

# MILITIA FORM AND ITS PARADIGMS IN THE SPACE-TIME OF THE URBAN IN THE METROPOLIS OF RIO DE JANEIRO

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## Abstract

The article presents five hypotheses regarding our evaluation of the current emergence of the geographical space of the militia form. To construct this hypothesis, the Metropolitan West of Rio de Janeiro (MWRJ) has been selected as the preferred locus for the rise of this social form. In an exercise of regionalization, we connect the terms of this socio-spatial presence within the scope of the current center-periphery relationships transcribed in the Brazilian urban network. Presenting the hypotheses and weaving them from cartographic data, we bring elements to the understanding of the negative character of the modernization entangled in this fragment of the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro in recent decades.

**Keywords:** Metropolitan West of Rio de Janeiro; Milita Form; Regionalization; Center-periphery Relation; Late Modernization

## Resumo / Résumé

### A FORMA MILICIANA E SEUS PARADIGMAS NO ESPAÇO-TEMPO DO URBANO NA METRÓPOLE DO RIO DE JANEIRO

O artigo apresenta cinco hipóteses a respeito do que avaliamos constituir, no tempo presente, a emergência do espaço geográfico da forma miliciana. Para a construção dessa hipótese, apresentamos o Oeste Metropolitano do Rio de Janeiro (OMRJ) como o locus preferencial da emergência dessa forma social. Em um exercício de regionalização, costuramos os termos dessa presença socioespacial no âmbito das atuais relações centro-periferia transcritas na rede urbana brasileira. Apresentando as hipóteses e costurando-as a partir de dados cartográficos, trazemos elementos para a compreensão do caráter negativo da modernização enredada, nas últimas décadas, nesse fragmento da metrópole do Rio de Janeiro.

**Palavras-chave:** Metropolitana Oeste do Rio de Janeiro; Forma Miliciana; Regionalização; Relação Centro-periferia; Modernização Retardatória.

### FORME MILICIENNE ET SES PARADIGMES DANS L'ESPACE-TEMPS DE L'URBAIN DANS LA METROPOLE DE RIO DE JANEIRO

L'article présente cinq hypothèses concernant ce que nous évaluons comme constituant, dans le temps présent, l'émergence de l'espace géographique de la forme milicienne. Pour la construction de cette hypothèse, nous présentons l'Ouest métropolitain de Rio de Janeiro comme le locus préférentiel de l'émergence de cette forme sociale. Dans un exercice de régionalisation, nous avons cousu les termes de cette présence socio-spatiale dans le cadre des relations centre-périphérie actuelles transcrites dans le réseau urbain brésilien. En présentant les hypothèses et en les cousant à partir de données cartographiques, nous apportons des éléments pour la compréhension du caractère négatif de la modernisation emmêlée, au cours des dernières décennies, dans ce fragment de la métropole de Rio de Janeiro.

**Mots-clés:** Ouest Métropolitain de Rio de Janeiro ; Forme Milicienne ; Régionalisation ; Relation Centre-périphérie ; Modernisation à Retardement.

## INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, especially in the last five or six decades, the action of criminal groups in various territories has escalated to increasingly high levels. Notably, in the metropolis of Rio de Janeiro, one of these groups has progressively consolidated its presence and ramifications in the various moments and activities of social production and reproduction: these are the militias. There has been a significant growth in documentary production about the performance of these groups, both in the metropolitan region and other parts of the state<sup>1</sup>. In general terms, militias are defined as armed groups organized by active members of the military, ex-military, and civilian forces who, in varied ways, organize a structure of coercion and extortion of resident populations and/or economic activities based in certain territories. However, a stricter definition of the nature of these groups is a work in progress: in recent years, researchers from diverse fields, social activists, and members of the State have pondered various nuances of the “concept” of militia and possible differentiations of the activities of these groups. Distinctions can be drawn between those strictly linked to drug trafficking, arms trafficking, and other criminal activities with territorial control and the intensive use of military equipment. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this article, we work with the notion presented above.

Thus, this article presents a hypothesis, which is the emergence and consolidation of the geographical space of the militia form, with its primary locus of action being the Metropolitan West of Rio de Janeiro (MWRJ). This region’s circumscription has been presented in other writings and discussion forums (Silva, M., 2020a and 2024; Alcantara and Silva, 2020; Silva and Alcantara, 2023). It corresponds to the entire Planning Area 5 of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, part of Nova Iguaçu (areas bordering the RJ-105 Highway, involving the “Km 32”, Prados Verdes, and Cabuçu neighborhoods), and the total area of the municipalities of Seropédica, Paracambi, Itaguaí, Queimados, and Japeri, according to the figure below:

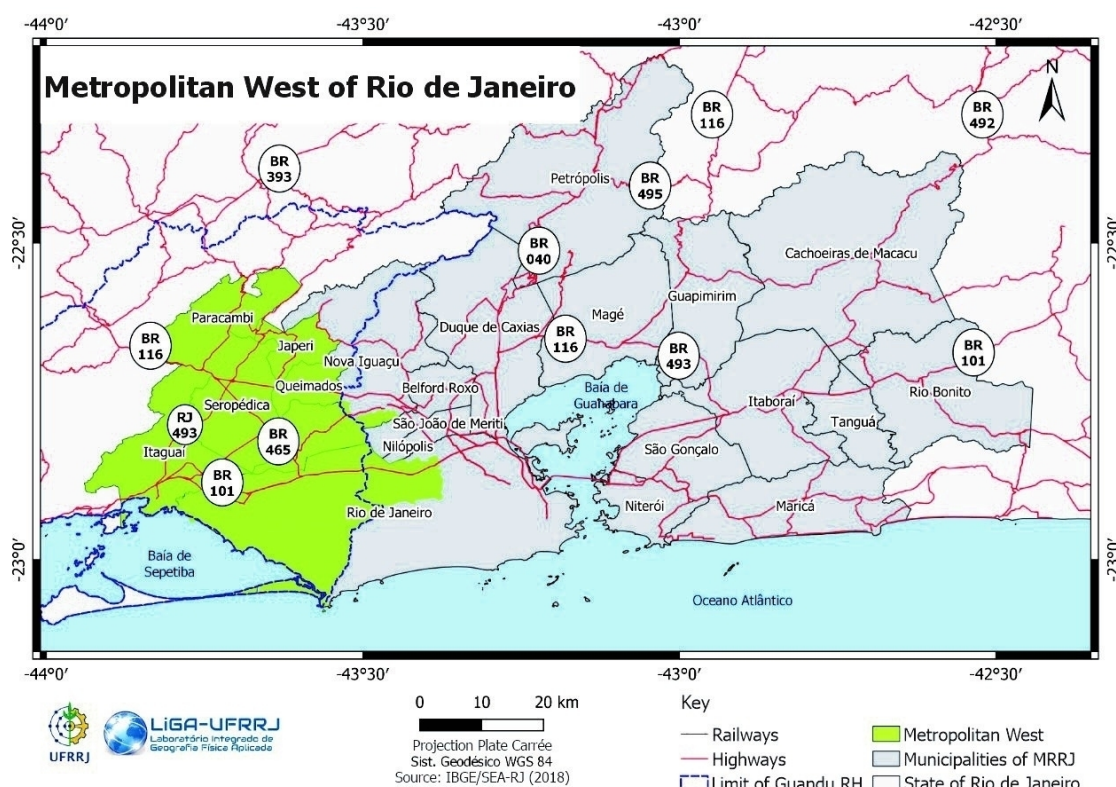


Figure 1 - Metropolitan West of Rio de Janeiro. Source: Silva, M., 2020a.

In more recent articles (Silva, M., 2024), we examined in-depth some issues related to the criteria of this proposed regionalization, emphasizing the political-administrative determinations<sup>2</sup>. This region,

which at one point occurred to us as a regional “arti-fact” (Haesbaert, 2010: 170), indicated that within a very long historical scope (starting from Colonial Brazil, with the historical presence of the Fazenda Santa Cruz, to the present day) its socio-political composition has brought critical elements deeply linked to contemporary social life.

In the following topic, we indicate one of the main acquisitions of this research cycle on the dynamics of the MWRJ: this geographical space of the militia form was born from the rubble of a process of late modernization (Kurz, 1996 [1991]), which deeply affected Brazil, at different moments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as a semi-periphery of global capitalism. It was also promoted in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro (MRRJ) and in its Metropolitan West.

## GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE OF THE MILITIA FORM: FUNDAMENTAL HYPOTHESES

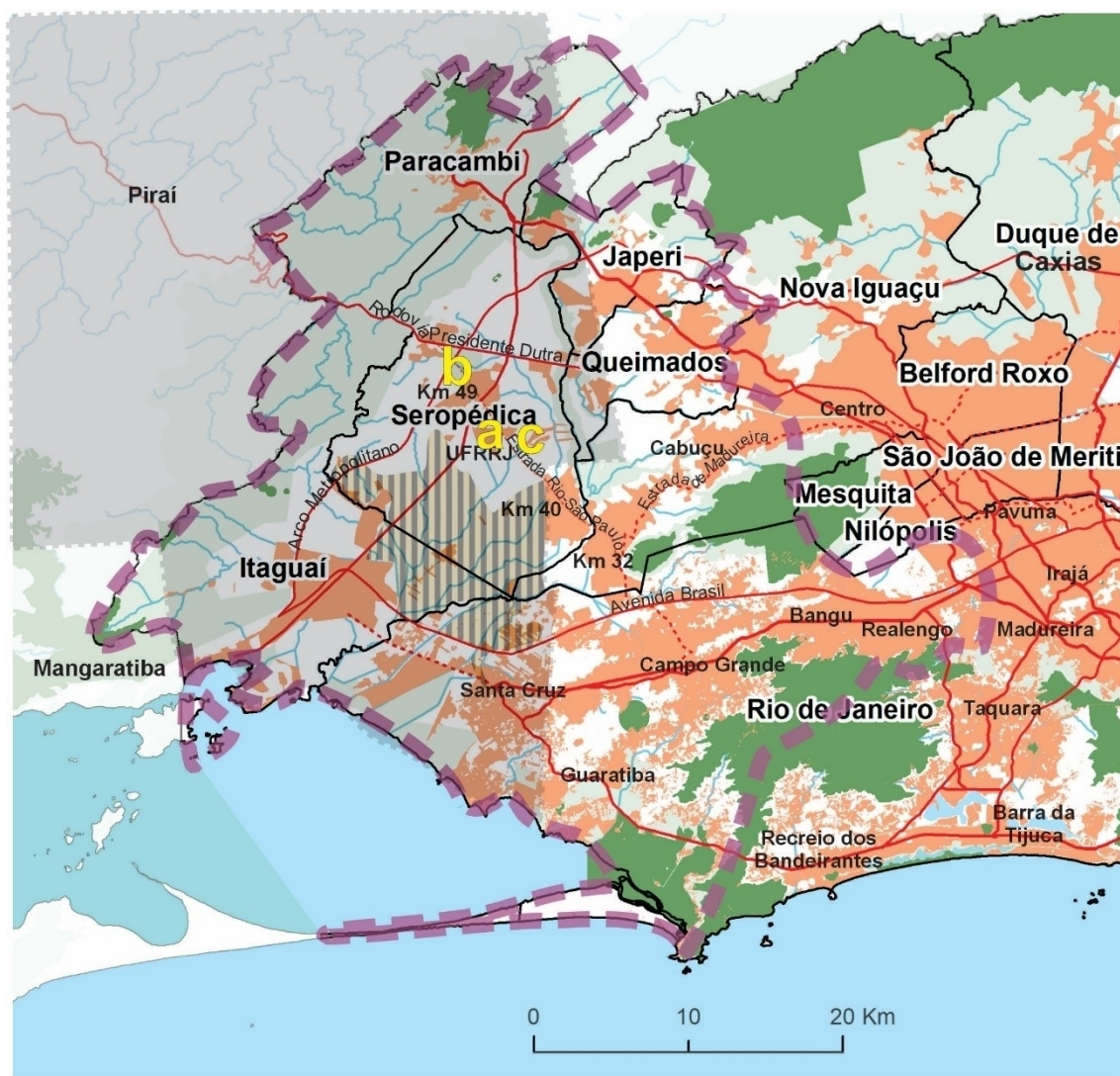
a) The “militia form,” or as we might call it, a kind of “militia capitalism,” is evidently ingrained in its spatial-temporal context.

Some generalizations are needed to develop this hypothesis. Broadly speaking, the metropolitan peripheries of Rio de Janeiro follow a historical device of long duration: the role of capital of the current core of the MRRJ (the municipality of Rio de Janeiro [MRJ]) in relation to Brazil, a legacy of the city's four and a half century history, and the subsequent loss of this condition from 1960.

Given the above, there is a certain mismatch between patterns of economic and urban development in the MRRJ between the nucleus (MRJ) and the other municipalities. This structure is also reproduced east of Guanabara Bay when considering the municipality of Niterói and the other municipalities of the sub-region: the presence of a primate city, somewhat concentrating income and/or public and private investments (specifically, the cases of MRJ and Niterói), and other municipalities whose urban fabric, as a rule, demonstrates more or less “peripheral” physiognomies and morphologies of the landscape, as well as political, social and economic structures. Notably, the region of the “Baixada Fluminense,” on the one “side” of the Bay, and municipalities of São Gonçalo, Itaboraí, and Tanguá, on the other. In short, in the MRRJ, these “peripheral” traits extend many tens of kilometers beyond the limits of the metropolitan core. Unsurprisingly, several studies show many of the residents of a municipality like Japeri or a neighborhood like Santa Cruz, both located 60 or 70 km from the center of Rio de Janeiro, spend the most time on daily metropolitan trips in any Brazilian city (Casa Fluminense, 2020).

By focusing specifically on the contemporary urban structures of the MWRJ, the history of its territory can be linked to the history of the Fazenda Imperial e/ou Nacional de Santa Cruz. Until the end of the nineteenth century, this farm extended from the current neighborhoods of Santa Cruz, Sepetiba, and Guaratiba to the current extra-metropolitan municipalities of Barra do Pirai and Vassouras. Over at least three centuries, it extended about 70 km north-south and 40 km east-west. Even today, the fragmented presence of this farm strongly marks the landscape and the territory's forms of occupation and production. In the municipality of Seropédica, for example, a current derivation of these lands is the presence of the campus of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and its “farm”, which, long ago, extended to the current limits of the municipality of Itaguaí. In addition, it is currently possible to confirm, among the main public facilities that occupy vast territories of the municipality, the presence of Embrapa Agrobiologia, the Agricultural Research Company of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Pesagro, Seropédica Experimental Station), and the Mário Xavier National Forest, as well as the Ecologia neighborhood, composed of the university's National Residential Owners (PNRs).





- Stain of Metropolitan Occupation
  - Full Protection Conservation Unit
  - Sustainable Use Conservation Unit
  - Limits of the MWRJ
  - Fazenda Nacional de Santa Cruz (boundaries of its maximum extension)
  - Colonial Center of Santa Cruz (1963)
- a. UFRJ (Seropédica campus), Pesagro and Embrapa Agrobiologia
- b. Mario Xavier National Forest
- c. Ecologia neighborhood

Figure 2 - Fazenda Nacional and Colonial Center of Santa Cruz. Author: Silva, M., 2024. Cartographic base: Rio de Janeiro (state); Metropolitan Chamber, 2017.

Furthermore, according to the figure above, traces of the Colonial Center of Santa Cruz and others remain both in Seropédica and in other MWRJ locations. These result from economic development policies promoted in the first Vargas Era (1930-1945), which aimed at welcoming small farmers and

forming and consolidating an “agricultural belt” around the then federal capital (Galvão, 2009 [1962]; Silva, H., 2017; Silva and Oliveira, 2018).

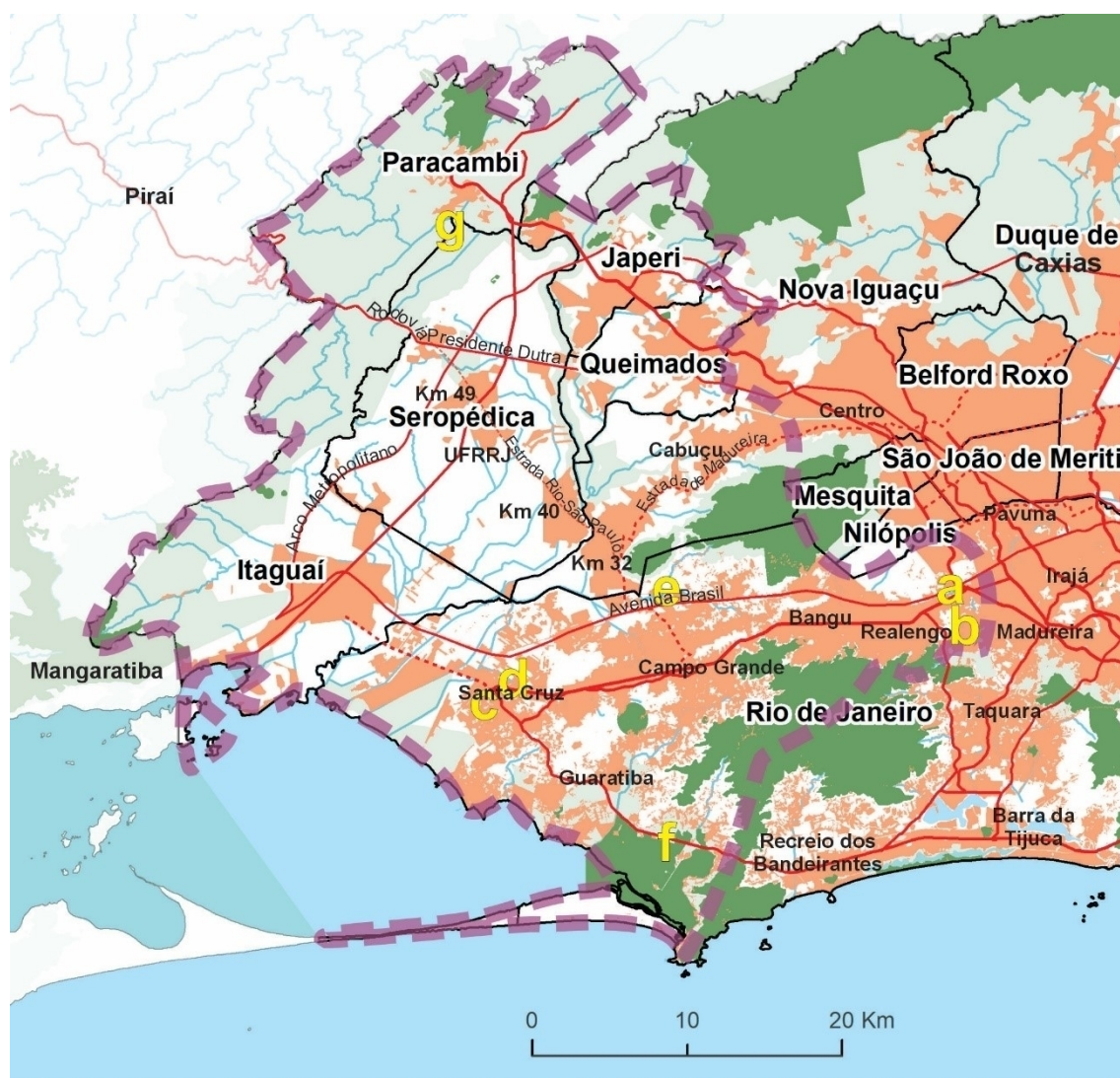
However, mainly from the 1950s and, with greater intensity, in the 1960s and 1970s, the explosive urban-metropolitan growth in Rio de Janeiro exceeded the borders of the MRJ. It reached these lands, already within the scope of forming a metropolitan “periphery” (Silva, M., 2020a). This rapid social and economic process re-signified the old agricultural lands of the Baixada de Sepetiba (Goes, 1942). Today, they have been added to the territory of the “peripheral” expansion of the MRRJ.

In this process, the transfer of lands occupied by public agricultural colonization projects to the control of numerous private agents also marks the economic, political, and social terms of the genesis of this periphery. In fact, the transformation of the social profiles and power mobilizations of certain local political elites over more or less forty years, especially between the 1950s and 1990s, is remarkable, either for the reaffirmation of their local power<sup>3</sup> or in the struggle for mobilizations for the political emancipation by districts of local municipalities<sup>4</sup>.

Finally, this relatively short period marked profound political-territorial transformations in Rio de Janeiro: the transfer of the federal capital to the newly founded Brasília in 1960, the formation and extinction of the state of Guanabara (1960 and 1975) and the institutionalization of MRRJ (1975). It is also necessary to consider the conjuncture of the forty years mentioned in the previous paragraph: in political-institutional terms, the 1964 Business-Military Dictatorship and the subsequent re-democratization of the country in 1985; parallel to all this, the outbreak of successive social, economic, and political crises in Rio de Janeiro (municipality and state), especially from the second half of the 1970s.

b) In some respects, the presence of military equipment and territorial devices in the MWRJ operates a political economy of space linked to a specific form of colonization of everyday life.

The presence of military infrastructure is evident along the section of the Avenida Brasil in the West Zone of the MRJ, such as in the neighborhoods of Vila Militar, between Deodoro and Magalhães Bastos, and Campo dos Afonsos, between the neighborhoods of Bento Ribeiro, Jardim Sulacap and Vila Valqueire. Other important equipment in the region are the Santa Cruz Air Base, in the neighborhood of the same name, the 1st Combat Engineering Battalion, occupying the headquarters of the former Santa Cruz National Treasury, and the Almirante Milciades Portela Alves Training Center (CIAMPA), in Campo Grande. Beyond the Avenida Brasil axis, in the region of Guaratiba, on the limits of the Pedra Branca massif, is the Army Technological Center. In Seropédica, the Army's Central Ammunition Warehouse is prominent in the Cabral neighborhood, bordering the municipality of Paracambi and on the edge of the RJ-127 Highway.



- Stain of Metropolitan Occupation
- Full Protection Conservation Unit
- Sustainable Use Conservation Unit
- Limits of the MWRJ
- a. Vila Militar
- b. Campo dos Afonsos
- c. Santa Cruz Airbase
- d. 1st Combat Engineering Battalion
- e. Almirante Milciades Portela Alves Instruction Center (CIAMPA)
- f. Army Technological Center
- g. Central Army Munitions Depot

Figure 3 - Military Territorial Equipment and Devices in MWRJ (2024). Author: Silva, M., 2024.  
Cartographic base: Rio de Janeiro (state); Metropolitan Chamber, 2017.



This equipment, under the administration of the Brazilian Armed Forces, forms a large part of the region's territorial history, as well as symbolizing the long-term military presence in Rio de Janeiro (Fernandes, 2006). Fernandes' study is somewhat pioneering regarding this theme and deals mainly with the presence of military equipment in the MRJ. Problematising the data showing the redistributions of militarized spaces in Brazil throughout the first half of the twentieth century and the progressive growth of their presence in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the author states:

In this study, I intend to problematize how military institutions built and occupied a significant part of the urban space of Rio de Janeiro. As yet uncertain calculations indicate that military areas can reach significant portions of the urbanized territory of Rio de Janeiro. For this reason, the general objective of the research is to treat the armed forces as an agent of the production of urban space through the magnitude of their action and considering the specificity and complexity of their needs, a subject that urban studies in Rio de Janeiro have not duly recognized. The fact that only one city houses more than a quarter of a country's military organizations indicates that this is its most militarized space; it gives Rio de Janeiro a unique urban situation, both from the point of view of the national territory and from the point of view of its internal planning. Fernandes, Emphasis added).

At other times, the author refers to documentary scarcity and the silence of approaches regarding this equipment, according to the following excerpt:

[...] Sooner or later, thanks to a more complex and broader view of the object, one can see obscure and unfamiliar areas, a certain silence about some subjects and characters that are not talked about and not investigated despite being in our landscape for a long time. This is the case for military organizations as a shaping agent of the urban space of Rio de Janeiro, as their strategic, political, and economic importance for the country has always resulted in the militarization of various parts of the city. (Fernandes, 2006)

The material influence of this equipment even extends to other neighborhoods (consisting of subdivisions, favelas, and housing projects) in their immediate surroundings and, in a way, to locations further away from them. In these surroundings, it is not very difficult to find whole neighborhoods that house people linked to the military estates of the Armed Forces and, more broadly, the Military Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro.

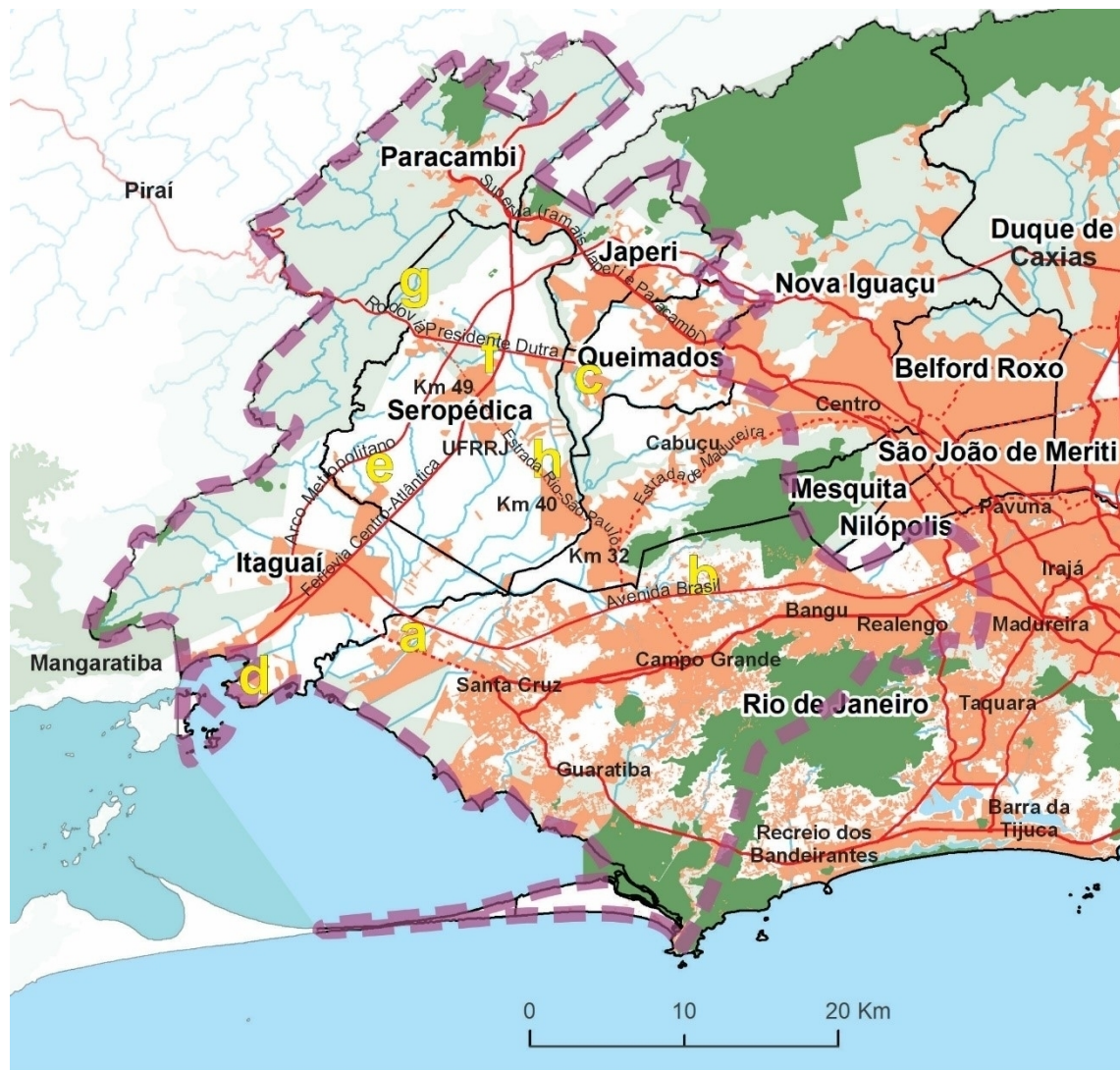
In short, as detailed in notable past and present studies, the particular geography of the military presence in the MRRJ, especially in the MWRJ, still requires a deeper analysis of many features<sup>6</sup>, which could unveil many forms and contents of the local devices of control and colonization of everyday life.

c) An economic geography of territorial-productive restructuring reveals the contemporary dynamics of industrialization and the recent profusion of logistical equipment in the MWRJ, within the scope of the critical reproduction of capital.

The MWRJ has a prolific composition of economic spaces typical of the era of so-called "flexible accumulation" (Harvey, 2005 [1989]). Recent studies (Oliveira, L. et al., 2020; Oliveira, P., 2017) have exposed the terms of a renewed industrialization in this region, considering that this industry, in turn, does not effectively fulfill its occasional promises of so-called local "sustainable", economic and social development. However, this industrialization mobilizes large businesses and, in a way, has shifted a significant part of the MRRJ's economic-productive axis to the West.

The most prominent current logistical-productive structures in this region are the Industrial District of Santa Cruz (the presence of Ternium, formerly Thyssen-Krupp Brasil, the Brazilian Mint, FIOCRUZ's future "Industrial Health Biotechnology Complex [CIBS]," promised to manufacture vaccines<sup>7</sup>), the Industrial Districts of Campo Grande and Queimados, and the recent industries in Seropédica and Paracambi. Also noteworthy is the presence and very recent installation of logistics complexes in these municipalities, especially in Queimados and Seropédica, taking advantage of the connection between the Presidente Dutra Highway and the Metropolitan Arch of Rio de Janeiro<sup>8</sup>.

In addition, one of the leading logistics equipment in the region stands out, the Port of Itaguaí, currently one of the largest in Brazil in the movement of ores and other goods; it is intended to become "Mercosur's main cargo concentrator port." <sup>9</sup>



- Stain of Metropolitan Occupation
- Full Protection Conservation Unit
- Sustainable Use Conservation Unit
- Limits of MWRJ
- a. Santa Cruz Industrial District
- b. Campo Grande Industrial District
- c. Queimados Industrial District
- d. Itaguaí Port
- e. Santa Rosa Waste Treatment Center (CTR)
- f. VBL Log Seropédica
- g. Industrial Concentration in Santa Alice, Seropédica (RJ-127 Highway)
- h. EPZ Seropédica (project announced in 2022)

Figure 4 - Industrial and logistical equipment in MWRJ (2024). Author: Silva, M., 2024. Cartographic base: Rio de Janeiro (state); Metropolitan Chamber, 2017.



It is also worth highlighting the academic research and social mobilization to confront the "externalities" resulting from this local productive manufacturing infrastructure due to air and water pollution. One example was the controversies involving the conception, the political-economic articulations, and, finally, the installation of the Santa Rosa Waste Treatment Center [CTR] in Seropédica (one of the MRRJ's main sanitary landfills, according to Pereira [2015]). This landfill led to the devastation of natural environments and negative pressures on artisanal fishing and small local agricultural production, among others.

However, given the breadth of academic and other contributions regarding such impacts on the MWRJ, it would be almost impossible to build a "synthesis" study of all these impacts, as their recurrence, amplitude, and severity are very substantial. At the same time, the resistance of social groups impacted by these negative pressures is also very significant. Indeed, regional

ping of these struggles could significantly contribute to the strengthening of these clashes between the political-economic interests involved in capitalist "new investments" (always, in one way or another, permeated by the global crisis of value and its multiscale consequences), and the permanence of the lives of populations and their environments.

d)The fraying of the political form in MRRJ gave rise to several municipal emancipations throughout the 1990s and, simultaneously, an explosion in the milicianization of politics through territorial fragmentation and the renewed composition of an economized territory.

In 2020, we published a text about the struggles undertaken mainly by representatives of the political and economic elite of the West Zone of MRJ between 1956 and 1987 to create a new municipality bringing together neighborhoods in the region (Silva, M., 2020b)<sup>10</sup>. In that article, we sought to decipher the forms, contents, and devices of an "autonomist" and "emancipationist" movement instituted and heightened by the initiative of certain political representatives of the Campo Grande<sup>11</sup> and Bangu neighborhoods. Analyzing this movement's comings and goings, whose most important moments were reported between the 1950s and 1960s and between 1982 and 1987, we conclude that these disputes are currently moving towards a critical management of surplus.

These conclusions summarize the hypothesis presented herein: the emergence of a frayed political form, where the State gradually becomes a true administrator of barbarism, and that concretizes the maxim of privatization enticed amid contemporary neo-liberalization at stratospheric levels. This privatization falls on "outsourced" forms of socio-political command or, even, in appearance and/or essence, from "post-state" perspectives (Botelho, 2020, p. 132-133): removing the modern "democratic state of law," typical of equally modern capitalism. So, a jumble of micro and macroscopic powers come into play, originating from different vectors and shades, inside and outside the State, all equally pertaining to an administration of life as a whole. What we have denominated the militia form arises, precisely what is described in the fifth and last hypothesis below.

e)As Brazil's "sounding board," Rio de Janeiro seems to have become an enormous social laboratory of the militia form.

Having indicated elements of the urban form and structure of Rio de Janeiro and its metropolitan region, pointing out data from its spatial-temporal axis, we proceed to state in extremely generic terms that, in the context of the Brazilian urban network, this metropolis is engendering a political-economic form and producing a daily life intertwined by a local statute of the reproduction of social relations of production (Lefebvre, 2002 [1973]). This can be read effectively as an enormous social laboratory of the militia form, especially around the MWRJ and other "peripheral" areas of the metropolis.

However, to be clear, we do not believe this to be a conscious, teleological process thematized by a cognisant political production of society by specific rulers or other occupants of the institutional forces of the State. For methodological purposes, we propose to observe precisely the social practice in its instituted and instituting terms: just as the economy and its derivatives (money, market, State, etc.) move historically, the militia form of capital also moves in its political, social, and economic determinations.

Under what conditions does this militia form move? Precisely from the elements indicated in the hypotheses presented above, first, critical urbanization (Damiani, 2004; 2008), a thickening of devices of a "peripheral" urban growth that recomposes complex centralities both in production and the realization of value. Second, a fraying of the political form through the past struggle for municipal

emancipations followed in the present by the colonization of politics and the institution of a narco-militia structure in the pores of local institutionality. Lastly, the mobilization of military territorial elements as an expedient for the colonization of daily life. In our understanding, the hypotheses presented above form this socio-spatial fabric's "layers" and "tangle".

There are other vital derivations of the latter hypothesis, which many researchers and participants have unraveled in social struggles concerned with the spread of this phenomenon in the peripheries and other impoverished areas of the country. Namely, the colonization of forms of popular religiosity via the deepening of sociabilities mediated by mostly neo-Pentecostal sects that promote and favor forms related to the accumulation of money and conditioning of social customs, and which also colonize the field of daily and institutional politics. Also, the dominance of strategic territories and the occurrence of conflicts of a narco-militia nature, producing terrorist forms of conditioning of individual bodies, handling legalities and illegalities in the extraction of surplus value from social production and circulation via real estate promotion (including subdivisions and incorporation), illegal fee collection, exclusive trade in goods (in a kind of micro-scale "colonial pact"), and open forms of social and political clientelism, giving rise to an urban "neo-coronelism," among others. We could also include the extent of this phenomenon in other Latin American countries, as well as in Africa and Asia, but this is a spectrum that currently exceeds our concerns. However, the globalization of the crisis and its "local" terms should be noted.

Thus, we argue that the periphery becomes the center at certain times, especially under the conditions presented. What remains to be deciphered is whether this centrality only occurs in the field of domination or whether it is also present in appropriation.

## DEVELOPMENTS OF THE "MILITIA FORM": RECORDS OF ITS TERRITORIAL EXPRESSION

The following figures highlight the current breadth of activities of these groups:

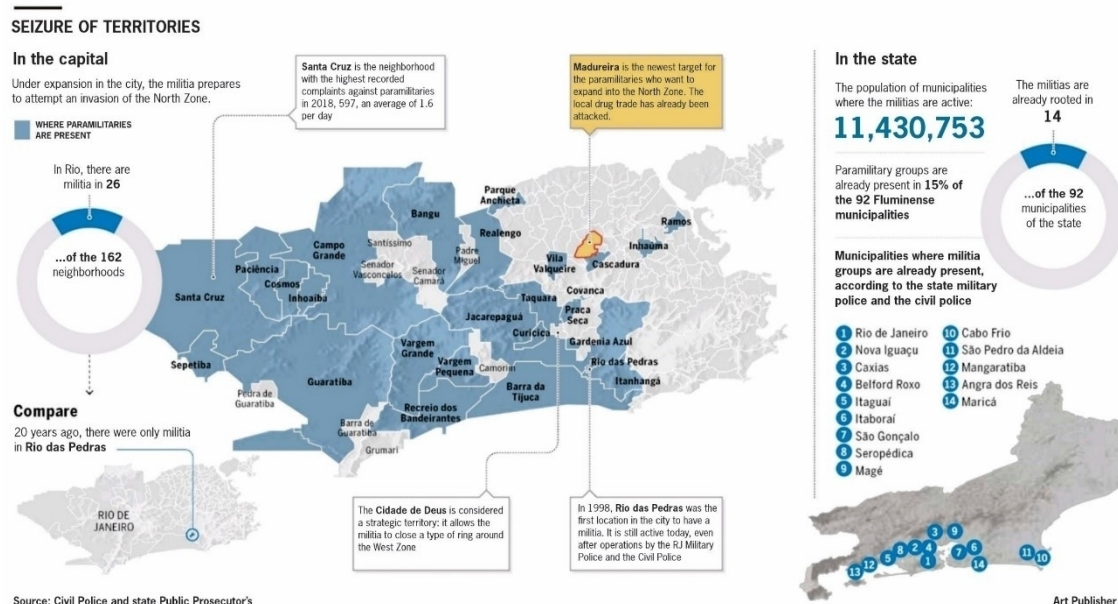


Figure 5 - Presence of militias in the municipality and state of Rio de Janeiro (2019). Source: O GLOBO. Militias reach 26 neighborhoods in Rio and 14 other cities in the state. Mar/31 2019. Available at <https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/milicias-chegam-26-bairros-do-rio-a-outras-14-cidades-do-estado-2356331> 5. Accessed on May 29, 2024.



Figure 6 - Armed groups in MRRJ in 2019-2021. Source: GENI-UFF; FOGO CRUZADO. Historical map of the armed groups of Rio de Janeiro. 2022. Report available at: [https://br.boell.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/relatorio\\_mapa\\_grupos\\_armados\\_geni\\_fogo\\_cruzado.pdf](https://br.boell.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/relatorio_mapa_grupos_armados_geni_fogo_cruzado.pdf). Interactive map available at: <https://fogocruz.github.io/mapafc/>. Accessed on May 29, 2024.

When we aligned these figures, which expose the territorial breadth of armed groups of Rio de Janeiro with the stories and experiences narrated in recent productions about the developments of the militia form mentioned at the beginning of this article, it was clear how much the entanglement of multiple forms of military control of social life is supported by “general” assumptions and specific hypotheses about the MWRJ. Consequently, the path has been opened to address new questions related to the daily developments of this social form, which will soon merit other writings.

## CONCLUSION

This article aimed to open an analytical perspective on a deeply critical social situation, emerging in several senses: the hypothesis of the militia form, exposed from its territorial expressions. This territory, profoundly strategic and economized in its effectiveness, can only reveal the production of a space suitable for this purpose.

As for the militia groups, we consider a more amplified debate about their performance urgent, especially regarding their frankly territorial strategies. For these groups, space is, in fact, a strategy, and the figures above help to decipher such strategies of space as saved territory. In its critical stage, the morphology and contents of urbanization, are mobilized for this contemporary machinery, in which unbacked global money seeks ways to extract social surplus value as much as possible via conditioning and coercion of everyday life at all times. Analytically, considering specifically the abstract social forms necessary for the contemporary form of reproduction of social relations of production (Lefebvre, 2002 [1973]), we start from the territorial performance of this criminal activity; methodologically, this procedure recomposes the fundamental vein of current urbanization, typical of a late modernization (Kurz, 1996 [1991]), revealing the limits of our time.

Late modernization can be deciphered from the hypotheses announced in the text: articulating the space-time of exclusive and institutional forms of property (the historical presence of Fazenda Santa Cruz) and the rhythms of the urbanization of the MWRJ, the traces of military urbanism and the recent territorial-productive restructuring, the political-administrative fraying and the colonizing forms of popular religiosity. What currently exists is an explosive territoriality in multiple directions, revealing the critical dynamics of contemporary Brazilian urbanism and its new socio-spatial morphologies.

Finally, the hypotheses and maps presented in the text expose and help to understand the territorial extension and the operative character of space as a strategic datum for mobilizing this emerging social form, the militia form, based on its forms and contents.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## NOTES

1- Given the breadth of these more recent contributions, it is unfair to single out the most important. However, we highlight the activities of USP's Center for the Study of Violence (<https://nev.prp.usp.br/>), the Grupo de Estudos dos Novos Ilegalismos of UFF (<https://geni.uff.br/institucional/>), whose production and dissemination of analysis and research has greatly helped us in understanding the dynamics of organized crime and armed groups in the Metropolitan Region and State of Rio de Janeiro in recent decades. Both groups, in partnership with the platforms and datalabs Fogo Cruzado, Dial-denunciation and Pista News, produced and launched, in 2022, the Historical Map of the Armed Groups of Rio de Janeiro (report available at [https://br.boell.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/relatorio\\_mapa\\_grupos\\_armados\\_geni\\_fogo\\_cruzado.pdf](https://br.boell.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/relatorio_mapa_grupos_armados_geni_fogo_cruzado.pdf) and an interactive map, available at <https://fogocruz.github.io/mapafc/>, where it is possible to verify the temporal evolution, every two years, of the performance of these groups throughout RMRJ). Within the scope of social organizations, we highlight the performance of the Fórum Grita Baixada (<https://forumgritabaixada.org.br/>) and Casa Fluminense (<https://casafluminense.org.br/>), for their role in producing and disseminating data, information and knowledge on these themes. Finally, some streaming platforms have also provided, in recent years, a myriad of extremely important documentary productions that, in some way, address this subject. Among these audiovisual productions, we highlight: A República das Milícias (2021); Lei da Selva: a história do jogo do bicho (2022); Vale o Escrito: A guerra do jogo do bicho (2023); Relatos do Front: a outra face do cartão postal (2022); and Rio do Medo (2018).

2- State Bill No. 2,743, of November 2001, presented to the State Assembly of Rio de Janeiro (ALERJ) by then Deputy Paulo Ramos (PDT), suggested, according to the text's summary, "the incorporation of the territory between kilometers 32 and 39 of the former Rio-São Paulo Road and Jardim Paraíso – Madureira Road, up to the limit of the Ipiranga River, in the municipality of Nova Iguaçu, to the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, as mentioned". These neighborhoods roughly correspond to the "piece" of the current territory of Nova Iguaçu that we have included in the OMRJ. The project's justification reports that: "[...] what the Community is really looking for is the return of the region between kilometers 32 and 39 of the old Rio-São Paulo Road and the Jardim Paraíso (Madureira Road, up to the limit of the Ipiranga River, Cabuçu District – Nova Iguaçu) to the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro, because for all the residents of that Region, their most normal relationship is with the West Zone of the City of Rio de Janeiro, more precisely the Campo Grande Neighborhood. The region's residents seek entertainment, work, education, health, etc. in the Campo Grande neighborhood. Campo Grande is where the transshipments in the transport system begin: off-boarding the buses that pass through the old Rio-São Paulo Road and taking the train or another bus to the center of the City of Rio de Janeiro; it is even common for residents to say that they reside in Campo Grande. The golden age of agriculture in this Region is similar to that of the West Zone, with orange culture at its high point, endorsed by the recent monuments built in Campo Grande in honor of this golden era. There is no formal relationship with the Municipality of Nova Iguaçu on the part of the residents of that Region, except in the payment of municipal taxes, which has no return on infrastructure works, which would improve the population's life." Next, the text mentions the precariousness of several public infrastructures in these neighborhoods (concerning basic education, the urban mobility network, urban planning, health, basic sanitation, and others) and, finally, it mentions the other emancipations that occurred from the former territory of Nova Iguaçu between 1943 and 1991, pontificating that these movements “were mainly due to the **Municipality of Nova Iguaçu’s abandonment and neglect of the** of its peripheral areas and their population.” (emphasis added). This same bill was submitted to ALERJ

four years later by the same parliamentarian under number 2.346/2005. In short, it is significant that this movement, although it has not effectively won its claim, confirms many of our impressions about the effectiveness of the region of OMRJ.

3 - In his study on militias and power relations in the Campo Grande neighborhood, Mauro Lopes de Azevedo (2014) draws a profile of “urban coronelism,” establishing a bridge between “archaic” forms of mobilization of local power, arising from agrarian societies, and the “modern”, represented by the urban-metropolitan presence of contemporary armed groups. When taking the Campo Grande neighborhood as a “cut,” Paulo Barata (2019) makes a long reference to the “triangle group” present in the local politics of the area known as “Sertão Carioca” in the first half of the twentieth century, operating the foundations of the transition from rural to urban in the region in the middle of the last century.

4- The study by Regina Araújo, when dealing with the relations between UFRRJ and the city of Seropédica, informs the reader that “recovering the urban dynamics [of this city] between 1940 and 1990 is not a simple task, due to the scarcity of documentary sources”, because “most of the secondary data found for the period aggregate information on Seropédica with Itaguaí, a municipality from which Seropédica was emancipated only in 1994” (2011, p. 145). The most interesting thing is to verify that, according to the author’s research data, the period of *most remarkable* demographic growth and *deepest* transformations in the physiognomies and structures of the current municipality until the present moment (2024) was precisely these fifty years of documentary scarcity!

5- Other studies by the author, address another aspect of Rio's military urbanism, that of the history of social housing in Brazil: FERNANDES, Nelson da Nobrega. Military urbanization and origins of social housing in Brazil. In: **GeocritiQ Plataforma digital ibero-americana para la difusión del trabajo científica**, Barcelona, 30 nov. 2013. Available at: <https://primeraepoca.geocritiq.org/urbanizacao-militar-e-as-origens-da-habitacao-social-no-brasil/>. Accessed on: July 20, 2018. 2024; and OLIVEIRA, Alfredo César Tavares de; and FERNANDES, Nelson da Nobrega. Marshal Hermes and the (un)known origins of social

6- Other recent studies on the interconnections between the military and urbanization in Rio de Janeiro, which also deserve to be highlighted: DAVIES, Frank Andrew. **Deodoro**: forms of government for an “Olympic region”. Thesis (Doctorate in Social Sciences). Institute of Social Sciences, State University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2017; and SANTOS, Maria Carolina de Oliveira dos.

**From the hinterlands to the barracks**: an analysis of the influence of the military in the urbanization process of Realengo. In: National Meeting of Graduate Studies and Research in Geography (14), Anais, 2021. Available at:

[https://www.editorarealize.com.br/editora/anais/enanpege/2021/61dee5daca6c6\\_12012022112946.pdf](https://www.editorarealize.com.br/editora/anais/enanpege/2021/61dee5daca6c6_12012022112946.pdf). Accessed on: May 9, 2024. In short, despite these important studies, military urbanism is still, per Fernandes' statement in 2006, a very underexplored subject, and with dialogues to be properly tailored and effectively built between the different research institutions and areas of knowledge.

7- According to information on the institutional page of the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, updated on 10/20/2023, “The Industrial Complex of Health Biotechnology (CIBS) was designed with the objective of expanding the supply of vaccines and biopharmaceuticals in order to meet not only public health programs but also the external demand of the United Nations. The plant will have an estimated production capacity of 120 million vials of vaccines and biopharmaceuticals/year, in different presentations (number of doses per vial) and will serve to meet the demands of the Brazilian population through the Unified Health System (SUS). Its construction will support the expansion of the National Immunization Program (PNI) and represents a milestone in the strategic initiatives of the Ministry of Health. The future Santa Cruz Campus (CIBS) will house the New Final Processing Center (NCPFI), as well as areas dedicated to quality assurance and control and others necessary for the full operation of the complex.” Available at:

<https://www.bio.fiocruz.br/index.php/br/home/crescimento-institucional/santa-cruz-rj>. Accessed on: May 9, 2024. The public notice for the construction of the complex was issued on 02/05/2021, at the beginning of the “second wave” of contamination and deaths from Covid-19 in Brazil and in the context in which the first vaccines against the disease began to be applied in the country, according to <https://www.bio.fiocruz.br/index.php/br/noticias/2195-cibs-santa-cruz>, accessed on May 6, 2024.

8- Regarding the Seropédica logistics complex, a notable study is LOPES, Gabriel Oliveira. **"New" spaces:** logistics condominiums and capitalist expansion in the municipality of Seropédica (RJ). 2018. 150 f. Master's Dissertation (Geography). Department of Geography and Environment, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2018. After defending this work, another logistics complex was announced for the city, to be installed at "km 42" of Highway BR-465: EPZ Seropédica, according to CALDERINI, Luiz. Another large company will settle in Seropédica, this time at km 42. In: **Seropédica online, August 9,** 2022. Available at: <https://www.seropedicaonline.com/prefeitura/planejamento/mais-uma-grande-empresa-vai-se-instalar-em-seropedica-desta-vez-no-km-42-veja-o-video/>. Accessed on: May 9, 2024.

9- On Porto's institutional page, there is the following story: "In 1973 the government of the then State of Guanabara promoted studies for the implementation of the Port of Sepetiba, with the main objective of serving the industrial complex of Santa Cruz, located in the western region of Rio de Janeiro. With the merger of the States of Guanabara and Rio de Janeiro on March 15, 1975, the implementation of the port was the responsibility of Companhia Docas do Rio de Janeiro, which chose the municipality of Itaguaí as the facilities' headquarters. The works began in 1976, with the execution of accesses and foundations of the coal pier. In 1977, the dredging works of the access channel, foundation, and hydraulic landfill were carried out. The inauguration of the port took place on May 7, 1982. In 2005, by Federal Law No. 11.200/2005, the Port of Sepetiba had its designation changed to Port of Itaguaí." Available at: <https://www.portosrio.gov.br/pt-br/portos/porto-de-itaguaui/historia>. Accessed on: May 9, 2024. The amount of academic work on the port and its urban-regional issues involving the municipality of Itaguaí and the rest of the OMRJ is very expressive, but two produced in recent years in the graduate programs of UFRRJ CHAGAS are noteworthy, Guilherme Mapelli. **The territorial-productive restructuring of Itaguaí:** rise and crisis of a city-symbol of the new Rio de Janeiro developmentalism. 2017. 331 f. Master's Dissertation (Geography). Institute of Agronomy and Multidisciplinary Institute, Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Seropédica and Nova Iguaçu, 2017; and CARDOSO, Rafaela Rosa Chaves. **Project of the Technological Pole of the Sea of Sepetiba Bay [PTM-BS]:** future scenarios through the parameters.

10 -This article is part of a collection of articles derived from the **V PPGDT Forum and I West Metropolitan Seminar of Rio de Janeiro**, held exclusively remotely, between 06/15 and 06/23/2020. Lectures and working presentations are available in full at <https://www.youtube.com/@vforumppgdtseminarioppgg4016/streams>.

11 - A study published a few years ago, on the hierarchies of the centralities of RMRJ, indicated that the Campo Grande neighborhood appeared, next to (and a little "ahead of") Barra da Tijuca, as a "Metropolitan Subcenter" (IETS, 2016, p. 67). *In other words, this study positioned the Campo Grande neighborhood as the second most important centrality of RM, behind only the Center of the city of Rio de Janeiro, which was categorized in the report as the "Metropolitan Center".*

12- About the report, it is worth highlighting the initial text. "For more than four decades, large spaces in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro have been under the control of armed groups, which subject residents to arbitrariness and expose them to armed confrontation, caused by disputes with rival groups or by police operations. The urban history of Rio de Janeiro is marked by the history of criminal groups, their cycles of peace and confrontation and their behind-the-scenes intrigues. Disputes over territorial control are unavoidable variables not only for the area of public security, but also for other urban policies, influencing everything from transportation and housing to education and culture. Faced with this serious public problem, we would expect state authorities to draw up a map showing which armed groups control huge areas of the state and where they operate. The various public agencies that operate in neighborhoods, favelas and housing estates have sufficient knowledge about the control exercised by armed groups and could gather this information on a map, to produce a basic instrument of public management. This map should also be made available to the population, so that citizens could better understand what is happening in these locations, demand accountability for public services and investments, making sure that they are serving the population and not criminal groups. The problem is that this map does not exist. Or at least, if it exists, the government refuses to make it available to the population. This void of qualified information undermines the elaboration and implementation of public policies that are, in fact, capable of bringing peace and quality of life to the population. It also harms the economic development led by the private sector since any investment made without this information



incurs the impossibility of calculating its inherent risks. The consequences of this gap are invaluable. To face these problems, the Fogo Cruzado Institute and the Study Group of the New Illegalisms of the Fluminense Federal University (GENI/Uff) decided to lead a collective effort that allowed us to present to you, today, the first version of the Historical Map of the Armed Groups of Rio de Janeiro. The map now released presents data from 2006 to 2021, for the entire metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro." (GENI-UFF; Fogo Cruzado, 2022, p. 4-5).

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