procession, 2018. Audio-visual art installation made by the photographer Mauricio de Paiva. Perus cemetery.



Throughout this chapter I have presented, from a chronological perspective, how groups were directly targeted by state policies, based on forms of classification that understood them to be enemies, classifying them as vagrants, unclean, criminals, promiscuous, suspicious, subversive, among many other terms that were widely used to justify violence against them. In any case, the impacts of colonialism on intersubjective relations based on the racialization of power relations was fundamental in legitimizing the Eurocentric character of modern power. Lélia Gonzalez (1988) wrote that the societies that form Latin America are inheritors of the ideologies of racial and sexual classification, as well as of the juridical-administrative techniques of the Iberian metropolises which, in turn, are racially stratified, dispersing open forms of segregation. This hierarchization based on the institutionalization of racial and hygienist theories in the governments throughout the 19th and 20th centuries is what guaranteed white supremacy and dominance.

The transition to democracy was an extremely controlled process, carried out from above, controlled by the elites. It was not agreed, but imposed. Two main legacies can be pointed out: the deepening of social inequality promoted by the economic model underlying the dictatorship, and the institutionalization and sophistication of the use

of torture and state violence itself. The nationalization of the military police from 1969, under the command of the army, implied the adoption of ostensive policing with military weapons. This shaped the political transition, the democratic period and the continuity of torture and, I would add, different technologies of disappearance return to the places from which they have never really disappeared: ordinary police and prison departments, where the most improvised methods are still in force.

With so many homicides committed by the police today, it can be stated that an authoritarian political culture has remained in force in Brazil. As Nancy Scheper-Hugues (2002) argues, death squad attacks on vulnerable populations did not cease; they actually resurfaced with even greater vigour. The targets of the new death squads were not only politically engaged “troublemakers”, radical environmentalists, and people from social movements, but also ordinary people, most of them young, black and poor.

There is a fundamental material dimension in these forms of racism which I shall seek to highlight in the following chapters with case studies that show these different types of racism, from their most subtle forms used by the police to assassinations perpetrated by the repression against urban guerrillas (Cardoso, 2011). As can be seen, there is a certain continuity in the ways the state categorizes and attempts to eliminate specific groups. For racialized, gendered and class dissidents, a continuity is seen in the control of their bodies by the state. As stated in the last section, this is also possible due to the persistence of certain technologies improved from the exchange, equipping and training of officers in the School of the Americas and from the resulting tactics of counter-insurgency that can be seen in the period of the last dictatorship: certain forms of torture and ways to disappear by mere omission.

Chapter 3. Forensic teams and the search for disappeared people of Brazil's last dictatorship (1964-1985)

3.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the challenges in carrying out forensic investigations related to human rights violations in Brazil. The way in which the field of Forensic Anthropology was and is structured and the policies related to the investigation of this traumatic past, have meant that many of the efforts made to identify missing persons from the last dictatorship have culminated in the application of questionable methods and treatment of relatives, as well as in the very abandonment of cases that never seem to be closed. Throughout this chapter I will examine the different teams and professionals involved in different cases over time and then focus on the biography of an iconic case related to the Perus mass grave in the city of São Paulo. This case, which, since its discovery in 1990 until 2021, has experienced numerous interruptions, difficulties in concluding investigations, neglect and abandonment of the human remains by experts and institutions which have further perpetuated forms of violence against the bodies of the dead and against their relatives, a process which has become known as an “eternisation” of trauma (Read & Wyndham, 2017; Ruderer, 2013; Wagner & Kešetović, 2016).

In this sense, I base my argument on the idea of *post-mortem* rights, that is, not only of the bereaved or of the family group, usually considered to be the owner of the corpse, but also of the dead bodies, which, as individuals, exercise a kind of agency and continue to belong to a community (Perosino, 2012).

This chapter includes my own experience between 2013 and 2017 in the different investigations conducted by the Brazilian government and the efforts to set up a forensic team during the period of activity of numerous truth commissions in Brazil¹²

¹² In addition to the National Truth Commission (Comissão Nacional da Verdade – CNV), there was a proliferation of other truth commissions, organised by sectors of civil society, municipal and state governments and legislatures during and after the national commission's term.

(Holland & Israel, 2019). It certainly implied speaking from a body of experiences, affections and emotions, of setbacks and of the personal when experiencing the creation and dissolution of a strong forensic team. (Collins, 2002; Haraway, 1988). The chapter is structured as follows: Firstly, it presents the biography of the Perus mass grave, since its discovery in September 1990 and the following 30 years of efforts to conclude the investigation by the different forensic teams. Secondly, it presents an overview of the search for missing persons in the Brazilian context, from the cases investigated and the identifications made over time. It concludes with a reflection on the perpetuation of forced disappearance by interruptions and abandonment of the case by the state.

3.2. The search for disappeared people in Brazil

Throughout the history of forensic science in Latin America, the role of the anthropologist Clyde Snow and other researchers, such as Eric Stover and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), has been fundamental in the formation and consolidation of different forensic teams that have begun to investigate not only in cases of forced disappearance in their country but also in other parts of the world (Crossland, 2013; Doretti & Fondebrider, 2001; Pedro Paulo A Funari et al., 2009; Salado & Fondebrider, 2008). Between 1984 and 1990 archaeology students from Argentina started working with Snow and, in 1986, they formed the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) as a non-governmental organisation dedicated to the application of forensic sciences in investigations of human rights violations in a multidisciplinary approach including Archaeology, Biological Anthropology, Genetics, Pathology, Ballistics, Social and Cultural Anthropology and Information Technology, among others. The team was formed as an independent group not connected to a university or Medical Legal Service (Salado & Fondebrider, 2008). With their individual particularities, between 1990, 2000 and 2010, different teams were formed on the American continent whose main lines of action ended up forming an approach specific to Latin American Forensic Anthropology (ALAF, 2016). Since the formation of the team in Argentina, teams have been created in Uruguay (GIAF), Peru (EPAF), Guatemala (FAFG), Chile,

Mexico and Colombia with different links to their respective states, but closely related to social movements and relatives of the victims.

The Latin American experience provided a new set of methodological developments, which rose to the challenge of locating and retrieving bodies clandestinely buried in the investigation of the consequences of regimes of exception and repression (Rosignoli 2015). In recent decades, this Latin American approach has been extended to many other parts of the world in this type of investigation. Despite this focus given especially in the English-speaking world of a Latin American forensic practice that often universalises this region, the experiences of building teams and investigations are profoundly diverse, and, in countries such as Paraguay and Brazil, whose dictatorships were the longest-lasting on the continent, they do not have the same trajectories of the independent local formation of teams.

The varying nature of the different democratic transitional processes in each country was determining in the regimes' ability to negotiate political and juridical pacts of impunity. In this respect, crimes have begun to be investigated where the conditions have emerged to clarify the victims' circumstances, and wherever the obstacles laid out by a still very present impunity have begun to be overcome (Bielous, 2017).

According to the research carried out by Rafael de Abreu e Souza (2019), in the case of Brazil, there is an overlap in scientific research and practices between forensic anthropology, medicine and forensic odontology, in which the latter two areas seem to understand the former as a technique for studying the human body purely in its anatomical-physiological form and not as the result of a biocultural process. In other words, a perspective that resembles the criminal anthropology of the end of the 19th century, which, in the search for medical explanations of behaviour, focused on the individual (the criminal) more than on the context or the circumstances, adopting a vocabulary closer to that of the police and the Law (R. de A. e Souza, 2019, p. 40).

The history of forensic investigations relating to the search for political disappeared people in Brazil, although it has been recorded in some articles and book chapters, is

mainly oral, based on the memories and experiences of relatives and associations that have done what the state's experts have long failed to do (C. S. Almeida, 2009; Coimbra & Brasil, 2009; J. Teles, 2001). In São Paulo, as well as in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco and other states, relatives and associations identified by the name *Grupo Tortura Nunca Mais* and the *Comissão de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos* have played a leading role in the investigation of police archives and cemeteries, in the struggle to open the archives of the repression and in an effort to demand answers (Almeida, 2009). It was they who travelled to Araguaia, in the Amazon region to find witnesses, conduct interviews, locate possible mass graves and often hired independent experts such as the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) (EAAF, 1993, 1996; Rede Brasil Atual, 2013; R. de A. e Souza, 2019). In most cases this was done employing their own financial resources.

It is noteworthy that Clyde Snow, considered the “father of forensic anthropology in Latin America”, was in Brazil at different times, the first of which was for one of the most internationally known forensic cases and the one that inaugurated a new approach to forensic aesthetics and politics (Keenan & Weizman, 2015): the identification of Josef Mengele in 1985 (Ferrándiz, 2015). The second time was at the request of relatives' associations, at the time of the discovery of the Perus mass grave, the first case found of clandestine burials related to the human rights violations of the Brazilian dictatorship (Figure 13). It is from the biography of the Perus mass grave that I draw on the continuous interruptions and the trajectory of the Brazilian forensic teams formed for the investigation of human rights violations.

Figure 13. Human rights associations, prosecutors, and forensic scientists associated with Human Rights Watch with Clyde Snow, Luis Fondebrider and mayor Luiza Erundina in the centre of the photo at the cemetery in Perus, São Paulo. Year 1990. Credit of the photo: CPI of Perus



3.3. Biography of a mass grave created during the military dictatorship in São Paulo

3.3.1. Perus district in São Paulo

Perus is a district located in the north-western part of the city of São Paulo (Figure 14). Together with the region of Caieiras and Água Fria (today Cajamar), it formed, in the first quarter of the 20th century, a micro-region that fed the voracious urban growth not only of the city of São Paulo, but probably of the entire State of São Paulo.

Figure 14. In green, the district of Perus. Credit: Wikipedia



In 1926, the first large cement factory in the country was inaugurated there (Companhia Brasileira de Cimento Portland Perus), which represented the first piece of the Brazilian base industry. Cement and concrete, known as “artificial stone”, were, at that time, new inventions and commercially widespread products, which caused a revolution in civil construction (replacing iron, wood, stone, clay and other agglomerates with advantages), definitively modifying urban landscapes.

Throughout its history, Perus has always been a central, pivotal part of the capitalism and modernising process of the city of São Paulo (the cement factory, the pine trees for the cellulose industry, etc.), as demonstrated by the historian Marcelo Chaves (2005) when discussing and questioning the centre-periphery studies that interpret the formation of peripheries, the swelling and explosion of central regions. Although fundamental to the modernising process of the city of São Paulo, Perus, as a visible space, has always been on the margins of the public policies developed in the city.

Figure 15: *Perus district on a rainy day, 2018. Credit: Maurício de Paiva.*



The understanding that it was a sparsely populated area, with the largest park in the city of São Paulo, far from the centre led the agents of repression to consider it as the ideal place for the construction of a cemetery that would be “distant” enough to hide the crimes of the dictatorship. Inaugurated in the middle of the dictatorship, in March 1971, by the then intervener Paulo Maluf, the Perus cemetery had been demanded by the local population since the mid-1930s (Seixas, 2012; R. A. Souza et al., 2015). However, it was subsequently used by the administration as the main cemetery for sending the bodies of unknown people and opponents of the regime.

Perus cemetery marks the end of the road for dead bodies which have travelled through different institutions. In the Dom Bosco cemetery, there is an area intended for the burial of NN people and another area for people from the neighbourhood brought for burial by their relatives (see Figure 16). Those who are buried by their relatives have their individual graves well marked as can be observed in the photo. The others, NN, brought by the funerary service and the Medico Legal Institution, are also buried individually, albeit after some days or months. However, it is extremely difficult to trace where exactly they are buried, as their graves are unmarked. Sometimes, in order to find the grave of a person buried as NN, it is necessary to depend on the knowledge of the professional gravedigger (*sepultador*) to find the grave based on his understanding of the layout of the cemetery and the grave number. If

the documentation in the cemetery logbook is consulted, it is possible to see a very clear description of the place: Unknown number XXXX, buried in plot 1, square 2, row 15, grave 1. However, in reality, the site is just an extremely irregular area where it is possible to discern the excavated burial sites, although the rows and the graves described in the official document are impossible to distinguish.

Figure 16: On the left, the area for NN people and on the right, those buried by their relatives. Credit: author



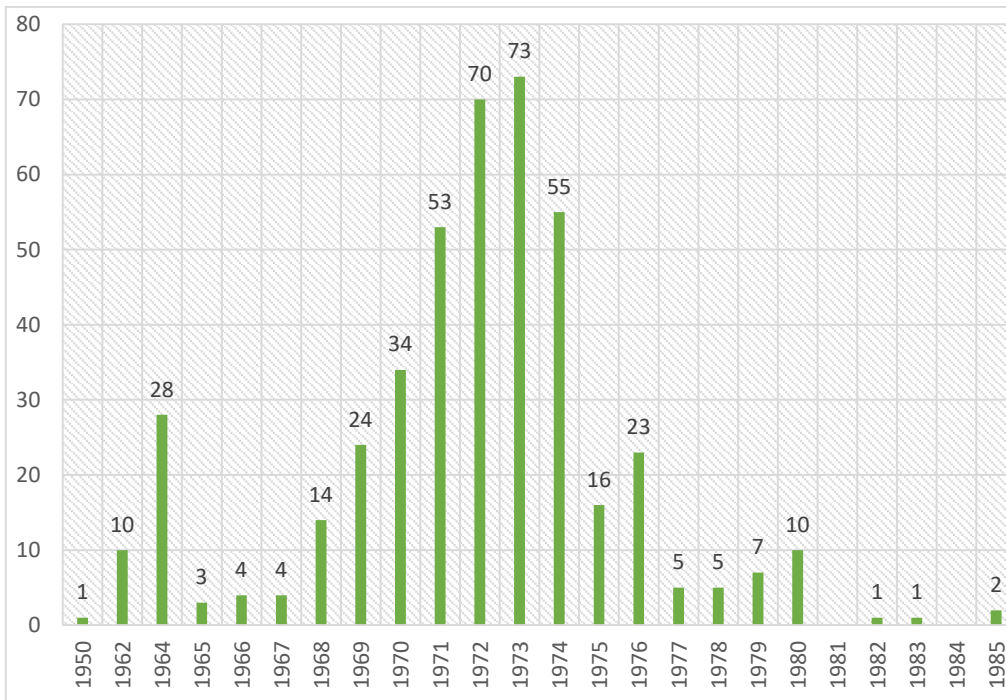
Cemetery staff, especially burial workers, are those responsible in practice for seeking solutions even without the minimum adequate tools and conditions in an effort to respond to relatives. An example of this are the divisions that are made, as is the case of the blocks destined for one group, referred to among cemetery staff as the “*quadras dos anjinhos*” (the Little Angels’ Block) where foetuses, new-borns and children are buried - a remnant of the Catholic distribution of those who were baptised or not.

Before the creation of Perus cemetery, Vila Formosa cemetery (the biggest cemetery in Latin America), was the destination of most bodies buried with no identity. Vila Formosa, in the east of the city, has an area of more than 763,000 m² (the equivalent

of 70 football fields). It was here that nine political militants murdered up to 1970, whose bodies could never be recovered, were buried. One of the reasons for this was the alterations and reforms made to the area destined for the unknown, carried out during the dictatorship in 1976 (Gonzaga, 2012). Besides this cemetery, Campo Grande was also used to bury two political militants - Emmanuel Bezerra dos Santos and Manoel Lisboa de Moura. With regard to clandestine burial sites in São Paulo, preference was given to sites on the outskirts of cities. Although they have not been the target of any forensic intervention, the “31 de Março” site in the southern region of São Paulo and the Itapevi clandestine centre are other possible sites for the occultation of bodies.

According to research carried out by family commissions (C. S. Almeida, 2009; Arns & Wright, 1985), at least 28 political militants were buried clandestinely in Perus between 1971 and 1976, assassinated by the regime at the height of the repression, as can be seen in Graph 2, which shows the fatal victims (acknowledged by the State) of the dictatorship per year.

Graph 2. Political disappearances from the 1964-1985 Brazilian dictatorship.
Data source: Almeida et al, 2009 and Brasil, 2014)



The city of São Paulo certainly reflects this national scenario. Taback and Coupland (2005) point out that the most significant factors of mortality among civilian victims in armed conflicts are not only the number and type of weapons, but also vulnerability and the context in which the individual finds him/herself.

Investigations by relatives of victims and the Perus Working Group (2015) found that the Perus mass grave was created in 1976 in an area of the cemetery not designated for burials. A massive exhumation between 1975 and 1976 of people buried as NN (possibly between 1971 and 1972 at the peak of disappearances) was carried out and the human remains were stored in plastic bags that were being stocked in one of the cemetery's funeral rooms, as the aim was to build a crematorium and incinerate them.

However, the English company that won the tender to build the crematorium withdrew because it saw irregularities in the process, in the midst of the dictatorship and the constant accusations of disappearances of people and violations of human rights (Seixas, 2012). As the crematorium was not built, the end result was the opening of a mass grave and the concealment of more than 1,500 human remains.

3.3.2. The “discovery” of the Perus mass grave

In 1990, Caco Barcelos, a well-known Brazilian journalist, was investigating cases of murders committed by the police in the city of São Paulo, especially the executions carried out by an elite squad named ROTA¹³, created in the 1970s as an auxiliary force for army officers.

The cemetery named Dom Bosco became part of his route to search for victims of the ROTA. With the assistance of the cemetery administrator, Antonio Eustaquio, he learnt that in the mid-1970s human remains of approximately 1,500 people had been exhumed from their individual graves and placed in a mass grave which had been dug

¹³ Ronda Tobias de Aguiar - ROTA

in secret as there was no sign on the surface indicating the presence of burials and it was not even recorded in any cemetery documents or on any maps.

When Toninho, as he is known, went to work in the Perus cemetery as an administrator, he started to help relatives of the disappeared people, even during the dictatorship, to search in the cemetery's logbooks for their relatives who had been buried there as NN or under false names. Some relatives already knew about the existence of this mass grave, but the political situation did not allow for the possibility of exposing the crimes of the dictatorship.

The Perus cemetery is, to this day, the main destination of people who are buried without identity, the NN and in the bureaucracy of death "unknown"¹⁴. With the help of the relatives' associations, and especially of Suzana Lisboa (Barcellos, 2001, p. 12), a long investigation was carried out with the documentation of the Forensic Institute of São Paulo, where declarations were found of the dead marked with a red "T" meaning "terrorist". They discovered that several of the disappeared who were part of the guerrilla insurgency could be in that mass grave.

On 4th September 1990, the mass grave was discovered containing approximately 1,500 plastic bags (Figure 17) of the human remains of these so-called "unknowns": people who lived on the streets; victims of death squads; children who died from a meningitis epidemic (which the government of the time silenced); and members of the guerrilla forces fighting against the dictatorship who had been kidnapped, tortured and murdered in clandestine detention centres (M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012).

¹⁴ In Portuguese: Desconhecido

Figure 17. The opening of the mass grave and the plastic bags with human remains (September 1990). Credit: O Globo. Available at: <https://blogs.oglobo.globo.com/blog-do-acervo/post/vala-de-perus-descoberta-do-cemiterio-clandestino-onde-foram-enterradas-vitimas-da-ditadura.html>. Accessed: 21st April 2021.



São Paulo City Council and the São Paulo State Government undertook the task of identifying the people buried in the mass grave, one which should legally be the responsibility of the São Paulo Forensic Medical Institute - IML. However, there was strong opposition from relatives and various human rights organisations, as this institution had had a past of direct collaboration with the repression. The director of the institution himself, Dr Antonio Melo, had, during the dictatorship, signed a false autopsy report on Manuel Fiel Filho, who had been tortured and killed in one of the detention centres in São Paulo (M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012).

When the existence of the mass grave became public knowledge in September 1990, a programme of activities was proposed to support the experts in the Perus cemetery, called the “International Mission in São Paulo”, which was attended by Clyde Snow (for Amnesty International), Luis Fondebrider (EAAF), Alejandro Inchaurregui (EAAF), Eric Stover (Human Rights Watch) and Fred Jordan (Human Rights Watch). The aim was to exchange scientific methods and techniques with the team of forensic scientists of the University of Campinas (UNICAMP), to monitor the exhumation of the human remains, and to make recommendations for the prompt investigation of

missing persons in Brazil and the possibility of discussing the disconnection of the Legal Medical Institutes from police agencies. However, this cooperation did not take place due to the fact that the forensic team of the university did not agree with the participation of foreigners, arguing that there were already trained professionals in Brazil (Gonzaga, 2012; M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012).

From that time on, forensic investigations related to the search for missing persons were conducted by the Department of Forensic Medicine of UNICAMP under the coordination of Fortunato Badan Palhares, who was a professor at the university and also a forensic doctor at the *Instituto Medico Legal de Campinas*. The initiative of the São Paulo mayor, Luísa Erundina, to investigate the Perus mass grave was followed by the installation of a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry in the City Council (Caligiuri Filho et al., 1992), considered by some human rights groups to be the first Truth Commission in Brazil.

The revelation of the existence of the mass grave of Perus and its opening drew the attention of society, thus resuming the social mobilisation in the struggle for a broad, general and unrestricted amnesty. As a result, many visits were made to other potential clandestine burial sites in the city of São Paulo that were listed by this Commission. Also, relatives of the disappeared put more intense pressure on the authorities and managed to gain access to some police archives such as those of the Forensic Institute (IML) and the State Department of Political and Social Order (DEOPS), in the city of São Paulo.

In the first two years, two identifications from the mass grave were made: Denis Casemiro and Frederico Mayr, using the method of the superposition of images on the dimensions of the cranium and photos. However, over the following years, the lack of communication between the UNICAMP team and the relatives' associations intensified.

The journalist Camilo Vanucchi describes two episodes which exemplify this situation. One of them was in a meeting between Unicamp representatives and

relatives in October 1995, Badan Palhares had sent fragments of bones to the Federal University of Minas Gerais at a time when researchers from this university were trying to extract DNA from human bones. However, he had done so without anyone's authorisation and without informing the families. In other words, the doctor had not hesitated to take samples of those bones, so mistreated by time and by the conditions in which they had been hidden, and had, clandestinely, sent them to another state. More seriously, some of the bones had been sent to Germany without any prior communication.

In another episode, Palhares was accused of acting in bad faith by changing a statement for political reasons. Still in 1991, after participating in the exhumation in Xambioá, in the Araguaia region, which could belong to the guerrilla Maria Lúcia Petit, killed by the repression in 1972, Palhares had affirmed, on the spot, that the characteristics matched and that her identity would be confirmed as soon as the material arrived at Unicamp. In the return trip, however, Palhares made a stop in Brasília, where he would have met Romeu Tuma, the all-powerful of the Federal Police, and changed his version: that human remain could not be of the guerrilla, he declared to a newspaper. According to the fabric of which the panties were made, it should be a prostitute, victim of a crime of passion in the north of Tocantins

(C. Vannuchi, 2020a, p. 130)

Due to the many requests for reports and information from human rights groups, in 1995, a complaint was made about the precarious situation of the human remains at the university¹⁵. Cleaning staff at the university, moved by the deplorable conditions, denounced the situation and relatives' associations, together with the journalist Caco Barcelos, went to verify the state of the human remains. In the UNICAMP facilities, the bones were flooded (Figure 18) and heavy furniture had been placed on top of the bags in which they were stored (Figures 19 and 20). Also, many of the bags were visibly open, broken and without identification numbers (R. A. Souza et al., 2015).

¹⁵ Information obtained from the Archive of the *Comissão de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos. Instituto de Estudos sobre Violência de Estado - IEVE*. Access: April, 2017

Boxes with several skulls could be observed, suggesting that anatomical parts had been removed from the human remains without reference and then returned, without it being clear if they had been mixed (Figure 21).

Figure 18: Mud on the ground resulting from a flood in the place where the remains had been stored (IEVE, 2017)



Figure 19. Chairs on top of the bags containing human remains (IEVE, 2017)



Figure 20. Chairs on top of the bags containing human remains (IEVE, 2017)



Figure 21. Box containing several skulls without any reference (IEVE, 2017)



The narrative of Maria Amelia Teles (a member of the Commission of Relatives who made the complaint) is quite enlightening about this period. It exemplifies the mistreatment and neglect suffered by those who had disappeared during the

repression of the dictatorship, and of the human remains that suffered from a lack of care in terms of preservation and mixing for decades, even in the democratic era.

They put rubbish, boxes, chairs and even pots over the bones. They have been damaged. We took pictures of it all. It was a devastating scene. I don't know why they did it. I call what I saw Perus mass grave number two. The first was created by the dictatorship and number two was created by that Department of Forensic Medicine.

(M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012, p. 16)¹⁶

After the accusation, the human remains were transferred to São Paulo in 2001 and placed in a temporary space in the ossuary of the public cemetery of Araçá, where they were stored in boxes. The forensic analysis was coordinated by Daniel Muñoz, professor at the University of São Paulo and forensic doctor at the Forensic Institute of São Paulo. However, during this period, no progress was made, and no report was filed. In 2004, the project was, once again, left without a forensic team to complete the identification work.

More than 1,000 boxes were kept in the ossuary of the Araçá cemetery throughout the 2000s, and it was during this period that some specific actions were carried out with the objective of collecting DNA samples from some cases that had been analysed in order to try to identify them. These actions were carried out by the Commission for the Dead and Politically Disappeared and the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office by hiring genetic laboratories (Gonzaga, 2012). As a result of this work, one more disappeared person was identified in 2005: Flávio Carvalho Molina.

The composition of such teams, whether linked directly to the State or not, should take into account the particularities of forensic work, which frequently, or always, requires urgent action. This means that if the teams are set up within universities, for example, they should be based on a different logic. Clyde Snow (1982) reinforces the differences between academia and this type of work. An example of this situation involved the case of the Perus grave and the agreement with a Genetic Department

¹⁶ Own Translation

of the Federal University of Minas Gerais. When a laboratory was asked for the quick delivery of DNA results, it replied that it “... would not be restricted to any specific schedule for carrying out the examinations and/or delivering the results (...)”.

In May 2012, the National Truth Commission (CNV) was established during Dilma Rousseff's government, almost 20 years after the end of the Brazilian military dictatorship. Following the creation of this National Commission, countless other truth commissions were set up to investigate the crimes committed during the dictatorship in different spheres: federal states, municipalities, universities and public institutions, among others. There were more than one hundred truth commissions throughout the country, which demonstrated the willingness of society to open a debate about this period.

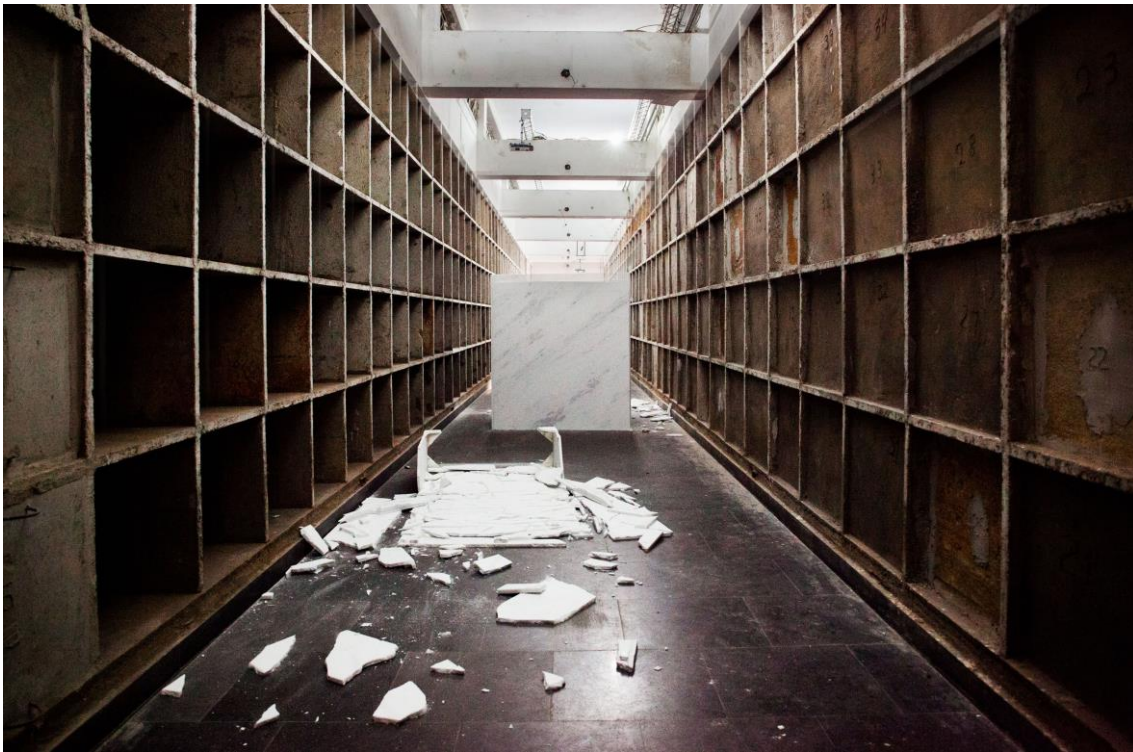
One of these commissions created was the Rubens Paiva Truth Commission of the Legislative Assembly of São Paulo, chaired by the then deputy Adriano Diogo. In the beginning of 2013, an association called ABAP (*Associação Brasileira de Anistiados Políticos*) with this commission, asked the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) to analyse some cases from the Perus mass grave stored at the Araçá ossuary, which, according to Unicamp's data, were compatible with the profile of the missing person, Hirohaki Torigoe. In this diagnosis made by EAAF, the team also made an evaluation of the work and the data produced by UNICAMP, affirming the need to repeat all the analysis, since the methods used were not reliable and the data could not be used.

On top of this, an attack on the ossuary (Figure 22) at the end of the year exposed the vulnerable situation of the human remains (C. Vannuchi, 2020a, p. 145). Almost ten years after the last systematic research carried out on the human remains from the mass grave, in May 2014, an agreement was signed to constitute a new working group named Grupo de Trabalho Perus (GTP) with the aim of resuming the forensic analysis. This project was based on an institutional triad: the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappeared Persons (CEMDP), the Municipal Secretariat for Human Rights and Citizenship of the Municipality of São Paulo (SMDHC) and the

Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP). This new agreement was established thanks to pressure from relatives of the dead and disappeared and activists committed to the cause who continued to demand a response from the state.

Figure 22: Araçá ossuary and the attack against an art installation made by Celso Sim and Anna Ferrari.

Credit: Tuca Vieira



This made it possible to resume the work of forensic analysis initially with the support for training, establishment of protocols, among many other needs, of two Latin American forensic teams: The Peruvian Team of Forensic Anthropology (EPAF) and the Argentinean Team of Forensic Anthropology (EAAF), as well as archaeologists, bioanthropologists, dentists, historians and geneticists to work on a continual basis in the laboratory.

The research focused on understanding not only what had happened during the previous work, but also on understanding the context and the forms of violence and disappearance which had taken place in the city of São Paulo in order to establish more precisely the universes of search for an open case. In order to follow up on the investigation, it was essential to understand the process carried out up to that point.

Therefore, it was necessary to carry out an extensive survey of the previous work. In addition, in the first meetings with relatives' associations, there were many doubts about the previous processes, such as the location of the reference blood sample bank of the relatives who had donated blood as it was not clear which institution had custody of these samples. In this way, it became evident that the history of the forensic analysis and attempts to identify people buried in the Perus mass grave was full of gaps and lacking in answers, demonstrating complete neglect in relation to the preservation of the human remains. These gaps clearly hindered and contributed even more to the disappearance, if no longer of the body, of all other material or symbolic forms linked to the disappeared. The work carried out by UNICAMP, IML/SP and USP was never based on a preliminary investigation. In fact, it did not start from basic assumptions about the relationship with the relatives and the cases of the people who might have been buried in Perus.

A key example to understand the complexity of the situation was the search universe. The forensic scientists acted on the basis of demands and lists sent by different institutions. Thus, UNICAMP did not carry out any investigation into the context of each disappeared person. It simply carried out the search by cross-referencing those cases for which it had received the forensic anthropology form filled out by relatives. The new group counter-checked more than 10 existing lists, produced by the investigations of different institutions, some of which were extremely out of date, as they even contained people who had already been identified.

In this way, the following elements were considered for the search universe of the work: the names of disappeared persons who were in the books of the Perus cemetery and who had a high probability of being there; disappeared persons who were known to have passed through some centre of repression in São Paulo; other persons who had disappeared in the city; and also disappeared persons who had entered at the request of their relatives in order to at least exclude the possibility of being among the mortal remains in the cemetery. Since this identification process deals with the search for persons in the framework of a policy of disappearance and, therefore, the

concealment of bodies, it was decided to aggregate the different probabilities so that an answer could at least be given to the families, even if it was negative.

Based on these criteria, it was possible to draw up a list showing the different degrees of probability of each of the disappeared to be found. On a first level, there were the names of the politically disappeared or false names present in the entry logbooks of the Perus cemetery, with a high probability of being among the remains in the grave. On a second level, there were the disappeared with names in the cemetery books, whose record shows indications of re-interment in the same place, i.e. it is probable that they are still in individual burial sites in the cemetery. On a third level, there was the list of people who had disappeared in São Paulo and/or who had been seen by different people in prisons in São Paulo. The fourth level, with lower probabilities, was made up of references to people who had disappeared or been murdered in São Paulo or with some information that they had passed through the municipality at some point. For this level of probability, which involved a large number of disappeared people, there were cases of people who had disappeared in the municipality of São Paulo, although witnesses and accounts from agents of the repression relate to other regions.

At the request of relatives at the time of UNICAMP's work in the 1990s, some cases were kept in the searches even though there was no information on any possibility of burial or passage through São Paulo. Names of people who had disappeared in the 1970s were also added whose relatives' requests date both from the period of UNICAMP's searches and from later requests to the Human Rights Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic. These were cases that were not necessarily of persons recognised by the State as having disappeared for political reasons.

After four years, two more people were identified: Dimas Casemiro and Aluísio Palhano Pedreira Ferreira. The latter was one of those unlikely to be in the grave. Almost all of the testimonies that existed indicated the possibility of burial in a clandestine centre in Rio de Janeiro, the so-called House of Death. As there was a witness who saw him at the DOI-CODI in São Paulo, Aluísio was in the search

universe. This case is fundamental in understanding the logic of the repression of the movement of prisoners.

However, over the years, the team was gradually reduced, the unstable contracts that were always threatened by any political change reached the highest point in 2019 when the government of Jair Bolsonaro dismissed the president of the Commission and today the work is expected to be completed without a technical team capable of concluding it satisfactorily.

3.4. Efforts made to identify missing persons by different teams between the 1990s and 2010

The materiality of the mass grave that, for the first time exposed the crimes of the dictatorship, had repercussions and made possible a series of investigations in other contexts. One of them was the formation of the Commission of External Representation for the Search for the Political Missing in the Federal sphere (Teles, 2001:170). This commission, which operated from 10ths December 1990 to 31st December 1994, was chaired by Federal Deputy Nilmário Miranda and was crucial in clarifying the cases of missing Brazilians in Chile and Argentina. Through its collaboration, it was possible to recover the human remains of Arno Preis, murdered in 1972 and buried in the municipal cemetery of the city of Paraíso do Norte in the state of Tocantins. Investigations were also carried out into the case of Ruy Carlos Vieira Berbet, murdered on 2nd January 1972 in Natividade, Tocantins.

The Ministry of Justice's Special Commission promoted two stages of searches in the Araguaia region, one in May and the other in July 1996, based on information from the newspaper "O Globo" and a report about the cemeteries in Araguaia region made by the relatives' association *Comissão de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos*. The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, and Suzana Lisboa and Criméia de Almeida, both advisors to the recent created *Comissão Especial sobre Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos* (CEMDP), participated in this investigation. The team located and preserved three areas with clandestine burial sites: the municipal cemetery in Xambioá, the DNER

(National Department of Roads and Highways) in Marabá, and Fortaleza Farm, near the city of São Domingos do Araguaia (Teles, 2001). It is noted that throughout the 1990s, incursions of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) could be observed in the search for the missing in Araguaia and São Paulo and in the case of the Ricardo de Albuquerque cemetery in Rio de Janeiro, to form a team that could carry out the analysis of the human remains found in another mass grave discovered in September 1991 in Rio de Janeiro (Coimbra & Brasil, 2009; N. V. de Oliveira, 2002; P P A Funari et al., 2005). Regarding the latter case, more than 2,100 individuals were exhumed, among them fourteen political disappearances (GTNM 2010). However, the work was closed down in 1993 due to the complexity of the case, the degree of preservation, and the impossibility of DNA testing (GTNM, 2010).

The year 2005 marked a turning point in public policy with the contract for a genetic laboratory to build a national DNA database of the relatives of the disappeared. In addition, initiatives such as a survey in the city of Foz do Iguaçu by the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF), hired by the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances (CEMDP).

During this period, forensic archaeology courses were held in the São Paulo police under the responsibility of the archaeologist Sergio Francisco da Silva (2009) and researchers were hired for diagnosis in forensic institutes in Brazil in order to assess the real need for forensic anthropology specialists. Andrea Lessa, the coordinator of the project, stated that the situation in the country had condemned forensic practice that, in the end, only helps to feed the chain formed by the failure of police actions, impunity and violence. In addition to the training of professionals, the greatest challenges of forensic institutions, was to design an organisational structure in which there was an intense and fluid dialogue between the three components of forensic anthropology research: the historical context; the fieldwork stage with all of the appropriate procedures for excavation, documentation, and removal of corpses; the stage of analysis, by experts and in appropriate laboratories; and, finally, the phase of comparison between the data observed and those of databases of missing persons (Lessa, 2009).

Regarding the search for the disappeared in the Amazon region, who represent almost half of the political disappeared of the military dictatorship, for two decades certain professionals (bioarchaeologists and physical anthropologists) have been called to appear at meetings or in occasional consultations, both by the government and, with greater force, by the relatives of the disappeared. According to Souza (2015), the official and systematic presence of archaeologists would only occur in 2012, when federal judge Solange Salgado demanded her presence in the Araguaia Working Group - GTA, an expert body composed massively of forensic doctors, assisted by geologists and cartographers.

It was from 2010 onwards that a new impulse occurred with the broadening of the debate with the previously-mentioned creation of the National Truth Commission and all the other commissions. A large bibliography on the subject was produced by these commissions based on the previous research made by relatives' organisations and human rights groups in Brazil. Investigations for the search of missing persons ordered by the Prosecutor's Office were carried out by the Federal Police in the city of São Paulo in the cemeteries of Vila Formosa and Dom Bosco. The federal police, along with other experts from legal medical institutes from different parts of Brazil, also joined the working groups created for the search in the Araguaia region.

It is at this juncture that the multidisciplinary team was formed in 2014 to undertake the analysis of the Perus mass grave in São Paulo, where doctors, dentists, historians, bioanthropologists, archaeologists, geneticists, among other professionals, were coordinated by the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances (CEMDP) and supported by the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP) and the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship of São Paulo.

For the other cases, unfortunately, there was no national search strategy, investigation of potential burial sites, development of hypotheses of identity or specific budget for this activity. Although it is true that, in verifying the different efforts made for searches, since the creation, in 1995, of the Special Commission on Political Deaths

and Disappearances (CEMDP), the latter has ended up centralising responsibility for searches or carrying them out in partnership with other institutions for the technical staff. This somehow led to the existence of a specific institution devoted to this purpose. An example of this is the DNA initiative in 2005 to constitute a national bank of DNA reference samples of relatives of missing people. Its actions began to be consolidated in 2010 with the coordination by the CEMDP for the search investigations, albeit without a specific technical staff. It can be seen in Table 1 that it was always necessary to partner with different institutions in order to carry out the forensic work (Table 1), thus making it difficult to develop protocols, systematic actions, the construction of knowledge and experience on the part of local forensics and a specific plan of action related to these contexts.

Table 1. Searches for disappeared people

TEAMS CARRYING OUT THE INVESTIGATION	YEAR	CASE	STATE
Caravanas de familiares	1980s and 1990s	Araguaia	Tocantins
Investigations carried out by relatives' associations - GTNM-RJ	1980s and 1990s	Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro
Investigations carried out by relatives' associations	1980s and 1990s	São Paulo	São Paulo
DML - UNICAMP	1990 – 1998	Vala de Perus	São Paulo
DML - UNICAMP	1991	Perus Cemetery	São Paulo
DML - UNICAMP	1991	Araguaia	São Paulo
IML-MG	1991	José Júlio de Araújo	Minas Gerais
DML - UNICAMP	1992	Campo Grande Cemetery	São Paulo
EAAF, UERJ	1992	Ricardo de Albuquerque Cemetery	Rio de Janeiro
Comissão de Representação Externa da Câmara Federal and IML-DF	1994	Arno Preis	Tocantins
Comissão de Representação Externa da Câmara Federal and IML-DF	1994	Ruy Carlos Vieira Berbet	Tocantins
EAAF and CEMDP	1996	Araguaia	Tocantins
Nelson Massini and EAAF	1996	Iuri Xavier Pereira e Alex de Paula Xavier Pereira	São Paulo
Nelson Massini and EAAF	1997	Ana Maria Nacinovic	Rio de Janeiro
Nelson Massini e EAAF	1997	Marcos Nonato da Fonseca	Rio de Janeiro
IML-SP	2000	Catarina Helena Abi-Eçab	São Paulo
EAAF	2001	Foz do Iguaçu	Paraná
EAAF	2001	Araguaia	Tocantins
IML-SP and USP	2001 – 2005	Vala de Perus	São Paulo
CEMDP, GENOMIC and MPF	2005	Vala de Perus (Flavio de Carvalho Molina)	São Paulo

TEAMS CARRYING OUT THE INVESTIGATION	YEAR	CASE	STATE
CEMDP and GENOMIC and MPF	2006	Perus Cemetery (Luís José da Cunha)	São Paulo
CEMDP and EAAF	2006	Estrada do Colono - Foz do Iguaçu	Paraná
CEMDP and GENOMIC	2008	Perus Cemetery (Miguel Sabat Nuet)	São Paulo
CEMDP and GENOMIC	2009	Araguaia (Bergson Gurjão)	Tocantins
Grupo de Trabalho Tocantins (coordinated by the Military Command)	2009-2011	Araguaia	Tocantins
Grupo de Trabalho Araguaia (coordinated by CEMDP and with the support of the MJ and MD)	2011-2015	Araguaia	Tocantins
CEMDP and Polícia Federal	2011	Estrada do Colono - Foz do Iguaçu	Paraná
CEMDP	2011	Casa da Morte de Petrópolis	Rio de Janeiro
CEMDP and Polícia Federal	2011	Cemitério da Vila Formosa Cemetery	São Paulo
CEMDP and Polícia Federal	2011	Perus Cemetery (Luis Hirata e Aylton Mortati)	São Paulo
EAAF and Associação Brasileira de Anistiados Políticos - ABAP	2013	Vala de Perus	São Paulo
Comissão Nacional da Verdade, CEMDP, Federal Police and International Teams	2013	Joao Goulart	Rio Grande do Sul
Comissão Nacional da Verdade (IML-DF e PF), CEMDP	2013	Epaminondas Gomes de Oliveira	Distrito Federal
Comissão Nacional da Verdade	2013	Anísio Teixeira	Rio de Janeiro
Comissão Nacional da Verdade and CEMDP	2013	Arnaldo Cardoso da Rocha	Minas Gerais
Grupo de Trabalho Perus (coordinated by the CEMDP and with the support of the UNIFESP and SMDHC)	2014 – present	Vala de Perus	São Paulo
Comissão Nacional da Verdade and CEMDP	2014	Joao Leonardo da Silva Rocha	Bahia
CEMDP	2017	Joao Leonardo da Silva Rocha	Bahia
CEMDP	2018	Marabá	Pará
CEMDP	2018	Foz do Iguaçu	Paraná

Archaeology can undoubtedly contribute in cases of recent deaths or in places where bodies had been buried (Congram, 2016; Hunter & Cox, 2005; Skinner et al., 2002), through concepts such as context (Hodder et al., 1994) , material memory (Olivier, 2017; Olsen, 2010), the formation of the archaeological record (Buchli & Lucas, 2001; Lucas, 2010; Schiffer, 1987), stratigraphy, and, in general, in the application of archaeological techniques and methods (J. L. Mazz, 2017; Suárez & Rosignoli, 2020). It can also provide a cultural profile, the reconstruction of the facts and the context of the executions, thereby enabling a better understanding of the phenomenon of political violence.

According to Silva et al. (2009), professionals involved in the recuperation of skeletonised or even tissue bodies are poorly qualified. In Brazil, the exhumations and the recording of crime scenes is mainly carried out by firemen or civil policemen unprepared for this activity and who, therefore, are often unsuccessful in investigations due to lack of records of the location, disposition of the body, number of bones rescued and due to inadequate transportation and custody of the material collected.

Cases involving extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances and human rights violations require an investigative body and quite a different way of proceeding, since the state and all its machinery are primarily responsible. Moreover, as we see throughout the democratic period in Brazil, all the investigation has been carried out by experts connected to the police forces or coordinated by such groups, where the predominant approach is the police with relatives and communities who always relate to these forensic teams with great mistrust.

Experts working on the different forensic cases come from a variety of institutions, universities and their forensic departments, forensic institutes (Institutos Médico-Legais or IMLs) and the Federal Police. In practice, this relationship was not so divided since some of the IML's staff are also professors at universities. According to Gonzaga (2012) "...the Prosecutor's Office, in view of the sensible demands of relatives, has always argued that the identification of the human remains of missing people should not be the responsibility of police teams (...)". Unfortunately, until now, this has not been possible either. The expertise remains under the responsibility of these entities, although in contexts such as the Perus mass grave, this has changed with the presence of forensic scientists (archaeologists and bioanthropologists) who work for the state but have no links to police agencies.

As far as the international teams are concerned, these have always taken place on an *ad hoc* basis, that is, in specific cases or to help to constitute local teams (Ricardo de Albuquerque and Perus). However, with the lack of state policies, these trained groups suffer from political change and job insecurity.

No team has become consolidated to the present day, although there have been many efforts undertaken by civil society and some state organisations, such as the Federal Prosecutor's Office (Gonzaga, 2012). State institutions such as the Secretariat of Human Rights of the Presidency and the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances (CEMDP), in response to the demands of human rights groups, have created groups such as the *Grupo de Arqueologia e Antropologia Forense - GAAF* (Brazil, 2013), and later, the *Equipe Interdisciplinar para busca de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos - EIMDP* (Brazil, 2017). However, without resources and a team of professionals working exclusively for this purpose, the practice was restricted to a specific context, without any continuity and depending on very particular situations (Soares, 2016).

The lack of a permanent multidisciplinary group, and the lack of participation of specialised archaeologists to investigate clandestine burial sites (S. F. S. Silva & Oliveira, 2009; R. A. Souza et al., 2015) and cross-referencing of information for a better understanding of the context, have resulted in a very low number of identifications over the recent decades (Márcia Lika Hattori, 2019) as well as discontinuity in the research and in the technical memory of the process itself. Furthermore, such issues stem from the lack of specific public policies and, in consequence, the permanence of symbolic violence towards relatives and communities, and a long wait to conclude investigations, as occurred in such iconic cases as the Perus mass grave (in the southeast region of the country) or the Guerrilla of Araguaia (in the northern region of the country).

3.4.1. Who has been identified?

Coming from the state of Alagoas in north-eastern Brazil in January 1976, the family of Gastone Lúcia Beltrão asked to transfer their daughter's body, buried in 1972 in the cemetery of Perus, to their hometown. The coffin was sealed and handed over by the former commissioner Sérgio Paranhos Fleury who "recommended" that the family not to try to open it. The family transported the body, even though they could not guarantee that it was their daughter who had gone to São Paulo to join the guerrilla

insurgency. According to data from the National Truth Commission, this case and 32 others were identified.

But what can be considered to be identification? How many of the disappeared from the military dictatorship have been identified in Brazil? What is the universe of people who remain missing? How many disappeared have suffered from the military dictatorship that lasted 21 years?

Regardless of the lists produced by different groups, whether from the state or civil society, these are certainly underestimated numbers considering the lack of systematic investigation, the non-recognition of many collectives and the lack of access, as political subjects, to state reparation and recognition as victims.

When referring to the number of victims and the conflict of different lists, the Brazilian case is not unique. Most countries have no internal consensus on lists of missing persons (e.g., Peru, Guatemala, etc.). However, as a state that intends to research and resolve the different cases, clarifying concepts, how many and who to look for, is fundamental to thinking about the policies that will involve investigating each of them.

Lists of names play an essential role in these contexts of human rights violations where they were effectively one of the few complaints visible in newspapers including during dictatorship. More than numbers, it has been a fundamental part of civil society struggles to recognise those who have been affected by state violence. They have allowed and allow for the recognition and materialisation of the state's action and, in some way, reinforce the struggle of relatives for memory, truth and justice.

The pioneering research of the Relatives' Association is summarised in the publication "Dossier of Political Dead and Missing" (2009) presenting 436 political victims who died and disappeared during the dictatorship and 178 who are still missing. It is information gathered since the 1970s by relatives reporting accusations of persecution, murder and disappearance due to political reasons. The first edition was

produced in 1979 and since then it has been edited as new information has emerged. In 2007, following the work developed by family members and based on requests related to law 9.140/95, the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances consolidated the information and cases analysed by it in the book *Direito à Memória e a Verdade* (2008) (Right to Memory and Truth), in which 362 victims killed and disappeared by the Brazilian State are recognised. The National Truth Commission (2014) in its final report presents the number of 434 dead and 210 missing. It may seem that there is only a small difference between the first and the last study, but there are 16 cases that are in the Dossier or in the final report of the CNV. A logical reasoning would be a higher number of deaths and disappearances with the latest work prepared by the CNV, although this is not the case. Those that are in the CNV, but not in the Dossier, are in fact new information and investigations that have been carried out that have made it possible to recognise them as victims of the state. Those not on the CNV's final list corroborate what had been questioned under the law on the political disappeared. One of the main criticisms of the law was that it “excluded Brazilians who died after 1979, restricting itself to the same scope of the Amnesty Law. It also excluded Brazilians who were forced to go underground or into exile, or who were murdered in joint actions of the dictatorships of the Southern Cone” (Teles 2001).

Table 2. Cases differing in each list

In the Dossier but not in the CNV	In the CNV, but not in the Dossier
Ângelo Pezzuti da Silva	Angelina Gonçalves
Antônio Carlos Silveira Alves	Flávio Ferreira da Silva
Ari da Rocha Miranda	Sebastião Vieira da Silva
Carmem Jacomini	Iguatemi Zuchi Teixeira
Djalma Maranhão	Inocência Pereira Alves
Gerosina Silva Pereira	José Pinheiro Jobim
João Belchior Marques Goulart	Odair José Brunocilla
Luiz Affonso Miranda da Costa Rodrigues	
Sylvio de Vasconcellos	

According to the report of the National Truth Commission, over time, 33 people have been identified (Table 2). Among these identified persons, there are cases in

which the families themselves carried out the search, located the possible burial site and requested exhumation or cases in which a sealed coffin was received without it being certain whether it contained their relative or not, and cases in which a forensic investigation was carried out by different institutions that produced a report and delivered the human remains to the relatives. To sum up, there are many specific cases in which the families who received a body are not sure if it was that of their family member, of families who requested administrative exhumation through the bureaucratic procedure, and many cases of people who received a sealed coffin and were unable to verify the circumstances of the death.

Table 3. List containing the names of people identified according to the National Truth Commission (2014)

Identified according to the CNV

João Lucas Alves
Maria Lucia Petit da Silva
Sônia Moraes Angel Jones
Norberto Nehring
Joaquim Alencar de Seixas
Luis Eurico Tejera Lisboa
Frederico Eduardo Mayr
Dênis Casemiro
Arno Preis
Alex Xavier Pereira
Gelson Reicher
Gastone Lucia de Carvalho Beltrão
Helcio Pereira Fortes
Bergson Gurjão Farias
Flávio Carvalho Molina
Emanuel Bezerra dos Santos
José Julio de Araujo
Luiz José da Cunha
Miguel Sabat Nuet
Helber José Gomes Goulart
Epaminondas Gomes de Oliveira
Carlos Nicolau Danielli
Iuri Xavier Pereira
Manoel Lisboa de Moura
José Carlos Novaes de Mata Machado
Antônio Carlos Bicalho Lana
Lourival de Moura Paulino
Antônio Sérgio de Mattos
José Roberto Arantes de Almeida
Roberto Cietto

Rui Osvaldo Aguiar Pfutzenreuter

Antônio Benetazzo

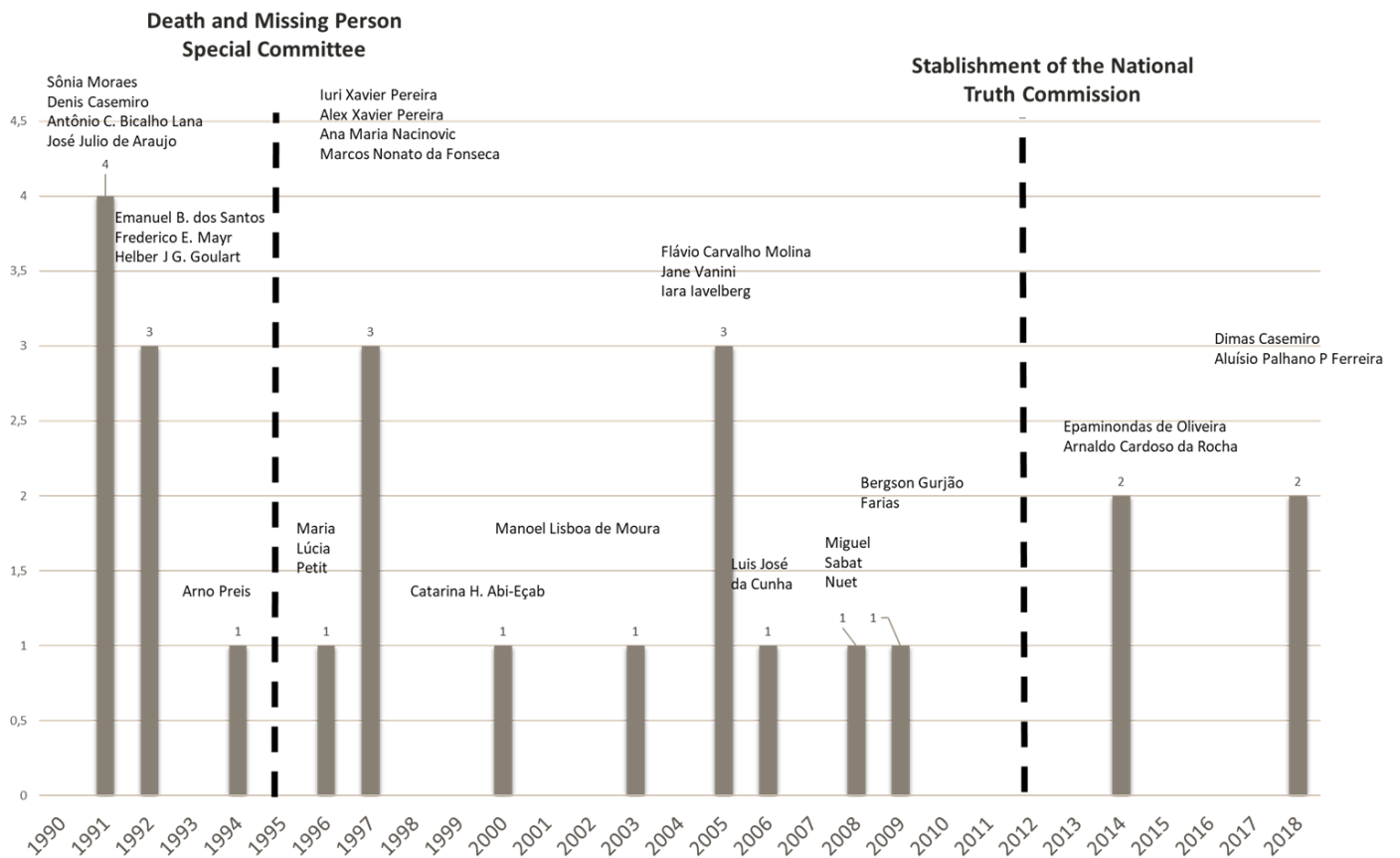
Alexandre Vanucchi Leme

But then, what does “identification” mean in Brazil? Do those relatives, who at some point during the repression were able to hastily exhume the bodies of their loved ones and bury them in a grave, have their process of clarifying the circumstances of death closed? And when there are doubts regarding the identification? Was the concept of identification used when there was only information about the possible location of the body?

Forensic identification of human remains is a legal determination (sealed by the signature of the judicial authority on the death certificate) based on the scientific comparison of information on missing persons and unidentified human remains. The process requires a holistic approach that takes into account all scientific and circumstantial evidence (ICRC, n.d.).

The following graph shows the identifications from the 1990s to the present day in Brazil, based on the above-mentioned concept. Cases were selected in which some kind of expert work was carried out and human remains were handed over to the family. The elaboration of such a synthesis involved not only bibliographic research, but, most importantly, dialogue with different family members who contributed from their own experiences to the search.

Graph 3. Identifications in Brazil each year

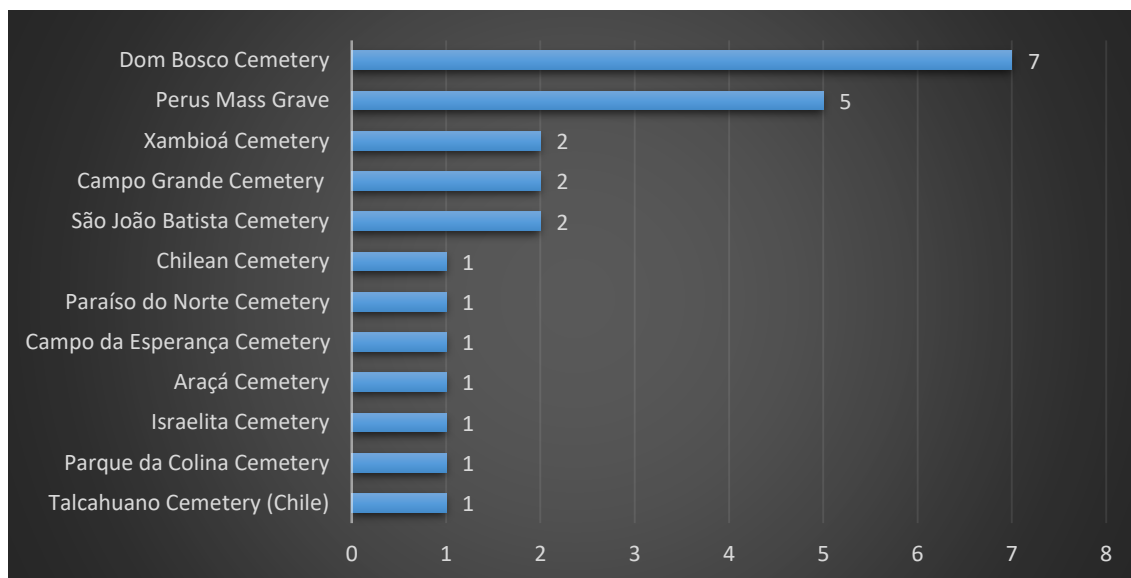


The creation of commissions able to investigate does not appear to have made significant changes in the number of identifications. This may be related to the lack of budget and fixed teams in the commission in charge of research (CEMDP), time, and coverage in the case of the National Truth Commission (CNV). Certainly, with the creation of the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances, the centralisation of information and the existence of an institution responsible for the search for disappeared people was and is crucial. It is worth noting that in the 1990s, 13 disappeared people were identified; in the 2000s, 7 people, and, in the 2010s, 4 people.

One type of information that clearly shows the problems of the search for the disappeared is related to the burial places of those who have been identified. As we can see in Chart 2, all the cases of identification were in cemeteries and individual graves, with the exception of the Perus mass grave. This seems quite symptomatic of the search process, as the training and profile of the teams appointed by the State,

with their methods, are flawed in one of the fundamental stages: the preliminary investigation in its different actions: surveying, gathering of testimonies and analysis of the documentation.

Graph 4. Identified people and the place of burial



Although a dictatorship and its impacts to this day should not be measured by the number of disappeared persons, forensic investigations establishing their universes of search, specific methodology and the development of a team with different professionals can certainly contribute to demonstrate and materialise the crimes of the dictatorship, as well as help in the identification of persons as part of the process involving transitional justice.

For this reason, it is essential to understand these mechanisms in a specific study of a representative case that perfectly exemplifies the complex relationships in forensic investigation in Brazil. Based on the forensic analysis of the human remains found in the mass grave of Perus carried out in recent decades, I intend to discuss the performance of experts, institutions and public policies in this field in Brazil.

3.5. Concluding remarks

The case of the Perus mass grave, which has been dragging on for 30 years, exemplifies the difficulties often encountered in forensic investigation in Brazil, such

as the difficult relationship between official experts who are part of the police; the lack of a specialised technical team from the State that acts in these contexts and has other types of theoretical-methodological perspectives; political changes that break with the continuity of the process resulting in a lack of financial and human resources for such actions; all of which occurs due to the absence of a strong State policy. The above research also draws attention to the problems that arise when collaborations with universities are formed, as the timing of work in forensic anthropology is often not the same as that of academic research, and the objectives are also different.

During the democratic period itself, the efforts to carry out the analysis and conclude the Perus case, far from creating a rupture with the trauma of the disappearance, generate the opposite: continuity, a lack of closure, symbolic violence with the abandonment of the human remains and the chaotic situation in which individuals' remains were mixed. The narratives of the victims' families, who speak of the abandonment and the mixing of human remains as if a new grave had been created, is the perception of how much the forensic work was a continuity of state violence.

Chapter 4. Clothes and papers: the de-characterisation of persons in dictatorship¹⁷

4.1. Introduction

During a fieldwork at Perus cemetery in 2017, in a conversation with José¹⁸, one of the employees, he told me the story of a mother who had arrived at the cemetery, in desperation, asking if they had already buried her son, who had died a few days before. The boy, who had been out on a weekend, died in a bar, was taken to the Institute of Forensic Medicine (IML-SP), registered as an NN and, days later, buried in the public cemetery. The mother, who was expecting her son to return at the weekend, begins the "pilgrimage" among the many hospitals in the region. One by one, since there is no cross-referencing of information between hospital systems. After assuming the possibility that her son might be dead, she begins another pathway to the forensic institutes, until she recognises him from a photograph in the NN photo album. The employees told that the body was taken to the cemetery on the same day. When she arrived there, the body had already been buried and she was not able to see him for the last time and say goodbye. The period between the death on Friday and the burial on Wednesday was only five days. The gravedigger at the cemetery still said it was better to wait three years before exhuming him.

One of the best-known cases in 2010, with great media repercussion, was the story of an elderly man who became ill in the street, was taken to hospital by police and died days later in the city of São Paulo. The death was not reported to the family. The most dramatic thing is that the daughter, knowing her father had memory problems, embroidered his name and six contact numbers on the man's clothes, a measure to prevent the elderly man from getting lost on the street. He was buried as an NN, but not before having his body used for anatomy classes at the Faculty of Medicine (Scatolino, 2017; E. F. Vendramini & Gennari, 2016).

¹⁷ Part of this chapter was published as an article in the *Journal of Contemporary Archaeology* entitled: *Undressing corpses - An archaeological perspective of the state violence*.

¹⁸ Anonymised

Cases like this are still recurrent in cities like São Paulo, in the southeast region of Brazil. The lack of communication and cross-checking of information between institutions throws all the responsibility to the families in integrating data, seeking information, checking the various police stations, hospitals and morgues for their relative. According to Vendramini (2019), for a family to be sure that their relative is not dead, they need to visit the 72 Institutes of Forensic Medicine - IML units in the state of São Paulo, because the data from the Civil Police, the Military Police, the Death Verification Service - SVO, the Funeral Service and the IML are not shared among themselves.

However, this practice, which makes it difficult to cross-reference information and ends up disappearing with bodies, does not appear recently. Hidden, in the basement of the dictatorship, political prisoners were murdered and the system itself was able to produce false reports of death, ignore the basic information available such as describing clothing, and stating that these occurred during a confrontation with the police. Two cases are extremely evident in this regard:

Ana Maria Nacinovic, an activist for the National Liberation Alliance (Aliança Libertadora Nacional, ALN), died at the age of 25 in 1972 in a confrontation with the police. The description in the autopsy report indicates that the body of the militant was naked when it was admitted to the Institute of Forensic Medicine) – a rare situation considering the fact that she had supposedly died in a public (ALESP, 2015; BRASIL, 2014)

Figure 23. Ana Maria Nacinovic Credit: ALESP (2015)



Grenaldo Jesus da Silva supposedly committed suicide while attempting to hijack an airplane at Sao Paulo airport in 1972; he was actually shot in the back of the neck and in the chest by law enforcement agents after he had surrendered and been immobilized (ALESP, 2015). The incident is one of the best-known cases of state violence that occurred in Brazil in that year. An air traffic controller who was working at the airport on the day was responsible for writing a report about what had happened. More than 30 years later, he told Grenaldo's son that there had been a letter to him in one of the pockets of the clothes his father had been wearing (Brum 2004). This letter, as well as the clothes – which could help clarify the circumstances of Grenaldo's death or assist in the examination – were omitted from the autopsy report, which states that “the corpse was completely naked”.

Figure 24. Grenaldo Jesus da Silva. Credit: ALESP (2015)



Besides Grenaldo and Ana Maria, there are many other cases, such as Francisco José de Oliveira, Hirohaki Torigoe and many others that follow the same strategy. The deaths and the disappearance of *guerrilleros* who fought against repression entered into a system of production of papers - such as reports, statements, photographs, which already disappeared people who, for the State, were not "important". These "unmourned" lives, to use Judith Butler's (2009) term, were the lives of poor people, street dwellers, psychiatric hospital inmates who had their largest population during the dictatorship and who were deprived of their identity during their passage through the state institutions and in the municipal funeral service itself during the years of dictatorship.

Undressing seems to be an almost standard procedure for bodies considered deviant by authorities: the exercise of sovereignty and territorial control as expressed through unrestricted actions on bodies (Segato, 2013, p. 56) has a long and gruesome history in Brazil with regard to indigenous people, those of African descent, women, LGBTQI+, etc. – “undesirable” or oppressed groups who have suffered, and still do, from neoliberal economic policies and the long-term processes of bitter structural violence and racism (Assumpção et al., 2018; S. Carneiro, 2015; Krenak, 2015; J. M. L. Mazz, 2015). In this sense, their bodies exist in a “state of exception” (G Agamben & Heller-Roazen, 1998; Davis, 1997) that becomes the norm. How is it possible to materialise the precariousness of life at the moment of death? How is citizenship constructed in the bureaucratization of death? These are questions that are certainly influenced by the understanding that the dialogue between archaeology and post-colonialism is not limited to processes of colonial domination in the past, but rather, in understanding the transformations and survivals of colonialism in the contemporary world (Escobar, 2004; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Quijano, 2015; Walsh, 2012). In other words, we still live our daily lives surrounded by the legacies of colonialism, one of the most structuring ventures of modernity. As Rita Segato (2016) states, the "state in Latin America is a reproduction of the colonial scheme and relationship in its architecture and structuring of institutions and its rationality in bureaucracy". In this sense, the concept of race and racism is central to this perspective. What marks these bodies across generations, particularly in the

citizenship given in death? If "race" in biological terms is a fiction, I agree with anthropologist Jaime Alves (2011) in the perspective that "the same cannot be said of the material implications in the lives of racialized populations. Race, as a socially constructed reality, structures social relations and defines not only differential access to citizenship, but also the right to live.

In the instances discussed above this power was exercised on the bodies of political dissidents, designated as "terrorists". In each case, bureaucrats, technicians and institutions were used to validate a false narrative regarding what had happened to an individual designated a terrorist at the moment of his or her death. Under Brazil's repressive military regime (1964–1985), forensic analysis consistently corroborated the official accounts of violent death, but it is significant that there is no documentation about clothes and other elements that could help to identify individuals or contribute to understanding how they died.

The disappearance of victims of the state – whether clandestinely following detention or of their bodies after their deaths have been acknowledged – is a strategy of repression that has been deployed in various contexts around the world, and it has been the subject of a great deal of research (Baraybar & Blackwell, 2014; Congram, 2016; Crossland, 2013; Doretti & Fondebrider, 2001; Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2020; Wagner & Kešetović, 2016). My interest is to analyze these other forms of disappearance and to demonstrate the omission as a technique of disappearance, a device employed by the state bureaucracy so that bodies are classified as *nomen nescio* (NN), or name unknown. The term denotes individuals who were neglected or marginal to the state in life – a status that is reflected in practices relating to the body following death.

The analysis of these state strategies for those buried as NN emerged from my participation as part of the forensic anthropology team of the Perus Working Group in the city of São Paulo, Brazil (2013-2017). Once the search universe of people who could have been buried in the mass grave of Perus was established, we began to systematically look at the bodies buried as NN with the aim of assessing if, one of

those disappeared could have been buried as NN. This is due to the fact that after 1973, the strategy of repression changes and the systematic use of forced disappearance begins to occur. This experience, whose methods were oriented by the Peruvian Team of Forensic Anthropology - EPAF that sought to constitute, together with the Argentinean Team of Forensic Anthropology - EAAF, a local forensic team in Brazil, as I already mentioned in the previous chapter. This enabled me and a group of archaeologists and bio-anthropologists to see this world of negligence in the records and this called our attention on the processes that involve the strategy of disappearance and the mechanisms of a dictatorial State. How was it possible that someone whose body had been found inside his house, had been buried as an unknown person? How could someone who was on working hours and in work clothes have gone to the Forensic Medical Institute as an NN? To unveil this in other documentary series, such as the cemetery logbooks, death certificates, victim photograph books, among others, was to perceive the lack of dialogue between the institutions and employees; the enormous quantity of documents produced that should help in the identification was precisely treated in a negligent way that caused the little information to be lost. After all, following the bureaucratic path of death elucidated the mechanisms of disappearance and the production of unknowns in the period, allowed an understanding of how repressive strategies used an institutionalised system, already in place, to also force the disappearance of opponents of the regime (Hattori et al., 2016)

The aim of this chapter is to explore disappearance and how it occurs within the bureaucracy of death, which undresses bodies and depersonalizes them, by analyzing information recorded about the clothes of individuals classified as having no known identity who died in during this period in São Paulo. Through a microanalysis of several cases and the systematic assessment of what little existing information there is, I intend to explain the institutional constitution of the production of NN bodies and identities. As part of this, I show how the apparatus of repression has formal attachment to norms of public administration, the complicity of officials and bureaucrats creating an aura of “legality” in cases of disappearance within state institutions. The mechanism is particularly clear in how the bodies of guerrillas killed

in acts of repression in 1971 and 1972 in the city of São Paulo were included in this bureaucratic machine in order to make them disappear, as part of a wider deliberate and systematic policy in which omission was deployed to make the bodies of people whose lives did not matter disappear – an instance of what Foucault (1977) describes as “technology of power”.

4.2. Forms of Disappearance through bureaucracy

Max Weber’s ideas about bureaucracy convinced many nation-states that high rationality would eventually objectify our systems of government, ultimately giving rise to independent officials, dehumanized rules and apolitical procedures (Plets, 2016). In different contexts, however, we see bureaucracy being used to govern subjects and their bodies (M. Foucault, 1985; Gupta, 2012), as well as being a way of practicing a clearly selective morality on the part of officers, especially concerning those who are buried without identity, usually the homeless, immigrants and missing persons, among others. During the Cold War, the production of documents and archives to control social movements and possible “subversive” people was one of the techniques taught to the police of Latin American countries, such as Guatemala, by the US government (Weld, 2014).

When considering countries with colonial heritage and the lives of indigenous people, enslaved people, the poor and minority groups and the like, such practices have always been common of either the colonizing countries or the new states. Certain groups have always suffered from bare lives, those which are not endowed with a political existence. In this sense, in accordance with Agamben (1998), the state of exception becomes a norm. Thus, when talking about violent deaths in contexts of dictatorship, the removal of identities and neglect, I understand that the use of the concept of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2006) is fundamental in countries such as Brazil, Mexico and others in the Global South when considering population management through neoliberal policies involving not only population growth, but also its reduction by eliminating certain groups. Since poverty, inequality, violence, massacres and life-threatening illegal trading markets are so widespread, what is at stake is no longer life

but death. At the heart of this necropolitics is the economy of illegal goods, including human trafficking and corpses, which become commodities (Estévez, 2016; Mbembe, 2018). This is not done to regulate reproduction but to decide who should die in a context in which corruption and impunity are so common that specific groups are vulnerable to violence and death and their existence implies conflicts in a modern consumerist and liquid way of life (Bauman, 2013).

Researchers with an interest in anthropology at forensic institutes (Medeiros, 2015; Rezende, 2012) have discussed the topic of the practices that make up the simultaneous identification and filing of multiple legal writs, guides, requisitions, photographs, and newsletters. The preparation of these numerous documents is a constitutive practice of the attempt to identify bodies. However, the classification logic also characterizes the fact that the combinations of documents concerning each corpse do not lend themselves to their individualization - constituting a 'classificatory game' which might appear to the outside world a form of 'care' but which is, when deconstructed, a form of control meant to produce or reproduce laxity and inaccuracy as part of the process of disappearance (Ferreira, 2011).

According to Ferreira (2011, p. 20), recognized and regulated documents establish the individual as unique and particular and produce a maximum of singularization and, ideally, an absolute individualization. Different documents legalize and officialise the citizen and make him/her visible, controlled and legitimized by the state. Such a mechanism has historically been oriented towards the identification of criminals and the investigation of crimes (J. Borges, 2019; Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2017). Likewise, the obligation to possess and carry documents has its reverse side: to exclude, remove, dispossess, deny and empty the social recognition of the individual who does not have the required document in certain contexts. The document is a device (DaMATTA, 2002; Peirano, 2006; Pina-Cabral, 2005) which lends itself to synthesizing and distinguishing total, unique and exclusive identities, integrating the biological and social existence of people, with names being presented as a constituent part of personal identities.

These roles involve the elaboration of an identity by a scientific discourse of individualizing traits in bodies which are subjected to and managed by the different types of knowledge and techniques of medical examiners, photographers and the whole body of employees dedicated to such activity. In the city of São Paulo, the bodies that undergo this type of treatment are those denominated in the bureaucracy as “unknown”, the so-called “John Doe” and “Jane Doe”.

For those buried as unknown, the bureaucracy and the “care / control” that is exerted on this group can be seen in the existence of numerous documents. There are corpse collection guides, case reports (*boletins de ocorrência*), examination requisitions (*requisições de exame*), autopsy reports (*laudos necroscópicos*), death certificates (*certidões de óbito*), photographs, fingerprints (*fichas datiloscópicas*), and cemetery entrance records, among others (Figures 25 and 26).

Figure 25. An examination requisition. Source: Pasta 2-38. Acervo DEOPS-SP. Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo – APESP

SECRETARIA DA SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA
INSTITUTO MÉDICO-LEGAL DO ESTADO

REQUISICÃO DE EXAME

Ilmo. Sr. Diretor do Instituto Médico-Legal do Estado.

nome verdadeiro: Francisco José de Oliveira
CAPITAL *União Anac.*

Solicito suas providências no intuito de ser recebido ao Necrotério desse Instituto, a fim de ser submetido ao necessário exame cadáver abaixo qualificado:

NOME: DARIO MARCONDES **Doc. Ident.** 412.517 EG.
Idade: 15.06.1943 **Sexo:** Masculino **Estado civil:** solteiro
Côr: branca **Profissão:** Estudante
Nacionalidade: Brasileira **Naturalidade:** Lavras - Minas Gerais

FILIAÇÃO | **Pai:** José Marcondes
| **Mãe:** Djanira Souza Marcondes

RESIDÊNCIA: Ignorada
Falecido às: 16,00 horas e encontrado às 16,00 horas
Do dia: 05.11.71 **à rua:** Turissaud **n.º:** _____
Bairro: Paraisópolis -

NATUREZA DA OCORRÊNCIA: (assinalar)

Homicídio	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suicídio	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acidente	<input type="checkbox"/>	Morte suspeita	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infanticídio	<input type="checkbox"/>	Acidente de Trabalho	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abortamento	<input type="checkbox"/>	Morte natural	<input type="checkbox"/>

Breve histórico do caso: (deve ser preenchido pela autoridade requisitante)
Hoje, por volta das 16,00 horas, travou violento tiroteio com os Criminos da Segurança, vindo a falecer em consequência de ferimentos recebidos.

DEPARTAMENTO DE ORDEM
POLÍCIA E SEGURANÇA
302 / 105 / 123

Conduzido por _____ Carro N.º _____
Remeter o laudo para DEOPS
Observações: **Fotografar e tirar impressões digitais.**

São Paulo, 05 de novembro de 1971
O REQUISITANTE
[Assinatura]
(legível e autógrafo)

S. G. - D. E. P. - 233M

Figure 26. Fingerprints Source: Pasta 2-59. Acervo DEOPS-SP. Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo - APESP



It is also true that, in the case of many of the unknown, gathering evidence from their associated materials, such as clothing, documents, the place where the body was found, etc., is not so difficult considering today's deeply controlled society reflected in the production of papers and data which monitor the inhabitants of the city of São Paulo. At present, this is most evident with social media, the use of cell phones and personal information which is sent continuously and simultaneously (Han, 2014; Steyerl & Berardi, 2014). In the case of those buried as unknown, neglect and the lack of “time” and care taken in the search for their identity and their relatives are evident. A clear example is the identification of these unknown people by their fingerprints. Many of those who already have a criminal record are found by matching the information collected at the IML with the identification institutes (in the case of São Paulo, the Ricardo Gumbleton Identification Institute, IIRGD). However, even so, they are buried as unknown if their bodies are not claimed by a relative.

In the words of Eliana Vendramini (2016, p. 190), coordinator of the State Prosecutor Missing Persons Search Program [Programa de Localização e Identificação de Desaparecidos]¹⁹:

¹⁹ In Portuguese: PLID - Programa de Localização e Identificação de Desaparecidos

We have an omission today that we call forced disappearance by omission. It is forced to the extent that the state has more power than the citizen to stop this type of action. So he/she is no longer eventually forced by violence. We have statistical data proving that one of the forms of disappearance is police violence, but it is also forced by how it is carried out, sending the body to the Funeral Service without the least organizational ethics and leaving families to search for more than 15 years.

What underlies this discussion is the distribution of the work and how accountability is diluted in one or more technicians: the employee(s) who fulfil the roles - on the microscale, the bureaucrat justifying the performance of his work (Arendt, 1963) and who, as a whole and as part of the institution, structures this machine. This rationalization dilutes everybody's responsibility.

One of the few forensic scientists to have had their medical registration revoked, Harry Shibata was part of the forensics team of the São Paulo Legal Medical Institute. His collaboration with the dictatorship had always been highlighted by the different family groups and truth commissions which investigated the matter. In a statement by the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the Missing, established in the 1990s when the mass grave was opened, Shibata made use of this argument of not taking responsibility for or not having autonomy in his actions: “(...) I just kept my schedule, did my autopsies, did my reports and nothing more., I had no access for the rest of the activities. Even, as I just explained before, the Forensic Medical Institute was not a police body, it belonged to the police, but it was not ultimately the police (...)”²⁰.

Still, Shibata was part of a larger structure that enabled such actions - the forensic centre and its staff. It is hard not to recall Hannah Arendt's (1963) classic text on Eichmann's trial and the banality of evil. For her, the act of exterminating people “can only become an administrative issue in the structures of the bureaucracy that dominates modern doing” (Grespan, 2013, p. 155). Within the legality of a Nazi state,

20 Harry Shibata's testimony to the Perus Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry (1992).

Eichmann drove millions of human beings to their deaths by following law-based orders in a framework of amoral bureaucratic automatism.

Since the 1980s, research on the Shoah has also complicated understanding of the “administrative bureaucracy of evil” and, at the same time, begun to study the relations of civil societies with totalitarian regimes, emphasizing their consensus, the widespread dissemination of knowledge of their crimes and the active participation of “ordinary people” in their perpetration (Browning, 1992; Goldhagen, 2009).

In the context of South America, this has resonance with the analysis of Sarrabayrouse Oliveira (2012), who considers the military dictatorship as a general disciplinary and consensus-forming process from which broad sectors of society approved criminal action of military forces. It can be added that this widespread discipline led to the increase of certain technologies of power such as torture and disappearance, deployed not just against guerillas but society more generally (Duarte-Plon, 2016). The Brazilian death squads (Bicudo, 1976) and their insertion in the political repression and repressive apparatuses demonstrates this: the practices of police offices in the squads overlapped in such a way that there was no possibility of dissociating from the repression apparatus (Mattos, 2016).

The bureaucratic performance model is based on the meticulous and functional division of labour and replaces moral responsibility with technical responsibility (Bauman, 2013, p. 125). This results in technicians not feeling responsible for the outcome of a work process with these characteristics, among other effects. However, these forensic scientists never knew how to organize themselves professionally independently of the state, even knowing the potential of their speciality as a means of questioning the modern state and revealing subaltern resistance (Fahmy, 2015). In the period of dictatorship, and to this day, this speciality is under the control of the police, in most Brazilian states. Many of them, such as bureaucrats, judges, police, in other words, the pillars of what is called the “deep state” act from the perspective that their first task was not to serve the public or society but to defend the state.

Returning to the case of Harry Shibata, in addition to the two coroners who signed the report, there was the driver of the vehicle, the policeman who would describe the scene, a photographer, etc. What is suggested here is that not only should ordinary individuals be held responsible, tried and convicted if necessary, but also the institutions and their officials, such as ministers and high-ranking military personnel. Above all, these institutions should be reformulated with the aim of disrupting those strategies that select those who are “deserving” to be more meticulously analysed with a view to seeking their identities.

Consciously or not, on the scale of the individual, employee or bureaucrat, some lives are unimportant, maybe wasted (Bauman, 2013), not grievable (Butler, 2009) and stripped of their identity. For Shibata, the forensic scientist working for the structure of repression, those who did not matter were poor people who were not deserving of his time to describe the circumstances of their death, their clothes or where they were found, and also communists, those who were struggling against the regime and entered this bureaucratic structure and disappeared.

If, on the one hand, these mostly black and poor people are unnoticed in life and, even more so, ignored in their death in the national imagination, on the other, their family and friends do not forget and have material and immaterial elements of reference to remember them by. Through the process of searching, individuals who have lived and still live through this traumatic process also find common experiences and trajectories (Irazuzta, 2020), organising themselves into collectives and social movements. Thus, by examining clothing, it can be seen how this carelessness is part of the state’s apparatus of making people disappear who, even during their existence, were regarded as lives that did not matter (Butler, 2009; Gatti et al., 2020).

4.3. Bureaucracy and identification in other Latin America contexts

How did this state bureaucracy work in the context of other dictatorships and in the present in Latin America? What similarities can be seen, from those countries that have suffered from the “Operación Condor” and also from the contexts of very

complex processes of violence in places such as Mexico or Colombia where disappearance strategies have deepened questions about necropolitics and state violence in “democratic” contexts?

Far from attempting a synthesis of the research developed in the Latin American context, I want to provide insights on the use of bureaucracy in the context of violence in some countries and how the concept of victim contributes to elucidate the nuances and complexities of the forms of state violence in contexts of exception and, as I have already pointed out throughout this thesis (see chapter 2), structural to certain groups.

I argue that in this context, far from generalizations, it is important to affirm that transitional moments, although they propose ruptures in certain forms of violence, there are others that are simply a continuity, called violence of long temporality or structural violence (Castillejo-Cuéllar, 2013; 2017; Farmer, 2010) founded within historical and epistemic colonial continuities. In the Latin American context, transitions were ultimately a movement to a form of global capitalism founded more on continuities than fractures. I focus here on some studies on bureaucracy in the context of Operation Condor and its use as a repressive technology in Guatemala and Argentina, the production of documentation or forms of materialisation of evidence in relation to indigenous people and peasants in the Peruvian context and the subsequent studies that permeate conflicts the widespread use of structural violence in contexts such as Colombia and Mexico.

Policing is, in its most basic sense, a process by which a State constitutes an archive of society. The work of policing would be impossible without the tools of archiving databases of fingerprints, arrest records and categories of circumscribed behaviour. In Guatemala, during Cold War, with U.S. assistance in matters archival, technical, political, and material, the oppressive power of police records assumed an intensified character by processing a massive documentary record about Guatemala and Guatemalans (Weld, 2014). In “Paper Cadavers”, published in 2014, Kirsten Weld analyses the repercussions of a discovery of 75 million pages of evidence of state-

sponsored crime in Guatemala dictatorship. She demonstrates how U.S. consultants went to Guatemala to recommend U.S. assistance focus specifically on records management by providing training courses in “Police Records”, “Police Property Records and Control” and “Police Records and Report Writing” – and by supplying raw materials like filing cabinets and file cards (2014, p. 92).

This leads us to consider the role of control beyond weapons and the use of institutions that have transformed distinct shock troops into brutal counterinsurgency.

U.S. intervention in Guatemala is better known for bloodier feats: deposing a democratically elected president; arming “neurotic” anti-communists to the teeth; offering political cover for state-sponsored terror; and providing technical assistance to security forces while knowing, at every step of the way, that those forces were using U.S. aid and political capital to commit crimes against their own citizens. But record keeping, too, belongs to that list.

(Weld, 2014, p. 93)

The organization of the police and the forms of control over populations considered dangerous did not begin during the Cold War, but it certainly improved in different countries. The first studies that aim an exploratory analysis for understanding political violence were made in Argentina to do an analysis to account for nuances, folds and contradictions in the practices, ideas and emotions that went through the members of state bureaucracies in the face of violence repressive force exercised by the last military dictatorship (Crenzel, 2014, p. 30).

This conceptual shift was reproduced in studies related to the history of political violence and human rights violations in Argentina, one of the precursor countries in the Latin American context in this type of investigation related to state violence (Crossland, 2013). In the mid-nineties, various contributions began to address, as an object of study, the commitments that various social groups established with the exercise of political violence and, also, the responsibilities of various civil society

actors and politics in repression (Aguila, 2008). The state itself and its bureaucracies ceased to be assumed as mere instruments of repression and became the object of new studies. A series of contributions showed the grey areas and the ambiguities of officials and state agents, the folds they traversed and the nuances that condensed different instances of public bureaucracies in courts, maternity, civil registry, mortuaries and cemeteries, among other dependencies, in times of the Argentinian dictatorship and, specifically, before the practices that involved its paradigmatic crime: the forced disappearance of people (Crenzel, 2014; Mora, 2008; Pita, 2005; Sarrabayrouse Oliveira, 2012; Somigliana & Olmo, 2002; Tiscornia, 2004).

Finally, it is important to highlight that many of the nuances and specificities related to the search for the disappeared in the state bureaucracy and its recognition are related to the category of victim. This has been embedded in our way of representing violence in the world and functions as a resource for claiming and accessing certain rights. Perceived and recognised as a condition of personal or collective status, it can constitute social, cultural, economic or political capital. Thus, for many people, the status of victim becomes a way of gaining access to citizenship or the right to exercise it through state recognition.

The maximum expression in the Argentinean context, for example, is the figure of the detained-disappeared, which extends to their relatives, former political prisoners, survivors and children born or appropriated during the captivity of their parents in a Clandestine Detention Centre - CCD. However, it is true that even in the Argentinean context, the victim/victimizer category is ambiguous and flexible, and from this emanates its great power as a classificatory resource to demand access to state and transnational prerogatives through the appeal to a humanitarian reason that frames the violent events and delineates the possible amends for the damage caused (Guglielmucci, 2017).

Sofia Tiscornia (2008) regarding the work of delimiting and recognising suffering as a political fact, points out that the death of young people by the police is usually presented "as a mistake without responsibility" and are generally judged by the courts,

unless the victim's relatives or friends turn the death into a political event. In this way, the possibility of these deaths reaching a political status is conditioned by the social and legal mobilisation activities of different actors such as human rights organisations and victims' families.

This is seen in different Latin American contexts during the dictatorship and also in democratic contexts where the condition of victim of a political recognition related to state violence only occurs through mobilizations and the public exposition of the events. I argue that this occurs with countless collectives during dictatorial contexts as it was for a long time with indigenous people, peasants in the context of the Brazilian dictatorship, as it occurs with countless black young people murdered by the police, LGBTQI+ persecuted by the police during Argentinian dictatorship and many other cases.

NN records in cemeteries during dictatorship

Regarding the investigation carried out with records of NN burial in the cemeteries, Olmo and Somigliana, from the Argentinean Forensic Anthropology Team - EAAF, when reviewing the numbers throughout the 20th century, affirm that people who were buried as NN throughout the century have constant characteristics that was not specified by the authors. However, reviewing for the second half of the 1970s, they found very different characteristics: women were around 33%, the dominant age range is between twenty and thirty-five years and, finally, the more frequent cause of death is “killed by a shot of a firearm”. The proportion between men and women and age distribution corresponds exactly with that of those whose disappearance was denounced at the same time (Somigliana & Olmo, 2002). The documentation, despite being entirely housed in a single unit and subject to a single archival management logic, had not been intertwined which complicates the possibilities to track the information about the person.

The contribution of these studies, in addition to the work identifying a state strategy with a very specific group profile during the 1970s in Argentina, shows the difficulty

in tracking and crossing these data shows a system made for enormous state control (materialized by the quantity of documents produced) but it is also used as a technique to make it harder for tracing by relatives and different groups that: first, does not have easy access to these files, and second, demand a huge time effort to allow tracing the pathway of the bodies buried as unknown and its destiny.

Records and archives – indigenous groups

According to the *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación - CVR* in Perú, of the total number of victims reported to the commission, 79 percent lived in rural areas, 56 percent were engaged in farming or livestock activities, and 75 percent spoke Quechua or other native languages as their mother tongue (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, 2003). In the CVR's final report, Salomón Lerner said that in the worst forecasts it was expected that the violence had left 35,000 lives lost and the estimate, whose numbers are always changing, was 35,000 more, mostly Quechua-speaking peasants, people who in the national imagination went unnoticed during their lifetime and were even more ignored after their death, although relatives still remember them (Rojas-Perez, 2017, p. 7)

Rojas-Perez (2017, p. 8) will refer the picture of “absolute exclusion”, ultimately as a product of persisting unjust structural conditions in Peruvian society as a whole. Racism, economic inequality, and social and cultural discrimination that continue to structure Peru's social order made some Peruvians more “killable” than others. This conclusion suggests that violence expanded lethally because it operated within a broader “biopolitics of neglect”. How survivors and relatives seize the moment of the forensic exhumation to speak truth to power and denounce the practices of state terror that resulted in the fabrication of corpses such as occurred at Los Cabitos and Accomarca Massacre.

However, the idea that there is little documentation regarding peasant populations has been debated and recent work (Willems, 2019) has demonstrated the extensive documentation produced by Peruvian state and different committees. In one of her

case studies in the Apurímac river valley, she mentions an archive with more than 600 documents from the headquarters of the self-defence committees in Pichiwillca containing correspondence from the grassroots and zonal committees to the headquarters and communication between them and the military.

In 2015, I had the chance to go to one of the space of the dead at the cemetery in Hualla in Ayacucho region with the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team – EPAF. There, *bnallinos* vocalize polical demands in the present. Eva Willems (2019, p. 491), who was there doing her research, affirm that the way in which survivors deal with the absence of the bodies of the disappeared in Hualla reflects their search for the body politic: they claim the space generated by the absence to vocalize their desire for inclusion and protection vis-à-vis the state. This enables them to vocalize their political demand to make the disappeared 'grievable'; to revalue their lives as that of human beings and citizens and also use the space to denounce present injustices. However, for the historian (Willems, 2019, p. 490), the survivors' perception of the ruptures between past, present and future are thus less clearly delineated than proposed by the linear temporality of transitional justice, in which the transitional moment aims to contain the violence of the past by turning it into history.

Structural violence and conflicts

Demographic studies suggest that there was an increase in the mortality of certain population segments and violent deaths during the "dirty war" in other countries such as Haiti and Guatemala (Baraybar do Carmo, 2016). According to these studies the entry records in the morgue or in the cemeteries coincide with the moments of greater repression by the State and its agents, the number of violent death revenues in the morgue increased drastically (Doretto & Fondebrider, 2001; Snow, 1982).

In Colombia there is also an effort to make visible all the deaths hidden by the armed conflict and touching very sensitive fibers of the social fabric: it occurs against anonymous, unknown, unidentified beings who die to a very high degree. These are the anonymous deaths that add up to the statistical figures (Blair, 1999). It is the

phenomenon of the indigent and marginalized, which, in opposition to the magnicides, has been called insignificant deaths in the form of "social cleansing." It is these deaths that appear in the press in a footnote the margin without major importance. Although we know that such actions occur elsewhere, in the Colombian case, they are fundamental to reflect this generalized state of violence (Castillejo Cuéllar, 2017).

Looking for the democratic context, Ansolabehere e Payne (2017) see Brazil and Mexico as emblematic cases regarding a new cycle of the practice of disappearance in Latin America in which in Brazil, the "cleaning" of young people who are supposedly "linked" to delinquency in Brazil and the so-called war against drug trafficking in Mexico has generated new justifications for the use of this type of practice - disappearance.

In Mexico, the case of Ayotzinapa in 2014 and the 43 students who disappeared, in the hands of the police, unleashed a social movement that confronted the Mexican State in the demand for finding them alive ("vivos los queremos") and placed the discussion about the massive and systematic dimension of the problem. This gave rise, among other things, to the lack of information regarding the disappearance of people (Yankelevich, 2017). In that sense, unlike contexts related to dictatorships and declared armed conflict, the investigation of the disappearances in Mexico is not raised exclusively through truth commissions or reports that investigate the crimes of the past. It does not evoke the idea of transitional justice, but of everyday justice, institutions that investigate crimes that happen every day, resulting from a kind of undeclared armed conflict.

Investigations have shown that the extent of the violence has been selective. The discussion in Mexico about the disappearances recovers as a national reference the dirty war in the decade of the 1970s, close to the rest of the Latin American experience, however the idea of what is disappearance has changed. The new disappearances resurfaced in the national life in the midst of some confusion due to the fact that it was no longer strictly a matter of kidnapping, but it did not fully

respond to the idea of what a disappeared detainee (“detenido desaparecido”) was. As pointed out by other researchers, although in the dirty war, the agents and causes of the disappearances were relatively clear, in the middle of the war against drug trafficking they have become rather diffuse. The involvement of security forces and groups of drug traffickers have led to an expansion of the idea of disappearance that, in public discourse, is used as the disappearance of people.

The concept understands that it extends the same group to those disappearances in which there is an active subject of crime that is not restricted to people belonging to or linked to the State, that the administrative disappearances resulting from the impossibility of identifying a living or dead person. This concept of disappearance is framed beyond the political opponents of a regime and include members of historically disadvantaged groups like indigenous people, women, afro-american people, poor, etc. (Ansolabehere et al., 2017)

According to the statistics of the National Commission of Human Rights in Mexico, the forensic services of the country have 16,133 unidentified bodies, which is equivalent to more than half of the official number of missing persons (32,148) (Ansolabehere et al., 2017). This is an indication that the explanation of the phenomenon is not only in the intentions of concealment of living or dead people who have the perpetrators of disappearance and in the deficiencies or eventual complicity of the institutions responsible for seeking the victims. It is also in the inefficiency of the agencies that are in charge of the identification of bodies. It is the interacting aggregation of these and other variables that results in the human rights crisis in Mexico.

As in Brazil, the Mexican context shows that the concept of state violence refers not only to police practices of extermination and massacre in slums, but also to complicity and state indifference with homicidal violence, daily violence expressed in spatial segregation, systematic denial of citizenship rights, preventable deaths in public hospital queues.

Another of the current characteristics of structural violence is racism and xenophobia manifested in the construction of new walls that "defend" the prosperous states of the migratory crisis. In the Mexican and Colombian contexts that have carried out to a large extent these studies on the necropolitics and the disappearance of people, as in the Argentinean context, where to a large extent one can see the performance of the bureaucracy, other officials and their distribution in the chores and the use of this structure to force the disappearance of opponents of the regime, show that structural violence remains in the institutions even if certain regimes are dismissed and replaced. Unfortunately, the Latin American experience itself both in dictatorial contexts and in the present, has made important contributions and reflections at the concept of disappearance.

4.4. The system – the identification of persons in São Paulo city: institutional structure and the production of documents.

The procedures in the city of São Paulo, which are related to the registration of people classified as NN involve different institutions and the production of a huge number of guides, papers, labels that follow the pathway of the body until its inhumation in the cemetery in a process of institutional construction of the corpses.

I introduce here the processes involved in the bureaucracy of death in the city of São Paulo, throughout the 1970s, for a better understanding of the system and the process of analysis that I present next. These endless papers produced with their copies delivered to different institutions and their non-systematization and cross-checking, generate the opposite objective: the difficulty in this trace. These countless barriers are found in the different narratives from the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina (Karababikian, 2007), the Comissão de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos (M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012) to the democratic context with Mães da Sé e Mães de Maio (D. Silva & Dara, 2015) in Brazil. On the other hand, to resist was also to produce papers by sending letters asking for news of their missing ones addressed to generals, presidents, NGOs (Assis et al., 1985) and that were later used

as evidence to demand reparation from the Brazilian state. This was a way of doing the opposite of what the strategy of disappearance was - materializing the existence of those who disappeared – showing pictures and writing about them.

Michel Foucault, in his well-known study of clinical medicine, showed the same transformation from small-scale practice to a large-scale manipulation of records. One of his studies demonstrates the shift from a power that is seen by invisible observers, to a new invisible power that sees everything about everyone. Foucault's (1992) analysis is to focus not only on archives, account books, time tables but also on the kind of institutions in which these inscriptions end up being so essential. Yet, if they are so essential to power (Latour, 2011), why the omission or the difficulty in this tracking that makes identification impossible? If they are lives that do not matter, what is the need for so many roles and procedures?

A key concept in this reflection in Brazil dictatorship is the maintenance of legality devices in an exception context (Teles, 2001). One of the most decisive characteristics of the Brazilian dictatorship was its apparent legality, or its capacity to reduce legality to the dimension of appearance. Elections were held, international treaties against torture were signed, a parliament elected by casuistic electoral rules, papers to justify death in the middle of a shooting, was in the end, clearly subjected to the arbitrary decision of a sovereign power that placed itself outside the legal system (Serrano, 2016). As Teles (2015) states, when it was convenient, electoral rules were modified, books were seized, music was censored, someone disappeared. In short, the law was suspended.

In this context, State terror is twofold: whether in the forced disappearance of the regime's opponents through torture and murder, but also in their omission, a practice of abandonment as a form of governmentality. Modern Totalitarianism can be considered, as the establishment, through the State of Exception, of a legal civil war, which allows the physical elimination not only of political opponents but also of entire categories of citizens who, for whatever reason, seem unintegratable to the political system.

4.4.1. The institutional track of the dead body during the 1970's

The process began with the report of the existence of a lifeless body and the intervention of the police from the nearest police station. The police were responsible for carrying out the first actions to register all the elements of the (crime) scene, such as the time and the day that the body had been found, and to produce the first two documents which accompanied the dead body: the first contained the information gathered by the attending police officers and was called a *boletim de ocorrência*; the second document, the *guia de recolhimento do cadáver*, was a body removal form. Nowadays, scientific police technicians, such as chemists, forensic photographers and other professionals register and collect evidence relating to the scene and/or the crime. Therefore, the commissioner in charge of the closest police station is responsible for requesting the post-mortem examination of the body by the Forensic Institute known as IML in Brazil. All these experts and police officers are legitimized by a scientific discourse and have the institutional authority (P Bourdieu, 2003) to answer two questions: who is this person and what has happened to him/her.

For all dead bodies, there are a set of technical and bureaucratic procedures to be followed, which include post-mortem examinations and laboratory analyses, if necessary, the main objective of which is to determine the cause of death. The documents produced (laboratory results, reports, photographs) constitute the “institutional construction of the dead person” (Ariès, 2003; Ariès & Lloyd, 1985; Medeiros, 2015). In the books where these documents are archived together (*livros de corpo delito*), the documentation of these different procedures, in addition to the autopsy reports, are found in a non-systematic way, although some examinations are specific to each case and are only requested if necessary. It is notable that, for some cases, possibly due to repercussion in the media, there is no end of documentation, such as schematic drawings of bullet projection, whereas for other similar cases, there is almost no documentation.

In the case of the document prepared by the autopsy, the necroscopic report refers to one produced in order to reply a request, usually of the police delegate, responsible for the recovery of the corpse. Information such as the requesting police station, the date of registration, the sequential number, the official responsible for transcribing the report, the date of the examination, the forensics involved, and the director of the institution and information regarding the individual. In cases where identity is unknown, a sequential number accompanied by the word "desconhecido²¹". Other information about the person sex, presumed age, color, history, place of death, description of examination and results, and also dress. The objective of the report is to answer the following questions: 1) Was there death? 2) What is its cause? 3) Which instrument produced it? 4) Was it produced by poison, fire, explosive, suffocation or torture, or by another cruel means?

The analysis at the clothes and objects started from the strength they have in personalizing, individualizing and, in their absence, just the opposite. These are described in one of the documentary series: the necropsy report, a document produced and signed by two forensic doctors that do the autopsy, which is subsequently transcribed by a registered official.

²¹ Translation: Unknown person.

Figure 27. Necropsy report data

6.Localidade (delegacia de polícia)

3.Data do registro

4.Número sequencial

5.Assinatura

8.Requerente

7.Data do exame

9.Médico-legista 1

10.Médico-legista 2

11.Diretor do IML

2.Nome

12.Código

13.Sexo

14.Cor

15.Idade

17.Histórico

18.Local da morte

19.Vestis

SECRETARIA DA SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA
INSTITUTO MÉDICO-LEGAL DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO

Registrado em 28 de 01 de 1972 sob n.º 3674

Walkiria

LAUDO DE EXAME DE CORPO DE DELITO
EXAME NECROSCÓPICO

Aos [redacted] de [redacted] janeiro de mil novecentos e setenta e dois, nesta cidade de São Paulo, a fim de atender a requisição do doutor - Delegado de Polícia -

os infra-assinados, doutores - Isaac Abramovitch e Walter Sayeg -

médicos-legistas, foram designados pelo doutor - Arnaldo Siqueira -

Médico-Legal do Estado, para proceder a exame de corpo de delito em

e responder aos quesitos seguintes:

Primeiro - Houve morte?
Segundo - Qual a sua causa?
Terceiro - Qual o instrumento ou meio que a produziu?
Quarto - Foi produzida por meio de veneno, fogo, explosivo, asfixia ou tortura, ou por outro meio ou cruel? (Resposta especificada).

Realizada a perícia, passaram a oferecer o seguinte laudo: Exame nanos e necropsiados hoje, às dezoito horas, no necrotório do Instituto Médico-Legal, um corpo que nos foi apontado como sendo do de [redacted] sexo feminino, branca vinte e um anos de idade, casada, brasileira, natural de Alagoas, estudante, filha [redacted] ignorada. HISTÓRICO: segundo consta, trata-se de elemento terrorista que faleceu ao travar tiroteio com os Órgãos da Segurança, por volta das onze horas de hoje na esquina da Rua Inglês de Sousa e Coronel Diogo. VESTES: capa de casimir fantasia, blusa de lã preta, calça de casimir azul, soutien de algodão preto, um sapato de couro preto. REALIDADE DA MORTE: a morte se evidenciava pela presença dos clássicos sinais tanatológicos de certeza. EXAME EXTERNO: trata-se de cadáver de adulto, de sexo feminino, de cor branca

Following the conclusion of the autopsy report, two other documents, the death certificate and the declaration of death, are produced and copies are made for the institutions involved: notary office, forensic institute, police station, and cemetery. The body is placed in the funeral assistance vehicle (a municipal service) and sent to the cemetery where the administrative department records its entry in another important archive for tracking bodies: the cemetery logbook, where information such as the number given to the NN at the Forensic Institute, the location where the body

is to be buried, if it was subsequently exhumed, etc. is recorded. In this process, the Identification Institute, which possesses the general register of all citizens, is responsible for crossing the fingerprint of the NN with its database. This occurs concomitantly with the process of other examinations and the sending of the body to the cemetery.

Many of the cases analysed from the 1970s in which there was a positive response from the Identification Institute were cases of people who had been detained at some point by the police and thus their records were already in the database. The problem is that the answer often came when the body had already been buried in the cemetery and the information was not recorded in the cemetery records and was only written in pencil in the photo book of NN victims in the IML.

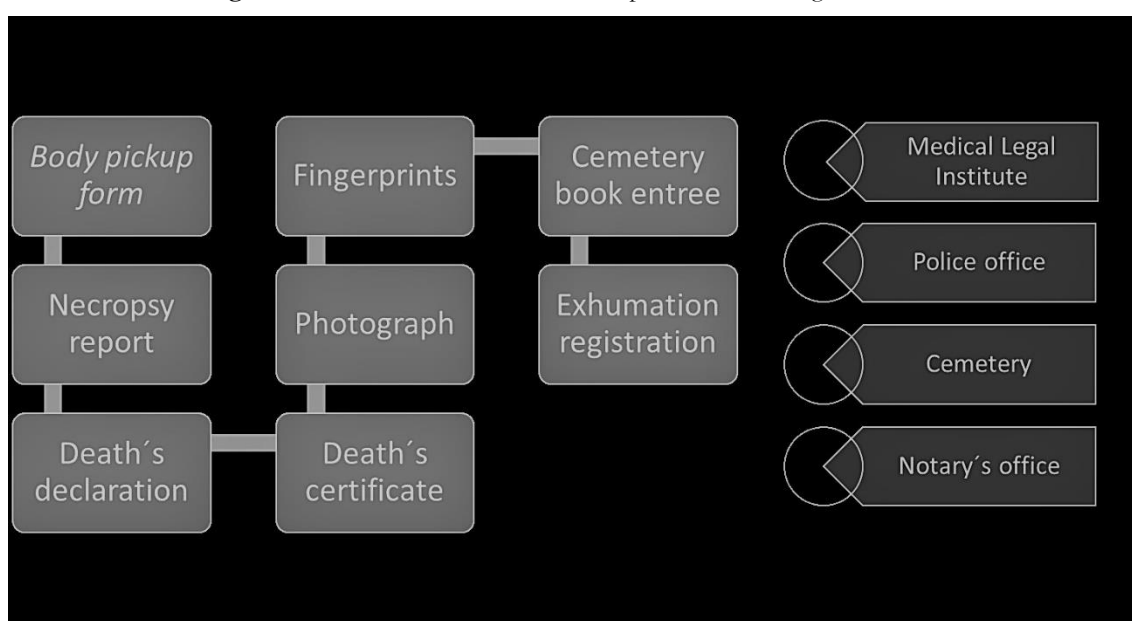
Still linked to the identification process, in 1968, with the intensification of the repression by Institutional Act n5, the minimum period that an unclaimed body had to wait in the legal medical institute before being buried was reduced by municipal law from 5 days to 3 days (*Dispõe Sobre o Serviço de Verificação de Óbitos Do Município de São Paulo e Dá Outras Providências*, 1968). In any case, even though the change in legislation relating to dealing with the dead was noted, deliberate actions which did not even respect the new law were carried out so that families were deprived of both the time and the possibility of finding their loved ones. This occurred with the Tiradentes Revolutionary Movement (MRT) militant, Denis Casemiro, who was buried only a day after his autopsy examination by state agents at the Dom Bosco cemetery. The possible argument involving population growth and the need for space in the cemeteries made no sense considering that Dom Bosco cemetery had only recently been inaugurated at that time.

It is worthy of note that the organized handling of information regarding persons of unknown identity (NN) was and remains the almost exclusive responsibility of the police forces, who administer it according to their research parameters and corporate interests. This circumstance, which is necessarily linked to the investigation of a case,

cannot be overlooked, especially in cases relating to state violence and the armed forces.

Figure 28 shows some of the documents that make it possible to trace the route taken by a corpse to its burial and subsequent exhumation three years later. The institutions listed next to the documents are those that hold or centralize in some way much of the information but are precisely those that do not cross these data during the documentation and identification process.

Figure 28. Documents related to the corpse and the issuing institutions



Looking at this documentary series and the data is to depart from the fact that it is already a series with gaps and flaws in its archiving (Márcia L Hattori et al., 2016). The 2892 records of unknown persons are not compatible with other documents (death certificates, cemetery entries, photographs of victims) produced for recording the handling of unnamed bodies. There are 3265 entries of unknown persons in the Perus cemetery between February 1971 and December 1975 (17% of persons who entered with suspicious/violent death), 2895 necroscopic examination reports between January 1971 and December 1975 (for all cemeteries in São Paulo), 2719 death declarations of unknown persons between January 1971 and May 1975 (2291 for

Perus), 3576 photographs of victims between January 1971 and December 1975 (3284 for Perus)²².

It is important to note that in terms of legislation, Pedro Russo (2016) draws attention to two laws, one from 1973, during the period under review, that refer to the burial of unknown persons. Law No. 6,015, of 31 December 1973, which in its 81st article says that if the identity of the person is unknown, the documentation produced must contain a statement of height or measurement, if possible, colour, apparent signs, presumed age, clothing and any other indication that may help in future to recognise him or her; and if he or she has been found dead, this circumstance and the place where he or she was found and the necropsy will be mentioned.

The most recent, Law No. 15.292 of 8 January 2014, "Defines guidelines for the State Policy for the Search for Missing Persons, creates the Missing Persons Database and makes other provisions: Under no circumstances will bodies or remains found be buried as indigent without first adopting the precautions of data crossing and the collection and insertion of information about their physical characteristics, including the genetic code, contained in DNA, in the database referred to in item II of Article 3.16

The following section aims to show how this omission can be materialized as a technique for disappearance, using the description of clothes made by forensic scientists for the autopsy report.

4.5. The individuals: clothes and material analysis

When our analysis is focused on clothes, this type of materiality not only fulfils functional purposes, it is also related to certain aspects of a person's self-expression and behaviour, as well as being a means of communication via which various messages can be conveyed. Different styles and materials can protect us from cold and heat or

²² Information provided from Hattori and Souza (2016) report. UNDP

from exposure to the sun, wind, rain, and dirt, from environmental influences, diseases, and other dangers or injuries. Social status, as well as individual personality, can be expressed by clothing. Certain codes, which can be conveyed by clothing, constitute an integral part of the production of norms and group identities. If familiar with a group's social structure and communication system, others can recognize a person's status or class through his/her clothing. The use of clothing is therefore an integral part of Bourdieu's theory of "habitus" and how modern rationality establishes rules of behaviour and notions of sophistication and aesthetics which he conceives as part of symbolic capital (Pierre Bourdieu, 2016). The desire to acquire different articles adjusts to the levels of class structures, distancing the need for functional purposes. However, it is important to state that clothing is subject to different norms, habits, and traditions in different geographical areas of the world. To adorn, to dress, to 'make' the body, is a practice of communication and a representation of social values. It speaks of the individual, his/her aspirations, and the way he/she conceals him/herself, but also informs how he/she relates to the group and to the larger sociocultural framework in which he/she is inserted.

From an archaeological perspective, clothing is a type of material culture, which, due to the difficult conditions of preservation, is not often at the centre of archaeological or material culture-based research, even though it has played such an essential role in human history (Janaway, 2002; Theune, 2017). However, even in research related to the recent past, for which there is a greater possibility of preservation of these artefacts, few studies have been carried out, albeit with some very powerful exceptions (Salerno, 2007, 2009). One of them is Claudia Theune's (2017) analysis of clothing in concentration camps, in which she highlights the role of the SS in deliberately excluding prisoners from society by the act of removing their clothes and their names and replacing them with a striped suit and a number. This inhuman treatment aimed to deprive the inmates of their own personality, individuality, identity, and any of the usual possibilities to act. However, the researcher also shows inscriptions embroidered by the inmates themselves which somehow individualised them and related them by mutually resisting the depersonalization of the uniform.

Used as an analytical category, clothing can also include body modification (tattoos, painting, scarification, piercings), ornamentation (lip plugs, earrings), and even portable equipment. All of these individual ways which we create to communicate and express ourselves are included in this effort to analyse the material remains of unknown people who died during the 1970s. It is important to state that, when referring to the clothing of dead people, this is a process always carried out by the living. In cases of unknown people, it is a process performed by the state. All the rituals involved are protocols in order to control this specific population.

People buried as NN are potentially disappeared people, considering that everybody is socially enrolled and relates to groups, communities, and other people, regardless of their socioeconomic situation. Technically, an “unknown” body is one whose civil identity could not be “proved”. When the biological death is confirmed, in addition to determining the cause of death, it is necessary to identify the person behind the body. It is as if we were standing before an empty faceless mask. Biological death is a certainty, but an insufficient certainty. Although it is a necessary condition, it is not enough for the social death of the person (Rezende, 2012).

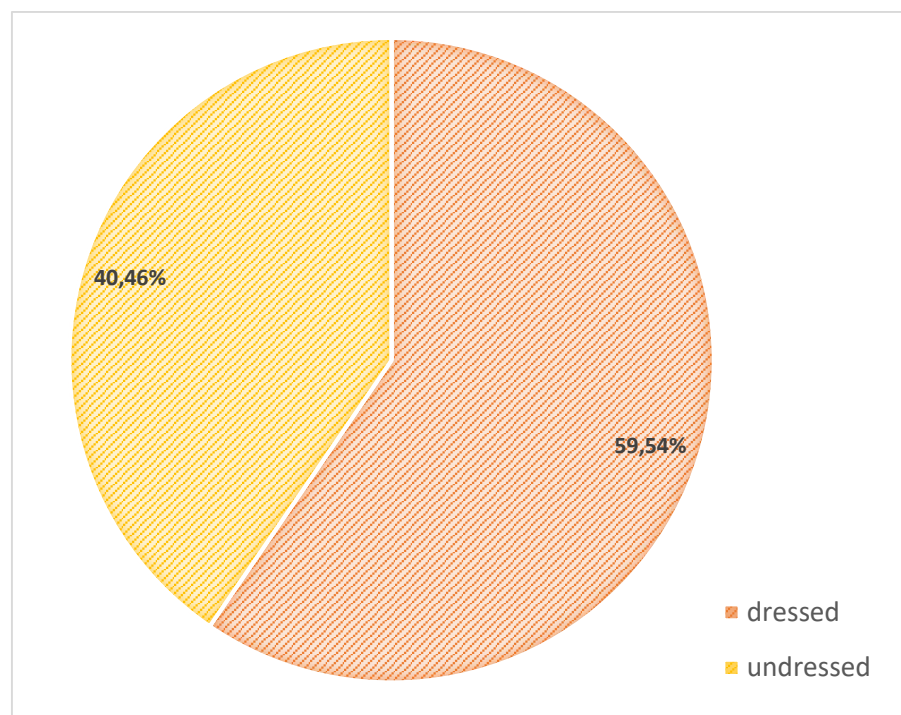
The starting point of this analysis is to understand that disappearance does not only deprive a person of their freedom, subjecting them to torture, inhumane conditions in clandestine detention centres and murder, but also involves the use of the state apparatus to avoid establishing the relationship of identity connecting the person to a body which appears without a name to perpetuate the suffering of friends and relatives.

Thus, the aim of this work is to establish ordering modes with the objective of understanding and testing hypotheses to confront a qualitative observation of the data - non-standardization, long descriptions and those records that do not even occupy a line in the document: the black shoe without a size, with no brand, no type of material, without specification. The goal of the quantitative analysis was, by way of a forensic methodological effort, to uncover, to create evidence, to unveil what some authors have termed as an evidence-based data-driven approach (Crossland, 2013). I consider

it important to analyse data from an activist perspective, as some researchers have used data activism from humanitarian and anti-hegemonic practices, such as hacking strategies (Bey, 2014), maps to monitor Amazon deforestation in indigenous lands (Brandão Jr & Souza Jr, 2006; Carneiro Filho & Souza, 2009) and the labour of Forensic Architecture (Weizman, 2014; Weizman et al., 2010).

When analysing all cases of people buried as unknown between the years 1971 to 1975 in the city of São Paulo, more than 40% are described as undressed and there is no information about clothes or any personal object (graph 5). In generating this data, I considered "undressed" as the cases where there was no description or it was directly described as undressed in addition to those with only a white sheet, newspaper, or a blanket over the body.

Graph 5. NN cases – Dressed and undressed

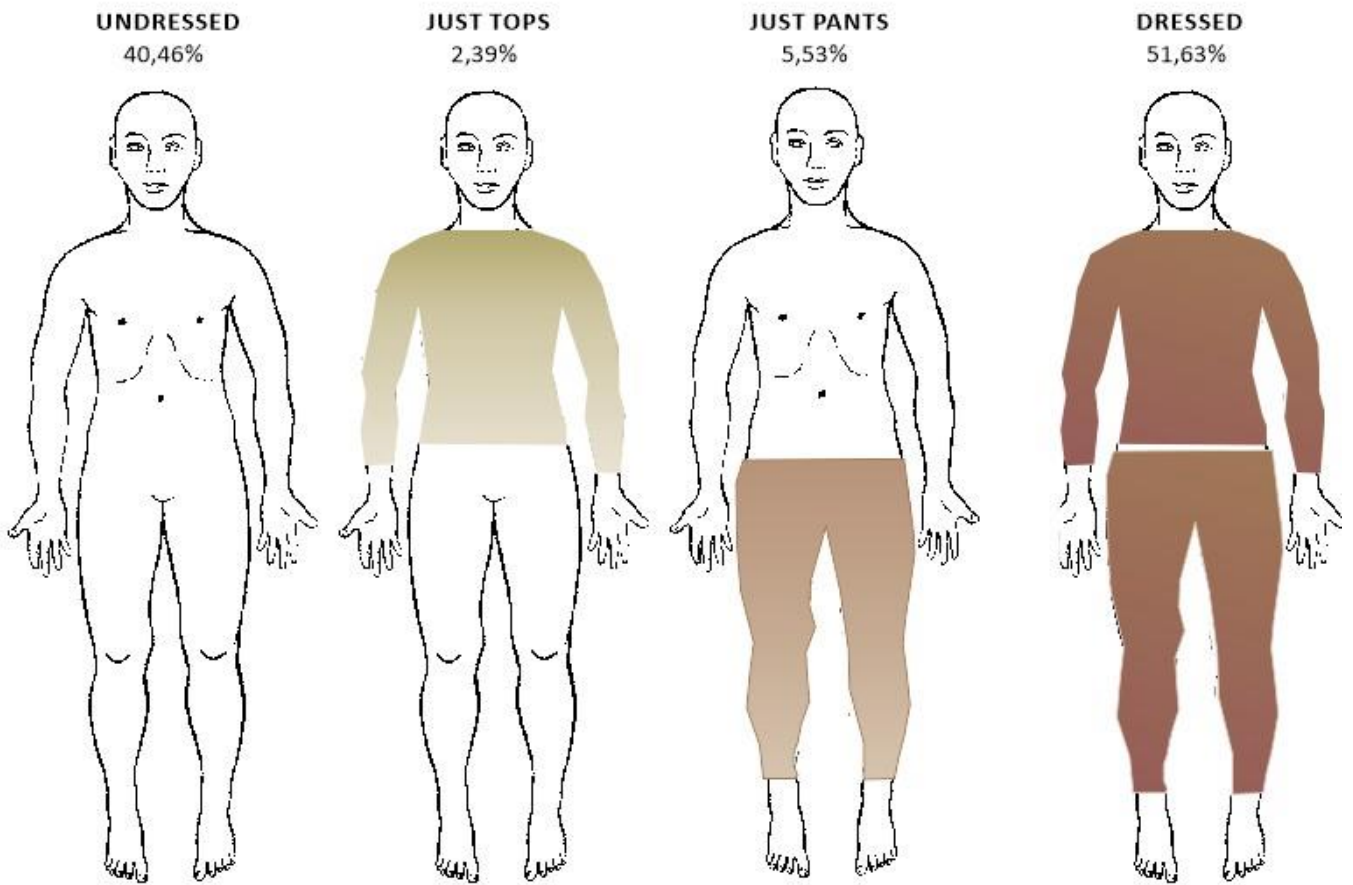


If we separate cases by biological sex, women have much less data on dress, which may be related to many factors. When looking at the history of these different cases we see that some are related to the majority to trampling, drownings, illnesses, natural deaths or encounter of bodies. In any case, it is noticed that even cases of car accidents

caused by various circumstances, the clothes are not described. Of all the cases in which the reports car accidents (92 in total), all appear as undressed in the description of the clothes or without any filling of this field in the document. Regarding all the cases from 1971 to 1975, practically half are undressed or without any information. In the case of those where it was not possible to estimate sex, there are 59.09% of undressed cases, possibly related to the condition of the body encounter.

The cases where there is a minimum description of the upper and lower part, we would have more than half of all cases, which would be 51% of the sample (graph 6). Others have descriptions of only the top or the bottom half. For example, there are documents which describe the clothing as “a yellow woollen blouse”, “yellow underwear”, “a blue shirt” or “a cotton blouse”, with these being the only information given for the description of clothing and accessories. It is true that the conditions in which the bodies were found, the scene of the crime, and the very processes of preservation, among many other variables, will influence the possibilities of description, but attention is drawn to possible negligence in one of the fundamental steps to assist in the identification of a body.

Graph 6. Description of clothes



Looking at the word cloud (Oliphant, 2006; Van Rossum & Drake Jr, 1995) produced by filtering the cases in which there is a description of the clothes, “blue trousers”, “grey trousers”, “blue jeans”, “cotton shirt” or “blue shirt” are the elements that appear most frequently. These terms are too general and no more detailed descriptions are given which could be more individualized, such as a design on a shirt, a mark or an inscription.

Figure 29 and 30. “Guarda-pó brim”.

Credit: <https://www.fg.com.br/guarda-po-7-8-de-manga-longa-e-brim-azul-m---wico/p>



On the other hand, if another analysis is carried out for the undressed cases, the words which appear most frequently are sheets, plastic, cotton, newspaper, cardboard, cotton, etc. The frequency of plastic is of interest when its meaning is taken into account: it is a highly disposable material, used and subsequently thrown away just like cardboard, newspaper and others. Absence and the idea of temporary materials here is also striking - naked, absent, nothing, non-existent (graph 8). If some forms of control range from confinement to murder, others operate through indifference and pure abandonment. (Mbembe, 2008, p. 49).

handbag	1
chain	1
wedding ring	1
avental	1
briefcase	1
necklace	1
shawl	1
helmet	1
tie	1
documents	1
scarf	1
label	1
wire	1
umbrella	1
walking stick	1
joelheira	1
tissue	1
bed sheet	1

Considering those cases in which there is a description of the footwear (16% of the sample), we see that although described, there is no standardization or details which can assist with identification or even other information about the death. None of them state, for example, the size of the shoes. The most general descriptions are as follows: black leather shoes, black shoe, brown leather shoes, black rubber boot, blue shoes, white leather shoes, brown canvas shoe, etc. Some mention the material (leather, plastic, canvas), others the type (shoes, sneakers, sandals, flip-flops, boots), a few state the brand (Conga, Keds, Havaianas, among others).

Of the few cases in which the model or brand appears, it is noteworthy that those that can refer to an advantageous economic situation are described, as is the case of *Keds* shoes or in the description of a case that describes the *Borçeguim* boot (figure X) used by military personnel.

Figure 31: Borzeguim boot



Other cases are striking in that they appear with no description of clothing under the term “undressed”, for example men of between 25-50 years of age whose history presents descriptions such as “run over”, or “run over by car”, “suddenly ill, died (...)”, “firearm injury to be clarified”. These people were possibly found on the street, although their place of death is not specified and are described as being without clothing, even though there is very little probability that they would have been naked when the body was found.

4.5.1. “Frontiers of citizenship”²³

In 1972, a 45-year-old man of African descent, described as undressed, was buried as NN in the Don Bosco cemetery. His history states “the victim would have died a natural death in his home.” The place of death is stated as “at home” with no indication of the house number, street or neighbourhood. In the same year, a 50-year-old man, victim of a natural death according to his history, was in CETREN (Screening and Referral Centre of the Secretariat of Social Promotion of the State of São Paulo) and was described as “unknown” and with no clothing. CETREN, where this person was apparently found, was a reception centre located in the central neighbourhood of Cambuci. People attending this institution came from all regions of the country (and even from abroad), and had different reasons for going there: some needed medical assistance, some were referred by Social Services, others needed documents, but most of them were searching for a job and applying for free passes to travel to their hometowns in other regions.

²³ A reference to the work of Roberto Kant de Lima (1995, 2005)

There are so many of these cases which reinforce this state violence that is not only linked to physical elimination, via its military and paramilitary devices, but also to complicity and state neglect, in which the state exercises its sovereign power by making all those categorized as undesirable disappear. Another example is a person described as wearing a brown sweater, brown checked cotton shirt, blue jeans, black nylon socks, and black shorts, a 26-year-old man whose body was reportedly found dead in the cell of a police station and was buried as unknown in 1975. The “police ethic” and “police right” are the practical translation of a series of social notions contrary to democratic guarantees. Since the 18th and 19th centuries, the police have played a key role in creating “frontiers of citizenship” between classified workers and criminals (Kant de Lima, 1995, 2005). How is it possible that someone who has been booked and photographed by the police is buried as unknown if upon entering, they have undergone a series of control procedures, particularly relating to their civil identity?

What is clear from these countless cases, is the negligence with which these people are treated by the system, particularly by those who act in it, who, a priori, have the responsibility of socially constituting these bodies without identity, but who, on the contrary, literally strip them by removing the limited information that could be provided such as a description of their clothing. This information could be of assistance in the case of future identification by a relative who is looking for them.

This system is used to give an air of legality to the process, thus eliminating entire categories of citizens who appear to be non-integrable to this same system. Until at least 2016, the bodies of unclaimed people are usually delivered completely naked to the cemetery, without any kind of clothing or mortuary blanket, in coffins with lids (Russo, 2016, p. 31), even though norms of the Superintendence of the Technical Scientific Police have instituted that the delivery of necropsied bodies must be at least with the mortuary blanket by the units of the Medico-Legal Institute. The way this process occurs results in an almost total absence of evidence, a radical invisibility, making it impossible to give an identity because, after these bodies are stripped, they are sent to the area designated for NN in the public cemetery of Perus. This place,

which is nothing more than a field with no distinction between rows, blocks and graves, receives them and from that moment, even with the work of forensic anthropology and DNA, it becomes practically impossible to locate the desired person in a megalopolis such as the city of São Paulo, where countless NN are buried each day.

4.5.2. An “unknown” with a name 40 years later: the search for a common citizen.

In 2017, Vilma Padilha, whose father has been missing since the 1970s, was informed by the Special Commission of Dead and Political Disappeared People (CEMDP) that crossing the *antemortem* information, the documents from the Medico Legal Institution (IML) and the documentation of the cemetery with the fingerprints from a document that she provided to the forensic team, they discovered information about when and how her dad died. My contact with her started years before, in 2014 when I was still working as part of the forensic team for this Commission. Later, doing my PhD research, we met again in São Paulo, and I was able to interview her again, few months later after the notice, in November, 2nd, coincidentally, the holiday of the dead in Brazil. I was disconcerted by the date chosen by my interlocutor, who decided to take advantage of coming to São Paulo for personal appointments and meet me.

There were many meetings before that. It is fundamental to situate myself in these interviews related to the PhD research. My access, the relationships of trust that we had were quite significant, having participated from the inside, as part of the team and responsible for contact with the family members. This is a case that I shared the interview, visits to her house, the investigations at the public archive with Rafael Abreu de Souza and much of the emotions and experiences that arose from it. From the moment of the decision to no longer be part of the group of forensic anthropologists, doing an ethnography on the continuity of this work was deeply sensitive and, honestly, painful.

I met Vilma's family from an email sent by her in 2014 to CEMDP after knowing that a forensic team would retake the analysis of Perus mass grave. She was requesting if we could undertake the search for her father, whom she had been looking for, since 1972. José had disappeared near the region of Perus district. When Vilma heard the news and having access to the Internet, she wrote, through the institutional page, requesting the search for her father among the thousands of people buried in the mass grave.

My father was an ordinary citizen, but I have the right to know what happened to him.

Vilma Teresa Padilha, interview in November, 2nd, 2017.

Vilma mentioned the difficulty she had, since she was young, to access any kind of information by going to the police stations, the medico-legal institute and hospitals. For her, it was from the access to the forensic team in 2014 and in the course of the investigation, that she could access and examine with them, the archive from the 1970s which, in this period, was already in the Public Archive of the State of São Paulo. From this work, by cross-referencing the information from the *antemortem* interviews and the documentation from the IML, we came up with some suspect cases that could have been her father. The crossing of the fingerprint file of an NN and the identity certificate of her father that she provided, confirmed that he had died in a train rail and had his body found there (Padilha, 2020).

In April 2017, Vilma told me that she went to the laboratory in São Paulo where the analyses were carried out, when she was informed that her father had been buried in the Perus cemetery, in the plots destined for NN. José Padilha, went to Perus as an indigent (she uses the term) to refer to her father and the conditions in which he was buried. Something that for her was considered dying without any dignity. Her father had documents and clothes and died in a nearby place, on the same day of his disappearance. On the same day the family had sought information from the police stations in the region. Why was he buried as an NN and no effort made? If she and her family went to the police stations in the vicinity, why did nobody said anything?

During the interview, she raised the question:

(...) How could it be that my father died with clothes and documents on the day of the disappearance, near the place where we lived, and the police station did not even consider crossing this information with my family's complaint that he had disappeared? Why did not they show this case to us? Why was all the right to know denied to us?

Vilma Teresa Padilha, interview in November, 2nd, 2017.

When the family noticed José was missing, they went to the nearest police station to report the incident. They asked and the answers were elusive. The next day, when they were there again, they were told that there was no case compatible with the profile of Vilma's father. The strange thing is to note that the lack of cross-referencing, interest in searching the cases of bodies found between one day and another, the very description of the clothes, none of this was sought and the doubt remained throughout more than 40 years about the fate of the father. José was buried at the Perus cemetery in the NN zone, almost impossible to locate as the boundaries of the graves are not individualised. The figure below, shows the street which divides the right side, where the graves of people buried as unknown would be and on the left side, the individualization of the graves of people whose families did the inhumation.

Despite not having found the body, this information was very important for her because she discovered what happened with him after his disappearance. For instance, she unveiled that his father died in the exactly day of his disappearance. This was very important in terms of knowing that he didn't leave his family to have another and other thoughts that came into her mind during the last 40 years.

How this bureaucracy, produced to not disappear does not help at all and more, create this illusion that the State try do to everything possible to identify.

*Sou uma maria ninguém. Porque a minha história não é tão importante...*²⁴

Vilma Teresa Padilha, interview in November, 2nd, 2017.

Being nobody that Vilma self describes reflects who are these subjects who do not have the same rights as other people - the right to occupy certain spaces or even to have their history visible. The nobodies are those subjects who basically do not have the right to the city, they (barely) inhabit it, but they are not a constituent part of it and not fully considered, because they are an inhabitant and not a citizen. It is a condition of sub-citizenship, which does not exclude fully, but does not fully include. A condition that does not completely annihilate, but uses violence to control the experience of these subjects in terms of opportunities, accesses and freedoms marking lives and bodies.

They are commonly called indigent in life (understood from a socio-economic perspective as one deprived of any material conditions) and in death. The expression "not to die like an indigent", quite popular in Brazil, speaks volumes about dying deprived of any right to citizenship in death. In places like Argentina and Spain the use of terms like "morir como un perro" is used for people murdered by police violence (Pita, 2010) or who did not have a dignified burial. The use of these native enunciations or categories to refer to someone who died without being people, in a dehumanised manner in the literal sense, draws attention to how these moral hierarchies associated with differential classifications and modes in death are presented and operate.

In order to "construct the dead", the technical agents of the state, responsible for the effort in investigating the identities of people classified as unknown, will produce what has been termed as "situational moralities" (Eilbaum & Medeiros, 2015; Medeiros, 2015), which will decide, in the end, who they categorise as citizens.

²⁴ Translation: I am a nobody. Because my story is not so important...

In many of the cases throughout the 1970s for the unknown, the term indigent is found in the necroscopic reports. An example that calls attention is a person who died in 1972, who has in his report that "he was indigent and died when he was admitted at MÓoca asylum reception centre". Other information such as the clothes or objects he was carrying do not appear and he is placed as undressed. In this classificatory game, "being indigent" is already a condition for not having the same rights in death.

4.6. Concluding remarks: omission as a technique to eliminate

This study is situated in the field of Contemporary Archaeology, in which one of the main concerns are the asymmetries and inequalities in the West and the possibility of being able to unfold these different mechanisms of state violence with such a massive group of anonymous people, who are often black and poor, who are rarely of importance in history books (Buchli & Lucas, 2001; Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2008a; Harrison & Breithoff, 2017; Harrison & Schofield, 2010). Also of fundamental importance is the postcolonial and intersectional perspective which understands that the anonymous, whose little information is omitted, have faces and a social class (Alves, 2011; Mbembe, 2008).

Applying quantitative data, I presented how the lack of care and information about the description of clothes makes the little information about that lifeless body disappear. This makes it even more difficult for a family member to find a missing person. What we have seen through analysis is that there is a continuity in the use of these techniques to disappear in institutions, especially with these buried as NN, not only regarding political disappeared who fought against the regime, but all the population that is a victim of the state violence and that is not considered citizen of full right not in life least in death.

Regarding the techniques of disappearing with the bodies, I tried to present how groups of technicians, administrators, employees, part of the regime, use a complex

and meandering system with its numerous gaps that fill and create this technique of disappearing through bureaucracy.

There is an inverse relationship in this process - to the extent that there is an increase in documents there is a decrease in objects, clothes and other identifying elements. As the process of identification goes on, the little information that there was about that body is lost - the brand of the t-shirt, the size of the shoe, the detail on the jeans.

It's interesting to see how difficult it is to track down people who do it, rather than track down those who are buried as NN. In a papermaking and sharing system of the exhumation technician responsible for opening the body, the doctor who does the autopsy, the employee who types the report, the driver who takes the body, the delegate who makes the request, the graveyard administrator, the clerk who records the body's entry into the book, and the graver, each one's responsibility is depleted.

In the period of dictatorship, they are de-characterized as subjects, undressed in the process, reduced to filling the mass grave, so as to make it difficult to find those who really matter: the members of the opposition against the regime. For the regime, these people, who just have the role to fill, such as “constructive material”, they are not considered human beings. However, unveiling these strategies is a way to show that these persons, who refuse state norms and expose them in their contradictions - those corpses keep refusing to be invisible and keep reappearing.

Chapter 5. Democracy and disappearances by omission: legacies from the structures of dictatorship

5.1. Introduction

In Brazil, we have witnessed the murder of councilwoman Marielle Franco, the murder of Amarildo and the crimes of May 2006²⁵; in Mexico, the disappearance of the 43 students from Ayotzinapa; and, in Argentina, the executions in the Mapuche territory of indigenous activists Santiago Maldonado and Rafael Nahuel. Such cases have long been occurring throughout Latin America and, in one way or another, they have had a certain degree of repercussion in the media due to the social mobilization they have generated. However, there are also the thousands of poor, young black people killed by the police in the U.S. and Brazil, the murder of indigenous people for merely living on their ancestral land, the death of countless Latin Americans on the border of Mexico with the U.S., and the huge number of victims buried in large cities of the Global South as anonymous individuals, referred to in forensic-bureaucratic parlance as NN (*nomen nescio* or “name unknown”). There are many situations and cases in which death and disappearance can be seen as a concomitant result of the actions and omissions of “democratic” states. What do these cases and phenomena allow us to infer from the historical relationship of the modern state and the expression of sovereign power by coloniality, racism, and capitalism in the contemporary Latin American context?

If we focus on the Brazilian context, police kill more than seventeen people per day, equating to more than 6,200 in 2018 alone (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2019). Approximately 75% of the murdered people are black, 99.3% are men, and 77.9% are young (15-29 years of age). In the United States, by comparison, the police

²⁵ The 2006 *Crimes de Maio* totalled 564 deaths by firearms from 12th to 26th May in the state of *São Paulo*, mainly in the capital and the metropolitan region and in the area of *Baixada Santista*. According to the investigations, the Brazilian state authorized the extrajudicial executions, which were carried out by policing organizations. For further information, see: *Movimento Independente Mães de Maio*, 2020 and Assumpção et al., 2018

have killed 11,090 over the past thirty years (Martín, 2014). As an expression and legacy of colonialism and forced displacement, throughout the Americas, police violence inscribes blackness onto the body and the landscape, marking black bodies and black spaces as expendable and violable in the production of the nation state (Smith, 2015).

What differences can be established between political and non-political murder? This is a complex issue, one in which situations of the intrinsic relationship of the state, transnational companies and violence against certain groups imply much more than defining whether these killings are political or not. The murder of Marielle Franco was a political murder which seems to be wholly related to her actions denouncing police repression in the slums and military intervention in Rio de Janeiro (Domingues & Junqueira, 2019; Nuñez et al., 2019; R. Souza, 2019). Santiago Maldonado was there when the Argentinian State combatted the indigenous Mapuche resistance against the Benetton company (Affanni, 2019; Gresham Beamer, 2017). Nevertheless, the murders of young black men carried out by the police, part of the state *dispositif*, are also political crimes, linked to the legacies of colonialism and slavery that define black people as non-human (Wynter, 1994). And what of the people who drown while crossing the Mediterranean Sea, abandoned by European states? (M'charek & Casartelli, 2019). Or those migrants from Latin American countries that die attempting to cross the Mexican border with the United States? They are victims of the omission of states that close their borders and ports or use natural landscapes, such as the Mediterranean sea and the Sonora desert (as is the case of the United States Border Patrol (De León, 2015)) as a weapon. What connections can be drawn between omission and direct murder on the part of the State apparatus in terms of this political or non-political disappearance?

Statistics from The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) state that 82,000 people are reported missing every year in Brazil. For Graham Willis:

(...) unlike the 'political disappearance' of historical moments, occurring amidst crisis, war, and outright contestation for political

power, which has been appropriately studied, counted, and disinterred, this kind of mundane disappearance is made apolitical – treated as banal and every day. The numbers just don't seem to count. Mundane disappearance, existing outside of the exceptional crisis, is never marked as political.

Willis, Graham D. (to be published). *Politics gone missing*.

They are the result of policies of death, in which the market has been placed above people and life in general. The 'disposability' of these people is the outcome of what Mbembe (Mbembe, 2006) conceptualizes as necropolitics - when the State applies a policy based on the idea that, for power, some lives have value and others do not (Bauman, 2013). It is not a question of killing those who do not serve power, but rather to let them die, creating policies and technologies for that purpose. One of Mbembe's greatest contributions refers to the perspective involving colonial legacies and populations that have been used as commodities since modernity, such as enslaved populations that were forcibly displaced to the American continent. For Franz Fanon (2008), it is the temporality of modernity within which the figure of the 'human' comes to be authorized, as he writes in 'The Fact of Blackness'.

It is fundamental to emphasize the difference between the period of dictatorship, which lasted until 1985 in Brazil, and the democratic period after that date. As stated by Teles and Safatle (2010), exploring continuities does not mean making the primary mistake of confusing our democracy with a dictatorship, but rather remembering where our democratic experience comes from.

Yet the brutality of democracy has been always muffled. From their origins, modern democracies have always shown tolerance for a certain amount of political, even illegal, violence (Ballbè, 2008). Democracies have always integrated into their culture forms of brutality that fall on a range of private institutions acting outside the state; militias, or other paramilitary or corporatist formations.

In Brazil, there is no doubt that violence against citizens and disrespect for the law have increased after the formal transition to democracy. Violence remains entangled

with democracy, within which citizens suffer systematic violence from forces of public and private, organized and unorganized, coercion, which act with the confidence of impunity. Cultures of fear, indifference, illegality, and abuse of power characteristically proliferate within the public body of these political democracies, coexisting with the democratic values of public life (Caldeira & Holston, 1999)

By examining death and the management of bodies in a public cemetery in São Paulo, it is possible to reflect on the contemporary regimes of disappearance, state *apparatus*, violence, the right to memory and neoliberalism. Rather than merely using dichotomies such as repression and visibility, or oppression versus rights, the aim is to problematize the dominant understandings of politics by questioning the ways in which class, race and gender are used in neoliberal policies by transforming human beings who were not "profitable in life" into "profitable in death" (Gefaell, 2015; Kim, 2012). I attempt to methodologically understand how disappearance by omission occurs in state bureaucracy, as I have discussed in previous chapters. In this sense, to politicize the disorder of what appears to be "normality". In other words, research that enables an emancipatory policy demands that we are able to destroy the appearance of the whole "natural order" and reveal it as a contingent structure and a violation of what seems to be inevitable (deaths by police officers, cemeteries and the loss of identities, disappearances, etc.). And that which is presented as impossible to access (the labyrinth of bureaucracy and its black box), turns out to be accessible.

Furthermore, this chapter examines certain continuities of practices relating to the processing of bodies under dictatorship during the democratic period. Although there have been politically significant ruptures and the achievement of greater freedoms in democracy, some institutions and certain practices have been maintained and have become more complex, linked to social, political and, above all, economic interests. The question here is: if, during the dictatorship, omission was used as a deliberate and continued practice of state action on lives and bodies, how do these practices occur in the democratic period in the management of bodies?

This research is situated in a context of response to a demand from different social movements regarding the controversial situation of the mass cremation of human remains to be carried out by the municipality of São Paulo. My action there, as a researcher, was to raise issues that could support the social movements with evidence (McGuire, 2002). I use this case study as an analytical tool to understand the reality of this phenomenon and to explore bureaucratic processes and the disappearance of identities by omission.

5.2. Transforming public cemeteries into an economic interest for the new entrepreneurs of death

5.2.1. Daily routine in a public cemetery – Quarta Parada

The Quarta Parada cemetery is located in the eastern area of the city of São Paulo and is one of the oldest public cemeteries in the city, having been inaugurated on January 6th, 1893. In that year, São Paulo already had 130,775 inhabitants and the neighbourhood of Brás (where numerous immigrants had settled in the city) had reached a total of 32,387 residents.

Brás was the largest working-class district and the second most populous in the city (Timpanaro, 2006). Mostly inhabited by immigrants, considered the leftovers of modernity and seen as undesirable guests, it was stigmatized by political activism such as anarchism and communism. On the other hand, there was another group of residents who were categorized as the habitués of jails - strays, the homeless, gamblers, alcoholics and thieves, from the world of urban poverty (Menezes, 1996). Many of them were deported by the new republican regime, which was guided by the idea of cleaning and sanitizing the city in order to make it a showcase for progress. When these people died, without relatives or friends in the new continent, they were buried in spaces such as the general blocks or in cemeteries specifically reserved for marginalized people, such as prostitutes (Gruman, 2006).

The dead of these working-class people were the first to begin to occupy what became known as the general blocks (*quadras gerais*); spaces of the cemetery for those that were not the owners of the burial plots, but that lived nearby and needed to be buried somewhere. These general blocks are regulated by the municipality. It is determined by law that "the Municipality concedes free burial, and the necessary means and procedures for it, to such inhabitants as who do not possess the means to bear the costs of a funeral"²⁶. In the city of São Paulo, so-called "indigents" are buried in the general blocks of the municipal cemeteries (Lajolo et al., 2016).

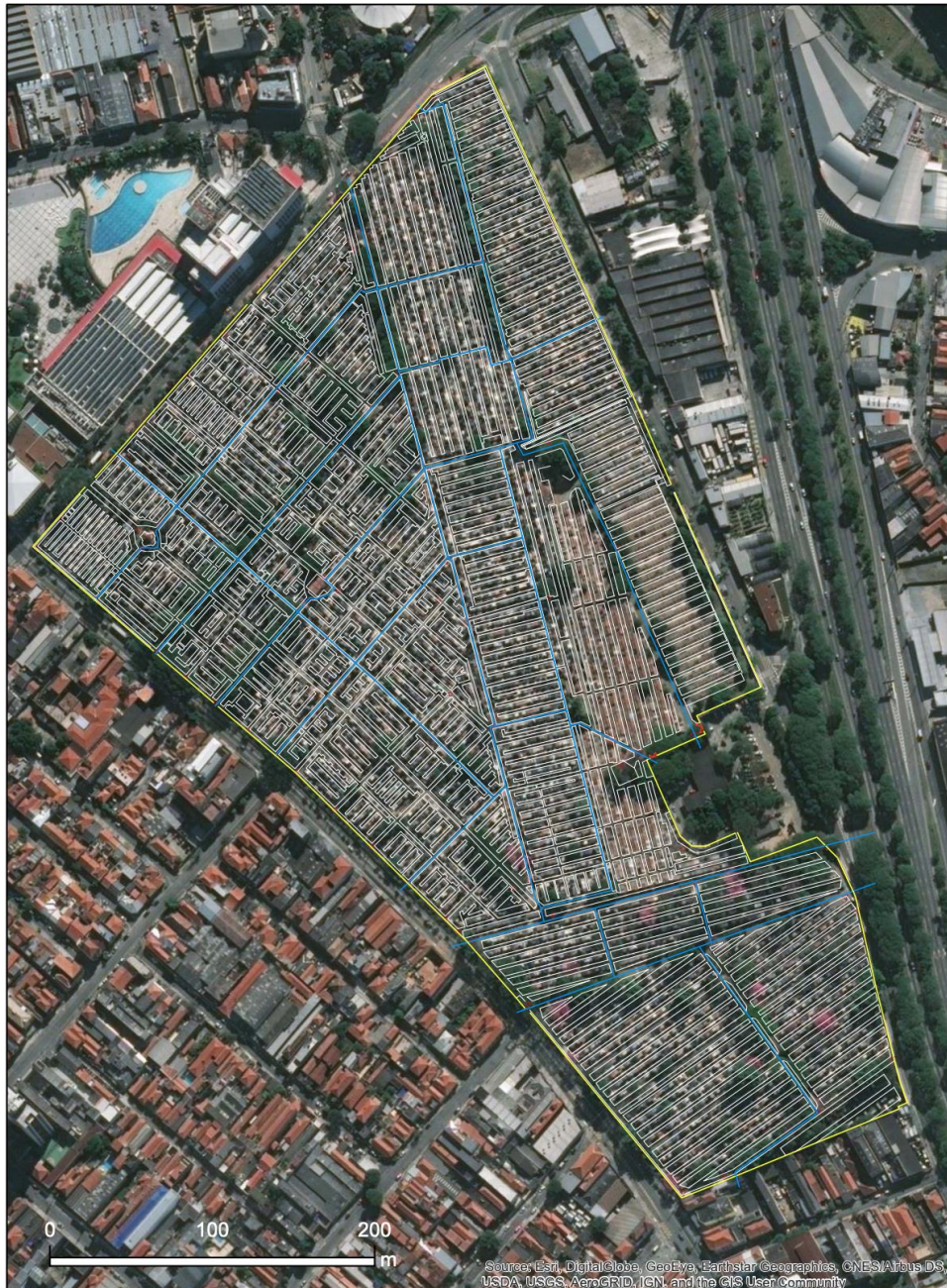
Today, the cemetery has an area of 183,000 m² and a population of around 400,000 individuals. Access to the main entrance of the cemetery is via the parking lot off a large avenue, the Salim Farah Maluf. The cemetery has very few trees, yet it is still one of the only green areas in this area of large avenues and buildings that dominate the landscape of the entire neighbourhood (Figure 31).

From the parking area, it is possible to see the administrative building and the eight funeral rooms, the architecture of which is very similar to the cemetery in the Perus district. This was my first impression upon arrival, almost feeling a sense of familiarity with the place. On the left side is the snack bar, which is usually full when funerals are taking place. When entering the burial area, it can clearly be seen that the trees and the green area surrounding the burial spaces occupy the few free spaces where there are no graves. The clear feeling is that there is no space at all to bury even one more person there, a perception that the gravediggers who work there and the administration employees confirmed to be well-founded. Currently, there is no possibility of buying new burial plots. If there are new burials, they are usually of people whose burial plot is already family-owned (I shall explain below why I use this term and not "burial plot granted for an unlimited period"). Employees with different contract regimes, some public workers and others employees of private companies, are part of the institution. This illustrates a process that is gradually taking place in

²⁶ **Law 11.083/91. Original:** "é concedida a gratuidade do sepultamento e dos meios e procedimentos a ele necessários aos municípios que não tenham condições de arcar com as despesas de funeral". Available at: https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/subprefeituras/servico_funerario/como_proceder/subsidios/index.php?p=3554. Access date: July 15th, 2020.

public institutions - part of the workforce already having been outsourced. The cleaning staff are from outsourced companies, many of them black women, immigrants from countries such as Haiti. Those who are hired to maintain the burial plots are freelancers who serve the families and offer their work locally.

Figure 31. The Quarta Parada Cemetery with the division of the different blocks. The green area on the right-hand side of the image is the parking area of the cemetery and the administrative building. Credit: Pastor Fábregas



I met a couple who had been working there for over thirty years, João and Maria²⁷. They were the oldest workers in the cemetery and, as we were talking about the history of its occupation, the types of graves, the size of the ossuaries, etc., many employees came to seek their advice or ask for information. The gravediggers and administrators (on the whole men) are public employees who have often passed through different cemeteries in the city.

The more experienced employees always tell stories and have their favourite cemetery where they have worked, while the position of director is designated by the *Superintendência do Serviço Funerário*²⁸. José was the director of the cemetery during my fieldwork, and had assumed the position no more than a year before. Many of the employees said that, besides the fact that he did not know how the cemetery worked, it was almost impossible to find him there. Indeed, during the months of July and August, when I was there every day during opening times (09:00 to 18:00), his absence was notable. Almost every morning, the director went to the nearest police station and registered an incident report for some object that had been stolen from the cemetery - usually a bronze plaque, a metal frame from a burial plot or any other object forming part of a grave (figure 32). I did not understand, at first, why it was necessary to do this every day for each frame and plaque stolen.

²⁷ Not their real names.

²⁸ The institution responsible for managing all the public cemeteries in the city of São Paulo.

Figure 32: Grave in the foreground with the mark of where the plaques with the family name once were. In the background of the image other graves can also be seen without their bronze plaques.



At the reception desk, a family member would appear from time to time, naturally unhappy to have found a burial plot without a plaque. One day, a woman, when speaking to the director who was in the reception that afternoon, a rare occurrence, asked him who was in charge of security. The director explained that it was the *Guarda Civil Metropolitana*²⁹ (GCM), although they were never on patrol in the cemetery. He continued the conversation by saying that every day he went to the police to report thefts. For him, things would work only by privatizing the cemetery and there was a proposal to this aim in the city hall. The lady, on the other side of the desk, agreed and said that it could be a good idea. Furthermore, she stated that she would not mind paying a small amount as long as she did not have to see her family's grave as it stands at the moment. She asked whether there was the risk of her family's remains being cremated, as she had seen the news about cremations in a newspaper. Those who own the plots, as was her case, would not have this problem, the director replied. The bodies which would be cremated would come from the general blocks, he said. The conversation went on with both of them talking about the inefficiency of the GCM, the public system and how thefts have become recurrent.

²⁹ Metropolitan Civil Guard: The local police force dependant on the municipality.

At that moment I understood the reason for the daily visits to the police station. They were to produce evidence of abandonment and of the absence of any structure on the part of the city hall to deal with cemeteries.

As far as the privatization process is concerned, there was a certain degree of polarization among the civil servants. One of them understood that perhaps by privatizing and being hired directly by a company, "more care would be taken of the employees and there would be better organization". Talking with one worker, Josué, he gave the example of employees hired by a funeral company who offer services for the funeral (coffin, flowers, etc.) and have no problems receiving their salaries. He also described to me what it is like to occasionally have to file a lawsuit against the city hall for reasons of insalubrity, extra jobs that take time to be paid, etc. Very often they had to request rectification via the director of the cemetery, due to incorrect payment of salaries. Since the cemetery requires work to be carried out on weekends and holidays, there are variations every month in salaries.

From the highest position in the cemetery to the citizen who has their family member buried there, most were in agreement with the idea of privatization. This was proved by the daily police reports that the director made, the salaries that were paid incorrectly every month, and the numerous newspaper reports that have added to and reinforced the inefficiency of the Funeral Service (figures 33 and 34) since João Doria, took control as mayor with his deputy, Bruno Covas.

"Relatives surprised by graveyard robberies"

"Parentes se surpreendem com furtos em cemitério"

(Jornal Agora, 22nd March 2018)

"Thieves steal grave plaques from São Paulo's East Side cemeteries"

"Ladrões roubam placas de túmulos de cemitérios da Zona Leste de São Paulo"

(Portal G1. 06/06/2018)

"Funeral Service is the worst in the city, says Bruno Covas"

"Serviço funerário é o pior da prefeitura, diz Bruno Covas"

(Folha de São Paulo, 22nd March 2019)

"Quarta Parada Cemetery is overgrown and vandalized"
"Cemitério da Quarta Parada está cheio de mato e vandalizado"
 (Jornal Agora, 18th January 2019)

Figure 33: Agora newspaper website

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Agora newspaper website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with categories like 'Capa', 'Olá!', 'Zapping', 'Nas ruas', 'Grana', 'Trabalho', 'Dicas', 'Defesa do Cidadão', 'Editorial', 'Vencer', 'Show!', 'Brasil', 'Mundo', 'Máquina', and 'Domingo é Show!'. Below this is a search bar labeled 'BUSCA'. The main content area features a large red header for the article 'Nas ruas' with the title 'Cemitério da 4ª Parada está cheio de mato e vandalizado' by Alfredo Henrique do Agora, dated 18/01/2019. The article text discusses the state of the cemetery, mentioning overgrown vegetation and vandalism. To the right of the article is a sidebar with a 'VEJA AS CAPAS DE' section showing a grid of newspaper covers with various headlines like 'Alerta de crimes no Waze causa revolta' and 'Bloqueio para consignado dos aposentados começa no dia 31'. Below the grid is a 'DE QUE VOCÊ PRECISA?' section with a dropdown menu set to 'Previdência' and a 'PREVIDÊNCIA' button.

Figure 34. Diário Comercio Indústria e Serviços website regarding the entrepreneurs interested in investing in cemeteries.

The screenshot shows the DCI (Diário Comercio Indústria & Serviços) website. The main navigation bar includes 'HOME', 'NEGÓCIOS', 'POLÍTICA', 'ECONOMIA & FINANÇAS', 'INOVAÇÃO', 'OPINIÃO', 'DCI SP', and 'ESPECIAIS'. The article is titled 'SETOR PRIVADO' and 'Empresários veem potencial em concessões de cemitérios'. The text states that private units could generate an annual profit of R\$ 8 million for the municipal treasury. Below the text is a photograph of a cemetery with several tombstones. A caption below the photo reads: 'Cemitério da Consolação é um dos que será concedido a empresário'. On the right side of the page, there is a 'ÚLTIMAS NOTÍCIAS' section with several news items, including 'São Bernardo do Campo pode iniciar parcerias para parques', 'Início de outono com garoa e frio na Grande São Paulo', 'Aluguel residencial registra ligeira alta em fevereiro na capital', and 'Prefeitura lança edital de patrocínio para Virada Cultural 2019'.

The Funeral Service is the municipal institution responsible for the management of all public cemeteries in the city of São Paulo. There are 22 cemeteries with approximately 350,000 burial plots, plus a crematorium, altogether covering an area of 3.4 million m². Linked to the Services Department of the City Hall, it possesses legal personality, its own assets and financial autonomy. In addition, the entity performs its service in the city as a monopoly, i.e., the existence of any type of entity that provides private burial services is prohibited. This is a particularity in relation to other municipalities in the state, which allows the public administration to concentrate practically all the information concerning the death of each individual buried in its territory, vastly expanding the possibilities and scope of research that takes its burial records as a primary source (Russo, 2016).

In the privatization process, not only the funeral service, but also the operation of the cemeteries and the crematorium would be ceded to private business interests.

To have an idea of speculative interests, according to the table of values for land concessions in the public cemeteries of São Paulo, the square meter in the level 1 cemeteries, including Quarta Parada, costs R\$ 4,927.15. A family burial plot for six coffins and an ossuary costs R\$18,131.91. The option with the possibility of eight burials and an ossuary (double the size of the first option) costs R\$26,064.62, according to the table below (table 5) obtained in the administration office of the Quarta Parada cemetery. This is one of the public cemeteries with the most expensive burial plots, along with other cemeteries in rich neighbourhoods, such as Consolação, Vila Mariana and Araçá.

Table 5. Values of land concessions in cemeteries. Source: São Paulo municipality

Funeral Service of the Municipality of São Paulo			
TABLE OF VALUES OF LAND CONCESSIONS IN CEMETERIES			
(May 10 th , 2015)			
Concession for an undetermined period of time			
Cemeteries (category 1)	Value per m ²	1.60 X 2.30 (3.68m ²)	2.30 X 2.30 (5.29m ²)
Araçá	R\$ 4,927.15	R\$ 18,131.91	R\$ 26,064.62
Consolação			
Quarta Parada (Brás)			
São Paulo			
Vila Mariana			

The initiative to privatize the cemeteries and the municipal institution responsible for their management are part of a neoliberal political project undertaken and carried out, especially since 2017 with the election of the then mayor João Doria Junior, who created a “destatization” office³⁰ (*Secretaria de Desestatização*), with the aim of privatizing municipal facilities ranging from parks, football stadiums and health centres to cemeteries. This policy of total privatization (Prieto, 2019) is part of the emergence of figures such as the depoliticized and "neutral" technocrat. It is the famous figure of the manager, an entrepreneur who will transform the city into an “efficient” big company. It is important to state that this is certainly not a recent phenomenon. Brazil, and cities such as São Paulo, are undergoing a process of hyper-segregation, common throughout Latin America, where there have long been segregated communities as it has been possible to observe over the decades, for example, with the establishment of gated communities (Caldeira, 2000).

5.2.2. The incineration initiative and neoliberal politics

In February 2018, the director of the cemetery informed the Funeral Service that the capacity of the collective ossuary was completely exhausted and that it contained, in

³⁰ Throughout this chapter I shall refer to this organism as Privatization Department, although this is not an exact translation of the Portuguese term “desestatizar”, which is a euphemism for privatization.

a precarious situation, the remains of approximately 1,600 individuals from exhumations carried out between 1941 and 2000 that had not since been claimed by the relatives. A technical inspection had been carried out and the local authority requested legal permission to cremate the unidentified human remains³¹. Previously, in 2014, Maria de Jesus Pinho, then director of the cemetery, informed the local authority that the ossuary was fully occupied and asked for permission to carry out cremations. The director of the Funeral Service inquired about the quantity of individuals and the data from the cemetery logbooks³² in which they were registered. In 2016, an employee responsible for this research at the Quarta Parada cemetery listed seven cases with the names of the people who had been sent to the collective ossuary, according to the documentation.

In such circumstances, even without knowing the names of the people who would be buried in the ossuary, or even how many, the cemetery director claimed that there were remains (*ossadas*) of 1,600 unidentified people that could be cremated and that these were related to individuals buried between 1941 and 2000, whose records would be drawn from among the cemetery logbooks 96 to 216. The cemetery administration also claimed that the cremation initiative was justified as it was "necessary for the protection of the environment, besides guaranteeing more space for new funerals"³³.

It is important to point out that in May 2005, during the mandate of José Serra and Gilberto Kassab (2005-2008), cremations from the same collective ossuary were carried out on numerous cases. These cremations, conducted on different days in the Vila Alpina crematorium, require more data and information, which could not be accessed during this research. The Quarta Parada cemetery does not receive bodies of unidentified people, all of the occupants are buried by their relatives. Therefore, those remains in the collective ossuary would, *a priori*, be identified.

³¹ Ofício nº 072/FMS/2018. Prefeitura de São Paulo. Serviços e Obras. Serviço Funerário.

³² Livros de registro de entrada do cemitério

³³ O Globo (2020). Prefeitura de SP consegue na Justiça direito de cremar 1.600 ossadas do Cemitério da Quarta Parada. Available at: <https://g1.globo.com/sp/sao-paulo/noticia/prefeitura-de-sp-consegue-na-justica-direito-de-cremar-1600-ossadas-do-cemiterio-da-quarta-parada.ghtml>

The process would be the same as that which took place in 2005: the ossuary is opened, the human remains (which are in plastic bags) collected and transported to the Vila Alpina crematorium, also located in the eastern region of São Paulo. This operation would be carried out so that the ossuary could be emptied, and new exhumations conducted in order to open up space and allow for the sale of new burial plots.

Beyond the speculative interests in making this cemetery attractive for investors, the whole process is problematic, since the identities of those placed in the ossuary are not known. At some point in the procedures carried out by the cemetery, the identity of these people was lost, therefore enabling their cremation as unidentified individuals.

According to the investigations of the municipal truth commission (2016), whose work was carried out between 2015 and 2017, the cremation of unknown or unclaimed bodies cannot be carried out as it goes against the foundations of the 1988 Federal Constitution, which states that the remains of a deceased person belong to the family. However, this does not prevent such remains, when allocated in the collective ossuaries, from being incinerated to free up space in municipal cemeteries at the end of the time allowed for grave use. This law³⁴ has never been repealed. The problem lies in the fact that there are many cases of people being disappeared by the institutions that manage death. The lack of dialogue between institutions and the way in which the disappearance of people is structured in São Paulo makes it possible to cremate the remains people whose identities are not known, even though it is deeply complex to do so (Márcia L Hattori et al., 2016).

This violence, assumed here as a local, relational and controversial category, has effects on the production of rights, morals (Eilbaum & Medeiros, 2015) and the practices of state and/or parastatal intervention. The legacy of the chaotic bureaucratic system for the management and tracking of death makes this type of

³⁴ Law n° 7.017/1967

action (the cremation of unclaimed human bone remains, the identity of which is not known for sure) more than problematic.

Let us consider one paradigmatic example: In 2015, a young man had a heart attack on a public road. The family had registered a missing person report at the specialized police station. His body was inspected at the Medico-Legal Institute and, in four days, the identity of the body was already known to the Identification Institute, following analysis of his fingerprints. The death report was registered at a police station, but nobody informed the family and the young man was buried as an unclaimed body. More than a month later, the Missing Persons Identification Program of the São Paulo Prosecutor's Office informed the family where he had been buried (Lajolo et al., 2016). Other cases, such as people whose bodies were used in medical classes and whose families were notified 15 years later, make policies such as cremation extremely complicated within this system.

The purpose here is not to directly equate cremation with destruction. Archaeological investigations of cremation in ancient contexts even demonstrate that, in acidic soils, cremated human remains are often better preserved than unburned bones (McKinley, 2006). If we consider the context of dealing with death in Brazil and Latin America during the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, medicalization and modernism reshaped the spatial relationship between cemetery and city. The new denomination of dead bodies as unhygienic brought with it centralized techniques of moving death outside the city, making it less visible and more spatially discrete (Dawdy, 2019).

In the modern period, cremation has become more widespread as a modern disposal method in western contexts, where it is seen as a 'sanitary measure' rather than a ritual process (Elias, 1994). Albeit to varying degrees, Europe became haunted by the use of open-air pyres and crematoria in the mass genocides of the Nazi regime. In more recent decades, cremation has been used as a means of disposing of the dead in different mass killings. For example, mass graves involving cremation have been found in Nepal and, most recently in the state of Guerrero in Mexico (H. Williams,

2015). If cremation can be seen in different ways, depending on the context of where and how it takes place, what is it that transforms the case of the Quarta Parada into an abject way of dealing with human remains? (Kristeva, 1982).

Today, life and death are inscribed more than ever with definitive and commodified worth, as witnessed through private hospitals, cemeteries, policing, life insurance, commercial DNA tests, etc. I argue that eliminating human remains completely via the more sanitary practice of cremation³⁵ is exactly what Norbert Elias states that never before have the dying disappeared so hygienically from the sight of the living. Or what the archaeologist Shannon Lee Dawdy (2019) understands as the relationship of hypermodernity with death. If in the 20th century we have medicalized and sanitised death (Ariès & Lloyd, 1985), in this specific case, this practice and relationship with the deceased goes through its most abject aspect: it is not a matter of eliminating the remains merely for sanitary reasons (although this is one of the arguments). Rather, it is a matter of eliminating them in order to open up space and make the cemetery attractive to private interests that might sell new burial plots (Goldhagen, 2009; T. W. Laqueur, 2018)

5.2.3. Social mobilization

On June 13th, 2018, the cremation of remains in Quarta Parada cemetery was legally authorized. Different social movements mobilized and drew up the manifesto entitled "For the Dignity of the Dead in the City of São Paulo" and organized demonstrations in the cemetery itself (Figures 35 and 36) along with a legal process against the Funeral Service of the City of São Paulo by lawyers related to CONDEPE (State Council for the Defence of the Human Person): Antônio Pádua Fernandes, Cleiton Leite, Dimitri Sales and others.

³⁵ Cremation practices have existed for thousands of years. The process involving the cremation of human remains is part of the variability of mortuary practices among societies in the past and present (Cerezo-Román, J., Wessman, A., & Williams, H. 2017; Williams, H. & Wessman, A. 2017; Kuijt, Quinn, Cooney, 2014).

Figure 35. Ecumenical act organized on June 30th, 2018 by the priest Julio Lancelotti and human rights organizations. Credit: Pádua Fernandes. Website “O Palco e o mundo”



Figure 36. Poster announcing the demonstration against cremation. Credit: Adriano Diogo. President of the Human Rights Section of the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT).



In addition to the demonstration held in July 2018, relatives of missing persons protested against the decision. Although the cemetery does not receive cases of people buried as NN, it is true that, in the light of the state's omission to identify their dead and offer them the right of burial by their family, the groups considered it

necessary to prevent the memory of victims or of crimes committed by the police from being permanently erased via cremation.

Figure 37. Relatives of disappeared persons demonstrating against the decision to cremate. Credit: <https://ponte.org/grupos-cobram-que-justica-revogue-autorizacao-para-incineracao-de-ossadas/>



Why is it that people are not mobilized by the collective ossuary, but by the cremation of human remains?

The use of cremation is almost the end of any possibility of identification in cases of missing persons. It is the elimination of evidence and the body, even though the practice of placing human remains in a collective ossuary also makes identifications almost completely impossible. Ossuaries and cremation here operate as two elements with different mobilization processes. The first is linked with the structural, normalized and "legalized" violence in state strategies. The second, although it also has a legal repertoire, is the exception, the abjection of neoliberal policies, the ultimate actions of the city council in making it difficult or impossible to search for disappeared people.

The 'mundane mass grave' is not an aberration of burial conditions. Cemetery patterns shift as spatial, economic and patterns of production do, especially in dramatic moments of

rapid change. These new cemeteries are good evidence of a systemic shift in structures of governance. The mundane mass grave, and the logics that make it happen, are both evidence of a structure of rule and a mode of sociality. Mundane mass graves, organised crime, and ‘going missing’ are not just structured political outcomes – they work with a deterrent effect, which is decentred as de facto public policy, working as an accelerated cost-mitigated means to structure social behaviour. It is public policy by omission, without the expenditure; perfection in market times.

Willis, Graham D. (to be published). *Politics gone missing*.

If, on the one hand, there is a normalization of the omission of public policies, on the other hand, when it is taken to its extreme in cremation, there is social mobilisation. Mass cremation is an aberration, but the omission that creates cemetery standards like the ossuary is not.

Regardless of the selectivity in what we consider “normalized” or not, all of this social mobilization had a huge repercussion in the media, especially the independent media, led the Prosecutor’s office to initiate a legal process to prevent the cremations from being carried out. The Funeral Service's claim was that all the procedures were perfectly legal, and authorization had already been granted for cremation. On December 12th, 2018, the judge accepted the evidence and made it impossible for the City Hall to perform the cremations. However, in the daily life of the cemetery, the situation of overcrowding and the need to store exhumed human remains made it necessary for an additional space, an old disused chapel, to be used to accommodate the new exhumations requested by the municipality in order to make new areas of the cemetery available.

5.3. “Dying like an indigent” - the non-right to a genealogy: Unclaimed bodies (*Corpos não reclamados*) and NN (*desconhecidos*)

In the previous sections, I have introduced the story of the social movement against the cremation of human remains, indicating that this process is connected to

neoliberal policies in São Paulo, through the project spearheaded by the new Privatization Department created at the beginning of 2017 by the mayor, João Doria. But who are these dead people and what criteria are used to choose them to be exhumed and placed in the collective ossuary? What legal aspects have been established to normalize and hide the loss of identity in the ossuary? How long does our memory remain regarding our ancestors and our relationship with their human remains? In what way does the materiality inscribed in the cemetery space reflect inequalities regarding the right to this memory? The dead body can be considered part-person, part-thing, but it is indisputably a focus of memory for the survivors (H. Williams, 2013). Hence, its transformation is a process of selective social remembering and forgetting.

I work here with the categories used by the state bureaucracy - "unclaimed bodies", "unknown", "Maria de Tal" (Jane Doe) and "João de Tal" (John Doe) and the expression "not to be buried like an indigent" - destined for a non-genealogy. What I mean by this expression is that, in effect, this means to lose one's right to lineage. Genealogy 0 is that of those who do not have the right to a family memory maintained through generations. In the case of Brazil, this right, which seems simple, relating to knowledge of one's own individual or family history, was, and still is, denied to a large part of the black and poor population. As Silvio de Almeida (2019) affirms, the lack of memory from the past is linked to the way in which these families, from different parts of Africa, arrived in Brazil. Black people did not come as a family, but as objects and commodities and lost, via kidnapping and forced displacement, their community and family ties, and were even dispossessed of their individual names.

I argue that the forms of structural and institutional racism reinforce this unequal right to a memory, especially with regard to the treatment of bodies and the efforts of institutions dealing with death to identify them as I have discussed in previous chapters. Classified as NN (*desconhecidos*) in the bureaucracy of death, they are routinely called indigent. The Latin term means "those who lack something". Its use in Brazil has innumerable meanings including an economic, social and/or symbolic condition: those who are unable to meet their own needs (Dicio, 2021), who live in poverty

(Michaelis, 2020), who live on the streets but who, in any case, especially those who come closer to the losing condition of persons, are defined as indigent. In the funeral system, the term indigent is historically used to define citizens lacking the resources to pay for their own burial.

A São Paulo newspaper described the indigent as someone who looks like garbage while sleeping and survives on *cachaça* (a distilled spirit) in a series of headlines that shapes the imagination constructing the indigent as a product of an individual moral failure who is to be dealt with as a deviant and a criminal through state policies (figure 38).

Figure 38: Newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, 21st June 1988, page 48. Headlines on this page: "They survive with cachaça". "Indigent does not have any help". "Sleeping, they look like garbage". "A line to have a soup and rest".

Eles sobrevivem com cachaça

DAVID RAINOWICZ NETO

Ele dorme na soleira das portas, debaixo de marquises ou na grama dos canteiros e jardins públicos. Escuro, unhas sujas, camisetas e cuecas, acorda cansado e recolhe restos de comida nas latas de lixo. De noite, calado, caminha lentamente pela rua da cidade, até chegar ao pé inclinado de fuga da realidade miserável. Como estratégia de sobrevivência, carrega nas mãos uma garrafa de pinga, "que ajuda a repouso e tira a fome". De vez em quando alguma insistência, o mendigo, sobretudo noturno, se apresenta sem qualquer "olá, José Manoel da Silva, 36 anos, administrador de empresa".

Fumando um cigarro filado, procura lembranças em sua consciência acomodada. Passou a beber, "cada vez mais", depois que a mulher o abandonou. "Ela fugiu. Levou meu filho e foi para Minas viver com outra mulher. Nova tragedia no cargo. José Manoel diz que "bebeu" a noite, o outro, o apartamento de dois quartos. Antes disso, o "desprezo de vida" tinha custado o emprego na Henry Levi, uma empresa norte-americana.

Acta, depois de quase quatro anos "na pior", que "não devia estar aqui". Com convulsão, conta que se formou em 1978, "pela faculdade de Vitória de Santo Antão (cidade produtora de cachaça no agreste pernambucano)". A mulher, "militante de Belo Horizonte, trabalhou co-

mo chefe de enfermagem no hospital Santa Cecilia". Embora sem pedicúla, confessa-se "ainda apaixonado" e se emociona ao falar do filho, "que está com 14 anos".

José Manoel diz que nunca foi abordado pelo pessoal do Cetren. "Ao contrário, recentemente me sentia o melhor lugar para procurar, caso decidisse melhorar de vida. "Ouví muitas histórias ruins e soube de muita gente que é assaltado ou espancado lá dentro."

Embora solitário, o mendigo foi amadado: o cearense Francisco Al-

onso da Silva, 36 anos, e Abel Francisco da Silva, pernambucano, de 36, com quem reparte as semolas e os troços de cachaça. As histórias do trio se confundem. Francisco diz que trabalhou na Volkswagen, "como mecânico montador". Abel, casado duas vezes, foi motorista. "Na morte", mal conseguem permanecer em pé ou explicar a própria decisão. Citar é fácil. Levantar é muito difícil", explica José Manoel, garantindo que pode comprovar ser formado em Administração de Empresas. "Meus documentos e algumas roupas estão guardados na casa de uma senhora amiga, que mora no Sumaré."

Dormindo eles parecem lixo

Quem passa apressado pelas ruas de iluminação deficiente precisa olhar bem para não confundir-se com monte de lixo. Isso também acontece no "ponto dos carroceiros" de Pinheiros, na rua Fernão Dias, 161. Lá dormem pessoas e suas donas de papel — José Júlio, João, Velinho, Isea. Os que conhecem o local costumam passar para ouvir a palavra e raramente dão atenção aos mendigos.

"Eu não me importo com essas pessoas. Durmo aqui porque me dá vontade de dormir, porque me facilita o serviço e ajuda economicamente algumas coisas", diz José Júlio Gomes, 38 anos, redator de Camaragibe. Ele passa o dia percorrendo as ruas do bairro, à procura de papéis, ferro e metal. "Vendo tudo no ferro-velho do seu José, um amigo, que me paga bem. Quanto o dinheiro arrecado e juntando nos táxi. De vez em quando sobra alguma para eu apresentar alguma doação. Eu que economizo com o quarto de pensão, gasto em comida, no barbeiro e com o dinheiro". Isea, José Júlio, sorriem satisfeitos, revistando que no ano passado chegou a ganhar R\$ 100 mil, "líquido".

Expede de vigia do "ponto dos carroceiros". José Júlio conta que sua vida é melhor que a de muita gente que mora em barraco. Não se considera mendigo, apesar das roupas surradas. "Isso não é, aponta para João, Velinho e Isea, que dormem mais apressados sobre um pedaço de lixo. "Eles só querem dinheiro para a cachaça. Tendo direito para a bebida, não precisam nem de comida. Por isso não sentem nem o frio." Como prova de que está "bem de vida", José Júlio mostra o colchão em que dorme, totalmente

Uma fila para tomar sopa e descansar

Outra perseguição no vaivém do trabalho da avenida 23 de maio. Dinardo Barros Mendes, de 40 anos, é o vigia de uma fila de 45 homens que desfilam o frio. A espera de uma vaga para comer e dormir no albergue retorna Lygia Jardim. O alojamento, mantido por espíritos, funciona nos baixos do viaduto Santa Cecília e só abre às 20 horas.

Os primeiros da fila contam que chegaram por volta do meio-dia, para não perder a oportunidade de ganhar uma sopa e uma cama para passar a noite. O cadastramento, o banho e a rápida oração antes de dormir, como diz um "veloz" do albergue, "fazem parte das regras da casa", mas não passam de formalidade obedecida por quem tem frio e fome.

Melhor aparelhado que os demais — embora humildes, suas roupas estão limpas — Dinardo fica de lado com o que sobra. Da um passo à frente, segura firme sua guardanapo. "Não é isso que eu quero. Só desejo voltar para casa. Mas, me ajuda, por favor", implora emocionado. Enquanto revela seu desespero e desorientação, lágrimas correm pelo rosto.

"Moro no Rio, em Realengo, com a família. Sou marceneiro e já podia estar aposentado. Vim para São Paulo tratar do INPS. Fiquei numa parada da rua Jacupuí, pagando diária. Andei dois dias até da firma que trabalhava, a West Companhia. Na Junta Comercial me disseram que a firma foi extinta. Quando voltei para pensar, tomaram todo o meu dinheiro, o relógio e eu fiquei na rua. Me ajuda, seu repórter..."

A porta do albergue se abre. A assistente social e vice-presidente da entidade, Maria Alice da Silva, e o coordenador de plantonistas, voluntários, Ary Abrantes da Silva, entre sorridentes e desconfortados, convidam o repórter para entrar e "conhecer o centro social e de reabilitação". Conversa interrompida. Dividido, mais esperançoso, volta para a fila.

Os dois voluntários explicam seu trabalho, enquanto os clientes

vão sendo selecionados por meio de fichas cadastrais, analisadas pelos plantonistas. "Tratamos os indigentes e necessitados por eles mesmos. Eles se sentem melhor assim, com o anonimato e privacidade preservados. Aqui recebem pijamas, chinelo, toalha, fazem higiene pessoal e podem lavar suas roupas. Além da água quente tomam chá, com pão e manteiga, pela manhã."

Maria Alice e Ary falam do "rigido" regulamento do albergue: "Não aceitamos gente embriagada e o cliente que falar ou chegar depois das 20 horas perde direito à vaga. Temos capacidade para abrigar 130 pessoas por dia, em quatro unidades construídas pela prefeitura. A feminina, com 20 camas, fica na Madureira Cardim. A de doentes, com 30 leitos, na 13 de Maio. Aqui, dos dois lados do viaduto, temos 60 vagas. Não recebemos ninguém nas ruas. Eles chegam voluntariamente. Antes de dormir, quem quiser participar de prece, na qual ressaltamos o valor do indivíduo, pois nosso objetivo é recuperar os clientes para a sociedade".

Indigente não tem ajuda

O engenheiro eletrônico Paulo Lima, depois de assistir ao noticiário noturno da televisão, foi visitar a amiga, que mora na esquina das ruas Roca e Irapera, na Bela Vista. Próximo à soleira da porta do prédio, corpo encolido e coberto de trapos, um indigente dormia. Condoído e incentivado pela notícia de que funcionários do governo do Estado estão recolhendo mendigos na rua para levá-los ao Cetren, o engenheiro decidiu dar sua contribuição. Duas horas e meia depois, porém, não escondia sua decepção. "Liguei para o Cetren e me informaram que as visitas da PM não costumam fazer esse tipo de atendimento. Pediram para eu ligar para o Cetren. Fiz isso. Uma voz indistintamente respondeu que nada podia fazer. Me contou que, por falta de pessoal e de condicoes, o Cetren não atende nem 10% dos chamados telefônicos. Além disso, informou que não havia lugar disponível, pois a maioria dos necessitados chega voluntariamente à instituição."

Paulo Lima achou essa situação "um desperdício". Diz que voltou à rua e colheu o indigente num um coberto. "Um palativo que ele, dormindo, nem percebeu. Liguei então para a delegacia do bairro. O investigador reclamou da falta de recursos para cumprir seu dever de pegar mendigos. Disse que seu tra-

Uma réplica procura na lista telefônica e Lima encontrou o número da Comissão Municipal de Defesa Civil. "Disseram que iam entrar em contato com a regional e tentar ajudar, mas nada garantiram. Sugiram também que eu telefonasse ao Cetren e explicasse o caso. Se pudesse, ligaria ainda para a casa do prefeito Jânio Quadros, para tomar alguma providência."

O último telefonema do engenheiro foi para o Estado. Diz que nunca pretendeu "banar o boné maricantinho", apenas desabafar seu desprazer. "Sei que o encaminhamento do indigente para o Cetren ou outra instituição assistencial não seria a solução para o problema. Mas no tempo em que perli ao telefone, descobri que a cidade não está mobilizada para esse tipo de solidariedade e que o cidadão ainda não dispõe de um mecanismo de comunicação eficaz para fazer com

In many newspapers, references can be seen to people living on the street as "indigents". Headlines such as "Indigent finds wallet and gives it back to its owner" are extremely common. The person's name is almost never present. In relation to

death, there is a popular expression, "Do not let the person die like an indigent" (Figure 39).

Figure 39: Newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, 28th August 2001, page 42. Headline: Person from Goiás state could be buried as indigent



The indigent is seen as an obscene body in public space. To die as one is cruel and undignified. To be buried as an indigent is to expose the dead body. A common expression in Portuguese is “*enterrado em cova rasa*” (“buried in a shallow grave”), the opposite of how a dignified death is understood today, when the person is made up, dressed in his/her own clothes and buried in a cemetery that looks like a peace garden (Dawdy, 2019).

For the indigent, a specific condition of humanity is imposed by the state and the social imaginary - the destitution of their social existence reducing them to their mere biological condition (G Agamben & Heller-Roazen, 1998). The ontological status of that population is, in the words of Butler (2010:51), compromised and suspended. This reduction in the humanity of "undesirables" accentuates their apparently unpredictable and dangerous character (Carman, 2017). As shown in research on human bodies found in landfills, Mariano Perelman (2019, p. 40) demonstrates how

identification as a human body does not always humanise the remains. Rather, it can give rise to a differentiating effect. This is due to the fact that this process is not only dependent on the body itself, but also on its performance, its form and, above all, on the possibilities of the body of being socially humanizable - that is, recognising who the person once was.

Rather symptomatic of this was the murder, in the 1990s, of the indigenous leader Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe, Galdino dos Santos, who was burned alive while sleeping by a group of upper-class men in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. The killers stated in their defence that they "thought he was an indigent" (*O caso do índio pataxó queimado em Brasília. A Sentença da Juíza.*, 1997). As can be seen, the moral prohibition of violence is applied in a selective way. My argument is that, considering discourse as a way of perceiving the world, the use of the term "indigent" should be abandoned.

In our case study, cremation would be the solution to eliminate and empty an ossuary with the remains of thousands of poor people who had no money for a burial plot, leaving the site free for the business interests of selling and using the different spaces of the cemetery. It is also important to think how this occurs within a sanitization policy. The deviant body of the poor person, which is reduced by the state (once it has not been claimed by any relative) to its biological condition and deprived of its social relations (genealogy 0), by occupying a piece of land with huge speculative interests, must be removed. Cremation is the price to pay. Bodies are seen as obstacles to land speculation in Brazilian economic capital.

Research carried out on the origin of the bodies that compose the famous Body Worlds exhibition³⁶ shows the intrinsic relations of this use of plastination techniques for entertainment and sale (Kim, 2012). Plastination enables the total insertion of the cadaver in the logic of commodity, as applied to cattle or oil, since technology allows full advantage to be taken of the cadaver, reducing it to cuts and derivatives which, after processing, are to be sold as mere goods via the Internet. According to the

³⁶ Information available at <https://bodyworlds.com/exhibitions/>

organisers of this exhibition, the bodies used came from donors, although there have been complaints made that this is not always the case. For Kim, many of the bodies are of people whose identities are unknown or even of people who had died in Chinese concentration camps. These bodies were not considered useful or lucrative in life but have been used in death for the benefit of business interests, which exhibit them non-stop around the world. The same occurs in the case of the Quarta Parada cremations, albeit with different motives. The former makes total use of the bodies of those who were not profitable in life but now will be in death, while the latter seeks to eliminate bodies in order to open spaces up to speculative interests.

Unclaimed dead bodies, according to Brazilian legislation, can also be destined to medical schools for research and teaching purposes (Law 8.501/92). According to the third article of the same law, this applies to both unidentified bodies and those which are identified, but not claimed by any legal guardians or relatives. The competent institution must publish news about the death in the main newspapers of the city and, if there is no dispute, this type of procedure is authorized.

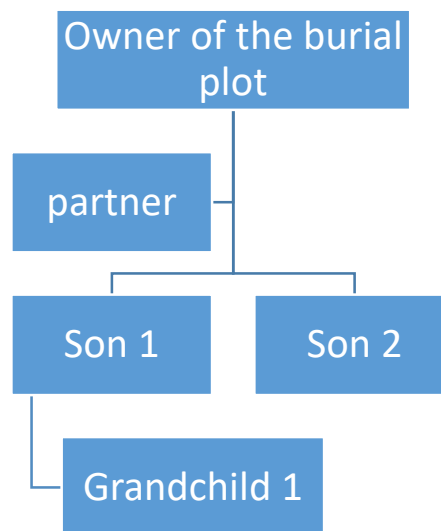
If there is a difference in the distribution of the treatment of unclaimed and unknown bodies, in the case of the Quarta Parada cemetery, in which all of the bodies are identified and buried by their families, I argue that differences can be seen in terms of ownership. The concession of a grave is a right of use. This means that the public authority is the "owner" of the space, merely granting the right to the concessionaire to carry out reforms and/or construction, although this concession is for an indeterminate period of time.

The family that owns the concession for an indefinite period of time, in other words, that is the owner of the burial plot, can maintain the memory of their ancestors, which is materialized in the cemetery space. Each deposit has between 6 and 8 niches and a space for the remaining exhumed human bones. The management is decided via the inheritance process of the family heritage, the rules of which regarding who decides the next burial goes through the same logic as the inheritance of other material goods, such as houses, money, etc. In the case of families that do not own the burial plot,

these material references to their ancestors are not embodied in the cemetery space, although numerous other forms of remembrance can be triggered, for example through oral accounts.

It is a frequent occurrence that a family member comes to the cemetery administration office to inquire about availability of space in a certain burial plot. The employee and the family member draw up a simple heredogram on a piece of paper to check who would have the right to decide and inherit the land.

Figure 40: Sequence of who receives ownership and has the right to decide on the next person to be buried in the burial plot.



The difference in economic terms between a burial in a general block and in a family-owned burial plot is enormous. If, as presented above, a burial plot in the Quarta Parada today costs more than 25,000 reais, a burial in the general block, with a three-year rental period, costs R\$132.42. At present, very few cemeteries (Dom Bosco and the Vila Formosa cemeteries) still have a general block, which are usually those that receive NN.

Table 6. Fees for each type of burial. Serviço Funerário de São Paulo (2018)

1.4. Burials / Cemeteries	
General Block (Rent for 3 years)	R\$ 132.42
General block with drawer (Rent for 3 years)	R\$ 266.26
Columbário (5 years)	R\$ 889.63
Urnas para ossos de madeira com revestimento metálico	R\$ 361.13
1.5. Corpos de outros municípios	
Sepultamento Quadra Geral Terra	R\$ 665.96
Sepultamento Quadra Geral Gaveta	R\$ 665.96
Sepultamento concessões	R\$ 665.96

Faced with the overcrowding of the cemetery, the Funeral Service carries out what is called a "*comício*", which is a request made by the Funeral Service itself with the aim of vacating space and exhuming bodies that families have not claimed.

One of the cemetery employees stated that for at least four years this collective ossuary has no longer been used, as it is full. In recent years, cases in which there is demand via the Funeral Service for exhumation, new "*comícios*" that are requested, have ended up using the space of an old chapel inside the cemetery. Closed for years and used to store the working tools of the gravediggers and gardeners of the cemetery, this building began to be used as an alternative to the collective ossuary with the bags stacked there together with the tools.

5.4. The necropolitics and ontology of death

In recent years, numerous projects have been carried out to discuss what has been called "to let die", one of the prerogatives of states in the contemporary context. The concept is deeply influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, Agamben and Achille Mbembe. Anthropological and sociological research related to state violence,

feminism, race and class have mainly focused on ethnography from three perspectives: 1) The gender perspective, such as the Mães da Sé (D. D. de Oliveira, n.d.; Graça, 2014; Salgado et al., 2014), Mães de Maio (AGRA, 2014; Assumpção et al., 2018), Mães de Acari, and Mães da Baixada Fluminense; 2) Research institutions (Ferreira, 2009), police violence and its actions (Eilbaum & Medeiros, 2015; Medeiros, 2015); 3) The field of psychoanalysis (M. B. C. C. Vannuchi, 2018). All of these are deeply linked to the perspective of coloniality (Quijano, 2015) and the question of class and race in the management of bodies in life and death.

If these social practices can be seen in sociological and anthropological research exploring the complex path of searching for a missing person, how can archaeology prove omission in material practices?

Via ethnography, I have presented, in the previous items, how an idea of inefficiency, insecurity and disorganization in the daily practices of the cemetery is being developed in public opinion, linked to privatization policies. Below, by examining archives and the materiality of the ossuary, I question the materiality of omission, and whether it is possible to identify the names of the human remains transferred to the collective ossuary.

My first contact with the site was through the intermediation of the Human Rights leader from the Workers' Party³⁷, Adriano Diogo and the Prosecutor's Office of the State of São Paulo³⁸, Eliana Vendramini. The latter was following the case of the cremations and she introduced me to the director of the cemetery. The concern of the director and his staff regarding somebody carrying out research in the cemetery was explicit and visible as they were already in the spotlight due to the request for cremation. The difficulties I experienced in accessing the cemetery logbooks from 1941 onwards (the first books (prior to 1941) being under the custody of the Municipal Public Archive) involved a great deal of bureaucracy and numerous meetings with different Funeral Service employees. After insistent telephone calls, e-

³⁷ Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT.

³⁸ Ministério Público do Estado de São Paulo - MP-SP.

mails and visits to the office, I was authorized to research and access only for myself. The possibility of having more scientific data for a response to the demand itself proved to be of interest for the managers, and at the end of a month, we had agreed to make a presentation to everyone with the data obtained.

Particularly regarding the opening and analysis of the collective ossuary, it was extremely challenging to gain access. I only received authorization in the last week that I was there. If, on the one hand, the documentation and analysis of the logbooks seemed to be more harmless, on the other, opening the ossuary concerned to visualize the omission and lack of care was to open something that was not visible for those who visited the cemetery, in contrast to the logbooks that were continuously in use in the routine practice of the cemetery.

5.4.1. Records, documentation and the disappearance of identities in the cemetery

The logbooks of the public cemeteries of São Paulo have been used since the implementation of the first cemeteries in the city as a key element of the registration and control of the population buried there. As official documents, everything is numbered. Each book has a sequential number, the first page is dedicated to a description of when the first and last record is made, and each page has a number in the top right corner. The oldest books, up to the 1970s, are fully handwritten by the employee. The detail of the fine handwriting, to make everything readable and easy to access, seems to be one of those handmade works that are already in the process of disappearing. From a certain period on, the logbooks have the necessary information printed with blank spaces to be filled in, a good way of ensuring that everything is properly recorded.

In these books, there is a record of each dead body that enters in the cemetery including personal data, such as name, filiation, number of registers, cause of death, place of death, date of death, etc. When exhumation, re-inhumation and/or transfer of the body is carried out, all of this data is also recorded. The book is divided into

two parts: the first containing the entry for each person, according to the date of arrival of the body in the cemetery, and a second part, which has an alphabetical index in order to facilitate the search for a specific individual. It is important to emphasize that this cemetery does not receive NN. Only people identified and brought by their families are buried here, although it was not clear who were those that were placed in the collective ossuary.

Not long ago, a software system was developed to perform the functions of the book and was added to the registration system, in order to facilitate the search for a particular person. However, the latter system does not replace the former. According to the cemetery staff, when someone comes to look for the burial site of a relative or to discover more information, inquiries are made in both the software, which looks like an old MS-DOS system, and in the mortuary book. This means that although other documentary series exist in the cemetery (records of employees' working time, cemetery map, and so on), these are complementary to what is in the mortuary book.

Figure 41: Cemetery logbooks and their place of storage. Credit: author



According to data from the city hall, of the 1,600 human remains in the ossuary, only seven people's names were known (table 3), distributed in five logbooks of the cemetery. All of them were buried between 1994 and 2000 and exhumed between 2003 and 2006, when they had their remains placed in the ossuary. The places of the primary burial also vary. They are from different blocks (62, 79, 88, 93, 96 and 111) and not only from general block 111.

Table 7. List of seven people drawn up by the funeral service whose remains were placed in the general ossuary

Book	Name	Date of death	Profession	Sex	Colour	Birthplace	Age	Cause of death	Date of burial	Date of exhumation
178	X	20/02/1994	Student	M	Brown	São Paulo	22	Bronchopneumonia	21/02/1994	04/07/2003
178	Y	05/02/1994	Retired	F	No information	Iugoslávia	80	Respiratory failure	06/02/1994	25/05/2003
183	Z	26/06/1996	Housewife	F	White	Iparicu	77	Sepsis, stroke	27/06/1996	04/07/2003
185	W	20/09/1997	Housewife	F	White	São Paulo	78	Respiratory failure, retroperitoneal sarcoma, carcinomatosis	21/02/1997	18/07/2003
189	K	17/04/1999	Housewife	F	White	São Paulo	59	Septic shock, multiple myeloma, pneumonia	18/04/1999	08/03/2006
190	T	04/01/2000	Retired	M	White	Amparo	71	Brain trauma, fall	05/01/2000	17/09/2004
190	U	01/10/1999	Janitor	F	White	São Paulo	85	Acute respiratory failure, bladder cancer, urinary tract infection	02/10/1999	02/06/2003

This table came from the initial survey carried out by an employee of the Funeral Service, who was probably assigned to perform this task at the time the protests regarding cremation began. The criterion used was to examine the logbooks directly and assume that all movement (burial, exhumation, transfer to another cemetery, etc.) concerning human remains should be recorded in the cemetery logbooks. Regarding the cases listed by the Funeral Service, what was evident from the books was how they search for the specific record as "Quadra 111 Ossário Geral. Exumado" (Block

111 General ossuary. Exhumed) (figure 42), probably one of the other ways of mentioning it, since it was located in the block of the same number.

Figure 42: Inscriptions on the left for a person exhumed in 2001 and sent to the collective ossuary.
Credit: author

Handwritten notes on the left: DESPOJOS, P/QUADRA 111, OSSÁRIO GERAL.

Stamp: EXUMADO

Record Card Fields:
estado civil: casado de 19...
Estado de S.P. natural de Birigui, com 65 e de 20...
Causa Mortis: lung - hep
Óbito registrado no Registro Civil do J. Formosa
Livro nº. _____ Folha nº. _____ Sob nº. _____
Sepultado aos 24 do mês de 2
Quadra nº. 19 g Gaveta nº. _____
Transcrito por [Signature] Funcionário Aos _____
Visto: _____ Administrador Obs: _____
Exumado em 23/ MARÇO 2001
Transcrito por _____ Funcionário

My research aimed to understand when the general block was built and began to be occupied, to comprehend the dynamics of exhumations and reoccupations in this block and whether it was possible to draw up a list with the details of all the people who ended up in the collective ossuary. Advised by Constantino, one of the workers who best understands the organizational logic of the records, we examined the cemetery logbooks that indicate the beginning of the use of the general block in August 1977. From 1977 to August 1995, when the general block ceased to be used and the sale of the burial plots took place, all the cases observed were recorded in an *Excel* file³⁹.

Constantino was quite an exception among the employees. Most of them have been employed for quite some time in the Funeral Service. However, few stay in one place. The majority are transferred to different public cemeteries in the city, such as São Pedro Cemetery, Vila Formosa, Araçá, and Vila Mariana, among others. This may also have been one of the problems when listing such a low number of individuals.

³⁹ All the different ways of naming the ossuary were aggregated: *ossário coletivo*, *ossário coletivo 111*, *ossário 111*.

Obviously, the ossuary did not contain only seven individuals; its storage capacity was completely exhausted. There were thousands more as the request itself and the materiality proved, although the documentation of the cemetery did not.

What was most evident was the complete impossibility, via documentation, of tracing back the identities, that is, of discovering at least the names of the people who were placed in the ossuary. The examination of the documentation proved the omission, the non-completion of the destination of innumerable bodies that were surely exhumed, but it is not clear where they went.

From the 38 cemetery logbooks, with most of the records for the ossuary found in book number 171, possibly due to the diligence of one of the employees in the registration department, I listed 233 people who were destined to the ossuary. This contributes extremely important data regarding the documental register, which, on the one hand, exercises the control of the bodies under state jurisdiction, whereas, on the other hand, when dealing with bodies already categorized as unclaimed, there is no care in the process. Somehow, there is an indirect understanding that no one will search for such information.

Consider the following example: according to the record of the mortuary book, João⁴⁰ was a black male who died due to a brain trauma when he was 28 years old. His report was produced by Renato Capellano from IML_SP. Two days after his death, he was buried in General Block 7, grave 16, in the fourth niche on the right side, on May 16th, 1978. There is no record in the book of his exhumation and re-inhumation. However, João cannot still be buried in the same place. When Block 111 was created, all those whose remains were not claimed by their families would have gone to the collective ossuary. Those whose families had responded had two options inside the cemetery - to buy the land or to place the remains in an individual ossuary in the walls of the cemetery. There is no information regarding his destination, although his remains were moved.

⁴⁰ Not his real name.

Figure 43: The record of “João” in the book of the Quarta Parada cemetery

Exumado em _____ Visto: _____ (administrador)

Transcrito por _____ (secretário)

Obito Nº 247996
 aos 16 dias do mês de maio de 1980 falecido aos 58 dias do mês de maio de 1980
 profissional: industrial sexo: masculino cor: preta estado civil: solteiro natural de: São Paulo Estado de: São Paulo com 58 anos de idade
 Causa mortis: traumatismo cranial
 Obito registrado no Registro Civil do Livro n.º 43 - C. Folha n.º 165 Sob n.º 11540
 Queda n.º 16 Gaveta n.º 11540
 Transcrito por: Pereira Visto: _____ (administrador)
 Data: 16/05/80
 Exumado em _____ Processo n.º _____
 Transcrito por _____ Visto: _____ (administrador)

This is just one of the hundreds of cases I have seen of people buried in the general blocks that could be assumed to have been exhumed at some point. However, where did these people end up? What was the fate of this body once it was considered to be unclaimed? How is it possible that in the case of João, who was identified, the fate of the body was lost? What is the "unclaimed body" in the everyday activities of this institution?

Unclaimed bodies are understood literally: bodies of individuals whose families have not claimed them. In other words, people without families (according to the state's understanding and legitimization of the concept of family). They are those relegated to having no memory or bond, and who thus pass onto the state the tutelage of their destiny.

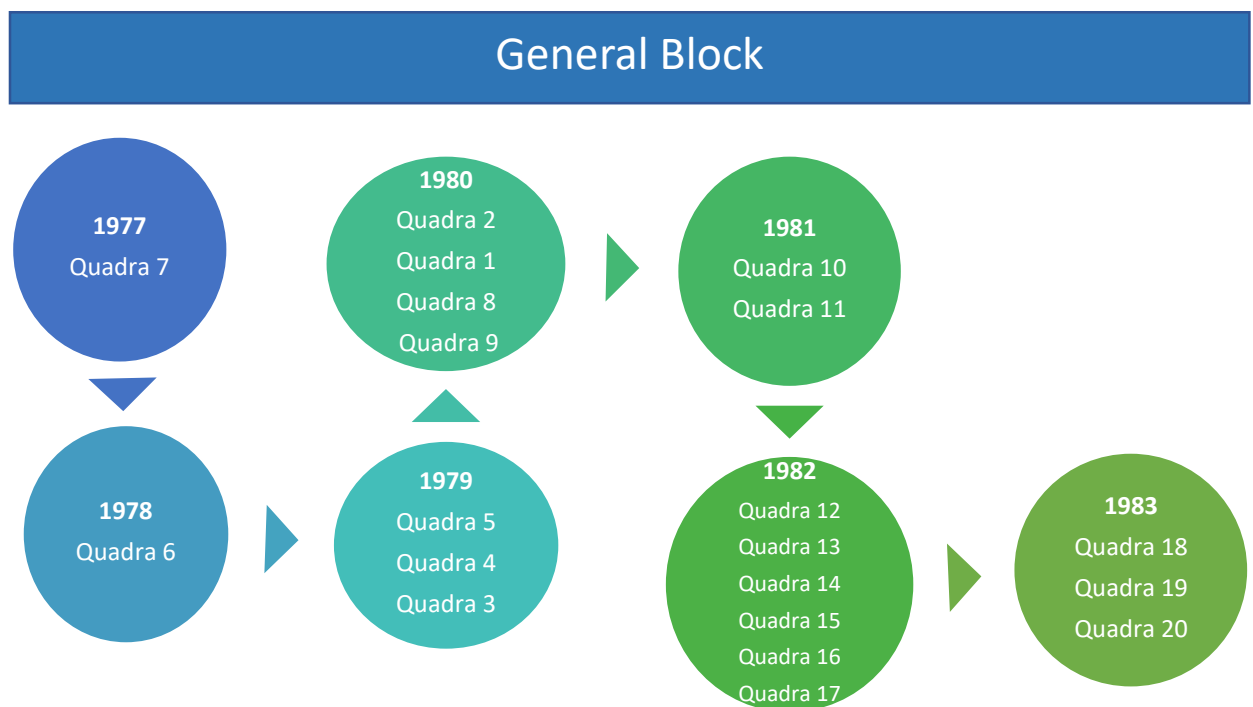
Like other categorizations of dead bodies provided by the state, the unclaimed body is a construction of power itself, in the same way as the unknown body. In other words, a person is always linked to and surrounded by a social context into which he or she is inserted. There is no such thing as an unknown person in an objective reality. The same can be said of the unclaimed body. What is the unclaimed body? Someone abandoned by his or her family?

The classification of the unclaimed body is inserted in class relations and, therefore, in the purchasing power to possess a memory, rather than a mere administrative classification for management purposes. It is how the state governs bodies and classifies and decides on them: who has the right to memory and a genealogy and who does not.

5.4.2. The occupation process and use of the general blocks

From these logbooks and the list of records created for the cases from the general blocks of the cemetery, it was possible to understand the process of occupation and reoccupation of this particular block. The figure 44 below shows its use until 1983, when the first exhumations were carried out. Their destination of the human remains after exhumation according to the documentation could have been any of the following: 1) Re-burial in the same place; 2) Taken to an individual ossuary; 3) Transferred to other cemeteries; 4) Purchase of a family plot.

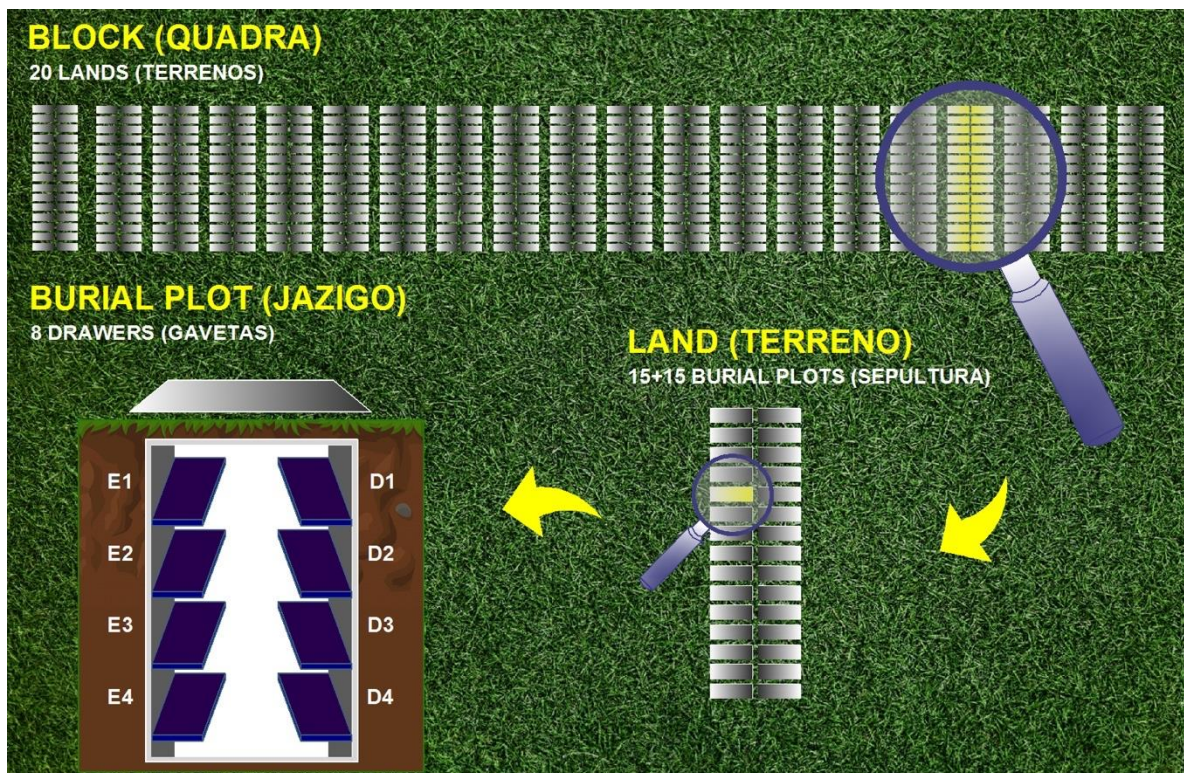
Figure 44. Outline of the occupation process showing year and block (quadra)



Since 1972, municipal law (Law 7656/72) determines that three years is the maximum time for a body to remain buried in the general blocks (Quadras Gerais) before being exhumed. In the case of children up to six years of age, this period is reduced to two years. At the end of this period, the human remains of unclaimed persons, whether identified or not, can be transferred to collective ossuaries containing the bodies of those whose families took no initiative or did not have the means to provide another destination for the human remains exhumed, and the dead considered unknown or unclaimed by the Medico-Legal Institute or the Death Verification Service (SVO).

Over six years, the whole general block was at full capacity. Each burial plot has six to eight underground drawers (figures 45 and 46). Each block has 30 plots of land. There are 600 burial plots. In other words, at least 3,600 people were buried there in the first years. There are cases in which exhumation and re-inhumation take place in the same place, because in these drawers it is possible to allocate human remains in a plastic bag in the same place, thereby freeing up space for new burials.

Figure 45: Diagram of the burial plot structure. Credit: author.



The process of occupation and exhumation continued until 1995, when the decision was taken to transform the general block into block 111 for concessions of burial plots with undetermined duration. The collective ossuary was probably built between 1995 and 1996 when it received the unclaimed human remains from the general block.

From that time, the configuration of the landscape also changed with the introduction of standardized burial plots, which are sombre and without grave art, use stone such as red granite and the copper inscription of the families' names. This type of grave began to configure a new understanding of care, based on elements such as the most valuable type of stone, cleanliness, and impermeability. As Comunale and Donadio (2017) state regarding the conservation of graves, deep and aggressive cleaning constitutes a moral issue: to offer the family member a clean and dignified grave. This is why stains and the patina of time are undesired.

Figure 46. Graves from Block 111. Credit: author.



The general blocks provide a contrast in the cemetery landscape, since, unlike the funeral art and structures built by wealthy families, the burial plot is just a delimitation on the ground (see the contrast between figures 47 and 48). Although this cemetery's

mausoleums do not possess the opulence and desire for notoriety as occurs in other cemeteries of the same period, such as Consolação (Timpanaro, 2006, p. 221), they do have structures with portraits, elements of art nouveau, a way of demonstrating and delimiting the space of their family.

Figure 47. Burial plots at the Quarta Parada cemetery. Credit: Gazeta do Tatuapé.
<http://www.gazetavirtual.com.br/cemiterio-da-quarta-parada-leitora-reitera-abandono/>



Figure 48. Remains of a burial plot from the general block. Credit: author.



If we examine in more detail the burial plot from the general block (figure 17), the impression is of empty plots of land that are used for discarding rubbish, abandoning fragments of ceramic pots, plants, broken stone blocks, empty spaces brought about by political processes of marginalisation and exclusion (Bauman, 2013; Alfredo González-Ruibal, 2020, p. 158). It is like a wasteland, where it is permitted to throw garbage, in contrast to the other perfectly polished stone graves, which give the impression of cleanliness and care.

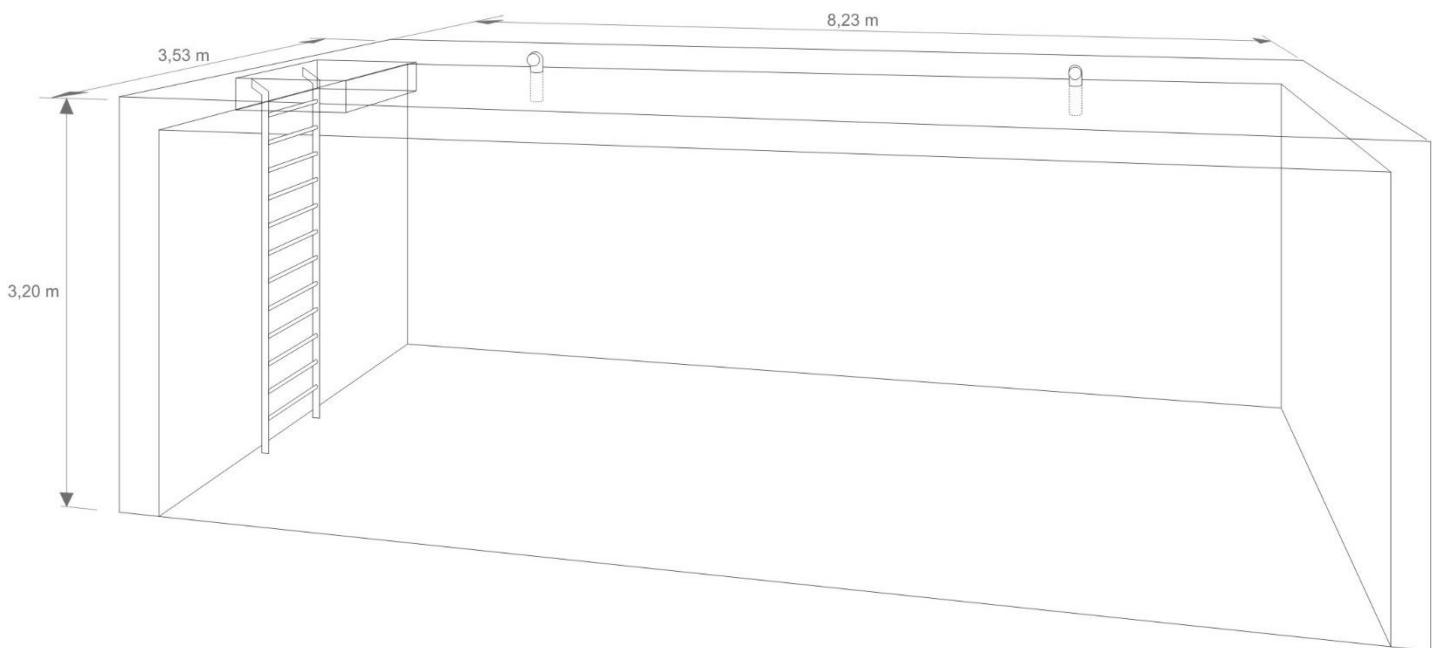
5.4.3. Eliminating remains and the materiality of the ossuary

As I have stated above, although the ossuary was completely full, the documentation was found to be lacking. If we focused only on the records of those that were sent to the collective ossuary, we would have 233 people. Although it would be difficult to associate the people with the human remains, at least the names of the people that were deposited there could be known.

The materiality of the ossuary did not correspond with the documentation of the logbooks. Neither did it match up with the request for cremation made by the Funeral Service, since it stated that the ossuary had "1,600 individuals".

The collective ossuary is a rectangular block made of cement 3.53m wide, 8.23m long, and 3.20m deep. Its structure has 2 air vents and one entrance via a trap door (Figure 18). From the surface, the visible part, if it were not for the trap door, would almost look like a small elevation near the sidewalk to the southwest of Block 111. The entire structure lies underground. There is no internal division to facilitate the location of an individual, and there is not even an organization in drawers, shelves, or any kind of structure.

Figure 49. Collective ossuary structure. Credit: Anxo Rodríguez-Paz.



Calculating the population of the structure, considering its measurements and the capacity of the plastic bags used, it can be suggested that its maximum capacity is somewhere between 6,000 to 8,000 bags, if we consider their volume to be between 15 and 20 litres. In this sense, if, from the documentation, it was not possible to

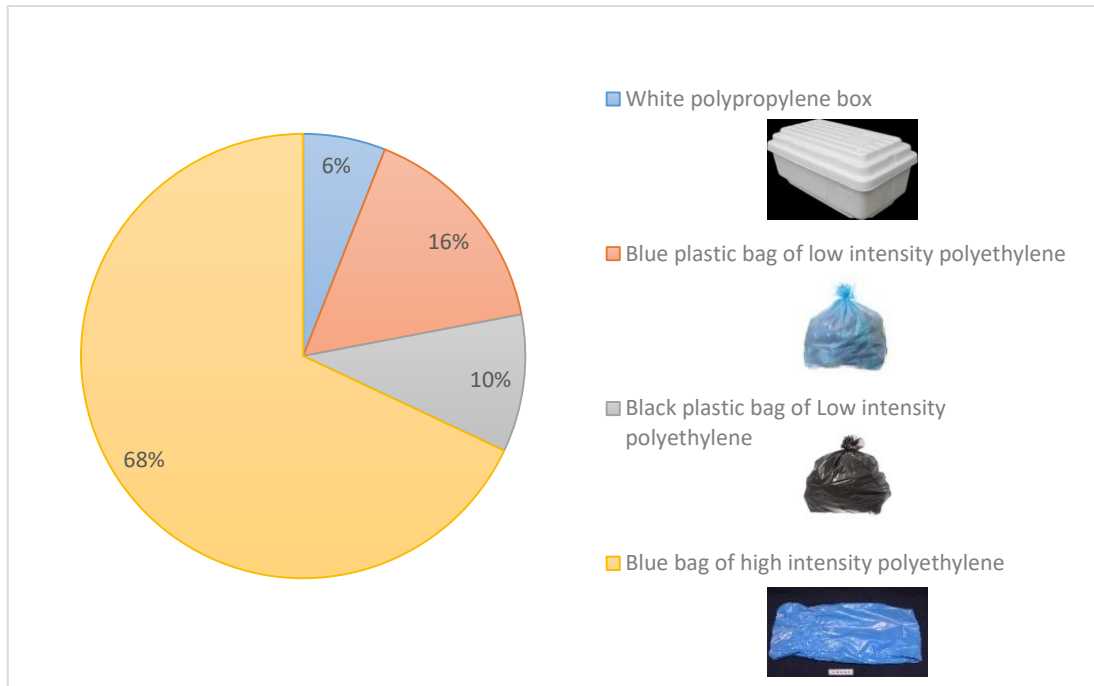
identify the people placed there, from a sample, I attempted to suggest the possibility of verifying the degree of preservation, whether they are individualized and identified.

From the sample, it was possible to verify that there is a variety of types of recipients used for the storage of exhumed human remains. Generally speaking, all of them are made of different types of plastic. In Western society, plastic is commonly classified as ephemeral or disposable and generates a distinct temporality characterized by being immediately present and impermanent. In medicine, plastic is related with sterility and even the idea of limited contact, it is low-cost and hygienic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many manuals on the handling of corpses highlighted the importance of placing the body in a plastic bag in order to avoid the leakage of bodily fluids (Brazilian Ministry of Health, 2020, p. 8).

In the post-World War II period, thermoplastics emerged as a powerful and ubiquitous material that transformed consumption and waste practices. Gay Hawkins (2018) remarks that plastic, as an anthropic marker, and its material persistence reveals the destructive potential of plasticity and the ability to shape a rather disturbing future. A materiality associated with the everyday world is absolutely disrupted in the experience of waste or the transformation of the human into the non-human; an everyday artifact that becomes a potentially abject material, part of the materiality of disappearance in contemporaneity.

There are white polypropylene boxes used for exhumation, more resistant blue plastic bags of high-density polyethylene, and relatively thin blue and black bags composed of low-density polyethylene used as rubbish bags.

Graph 9. Typology of recipients



As far as the state of conservation of these packages is concerned, 48% had some kind of hole of sufficient diameter for a long bone to protrude and, of these, 58 % were found to be open. Regarding other associated materials, there were 2 labels, one of them wrapped in transparent plastic, which allowed the person's data to be read, and a solitary black sock.

Figure 50. Open plastic bags exposing human bones. Credit: author



Figure 51. Loose bones around the plastic bags. Credit: author



Loose bones were also found lying around the 50 bags removed, which may or may not have been related to these bags. From these bones, it was possible to observe vertebrae, fragmented bones, a radius, and a clavicle around the plastic bags.

Of the 50 bags that were immediately visible when opening the trapdoor, it was only possible to identify two, due to the fact that the bags were sealed, without holes and had the persons' names on the bags. It is important to emphasize the fact that the 50 cases analysed, were probably the most recent and "best-preserved" cases. In the two aforementioned cases, the impossibility of tracing the dead body, via the documentation produced, is quite indicative. In the only two cases in which the names were contained with the plastic bags, there was no record that they had even been exhumed. Be it due to carelessness, intentional or not, the omission in the records of these individuals, makes it impossible, as in the cases of the NN from the dictatorship, to trace their pathway.

This precarious situation of the Quarta Parada ossuary is naturally not visible to either the general public or the businessmen interested in investing. These are hidden spaces of land and discrete elevations of cement. Intentionally hidden, they do little harm to the public and even less to the state.

What is beneath the earth is not in plain sight, it is hidden in order not to disturb our relationship with death. They represent those who are neglected and have their identities lost within the proper institution - the cemetery. As in the cemetery garden (Dawdy, 2020), a representation of the relationship of complete disassociation with death, the ossuary lies below the grass carpet of these commodified spaces.

These ossuaries are also hidden from the maps of the new cemeteries produced for the Privatization Department. They do not appear as one of the structures of the cemetery. There is no will on the part of the managers for civil society to be confronted with them, and they are not of interest to show to entrepreneurs wishing to invest in this type of business. The same occurs in the case of the Perus cemetery ossuary, which currently receives the highest number of NN cases in the city.

Figure 52: What lies beneath the earth. Collective ossuary. Credit: Anxo Rodríguez-Paz



Figure 53: Subterranean ossuary at Perus Cemetery. In red, the delimitation of the ossuary despite the fact that there is no sign as place of burial. Credit: author



5.5. Some reflections: Democracy, ownership and disposable bodies

Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to demonstrate a specific mode of uncaringness on the part of an institution that loses the identity and location of people buried under its responsibility. To this is added the understanding of the political use of these bodies, from the moment that speculative interests within a neoliberal policy act together with the reality of disappearance. As Akhil Gupta (2012) indicates, “uncaring” is not a psychological state of government employees but a constitutive modality of the state. One could hardly accuse the state of inaction toward the unclaimed and NN: it would be difficult to imagine a more extensive set of documents produced with the aim of the identification of a person.

I am arguing here that such arbitrariness is not in itself arbitrary. Rather, it is deliberate, systematically produced by the very mechanisms that are meant to care in

terms of the control of these populations. It is this state technology that serves the interests of eliminating those who do not matter. This is necropolitics in its neoliberal context.

Nevertheless, forms of resistance within the state have been fundamental precisely in the effort to fight against disappearance. These efforts go far beyond searching for or focusing on the body - in the case of the Quarta Parada Cemetery and neoliberal policies in the reordering of the administration of public cemeteries, the grave diggers themselves are an example of forms of daily care. They are the ones who, every day, are required to know the location of a grave, even without the materials and equipment that can help them in the best delimitation of the graves. They are the ones who make the separation, from a traditional logic going back centuries and the relationship of cemeteries with Catholicism, of specific blocks for children and newborns. They are also part of the state and confront these mechanisms of disappearance.

For Judith Butler (2009) bodies that do not act as expected are abject. Bodies considered by society to be abject in life, are also abject in death. In Brazil, cadavers and human remains are systematically treated in different ways by state agents. Indeed, this is normally established from the categories of race, class and gender. These moralities, situated in a neoliberal context, make these human remains, which were poor and marginalized, buried in the general blocks and placed in the ossuary, profitable with their elimination by cremation and the possibility of the sale of new plots and investments by the business community in cemeteries. Living, as we do, in a world in which the rights to private property and profit crush all other notions of rights, the defence of property values becomes a fundamental political interest.

In this context, despite having only observed the path of loss of identity within the cemetery, in my search for the plans of the cemetery, I discovered that the Privatization Department had produced maps for each cemetery, while the Funerary Service responsible for their management had not. The new control societies are

different from disciplinary societies (M. C. N. Foucault, 1992) they show that all institutions are embedded in a kind of dispersed corporation (Fisher, 2016).

To think that the neoliberal discourse of the privatization of cemeteries is to unburden this bureaucracy can help. However, it ends up creating more control, like the state institutions that end up being created to inspect what is being done by private companies.

In this regard, some considerations regarding this chapter are presented below:

- How privatization is structured from the creation of evidence of the inefficiency of the cemetery, the lack of capacity of the state to manage, from the theft of bronze plates, the salaries always incorrectly paid to the employees and the use of media.

- How the legal discourse of controlled procedures is used to create an aura of legality in the cremation of individuals whose identities are not even known.

- Cremation, and its rise in the context of global capitalist societies, should be explored in its own right as a key phenomenon (Cerezo-Román et al., 2017; H. Williams, 2015).

In the case of the Quarta Parada cemetery, cremation demonstrates the final stage of elimination by omission on the part of the state. This aberration, the culmination of state relations with the dead, creates social mobilization, especially on the part of groups which experience the uncertainties and difficulties in their daily lives of tracing the path of death in state institutions in search of their missing relatives.

To conclude, what is the difference between people with names in the general block and people with family burial plots? Ownership. The category of "unclaimed" matters when the regime that prevails is that of ownership in the capitalist system - inheritance. In the case of the old burial plots of the Quarta Parada, in the literal sense of the term, these people are not claimed either. Who are they in the generational sense? Somebody's great-great-grandmother? What is at stake is not the unclaimed, but who has ownership and who only pays rent.

Chapter 6. The aftermath of dictatorship – Material forms of visibility from plaques and monuments

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters I have analysed the continuities of the dictatorship, in relation to forms of disappearance concerning bodies and identities. These continuities are related to the transition from dictatorship to democracy, a process that is far from complete in Brazil and one which is marked by a discourse of reconciliation, the non-trial of torturers and the perpetuation of institutions preventing ruptures with certain practices (Fico, 2012; E. Teles & Safatle, 2010). I have attempted to demonstrate that the state has a historical structure that makes different groups invisible and attempts to eliminate them through institutional racism, classism and sexism and the establishing a hierarchy of subjects where some have more rights than others.

In what ways can visibility be given to processes of disappearance and a broader debate stimulated in society on the topic? How do these forms extend through debates related to memorials and heritage? What are their meanings and uses by social movements and groups of family members who have been fighting for decades for visibility and, more than this, to show the existence of those who disappeared? I explore one of the facets of these visibility strategies, namely the ways of inscribing traumatic stories and places through materialisation by using plaques and monuments.

If cities were the predominant space of resistance against dictatorships in Latin America, today they are the centre of disputes between social groups for the right to memory, justice and truth. As I have mentioned before, different efforts have been made to publicise testimonies, to open archives and to exhume mass graves, among other actions. The first publications in this sense were the Dossier on Political Deaths and Disappearances prepared by the Commission of Family Members, the first edition of which was published during the dictatorship, and *Brasil Nunca Mais*, organised by Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns and Jaime Wright (C. S. de; Almeida, 2009;

Arns & Wright, 1985). Both reports presented the countless human rights violations committed by military personnel in political police stations, clandestine centres, military bases and many other places. In this context, different places related to the right to memory and truth about this past were claimed and plaques, monuments, streets, viaducts and squares that alluded to the coup and that rendered, and still render, tribute to people who were directly linked to the repression were questioned.

To illustrate this, aligned with the technocratic and developmental project of the military dictatorship (Campos, 2019; Ridenti, 2009), in some contexts such as the southeast region of Brazil, highways were named to honour the generals of the regime such as the BR-374 road - Castelo Branco inaugurated in 1967. Other examples can be found in the north, where colonies were established that forcibly displaced the local population and introduced new residents within the aegis of progress and economic development. Cities were named in reference to the dictatorship and its project such as Presidente Médici in the state of Rondônia, in honour of the general whose government during the dictatorship was known as the iron years of the military regime (M. A. da Silva, 2015). One of the most emblematic examples is the city of Curionópolis in the state of Pará, a city that had one of the largest open-pit mines in the world, Serra Pelada, and honours Sebastião Curió, responsible for commanding the military action against the Araguaia guerrilla movement (Nossa, 2012; Vecchi, 2014). What is more, from 2000 to 2008, he was also elected mayor of the city representing the PMDB⁴¹ party (Moreira & Santos, 2016, p. 174). Symbolic and material traces of the military dictatorship are everywhere.

If on the one hand the marks of the dictatorship remain in the names of places related to a narrative of celebrating people linked to the repression, on the other hand, the narrative of brutality and resistance were played out in a clandestine landscape of trauma that shaped the imagination of this period and is still disputed even today (Huyssen, 2000, 2003). The city of São Paulo is also influenced by the same debate for the dictatorship's memory, a dispute between those affected and, according to the

⁴¹ *Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro*

historian Janaina Teles (2020), the almost always conciliatory action of the State in the transitional process. One of the materialisations of this dispute in the city are the memorialisation processes and the inscription of places through graffiti, plaques, monuments and the modification of street names, among many other elements.

My purpose here is not to be exhaustive, but rather to explore the relationship of these inscriptions intentionally created by public policies and by the State at its different levels and the moment/place in which they exist. In a city like São Paulo it is difficult to inventory streets with the names of torturers, members of guerrilla movement, landmarks, graffiti, plaques and monuments. In the case of torturers, it is even difficult to access the names of those who have been linked to the repression, and what exactly that means (direct, indirect, negligent) since nobody has ever been judged or condemned (C. Borges, 2020).

Drawing on reflections on conditions of visibility (Barreiro & Fábrega-Álvarez, 2019; Criado Boado, 1995; Seitsonen et al., 2019), I explore the efforts to break with the legacy of the dictatorship, which can be seen materially through the archaeological analysis of plaques and monuments created in a space of dispute, focusing on the city of São Paulo and the different public policies and initiatives of social movements that materialise a memory of resistance. How are memorial sites used by social movements, victims and relatives? In this sense, my purpose is to contribute to the understanding of processes involving remembrance and forgetting, and the long-term consequences of dictatorial violence in Brazil.

6.2. Traumatic Heritage

Heritage as a social, economic and political construction, characteristic of Western modernity, is part of a certain regime of truth (Lorenzini, 2016), in which a series of discourses, mechanisms, practices and agencies are employed as biopolitical devices to create, transform or perpetuate the established social order and the small proportion of society that occupies positions of power and prestige (Jiménez Esquinas, 2018; Sánchez-Carretero, 2012). If, on the one hand, we see how heritage

is integrated into capitalist production and state apparatuses (Alonso González, 2019), it has a diversity of uses that question this place as a technology of power, the set of rules and norms that regulate heritage governance strategies (Bendix et al., 2013) and proposes other ontologies for this category (Kopenawa & Albert, 2019). Heritage refers to a set of attitudes to, and relationships with, the past, although it is formed in the present (Harrison, 2013; Lowenthal, 2015).

This is no different in cases related to heritage and legacies of violence. They are inherently political and are invariably associated with the dispositives of power (e.g. (Drozdowski et al., 2016; Alfredo González-Ruibal & Hall, 2015; Sánchez-Carretero, n.d.; Viejo-Rose, 2015). The uses of heritage in these contexts often, or almost always, are seen as one of the processes of reparation, not only for the direct victims, but also as a way of materially embodying individual memories ensuring public recognition of past crimes as indispensable to the victims and essential for preventing further violence, a genocidal pedagogy (Kidron, 2020). In that sense, heritagisation has become a critical element in current struggles for human rights and democracy. The term covers a range of initiatives that aim to preserve the memory of past abuses for present and future generations, by such means as monuments, museums, commemorative ceremonies, and rituals.

Lea David (2017, 2020) has discussed how an economy related to a morality of remembrance has been elaborated in recent years which prescribes standards for a “proper way of remembrance”. She refers to a standardised, isomorphic set of norms, and bases her research on normative world-views of human rights that promote “facing the past”, “duty to remember”, “justice for victims” and the “never again” as its pillars. In 2014, the United Nations (UN) adopted standards of memory that promoted Western memorial models as a template for the representation of past tragedies or mass crimes. According to these standards, memorialisation may include sites such as concentration camps, former torture and detention centres, sites of mass killings and graves and emblematic monuments of repressive regimes, symbolic sites such as permanent or ephemeral monuments carrying the names of victims, renamed streets, buildings or infrastructure, virtual memorials, museums, and activities such as

reburials, public apologies, parades, temporary exhibits, etc. The same can be seen in global initiatives of networks of memorials like the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, which assists in “drawing connections between history and contemporary implications—primarily surrounding humanitarian principles including conflict prevention” (Hazan, 2014).

Carol Kidron (2020), analysing the context of Cambodia, problematises the globalisation of a Holocaust model of commemoration and the human right and duty to remember as a pillar of global genocide pedagogy in today’s post-conflict memoryscapes. The intervention of Euro-Western genocide commemoration in non-Euro-Western cosmologies of memory marks a new form of imperialism. According to Kidron: “Intervention in the intimate realm of everyday lived familial relations with murdered loved ones’ risks destabilising formative ideational and experiential scaffolds of cosmos in already destabilised post conflict societies”. Moreover, a self-reflexive critique of memorialisation as a new form of humanitarian governance necessitates an awareness of the subtler constitutive power of commemoration as a model of and for hegemonically engineered global-local worldviews.

The term ‘negative heritage’ was coined by the archaeologist Lynn Meskell (2002), in reference to “a site of conflict that becomes the repository of a negative memory in the collective imagination”. Flora Vilches (2015) adds that negative heritage comprises places that can be interpreted by a group as commemorating a violent, tragic or traumatic event that is, therefore, disturbing and uncomfortable. The same idea has been used for contexts related to genocide, conflicts and even for cases of environmental disasters such as Fukushima and Miyamata, in which the State and businessmen were the main perpetrators of the suffering and death of countless people (Aoyama & Hudson, 2013).

Many terms have been proposed for this kind of heritage: that which is uncomfortable (Morgan, 1993), difficult (Logan & Reeves, 2008), dissonant (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996), 1996), that hurts (Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). Critiques of the prevalence of the term “dark” in this context and that of “dark heritage” note the negative ethnic

and racial connotations of the term. Goldenberg (2009), for example, has highlighted the uses of black and white as metaphors for good and evil as having their roots in racist thinking. I will adopt the term “traumatic heritage” for simple standardisation, but it is fundamental to raise critical questions about coining new expressions and applying concepts that in (ex)colonial contexts for example, the idea of traumatic heritage could be extended to almost everything that is considered official heritage. In the Brazilian case, until almost the end of the 20th century, most heritage was related to colonial baroque architecture (Chuva, 2017) and to monuments that refer to genocide in the colonial period against indigenous groups.

In Latin America, the concept of “site of memory” is used by most social movements, activists, relatives’ associations and by academia, in which the use of sites of memory has been redefined and relates to the different spaces that refer to the various authoritarian regimes that plagued the American continent in the second half of the 20th century. In Brazil, it is a category that goes beyond the spaces that were heritagised by some kind of heritage institution (Cymbalista, n.d.).

According to Rico (2008), monuments, as representations of a snapshot in time and space of more complex and layered realities, are not in themselves capable of conveying causality. Such sites do not make sense on their own without their contextualisation and the removal of physical and conceptual contexts makes places susceptible to political manipulation as seen in monuments such as the Valley of the Fallen in Spain (González-Ruibal, 2017).

In her work on the UNESCO World Heritage List and different negative heritage sites, Rico (2008) states that there are very few listed sites, the first being the Auschwitz concentration camp and later the Genkaku Dome in Hiroshima. For her, “the World Heritage List has been invaluable in raising awareness of cultural conservation needs and cultural diversity, but now it needs to take the lead to translate the protection of this diversity into the promotion of tolerance of the variety of forms of heritage that are emerging around the globe”. She suggests that nations are being

taught to present heritage in such a way that conflict is erased or made to fit a set of approved policy issues.

Presenting traumatic heritage is always tricky. There is the risk of banalising historical suffering. An example of this is the conservation work conducted at Manzanar concentration camp in California for its transformation into a historical national park, which involved a huge debate between the victims and the National Park Service Management Policies. According to Moses (2015), the reconstruction of just one building behind the Sierra Nevada Mountains leads to an almost bucolic air and visitors referencing that in such a place, the concentration camp must not have been so bad.

Considering all these nuances from this review of the literature, how do these manifestations, rituals, architectures and places appeal to our memories to shape desires for memory, truth and justice?

6.3. Sanitising memories of violence

In 2017, a plaque in memory of the victims of the dictatorship was unveiled at the Volkswagen factory in the city of São Bernardo do Campo in the metropolitan region of São Paulo. According to newspapers at the time, it was a form of reparation and support for human rights and an initiative of the factory itself. The unveiling of the plaque took place together with the delivery of a report commissioned by Volkswagen from the historian Christopher Kopper, hired by the company to investigate the human rights violations it had committed during the military dictatorship.

The report states that “Volkswagen was unreservedly loyal to the military government and shared its economic and domestic policy objectives”. The automotive corporation regularly informed the regime about the trade union activities of its workers. There was a “blacklist of politically undesirable workers”. As a result, six workers were arrested and one tortured at the factory in São Bernardo do Campo. On the other hand, the report mentioned that no evidence was found of institutionalised

collaboration of the company with state repression. In fact, Lucio Bellentani, a former Brazilian Communist Party militant who was tortured by DOPS agents in one of the factory's rooms, told the Deutsche Welle news agency of his dissatisfaction with the results of this report, indicating that the company wanted to control the narrative of its past and was not being honest when it came to taking specific action: "The report is weak, it doesn't have a lot of documentation. I don't think the company has opened all its files to the historian" (Struck, 2017).

The interest and initial proposal of the group of workers was to create a memorial to the workers' struggle, a proposal vehemently rejected by the company (C. Vannuchi, 2020b). The plaque which was unveiled (Figure 54) came as a response. Questioned about the fact that the plaque does not name the persecuted workers, the factory president said that it is a plaque in line with the company's values. He claimed "What happened here happened in all companies. It was a systematic process of the military regime" (Struck, 2017).

"In memory of all the victims
of the military dictatorship in Brazil.
For Human Rights, Democracy
Tolerance and Humanity."
Volkswagen

Figure 54. The German historian and the President of Volkswagen unveiling the plaque.
Credit: Marco Ankosqui. In: <https://www.istoedinheiro.com.br/volks-e-os-anos-de-chumbo/>. Accessed:
February 14th, 2020.



If the text inscribed in these plaques follows certain standardised phrases that seem to be aligned with the politics of memory in recognition of the victims, on the other hand, focusing on an archaeological analysis of the conditions and a “will” for visibility, can reveal other elements that can help us to decode these different intentions.

This history of sanitising and simplifying the memory of violence and human rights violations committed there, via the unveiling of a plaque to “repair” and affirm the company’s commitment and “values” in relation to this issue led me to reflect on the processes that these kinds of initiatives involve: their material making, types of materials, messages, and the visibility of these plaques in space, whether public or private. Plaques and monuments regarding resistance to the dictatorship have been created since the 1990s and have the objective of permanence, visibility, and attracting the attention of people to a part of the history of that particular place where the plaque or monument is located. The raw material of most of these monuments is often made of concrete and, mainly, of different types of stone, materials that evoke permanence, durability, rigidity, which can be seen in many examples in South America such as El Ojo que Lloro in Peru (Moraña, 2012), the memorial in the cemetery known as Patio 29 in Chile (Aguilera, 2013) and the Parque de la Memoria in Argentina (Battiti, 2018), among many others.

This model of plaque is that which is most commonly seen in public policies related to inscribing in the city a memory of resistance that had been silenced and in the context of policies of reparation. In that sense, I agree with some authors on the need for a self-reflexive critique of memorialisation as a new form of humanitarian governance (Kidron, 2020). Commonly, human rights defenders operate under an unquestionable assumption: that a proper memorialisation of a traumatic past is essential for both democracy and human rights. From it, derives an economy related to a certain morality of remembrance that evokes a list of actions, ways of acting that should be followed to deal with this traumatic past (David, 2020).

Inspired by the work produced by Pastor Fábrega and David Barreiro on the memory of the commune of Paris, the object of analysis here is focused on monuments, understood as “a construction or building erected with the main objective of making memory about a particular fact or event” (Fabri, 2013). In addition to the names of streets, squares and bridges, they are places of inscription, marking or territorial marking of memory, a dispositive (Foucault, 1991) that shapes the collective imagination (Barreiro & Fábrega-Álvarez, 2019).

Because of the difficulty of a more extensive mapping, I have left certain components out of the analysis: grassroots memorials, graffiti (Figures 55 and 56) and interventions such as posters (Figure 57) put up during the 2018 elections (Brito, 2017; Margry & Sánchez-Carretero, 2011). More improvised and temporary, these expressions are some of the many forms of social action in public spaces. In fact, in São Paulo there are many places that make reference to this: artistic interventions in an ossuary at the Araçá Cemetery in 2013 or ecumenical masses organised by relatives and social movements on the day victims were killed or even a silent march (Movimento Vozes do Silêncio, 2019) among pictures of the disappeared, protests against and other activities. The use of photographs of the disappeared in the demonstrations also evokes existence, a strong transnational visual and emotional aesthetic that personifies and individualises by holding up posters with the photographs of each disappeared person. This action that evokes the name of each of the victims followed by the rest of the people with the expression “Presente, hoje e sempre⁴²” is a powerful ritual in which the place and the photographs are an instrument of political use as they reflect the social struggle that mothers, wives, daughters and granddaughters undertake by taking the images embodied in galleries, T-shirts, posters, flags and flowers to the different public spaces (Figure 58).

⁴² Present, today and always

Figure 55. Graffiti on the front wall of the house of a known collaborator of the dictatorship. Organised by the social movement Levante Popular da Juventude as part of the “escrachos populares”. Photo credit: Douglas Mansur (2014).

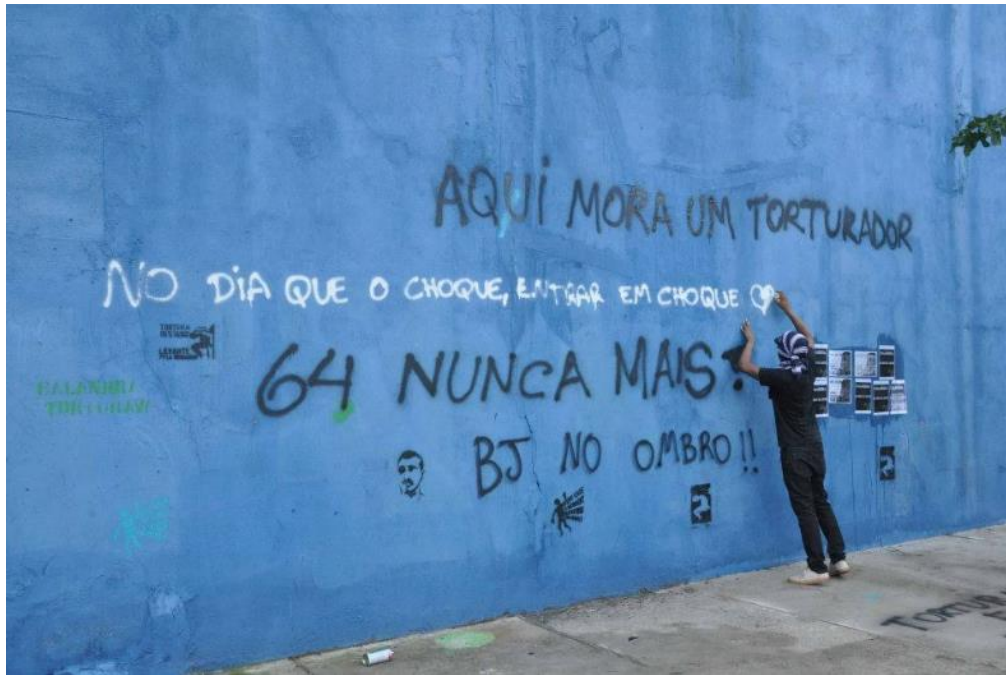


Figure 56. Graffiti promoted by the Human Rights and Citizenship Secretariat of São Paulo (SMDHC) on the front wall of Dom Bosco cemetery. Photo credit: Douglas Mansur (2014).



Figure 57. Posters put up in the Liberdade neighbourhood in São Paulo during the 2018 presidential elections. Credit: Perigo Amarelo Collective.



Figure 58. Demonstration in 2015 to transform a clandestine detention centre into a memorial site.



6.4. Plaques, monuments and visibility

My work focuses on analysing the conditions of visibility to generate a description of the efforts of different groups, supported by the use of plaques and monuments to draw attention to this memory of resistance and the actions developed by public policies related to reparation. From the spatiality of these plaques and monuments, I attempt to disentangle certain social and symbolic logics and the political context from materiality (Shanks & Hodder, 1995). I argue that this type of analysis can be a fundamental way of accessing knowledge that is not accessible by words and narratives from consciousness; that is, to deal with what cannot be verbalised, which allows the discipline to uncover hidden aspects of reality not only in the past, but even in the present (Buchli & Lucas, 2001). In this analysis, I emphasise my own experiences (Ingold, 2002; Lee & Ingold, 2006) of having participated in the unveiling of many of these plaques, demonstrations, as well as the whole range of discussions to which they have given rise.

In this cartography under construction through the contested meanings of these different places in the public space, there is a fundamental aspect that could be called a “will to visibility” (Criado Boado, 1995). Is there a “will to visibility” in these different cases of plaques and monuments? Depending on the place and the conditions of visibility, with whom are these plaques attempting to engage? Do they only evoke a policy of reparation related to Brazil’s response to the condemnation by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and/or, in fact, have they given new meaning to those places and made visible those subjects whose repression sought to erase their existence?

Table 8. Plaques and monuments related to memory of resistance in the city of São Paulo.

Plaque or monument	Address	Year
Arco do Presídio Tiradentes	Avenida Tiradentes esquina com a Praça Coronel Fernando Prestes	1985
Monumento de Perus	R. Ernesto Diogo de Faria, 860 - Perus, São Paulo - SP, 05215-000, Brazil	1993
Carlos Marighella	Alameda Casa Branca, Jardins. São Paulo	1999
Isis Dias de Oliveira	Praça Isis Dias de Oliveira, São Paulo - SP	1999
Memorial imprescindíveis - Placa Faculdade de Medicina da USP	Av. Dr. Arnaldo, 455 - Cerqueira César, Pacaembu - SP, 01246-903, Brazil	2006
Memorial imprescindíveis - Placa PUC - SP	R. Monte Alegre, 984 - Perdizes, São Paulo, 05014-901, Brazil	2006
Memorial da Resistência	Largo General Osório, 66 - Santa Ifigênia, São Paulo - SP, 01213-010, Brasil	2009
Ana Rosa Kucinski	Av. Prof. Lineu Prestes, 748 - Butantã, São Paulo, 05508-900, Brazil	2014
Memorial aos Membros da Comunidade USP Vítimas do Regime da Ditadura Militar	Rua do Anfiteatro, Cidade Universitária, São Paulo	2017
Alexandre Vannuchi Leme	R. do Lago, 562 - Butantã, São Paulo - SP, 05508-080, Brazil	2013
Monumento em Homenagem aos Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos	Parque Ibirapuera - Vila Mariana, Brazil	2014
Memorial da Luta Pela Justiça	Avenida Brigadeiro Luís Antonio, 1249.	2014
Memorial dos Crimes de Maio e das Vítimas de Genocídio	Centro de Culturas Negras. R. Arsênio Tavolieri, 45 - Jabaquara, São Paulo - SP, 04321-030, Brazil	2016
Jardim Para não dizer que não falei de flores	Av. Flor de Vila Formosa, s/n - Vila Formosa, São Paulo, 03366-010, Brazil	2016
Placa Cemitério Perus	R. Ernesto Diogo de Faria, 860 - Perus, São Paulo - SP, 05215-000, Brazil	2017
Placa Cemitério Vila Formosa	Av. Flor de Vila Formosa, s/n - Vila Formosa, São Paulo, 03366-010, Brazil	2017
Placa Cemitério Campo Grande	Av. Nossa Sra. de Sabará, 1371 - Campo Grande, São Paulo - SP, 04685-003, Brazil	2017
Placa Maria Antonia	R. Maria Antônia, 258/294 - Vila Buarque, São Paulo - SP, 01222-010, Brazil	no information
Jardim Cálice	R. Ernesto Diogo de Faria, 860 - Perus, São Paulo - SP, 05215-000, Brazil	2016

Some of these monuments are registered as heritage elements by different bodies (municipal, state or federal). They are few in number and involve a complex dispute over the classical notions of heritage that have been established since the creation of the heritage institutions. Brazil's heritage policies until the end of dictatorship have always been related to the canonisation of baroque and *mestizaje* monumental architecture as evidence of the national ethos, guided by selection practices that are authoritarian and exclusionary. The process relies heavily on technicians and the

apparent neutrality of their choices, derived mainly from the formalistic and stylistic description of artistic monuments (Marins, 1999). In the case of the state of São Paulo, these heritage practices memorialise the *bandeirantes*, who represented the “occupation” and delimitation of Brazilian territory and the murder of innumerable indigenous people (Marins, 2008; Miceli, 1987). This is significant because, although the discourse has changed in recent decades with the new heritage policies and the inclusion of heritage related to subalternised groups, the process of registration and preservation is still based on what is deemed “architecturally significant” (Chuva, 2017).

The period after re-democratisation in 1985, has seen the concept of heritage broaden to accommodate sites that are not necessarily purely architectural but of historical and/or cultural importance. It should be highlighted that the first proposal for a public policy regarding heritage made by Mario de Andrade at the beginning of the 20th century conjectured the relevance of the study on popular manifestations (Chagas, 1999). These measures in Brazil’s heritage policies followed an international context of the globalisation of the World Heritage Convention and the subsequent modification and diversification of the concept of ‘World Heritage’ accommodating an increasingly large number of objects, places and, perhaps most importantly, practices, and the landscapes in which these occur (Pellegrini, 2008; Harrison, 2017: 115).

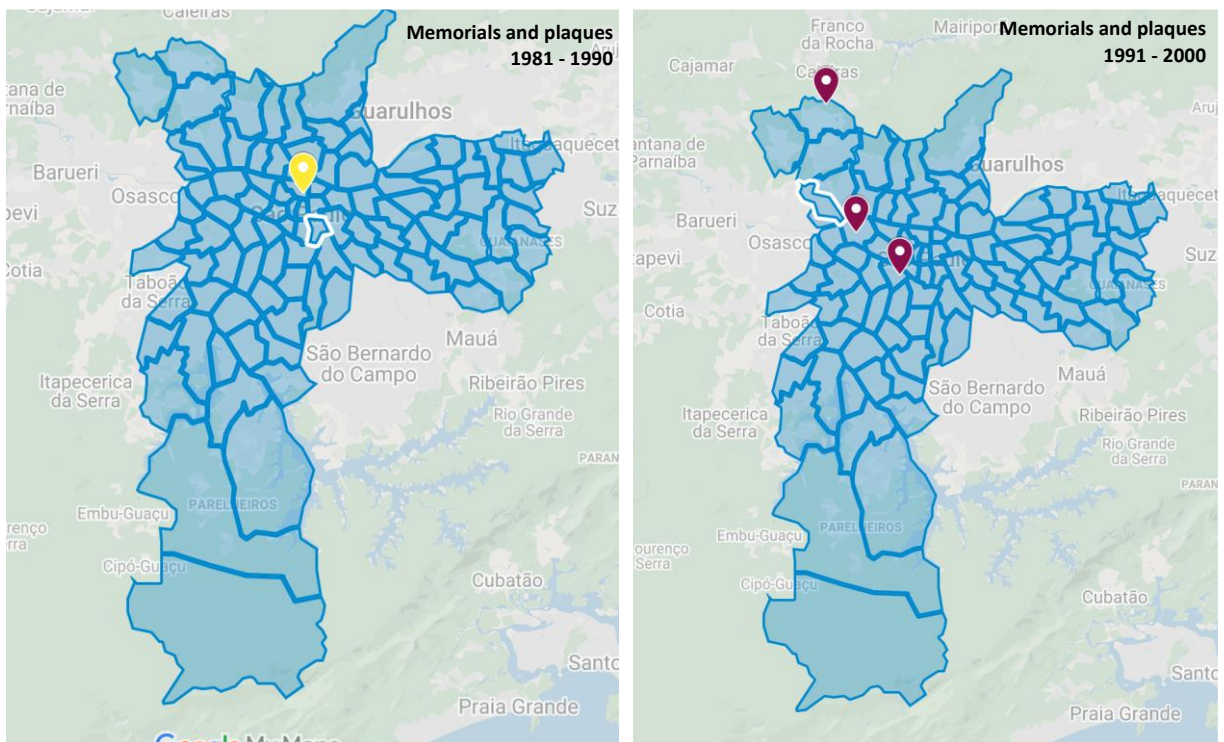
This also occurs concerning everything related to the memory of the dictatorship. In the 1980s, almost as the dictatorship ended, heritage policies already recognised certain sites as symbols of resistance against the regime (Neves, 2013). It is interesting how heritage policies are implemented, for if they are one of the first state actions related to the memory of the dictatorship, on the other hand, truth commissions and investigations will only take place afterwards unlike the case of Argentina, for example. This is the case of the DOPS detention centre, the Tiradentes prison gate, the building of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of São Paulo, where the Battle of Maria Antonia took place and the mass grave of Perus, which is registered as an archaeological site.

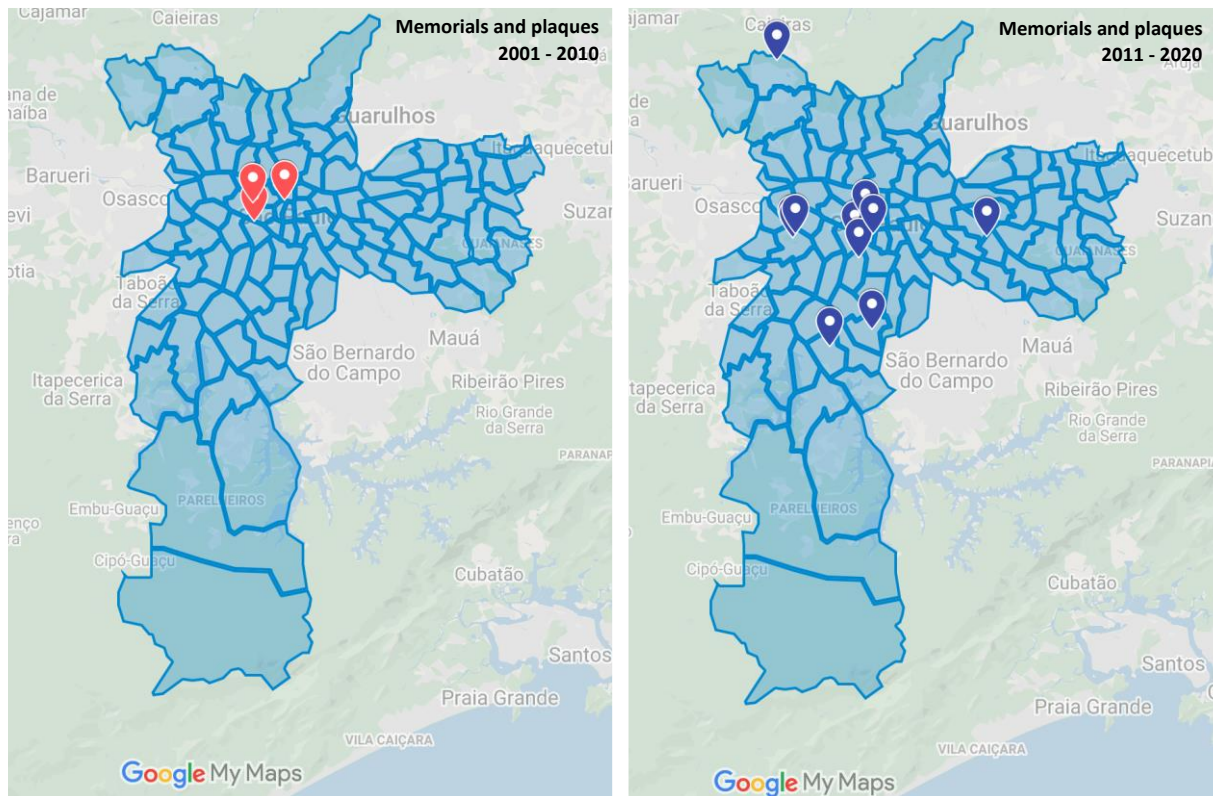
6.4.1. Public policies over time

The plaques and monuments created over the last forty years since the end of the dictatorship in the city of São Paulo are analysed here over time and in terms of their visibility in public space.

An analysis of the fixing of plaques in the city of São Paulo over decades provides certain elements to understand the constitution of this counter-hegemonic memory in the landscape and the efforts undertaken to make the memory of resistance visible.

Figure 59: Memorials and plaques in the city of São Paulo – 1985 to 2020.





The first moment, related to the 1980s, refers to the registration as heritage of the Tiradentes prison gate in 1985 by the Council for the Defence of Historical Heritage (Condephaat). The request came from the Journalists Union with the justification that the gate is a point of reference of the political history of Brazil, the memory of state repression and resistance to it. For several years, relatives had placed flowers under the plaque of the gate on the Day of the Dead, the anniversary of the beginning of the Araguaia Guerrilla or on the anniversary of the disappearance their loved ones. Today, the gate remains without a plaque or any reference to the violent past of the site or the existence of the building that housed the political prison (Teles, 2015). In this sense, the state of São Paulo and its preservation agencies took a pioneering initiative in 1985, in the first years after the end of the dictatorship. Compared with other contexts in South America such as Argentina (Neves, 2013), this concern for preservation by the recognition of heritage agencies, has only occurred from the 2000s onwards.

The 1990s brought the opening of the Perus mass grave and the construction of the monument on the site designed by the architect Rui Ohtake. Two other initiatives were undertaken at the end of this decade that pay tribute to two militants of the National Liberation Alliance (ALN) - Isis Dias de Oliveira, who has a square named after her in the Lapa neighbourhood where she grew up and a monument in the same place. The other consists of a monument on the street where Carlos Marighella was assassinated, in the Jardim Paulistano neighbourhood, inaugurated 30 years after his death.

The period from 2001 to 2010 was one in which the number of plaques was reduced and actions were centralised in colleges, more specifically at the *Pontifícia Universidade Católica* and the School of Medicine of the Universidade de São Paulo. Here the plaques have a more individualised characteristic, referring to former students who were persecuted and murdered by the dictatorship.

The best-known initiative from this period is the inauguration of the Memorial of the Resistance, a former political police detention centre in the city of São Paulo. It is still a meeting place for human rights movements today with countless activities conducted by former political prisoners who are part of the management of the memorial (Politi, 2014). It was located in a building designed by a prestigious architect, Ramos de Azevedo, in the 1930s. When it was registered as a heritage site, the technical analysis was based more on its architecture and less on its historical significance (Neves, 2011).

Figure 60. Former detention centre and political police station - DOPS São Paulo and current Memorial da Resistencia Credit: Memorial da Resistencia.



Between 2013 and 2017, with the work of the various truth commissions set up in collaboration with the National Truth Commission, there was a change in São Paulo's policies of memory and truth. During the administration of Fernando Haddad as mayor (2013-2017), the Secretariat for Human Rights and Citizenship was created with a specific brief for historical memory. Among the various public policies, such as support for the creation of a forensic team for the identification of the Perus mass grave (Grupo de Trabalho Perus), a municipal truth commission and artistic projects related to the topic, there were three equally important projects. The first was called "Ruas da Memória" (Streets of Memory) and aimed to change the names of streets that paid homage to torturers and people who were part of the system of repression. The second was related to the creation of memorials and plaques and the third consisted of a mapping project of the memory sites of resistance and repression, which was carried out in collaboration with the group responsible for managing the Memorial da Resistência, the result of which is a publication called *Resistant Memories*. They mapped more than 37 sites that constitute this terrorscape (Van der Laarse, 2013), all of them part of the machinery of repression, from faculties to possible clandestine burial sites and detention and torture centres. In total, more than 80 memorial sites represent expressions of resistance, ranging from theatres to religious institutions, research centres and factories, among many others.

A decentralisation of these inscriptions is only seen in this period, when there was a profusion of actions related to the implementation of numerous truth commissions and a greater public debate, along with new policies related to the subject and a focus specifically related to municipal public cemeteries, where the victims of repression are buried. Monuments, changes to street names, plaques and gardens were built as part of the politics of memory. The gardens combining tree planting, plaques and stone paths are seen in line with the new cemetery projects that were being proposed by the municipal administration under the coordination of Lucia Sales. The idea was that cemeteries were public spaces for visitation, as they were often the only green areas in the neighbourhood and contained the stories of the people of São Paulo.

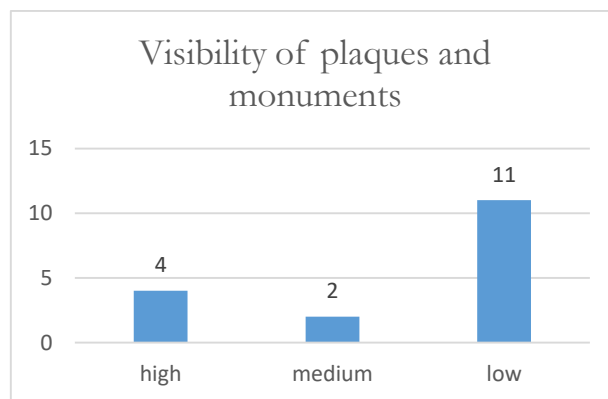
Despite the aforementioned decentralisation, six plaques and monuments (35%), are located at university campuses. Five of them are at the University of São Paulo (USP), a public space, albeit with restricted access. The other is at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, a private university which is usually only accessed by students, employees and teachers. These are tributes related to the victims who had links to these universities, either as students or employees of these institutions. In addition to the restricted access that this implies, it somehow reinforces this image of the victim of the dictatorship as a middle-class university student, a deeply restricted perspective that has already been questioned by both social movements and research related to the topic. However, the materiality of these plaques reinforces this view of a dictatorship that affected a specific group and not society in general.

Figure 61: Memorial at the Cidade Universitária in honour of the members of the university victims of the military dictatorship. Credit: author.



The central location of the plaques implies that they are placed in areas with a lot of movement of people, especially pedestrians. However, if we observe each plaque and monument using how people experience these materialities in an urban context and using the criteria of: location, pedestrian movement, fences, signs, high buildings around, access and visualisation, 65% of them are in low visibility areas, 11% in medium visibility areas and 23% in areas classified as high visibility (Graph 1). Certainly, the dimensions of the monument also have an influence on this analysis, although this are not a crucial factor. In other words, although there seems to be a policy of making this memory of resistance visible, most of it is not to the people who inhabit the city.

Graph 10: Visibility of plaques and monuments based on the criteria of location, movement of people, access and visualisation.



The monument to Carlos Marighella is classified as high visibility as a result of an accumulation of factors in which dimensions are of lesser importance (it is on the pavement of a street) than pedestrian movement, the busy street and its location. Despite its small size, the monument has suffered numerous acts of vandalism. It has been completely removed (Teles, 2015) and graffitied repeatedly with references to extreme right-wing groups such as the “Commando de Caça aos Comunistas”, a representation of lingering transgenerational tensions and an example as an active site of power where political memory is presented and reproduced.

Figure 62: The Marighella monument vandalised with CCC painted in green. CCC refers to the Comando de Caça aos Comunistas, a paramilitary organisation. Credit: Douglas Mansur.



Figure 63. An event organised every year to honour Carlos Marighella in front of the monument. Credit: Douglas Mansur.



Inaugurated in 2014, another highly visible monument is the Monument in Tribute to the Dead and Disappeared. Raised in a dominant public place, it stands facing the largest park in the city on one of its busiest avenues. It is a place where three large monumental, sculptural and architectural landmarks are found, the formal characteristics of which allow us to understand the relationship between the plastic arts and the affirmative movements of a *Paulista* identity (Garcês, 2003). This monument, created by the Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship, disputes these other São Paulo identities and stories. Near the former DOI-CODI clandestine detention centre, it was the stage for one of the largest marches against the dictatorship in 2019.

Figure 64. Demonstration in front of the monumento. 2018
Credit: Vozes do Silêncio Movement.



6.4.2. Non-visible plaques and monuments

The Perus cemetery plaque was installed in 2017 with the conclusion of the work of the Municipal Truth Commission. The installation involved the participation of politicians, social movements and family members of the disappeared, some of whom had also served on the truth commissions. Like other memorials, the plaque in Perus contains the names of 32 people buried there and some that it is supposed are buried in the mass grave, but are still missing. This model of naming and, therefore, recognising disappearance and human rights violations also makes these people visible. However, in this specific case, it ends up excluding them as well, since the identification work has not been completed. A good example of this is the case of Aluizio Palhano, whose odds of being inhumed in this cemetery were low by existing testimonies. Although Aluizio's name is not listed on the plaque, he was identified there in 2018. The plaque was the end result of the work of the municipal truth commission following the transnational model of forms of reparation.

Figure 69: Plaque content at Perus cemetery. Credit: author.



In spite of its content, the memorial, made of cement and a metal plaque, is located at the end of the cemetery's administrative building. It is situated at the end of the cemetery car park in a place where hardly anyone passes by, as it is not on the way to any of the burial areas. Although it exists, it is not visible. On one of the days when I was at the cemetery, even though there was a funeral and some of the rooms were crowded and people were in the parking area, nobody passed by the plaque.

Figure 66: Plaque at Dom Bosco cemetery. Credit: author.



In the figure below, the red lines indicate the routes taken by people during the week, from the ethnographic observation. There is an entrance located on the right from the entrance of the cemetery to the burial courts. Normally people go into the cemetery through the gate and go straight to this entrance or they pass through the administration building where the funeral rooms are located and then follow the path to the burial area. Due to its dimensions and the fact that the text that can be seen from a distance, the monument is quite visible. In fact, on the numerous occasions that I approached the monument, people visiting the cemetery had left flowers or lit a candle for their loved ones, leaving them near the monument. Remnants of candle wax and plastic flowers can commonly be seen around the monument. On one occasion, I approached one of the people who was placing candles there and she told me that although she had no family connection, the story seemed very impactful to her.

The same does not occur in the area where the plaque is located at the end of the administrative building. Located at the level of the building, it has little dialogue with

the monument and is even less visible to those who pass through the administration and funeral rooms.

Figure 67: Pedestrian routes at the cemetery.



The garden named “Jardim Cálice” follows an access road from the main street to the monument with a stone path that was no longer visible due to overgrown vegetation. It was built in an area that had been registered as an archaeological site, although it was not designed with maintenance in mind and the grass grows between the stones, complicating the work of those in charge of maintenance at the cemetery.

Figure 68 and 69: The garden path on the day of its inauguration (Credit: Prefeitura de São Paulo) and in 2019 (Credit: author).



Located in the Centro de Culturas Negras (Centre of Black Cultures) in the Jabaquara neighbourhood, the plaque in memory of the Crimes of May 2006 and the victims of black genocide is the only one that makes reference to those murdered in the post-dictatorship context. The site was a former *quilombo* in the city of São Paulo. The reference to resistance intersects yesterday and today. Despite the great significance of the memorial in this place, as a historical *quilombo*, a place of resistance and a way of making visible not only the struggle of the Mothers of May against state violence and the genocide of the black and poor population, its location in the Centre of Black Cultures is far removed from centres of activity and is not visible.

Figure 70: Stand where the metal plaque was situated. Credit: author.



Figure 71: Symbolic memorial near the metal plaque. Credit: author.

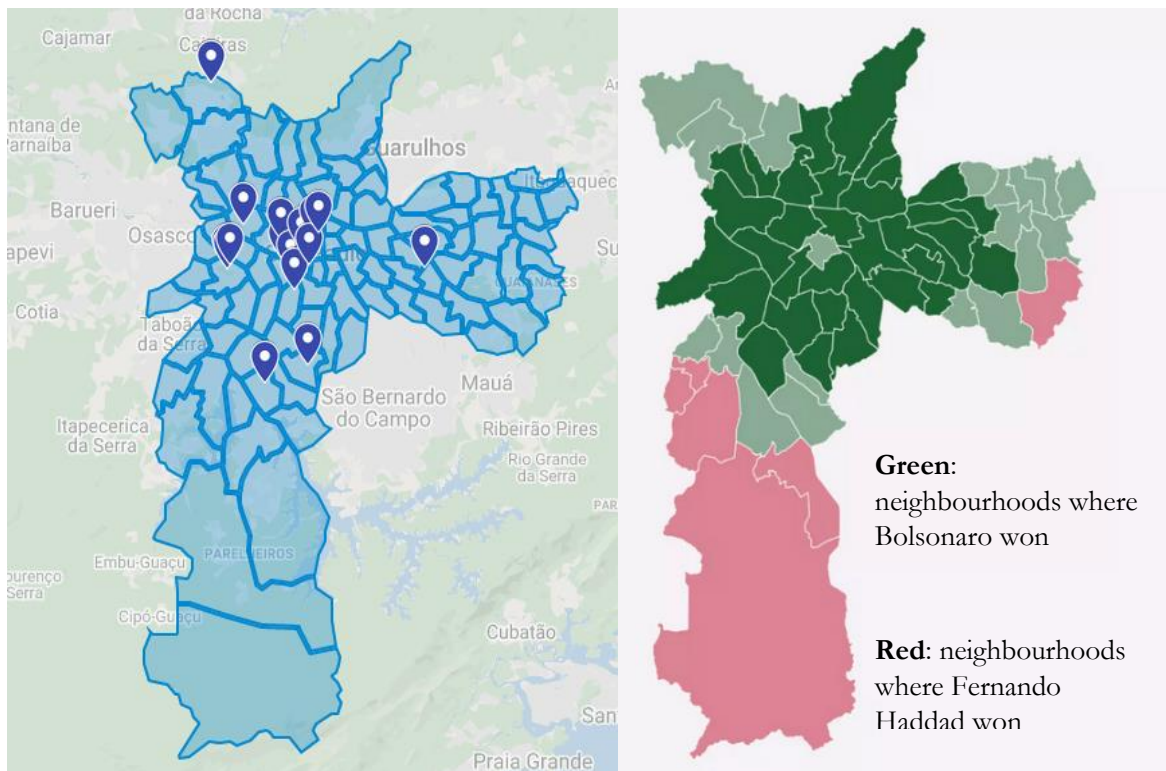


The white plaque certainly draws more attention than the previous copper plaque that blended in with the growing vegetation and the nearby tree. If I had not seen photos of the inauguration, I would have thought that the base of the plaque was to make reference to the species of tree that is there.

Did the resignification or contextualisation provided by the plaques enable other readings or even what has been called a certain pedagogy in those places where they are installed? By comparing places where plaques and monuments are located with the presidential elections from 2018 that elected the far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro, whose statements have always been openly pro-dictatorship, the neighbourhoods where Bolsonaro won in the city of São Paulo is where there is the largest presence of monuments and plaques (Figure 18). Observing this data does not intend to diminish the importance of these plaques and memorials but question the idea of their use as a pedagogical tool.

As an exploratory analysis, understanding the relationship between the rise of the extreme right in these traditionally conservative neighbourhoods and the plaques and memorials demands more ethnographic and sociological data to compare both indicators. The question is whether this movement that increased in the 2010s generated a far-right reaction against these policies or the opposite, or if this pedagogy of never again is not so effective in society as a whole. In any case, it is an analysis that could be better explored further in future research.

Figure 72: The location of each plaque and monument and the results of the 2018 Brazilian Presidential Elections. Source: Tribunal Superior Eleitoral – TSE. Available in: <https://g1.globo.com/politica/eleicoes/2018/eleicao-em-numeros/noticia/2018/10/28/bolsonaro-vence-em-631-das-645-cidades-do-estado-de-sp-na-capital-haddad-ganha-apenas-em-6-das-58-zonas-eleitorais.ghtml>



6.5. Some reflexions: A never-again pedagogy from the visibility of plaques and memories

In this chapter, I have attempted to present how histories of resistance to the dictatorship are inscribed in the city of São Paulo and how, based on the concept of traumatic heritage and sites of memory, different social movements, and relatives' associations have seen it as one of the material ways to make the struggle and the existence of those who were murdered by repression visible.

Throughout the democratic period, actions have been taken due to pressure from these groups, and public policies developed, especially in the 1990s and in 2010, which are associated with a greater public debate on the subject, either via the opening of the Perus mass grave and the investigations that resulted from this event or in 2010 with the many truth commissions operating in the country. Most of the material

elements presented throughout this chapter that make up these landmarks of a landscape of repression and resistance, although considerable in number, are very small, barely visible and, for the most part, in places with very low circulation of people.

As demonstrated here, a considerable number of plaques and monuments are located at two universities –*Universidade de São Paulo - USP* and *Pontifícia Universidade Católica – PUC SP* (35%). With restricted access, these sites reinforce the representation of the victim of the dictatorship as a middle-class university student, a deeply restricted perspective that has already been questioned by both social movements and research related to the topic. The materiality reinforces the view of a dictatorship that affected a specific group and not society as a whole.

The visibility of these plaques, from their location, such as the emblematic case of the plaque at the Volkswagen plant and, in some cases, a more detailed spatial analysis, as was the case of the cemeteries, also questions whether this is the most effective way to generate and expose society's conflicts based on a transnational or cosmopolitan model (Bull & Hansen, 2016; David, 2017). In doing so, most of the identity symbols of the victims associated with politicisation were erased or pulverised and replaced by others associated with a liberal humanitarian discourse. In the same way, the “never again” pedagogy is questioned in the case of plaques and monuments.

On the other hand, these monuments and plaques, when located in highly visible places, as is the case of the Carlos Marighella Monument, create a tension that ultimately goes against the vanishing of political memory of the dictatorship in the public sphere. The many actions against the installation of the monument, the efforts of Marighella's comrades and family to preserve it there and the numerous graffiti, many with references to symbols of the dictatorship, such as the “Comando de Caça aos Comunistas” (CCC) may not be pedagogical, but expose a more complex side of the process of democratic transition and the continuities of the dictatorship.

II. Conclusions

I started this thesis, very influenced by the experiences I lived, working as part of a forensic team in Brazil. This forensic group was constituted in the 2010s to investigate human rights violations and the search for the disappeared people during the last military dictatorship, all linked to political and/or guerrilla movements. In this context, together with colleagues with whom I learned and experienced many of the phenomena presented throughout this work, we encountered a world of mundane, everyday disappearances, almost unnoticed by society in general. These were cases of people buried as NN who lost the few data that could be obtained such as the place of death, description of clothing, personal belongings, physical description in the bureaucracy of death.

My interest was to observe how material elements linked to individuality, a fundamental concept in the identification process, were lost in the way to burial. If racism, sexism and classism essentially crossed paths in the form of negligence and omission by officers and the State itself in the treatment of these people who are deprived of their status as political subjects, they only attain the status of disappeared when their fate is exposed by the mass media or thanks to social movements and family groups.

Despite studies developed in the field of social and cultural anthropology (Kant de Lima, 2005; Medeiros, 2015; Pita, 2005; Sarabayrouse Oliveira, 2012; Tiscornia, 2004) on the unequal treatment given to different groups of people by the police, forensic institutes and researchers working on forced disappearance in Brazil (Bauer, 2011; Padrós, 2012; R. de A. e Souza, 2019; J. de A. Teles, 2020; M. A. A. Teles & Lisboa, 2012), I noticed the potential of an archaeological approach that could contribute to these reflections on other strategies and forms of disappearance. Thus, I questioned throughout the thesis: is it possible to materialize the precariousness of life at the moment of death? What forms of citizenship are constructed in the bureaucratization of death? What technologies have been deployed in these strategies?

To answer these questions, I started from the perspective of contemporary archaeology (Buchli & Lucas, 2001; Lucas, 2010; Thiesen, 2013) and of supermodernity (González-Ruibal, 2008b; 2019) to seek into different bodies, individuals and populations categorized as undesirable, dangerous, deviant, and the different forms of treatment they experience through life and death (S. Carneiro, 2015; Davis, 2013; Fanon, 1979; Federici, 2004; Gilmore, 2007; Mbembe, 2008; Nascimento, 2016). If during life these populations are over-controlled by the State through its institutions (M. C. N. Foucault, 1992) and forms of policing, they are neglected and abandoned in the construction of their citizenship in death.

Rather than proposing a contextualization of Brazil, I explored the control of the state over different bodies from the end of the empire and the beginning of the twentieth century onwards, to make clear that the forms of control that I study are not exclusive of the dictatorship and the neoliberal democratic context, on which my work is centred. Quite the opposite: they constituted the basis of Brazilian society in the formation of the republic at the end of the nineteenth century.

From a chronological perspective, I presented how certain groups were directly targeted by police, based on forms of classification that understood them as undesirable and classified them as vagrants, unclean, criminals, promiscuous, suspicious, subversive, among many other terms that were widely used to justify violence against them. In any case, the impact of colonialism on intersubjective relations based on ideologies of racial and sexual classification was fundamental in legitimizing the Eurocentric character of modern power (Gonzalez, 1988). Also, the transition to democracy was an extremely controlled process and two main legacies can be pointed out: the deepening of social inequality promoted by the economic model underscoring the dictatorship, and the institutionalization and sophistication of forms of state violence, which came with the application of different technologies of disappearance in places from which they have never really disappeared: ordinary police and prison departments, deployed in the peripheral zones against racialized, poor people.

For racialized, gendered and class dissidents, a continuity is seen in the control of their bodies by the state and this can be seen in the constitution of identities in death. As I have argued, some characteristics that have been highlighted in different studies relating to disappearance by omission as one of the techniques used include 1) an air of legality in the production of documents which would have identification as their first objective and which, in the end, are not completed (Ferreira, 2009; Gupta, 2012), 2) Race, gender and class and the moralities in the classification of the dead (Medeiros, 2016, Kant de Lima, 1995; Alves, 2011), and 3) the non-traceability - the network of institutions that do not engage in dialogue (Vendramini 2016, Hattori et al, 2017)

Structural violence and the contributions of military dictatorship

This thesis has explored the topic of forms of disappearance by omission as one of the legacies of dictatorship. The findings from the two case studies, one related to the treatment of NN during the last military dictatorship and the other in neoliberal context, generate a series of insights concerning the disappearance by omission in São Paulo.

By using the clothing description of the NN, I tried to understand how the bureaucracy uses omission as a technique to disappear. Applying quantitative data, I presented how carelessness and lack of detailed information regarding the description of clothes makes even the few extant data about the lifeless body disappear. There is an inverse relationship in this process - as documents increase, objects, clothes and other identifying elements decrease. As the process of identification unfolds, the little information that existed about a particular body is lost - the brand of the T-shirt, the size of the shoes, the detail on the jeans.

This makes it even more difficult for a family member to find a missing person. What we have seen through analysis is that there is a continuity in the use of these techniques to disappear in institutions, especially with these buried as NN, not only regarding political disappeared who fought against the regime, but all the population

that is a victim of state violence and that is not considered a citizen in full in life, it is considered even less of a citizen in death.

What I show in my analyses is how the very actions of officials, institutions, and the state literally strip those who arrive as NNs of any individuality by not describing clothing and personal belongings. The gradual process experienced by these corpses as they go through the different institutions of dematerialization leave the naked body, isolated and without identity, buried in a potter's field.

In the period of the dictatorship, they are de-characterized as subjects, undressed in the process and reduced to the function of filling a mass grave, so as to make it difficult to find those who really matter: the members of the political opposition against the regime. For the regime, these people are just “construction material” useful to hide bodies of the militants or the guerrillas. However, unveiling these strategies is a way to show the work of the state itself with regard to those who refuse state norms and to show its contradictions.

In my second case study on the neoliberal context, I attempted to analyse in detail the context of Quarta Parada cemetery, exploring the loss of identities inside the cemetery and the treatment of NN and not claimed bodies. I demonstrated how the legal discourse of controlled procedures is used to create an aura of legality in the cremation of individuals whose identities are not even known.

Different discourses on the privatization of cemeteries have resorted to the neoliberal perspective to say that this could help lighten the bureaucratic load. However, it ends up creating more control, such as the state institutions that end up being created to inspect what is being done by private companies.

In this case, cremation epitomizes the final stage of elimination by omission on the part of the state. This aberration, the total annihilation of the dead without possibility of recovering their identities, represents the culmination of state relations with the dead. Yet it creates social mobilization, especially on the part of groups which

experience the uncertainties and difficulties in their daily lives of tracing the path of death in state institutions in search of their missing relatives.

I argue that there is a specific mode of uncaringness on the part of an institution that loses the identity and location of people buried under its responsibility. To this is added the understanding of the political use of these bodies, from the moment that speculative interests within a neoliberal policy act together with the reality of disappearance. As Akhil Gupta (2012) indicates, “uncaring” is not a psychological state of government employees but a constitutive modality of the state. One could hardly accuse the state of inaction toward the unclaimed and NN: it would be difficult to imagine a more extensive set of documents produced with the aim of identifying a person. Such arbitrariness is not in itself arbitrary. Rather, it is deliberate, systematically produced by the very mechanisms that are meant to care for the population. It is this state technology that serves the interests of eliminating those who do not matter. This is necropolitics in its neoliberal context.

Bodies considered by society to be abject in life, are also considered abject in death. In Brazil, cadavers and human remains are systematically treated in different ways by state agents. Indeed, this is normally established through the categories of race, class and gender. For neoliberal economies these human remains, belonging to poor and marginalized people and buried in the general blocks or in the ossuary, are only profitable when they are eliminated by cremation and thus the plots they occupied can be sold. Living, as we do, in a world in which the rights to private property and profit crush all other notions of rights, the defence of property values is not only economic, but also political and of a moral order.

Uncovering forms of violence

The portrait that emerges in the light of the evidence gathered in this thesis is of a silent, peripheral, naturalised conflict under exhausting conditions of scarce means, marginal in all senses of the word, but brutal and violent. However, violence as action and attitude of annihilation and destruction is not only physical.

The normality of state violence is, in fact, the normality of a broad process of genocide, of annihilation of entire groups to reproduce their status of subalternity. It is essential to adopt a broader perspective, of power and morality. In the 1970s, when Abdias do Nascimento (2016) developed the notion of genocide as a broad system that materially, physically and culturally affects human existence, there is a series of actions and interests behind the actions that would aim at dismantling the cultural heritage and existence of certain groups. This process goes from police violence against peripheral communities to the silencing of black cultures, the devaluation and invisibility of racial agendas both in politics and in society and the erasing of leadership and figures of reference among black people.

The unique contribution of this work to these discussions lies in the exploration of other forms of disappearance by omission and abandonment that are still happening. In the cemeteries of the city of São Paulo, throughout 2020 pandemic crisis, the work overload and lack of protective equipment for employees were denounced. In July of 2021, four gravediggers passed away by COVID-19. In the same month, the mayor, in a neoliberal policy of privatization of the services and institutions of the city, carried out the concession of the 22 public cemeteries to private companies. Negationism and omission became government policies, in other words, non-action is a decision - die or let die as the ultimate expression of sovereignty.

The widely-circulated images of the construction of mass graves during the pandemic, like the one in the cemetery of Nossa Senhora Aparecida in the city of Manaus, has shocked the world. With the increase in positive cases of COVID-19, the Brazilian government, as well as different states around the world, proposed actions for the management of the bodies of people killed by the disease and some measures related to rapid inhumation, or other forms such as cremation, to try to minimise the risk of contamination.

In a context of lockdown, where people cannot be out in the street, the number of unclaimed bodies became much higher. If these are cremated or the necessary

documents are not produced, the possibility of missing persons, whose human remains will be almost impossible to trace, will be immense. In this health emergency situation, COVID-19 exponentially increases to uncountable numbers the large fractures and fissures existing in this system.

An archaeology that investigates necropolitics has to make a familiar landscape unfamiliar, uncanny (Buchli & Lucas, 2001), and to encourage people to see the traces of the recent past and engage with their ordinary environments in a more critical manner (González-Ruibal, 2007). In this sense, I proposed three representative places in this necropolitical landscape where excess and hidden structures are two sides of the same coin: hidden collective ossuaries, landfills and potter's fields. Unlike mass graves, these spaces are on the borderline between what is considered legal and illegal. By being normalized, trivialized and part of the day-to-day bureaucracy of death, they are naturalized insofar as they do not disturb the senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing) of those who pass through these places. Rather, they are one more element of a vast landscape that is absent and marginalized in official history (Ayán Vila 2008).

However, and in order to gain a necropolitical perspective, I look at the physicality of the rubbish bag as something that is contradictorily contaminant and non-contaminant, something that has a dialogic relationship between the ephemeral rubbish bag, highly disposable, with the idea of the resistance it proposes to non-contact with the flesh, body, fluids and human remains. The “politics of disappearance”.

An archaeological perspective of the *chaîne opératoire* of disappearance, starting from the encounter of the body, registered by the police. This is where the process of loss of information begins, in the economies, politics and moralities based on race and class. The information about the place where the corpse was found and the objects associated with it are lost as the body is analysed and passes through different institutions. Much paper is produced to justify the work, but when racism and classism are structural and structuring in a certain society, negligence and lack of care will nevertheless dematerialize all the elements that make it possible to individualize a

body. The body is stripped naked for analysis, but the information about the clothes with their description does not remain in the documentation, and even less does it go along with the body at burial. In this dematerialisation that involves the annihilation of individuality, what remains are the human remains and the plastic bag, an out-of-place substance, contaminating the “natural” (Olsen, 2010) with its sticky persistence. In institutionalized death in São Paulo, in the processes of exhumation, plastic represents this non-contact with human remains, whether via the plastic bag of exhumation, a high-density polyethylene or the exhumation box. At the same time, it represents the possibility of maintaining individuality. In this logic, loose human bones and the use of rubbish bags, have an evident symbolic meaning that links them to soil, dirt, non-individualization, lack of care and negligence.

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Annex 1 Research authorization for the investigation at the Quarta Parada cemetery in São Paulo city, Brazil

TERMO DE AUTORIZAÇÃO PARA REALIZAÇÃO DA PESQUISA

Eu, **DENNI SANCHES DE NOVAES**, na qualidade de Chefe de Gabinete do Serviço Funerário do Município de São Paulo, **AUTORIZO, MÁRCIA LIKA HATTORI**, RG 30403518-X, CPF 328626568-36, pesquisadora do Instituto de Ciências del Patrimônio do Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), doutoranda da Universidad Del País Vasco a realizar pesquisa na documentação do cemitério Quarta Parada com o uso de métodos de pesquisa quantitativa e qualitativa (dados dos livros de óbito, entrevistas com funcionários do cemitério, plantas dos ossários e fotografar ossuários).

A pesquisadora se compromete a:

- 1- Utilizar os dados e as fotografias obtidas apenas para uso da pesquisa científica sem divulgação para imprensa e qualquer outro tipo de mídia, sob pena de responsabilização cível e penal.
- 2- Obedecer às disposições éticas de proteger os participantes da pesquisa, garantindo-lhes o máximo de benefícios e o mínimo de riscos.
- 3- Assegurar a privacidade das pessoas citadas nos documentos institucionais e/ou constatadas diretamente, de modo a proteger suas imagens, bem como garantir que não utilizará as informações coletadas em prejuízo dessas pessoas e/ou da instituição, respeitando deste modo as Diretrizes Éticas da Pesquisa Envolvendo Seres Humanos, nos termos estabelecidos na Resolução CNS N° 466/2012, e obedecendo as disposições legais estabelecidas na Constituição Federal Brasileira, artigo 5º, incisos X e XIV e no Código Civil, artigo 20.

São Paulo, 15 de agosto de 2018.

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