

***Rolezinhos* in Brazil: Social and Political Significance**

by

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Abstract

Contemporary Brazil has experienced a wave of large-scale urban social gatherings at shopping malls of underprivileged youth known as *rolezinhos*. While neither illegal or explicitly political, these gatherings generated deep unease among the middle-classes and the municipal authorities. This thesis investigates the *rolezinho* phenomenon in São Paulo as a social-movement cycle. It is first situated in the long historical context of colonial and imperial urbanization, slavery, and social repression and, subsequently, in the immediate contemporary context of the seemingly similar, yet more explicitly political, Movimento Passe-Livre (MPL). The research findings suggest that the *rolezinhos* participants, who are discriminated against and had their actions criminalized in urban spaces, saw themselves as young people aiming to express their unique cultural and social identities from the periphery. Given the reaction from the upper and middle-class with concerns over social order and crime, illustrated by brutal police response and criminalization of the *rolezinhos*, the local government under the Workers Party (PT) administration decided to intervene, negotiate and coopt leaders of the movement. Thereafter, the movement declined and later collapsed when the Social Democratic Party of Brazil (PSDB) came into power, and funds for the movement's association were cut.

Keywords: *rolezinhos*; inequality; Brazil; urban spaces; public policy; repression

To Mami, Papi, Guga, and Sandra. In memory of Christine Buske.

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List of Acronyms

ABEP	Associação Brasileira de Empresas de Pesquisa; Brazilian Association of Survey Companies
Abrasce	Associação Brasileira de Shopping Centers; Brazilian association of shopping centers
CBN	Central Brasileira de Noticias; Brazilian news central
CET	Companhia de Engenharia e Tráfego; company of engineering and traffic
Cohab	Companhia de Habitação Popular; popular housing company
GCM	Guarda Civil Metropolitana; civil municipal guard
MPL	Movimento Passe-Livre; Free-Fare Movement
MTST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto; The Homeless Workers Movement
PM	Polícia Militar; military police
PSD	Partido Social Democrata; Social Democratic Party
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira; Brazilian Social Democracy Party
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores; Worker's Party
PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro; Brazilian Labour Party
SAMU	Serviço de Atendimento Móvel de Urgência; mobile emergency care service
SEME	Secretaria Municipal de Esporte, Lazer, e Recreação; municipal secretariat of sports, leisure, and recreation
SGM	Secretaria de Governo do Município; city government secretariat);
SMC	Secretaria Municipal de Cultura; municipal secretariat of culture
SMDHC	Secretaria Municipal de Direitos Humanos e Cidadania municipal secretariat of human rights and citizenship
SMPR	Secretaria Municipal de Promoção da Igualdade Racial; municipal secretariat for the promotion of racial equality
SMSP	Secretaria Municipal de Coordenação as Subprefeituras municipal secretariat of coordination of the subprefectures

SP	São Paulo
SSU	Secretaria de Segurança Urbana; secretariat of urban security
SVM	Secretaria do Verde e Meio Ambiente; secretariat of green environment
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Glossary

Associação Rolezinho: a Voz do Brasil	An association established by leaders of <i>rolezinhos</i> after meeting with São Paulo City Hall.
<i>Arrastão</i>	An invasion accompanied by robbery.
<i>Funk ostentação</i>	Ostentation funk Preferred type of music among rolezeiros. It's a form of Brazilian rap that praises cars, money, and expensive brands.
<i>Periferia</i>	Urban periphery.
<i>Favelas</i>	Brazilian shanty towns.
<i>Rolezinho</i>	Meetings of young people from the urban peripheries planned via social networks (such as Facebook or Twitter) with the intention of socializing
<i>Rolezeiros</i>	Young people who participate in rolezinhos.
MC	MC is a term originated in the late 1970's to refer to a rapper and their work within hip hop music and culture. MCs in Brazil gained notoriety by publishing their songs on YouTube, and frequently participate in the rolezinhos.
“Rolezinho da Cidadania”	Rolezinhos organized by the association with funds provided by São Paulo City Hall are called “Rolezinhos da Cidadania” (Citizenship Rolezinhos) and are referred to as rolezinhos organizado (organized rolezinhos) in this thesis.
Organized Rolezinho	Rolezinhos funded by São Paulo City Hall.
Unofficial Rolezinho	Sporadic rolezinhos unrelated with the association.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

In December 2013, a number of Brazilian shopping malls, especially the ones located in the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, became the stage for a new style of youth gathering named *rolezinho*, which can be literally translated as little strolls or outings. The *rolezinho* was considered a type of flash mob as it involves planned meetings in public spaces. *Rolezinhos* can be characterized as meetings planned via social networks (such as Facebook or Twitter) of a large group (numbering from tens to thousands) of youths from poor neighborhoods, with the intent of socializing. On the 8th of December of 2013, the administration at *Shopping Metrô Itaquera* stated that around 6,000 teenagers were at the Mall (Globo News 2014a, 2014d). This news caught the attention of international media and was highlighted by articles in *The New York Times* and *The Economist* in 2014, when more than 3,000 people gathered at *Shopping Metrô Itaquera* and were confronted by the police with rubber bullets and tear gas. The *rolezinhos* suggested its participants were in a quest for public space since malls remain the main gathering place for Brazilians in São Paulo and other large cities where there's a lack of parks and public places for recreation (Romero 2014).

Youngsters participating in the *rolezinhos* are usually of black or *pardo* skin colour, and from neighborhoods, mostly located in the periphery, that offer few options of safe public leisure facilities for kids who want to socialize. In addition, *rolezeiros* usually belong to classes C and D. Class C emerged as the *new Brazilian middle class* after poverty had been reduced and a significant portion of the population emerged as a new emerging consumption group (Neri 2010; Ferreira et.al. 2012) following 20 years of successful planning to stabilize prices, combined with income transfer programs, increased access to credit, a 70% increase in real minimum wage between 2002 and 2012, among other measures (Paiva, G., Silva, D., & Feijó, C. 2016, 208), thereby improving levels of family income.

In the city centre of São Paulo, there are 33 cultural facilities available to approximately 65,000 youngsters between ages of 15 and 24, while there are 12 centres for approximately 230,000 youngsters in Itaquera and its eight districts in the periphery (*The Economist*, 2014). As a result, many *rolezeiros* (participants in *rolezinhos*) claim that shopping centers offer the ideal meeting place since they are one of the few safe places in cities like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, where endemic crime and violence and a culture of fear, frequently exacerbated by the media, has resulted in a lack of available public spaces. After clashes with the police, *rolezinhos* were redirected by the municipal government to take place in parks and public squares, and have included background funk music (GloboNews 2014c).

The first *rolezinho* to receive media attention happened in São Paulo on December 21st, 2013 in a mall in the Campo Limpo neighborhood. The second happened on January 11th 2014 at JK Iguatemi. In a separate incident, a *rolezinho* at Shopping Metrô Itaquera in São Paulo, around 3,000 participants were met with rubber bullets and tear gas (GloboNews 2014a). The disproportionate force used against the gatherings raised concerns among youth from the periphery and local government as the judiciary in the states of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro criminalized and prohibited *rolezinhos* at shopping malls. Subsequently, a number of shopping malls started selecting those who may or may not enter the mall, especially those aged under 18, raising questions about racial and class discrimination.

Since their first occurrence, *rolezinhos* received a great deal of media attention due to alleged criminal acts of vandalism, physical aggression and robberies by some of the participants, which caused them to be met with violence from the *Polícia Militar* (PM) or military police. Yet, as will be discussed below, a number of scholars (Erber 2019; Pinho 2018; Barbosa-Pereira 2016; Caldeira 2014, 2015; Poets 2015; Pinheiro-Machado 2014, 2012.) and journalists have pointed out that the *rolezinhos* represent a symptom of social and racial apartheid in Brazil, revealing the inequalities present in the country, particularly in urban centres.

The selected research site was the ideal for this case study because São Paulo is one of the cities (along with Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte) where *rolezinhos* received the most notoriety due to the disproportional and violent response by the police in reaction to perceived social unrest inside shopping malls. Similarly, mainstream society's perception was harsh: 82% of paulistanos disapproved *rolezinhos* and 72% stated their understanding that the police should act in order to repress participants. Such responses lead one to also ask how normalized and legitimized is the brutal police violence which they faced (Pinho 2018; Leite 2014; Pinheiro-Machado 2014).

The goal of this study was thus to explore if the *Rolezinho*, a new form of popular gathering in malls organized through social media by young Brazilians from December 2013 to March 2014, was a form of social protest against inherited racial segregation and inequality. The *Movimento Passe-Livre*¹ (MPL) that occurred in 2013 in Brazil managed to mobilize more than 100 thousand people for a protest march through Twitter with the hashtag *#Vemprarua* (come to the street) over a 20-cent increase of bus fare by widely constructing its own narrative and effectively countering that which the media was providing. This movement also had specific expressions in each large city, as for example, *#protestoSP*, *#protestoRio* and so on (Borja 2013), for São Paulo and Rio, respectively. It should be noted that the bus-fare increase took place shortly before Brazil was to host football's World Cup in 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016. The MPL's "call for insurgence" to resist the bus-fare increase was facilitated by turning to text messages, smartphones, videos, Facebook posts, WhatsApp, and was ultimately successful in halting the fare increase (Holston 2014). The MPL was thus successful in addressing one form of citizenship inequalities. For their part, the *rolezinhos* movement used similar social media platforms and was successful in mobilizing large crowds at shopping malls all across Brazil and later, after its prohibition in private malls, at public parks. Given the similarities between the MPL and the *rolezinhos*, I considered that the latter looked like a less well-articulated version of the MPL and sought to discover if in fact they were.

¹ The MPL originated in Salvador, Bahia, in 2003, and since then has campaigned for public transportation to be considered a fundamental constitutional right (Holston 2014, 888; Melito 2013).

The primary research goal was to find out how this phenomenon is perceived by the participants themselves, and to ask whether it represents a form of resistance by the Brazilian youth from lower social classes in response to forces of social control from upper classes and the state, given the lack of public spaces available for young adults in the city of São Paulo. The thesis also asks whether mainstream middle-class Brazilian society has perceived the *rolezinhos* as a form of social protest against inequality. The two primary research questions were: 1) “How do participants in *rolezinhos* understand their own actions?”, and 2) “How does the larger society perceive and respond to the *rolezinhos*?”

1.1. Methods

This field research was initially intended to last 4 months. However, a number of instabilities in Brazil caused by World Cup protests, a polarized and aggressive climate during and following the 2014 elections, in which president Dilma Rousseff was reelected, as well as campaigns for her impeachment, presented a big challenge to carry out interviews, as well as recruit new research participants. As a result, fieldwork was extended by 3 additional months and concluded in January 2015. The political environment and social instabilities that made this fieldwork challenging, however, also helped me gain a better understanding of the dynamics and challenges presented to young Afrodescendent Brazilians and their quest for economic inclusion and citizenship equality.

This research was primarily focused on a qualitative approach and fundamentally ethnographic, but also relied on secondary sources, newspaper articles, videos, as well as following *rolezinho* events on social media, its repercussion in the Brazilian and international media, while conducting participant observation at 4 *rolezinhos* in private and public spaces: two at the Itaquera Mall and at two parks (Bosque Maia and Ibirapuera Park) in the city of São Paulo. The intent of this research is to recount and examine the perception of mainstream Brazilians about *rolezinhos*, as well as to give the opportunity to *rolezeiros* themselves to tell their own stories on their struggle for egalitarian citizenship in one of the most unequal cities in the world, São Paulo. I also relied on

examining journalistic reports from newspaper articles from Brazilian mainstream media, radio, and TV interviews.

The ethnographic fieldwork resulted in a total of 86 open-ended interviews in the city of São Paulo, where significant urban and social changes relevant to this research have taken place since the 1990s. Participants included men and women from low, middle, and high income classes: *rolezinho* members, generally members of the lower classes, including unemployed youth; cab drivers, *diaristas* (domestic workers), and custodians, members of the lower-middle to middle income classes; and professional workers, shoppers and shop owners, generally members of the middle to upper-income classes. Ages varied between 18- and 60-year olds.

The shopping malls visited for this research were Jardim Sul Mall, Shopping Morumbi, Shopping Itaquera, Shopping Iguatemi, and Shopping do Campo Limpo, where open ended interviews were conducted with security guards, store staff, shoppers, and *rolezinho* members when appropriate and deemed safe. Interviews were conducted informally without a voice recorder. These interviews were recorded by taking personal notes soon after they occurred. Due to concern over mall administrators and *rolezinho* prohibitions, it was not possible to have security staff interviews recorded, and their informal interviews had to be conducted outside the property of the malls. It is relevant to note that several security guards were apprehensive about participating in this study for fear of losing their jobs. This fear was mitigated, however, by arranging to meet with security staff after their shifts were over and they were not wearing their uniform. Mall administration was also contacted but refused to participate in this study due to concerns stated above. A total of 86 people were interviewed.

It was only possible to interview 8 security guards and 8 shop owners at the malls. Many refused to participate due to ongoing investigations surrounding *Rolezinho* gatherings at their properties and ongoing legal proceedings. In order to get a range of different perspectives on *rolezinhos*, 20 male and female high-income earners living in high-status neighbourhoods of São Paulo (Morumbi-Panamby, Jardins, Campo Belo, and

Jardim Europa) were interviewed either in their homes or at a neutral place, such as a coffee shop.

It was also possible to interview 25 middle-income earners living in the Grajau, Ipiranga, and Jabaquara. 25 participants from communities in *favelas* (Paraisópolis, Peinha, and Santo Antonio) and suburbs around São Paulo in neighbourhoods Guarulhos, Itaquera, Grajau, and ABC were also interviewed. Out of the 25, 14 were either *rolezinho* members or participants of the gatherings. Darlan Mendes, one of the main organizers, was interviewed over the phone and in person. After this exchange, it was also possible to be a participant observer at 4 *rolezinhos*: two at the Itaquera Mall (where a number of kids were barred by security to enter the mall, while others were forced to leave) and two at a Bosque Maia and Ibirapuera Park (where there was a campaign against drug use and sexually transmitted disease, STD, prevention). The first two were organized by young adults from the periphery of São Paulo, and the latter two by an organization, which emanated from the movement. None of the existing literature mentions the establishment of this Association – a movement organization – that was successful in addressing concerns of young adults in the periphery but, unfortunately, only while the PT administration at the time was still in power: until 2016. After that, budget and investments cuts for art, leisure, and health prevention campaigns did not allow the organization to continue most of its projects.

1.1.1. Associação Rolezinho: a Voz do Brasil, the Movement’s Organization

Rolezinho members established an organization called “Rolezinho, the Voice of Brazil”, at the end of 2013. Following conflicts at shopping malls due to police brutality, one of its founders, Darlan Mendes started “*Rolezinho da Cidadania*” (Citizenship Rolezinho), which sought to organize the gatherings with the help of the government so as to relocate the gathering away from malls and parks to places closed to their own communities, and members could enjoy their time in safe space without negatively impacting shop owners and costumers. As of March 2017, this organization had organized

68 events without any conflict with the police. Also, the founder, as per a TV interview, belongs to the new middle class in Brazil, which emerged during the first 10 years of PT's government that started in 2002.

It was possible for me to be a participant observer in the first event dealing with racial discrimination, public spaces and police violence. This event was co-organized by the Association and the government of the city of São Paulo, under Fernando Haddad's administration from the Worker's Party (PT), in November 2014.

1.1.2. Deconstructing São Paulo's *Rolezinhos* in the Early 21st Century Brazil

The long legacy of slavery, policing, and rapid urbanization in Brazil have created a social and racially segregated society, where members of African descent usually belonging to the working class have lived for years in the *periferia* (periphery) and *favelas* (shanty towns) of São Paulo. They have not been able to be seen by the rest of society as full citizens with equal rights. The vestiges of this period are still present in Brazilian society by 2019 and give rise to a number of social protests and riots to claim the rights to which population in the lands of the hinterlands (presently the periphery) have been denied. For this reason, this thesis provides a historical background of colonial and post-colonial period in Brazil in order to understand the historical processes that illuminate four themes seen in early and late development in Brazil: race (slavery legacy and arbitrary arrest of Afrodescendants), police impunity, urbanization, and segregation (physical and social), which is covered in the following two chapters.

Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo were cities marked by urban riots from the early 1900's until 1940s by the underclass due to the high cost of living in the city due to urban changes in order to attract investment, and please the elite and oligarchs. This underclass was forced to move to the further periphery, where they lacked basic infrastructure and access to services and saw their living conditions getting worse. Examples of such riots and movements include the protests against the health campaign of 1904 in Rio de

Janeiro, which was against a campaign that sought to sanitize the city only to please the interests of the Brazilian bourgeoisie and British merchants; the May Day demonstrations and a general strike in 1917, that were against efforts to terminate free transportation passes to children during commute hours for the working classes; and the trade union movement during the 1910s in São Paulo that joined forces with other opposition movements; the overthrow of the Old Republic, which was ruled by oligarchs, in the 1930s .

The study of urban social protests in Brazil is important because they have transformed the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and were successful in bringing into light issues of citizenship in contemporary Brazil. They are also relevant to contemporary movements and protests pertaining to issues that are of particular interest to the working classes in the periphery (Meade, 9-16).

My empirical investigation uncovered a number of similarities between the *rolezinhos* and the MPL, a more explicitly-political that occurred in 2013 in Brazil. The MPL managed to mobilize more than 100 thousand people for a protest march through Twitter with the hashtag *#Vemprarua* (come to the street) over a 20-cent increase of bus fare by widely constructing its own narrative and not that which the media was providing. This movement also had specific expressions in each city, as for example, *#protestoSP*, *#protestoRio* and so on (Borja 2013), for São Paulo and Rio, respectively. It should be noted that the bus-fare increase took place shortly before Brazil was to host football's World Cup in 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016. The MPL's "call for insurgence" to resist the bus-fare increase was facilitated by turning to text messages, smartphones, videos, Facebook posts, WhatsApp, and was ultimately successful in halting the fare increase (Holston 2014). The MPL was thus successful in addressing one form of citizenship inequalities. For their part, the *rolezinhos* movement used similar social media platforms and was successful in mobilizing large crowds at shopping malls all across Brazil and later, after its prohibition in private malls, at public parks. Similarly to MPL, the *rolezinhos* movement managed to organize mainly via Facebook and WhatsApp, and was successful in establishing its NGO with the help of the local municipal government

under the administration of Fernando Haddad, a member of the Worker's Party (PT) and eventually the PT's unsuccessful presidential candidate in 2018.

It should also be noted that there are two noticeable differences between the MPL and the *rolezinhos*. First, MPL is a movement that started with the 20-cent fare increased, and soon mushroomed and protests started to cover other grievances, such as police violence against demonstrators in São Paulo, housing, health, education, corruption, security, environment, energy and violence (Holston 2014, 889) and triggered pre-existing organizations and social movements relevant to the protests, such as the MTST, *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto* (The Homeless Workers Movement) (*ibid.*, 896). *Rolezinhos* on the other hand focussed primarily on one issue, the availability of public spaces in the periphery for teenagers and young adults in the periphery. Both were, however, urban social protests that gave rise to the issue of police violence and impunity in urban protests. Secondly, while the MPL was able to control its own narrative in the mainstream media and through the use of “vertical social media”, and “denounced vertical forms of communication with elected officials” (Holston 2014, 897), the *rolezinhos* were not: although gatherings were organized through social media, mainstream media controlled the narrative and criminalized its members. Yet, both urban movements illuminated issues pertaining to police violence and impunity in Brazil's urban centres and the periphery, and gave rise to other grievances relating to equality, physical, and social segregation

The findings of my research conclude that the *Rolezinho* Movement was a youth movement composed of young people from the hinterlands and peripheries of the city of São Paulo that crystalized in 2013 and culminated in the establishment of Associação Rolezinho: a Voz do Brasil, the movement's umbrella organization after the local government contacted leaders of the movements. Through my research I found that *rolezinhos* had been happening for years in other cities across Brazil and the greater city of São Paulo, and are a manifestation of cultural, social, and political identity of the working class of the periphery. They received attention when thousands of its members gathered at Itaquera Mall on 6 December of 2013 after having it organized through online platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook with the intent to gather with others their age,

promote their cultural productions, and express their own identities which are unique to the periphery. The violent and repressive response by private security guards, and the Military Police, who used teargas and rubber bullets in order to disperse the crowd and arrests of *rolezinho* participants legitimized their criminalization. For the *rolezeiros* (participants in *rolezinhos*), they need a space to socialize, promote their songs, and meet their friends. The peripheries, however, lack the availability of public spaces, which forces them to go to malls, where they face discrimination and violent repression by the police.

Mainstream Brazilian society on the other hand, viewed *rolezeiros* as young adults who went to malls and parks to commit crimes. As a result, mainstream society felt threatened and scared by their behaviours, which revealed similar past concerns which pertained to social order and control of the behaviour of those belonging to underclasses. My interviews revealed that there was a desire to remove the kids from urban centres back to the periphery so as not to bother the elite in malls and parks in São Paulo.

The media also served to delegitimize the *rolezinho* movements, making most of Brazilian society -including members of the lower-middle-income classes – fearful of them and approve the brutal police response. The MPL, in contrast, was able to build its own narrative and seek common grounds with the rest of the working class in fighting the increase of bus welfare. In the case of the *rolezinhos*, the media played a role in feeding into the idea that *rolezinhos* were criminal acts and *rolezeiros* were vandals committing *arrastões* (invasions accompanied by robbery) in malls across the city. This idea was articulated and reinforced by the media, which legitimized the criminalization of the movement by claiming that it caused insecurity, disorder, and chaos, thus becoming the dominant narrative of Paulistanos. Unfortunately, the talk of crime pertaining to *rolezinhos* produced what Caldeira and Holston (1999) had claimed earlier about criminalizing the working class in the periphery more generally: Such criminalization not only created and articulated stereotypes and prejudices but it also reinforced *rolezeiros*' inequality in relation to other groups within society, provoked abuses from the institutions of order (the police), denied their citizenship rights, increased violence toward movement members, and reordered an undemocratic, intolerant, and inegalitarian

reality of Brazilian society. As result, the local government coopted the movement in order appease the elite and control the efforts of the movement to challenge a status quo that reflects geographical, social, and economic exclusion.

1.1.3. Thesis Outline

Following this introduction, chapter 2 provides a literature review of the historical processes of early urbanization and policing in Rio de Janeiro during slavery in the early nineteenth century all the way through the early 21st century. This chapter offers the relevant historical background and context for the contemporary study of the *rolezinhos*. This is done by discussing notions of urbanization, citizenship in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo during the late colonial period, Brazilian Monarchy, the Old Republic, and the New Republic under Getúlio Vargas, which sought to “modernize” the country. Lastly, I provide information about the ways in which national policies affected urbanization, citizenship, and policing and social control policies in urban centers, as well as relevant history of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In chapter 3, I report, analyze and recount the findings of my fieldwork in the city of São Paulo from different perspectives by providing different perceptions of the *rolezinhos*. Using Brodwyn Fischer’s theoretical framework on “a poverty of rights,” I will methodically chronicle how an unequal citizenship continues to be encountered by Brazilians in segregated spaces in the periphery of São Paulo compared to those living in more affluent neighbourhoods in the twenty-first century. In chapter 4, I provide a conclusion by recapitulating the literature, my research findings and its implications.

Chapter 2.

Social Control, Citizenship, and Inequality in Brazilian Cities: from the 18th through the 20th Centuries

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the historical processes of early urbanization and policing in Rio de Janeiro during slavery in the early nineteenth century in two parts. My goal is to understand the origins of spatial segregation and police institutions throughout the country and conceptualize efforts to control and oppress the underclass, as it happened in the case of *rolezinhos*. The first part will describe how policing was enabled by means of penal codes and criminal statutes, which defined the types of behaviours that were acceptable and those that were not. These laws served as a form of racial oppression of slaves and the free urban poor. This legal framework approved the Brazilian slavery regime through its institutions brought from Portugal. It was through the use an urban police force that the elite controlled public order in an urban context. This order was characterized for being brutal and heavily arbitrary for targeting of slaves and the free poor who were seen as acting “disorderly” at any sign of resisting the regime. Following Brazil’s independence from Portugal in 1822, these institutions did not break down but continued to mirror this behavior where oppression became regulated and organized and any efforts to resist were considered illegitimate and a threat to public order (Holloway, 1993). It is important to cover the establishment of police institutions in Rio de Janeiro since Rio was the largest city at that time, and significant in economic, administrative, and political terms. The development of police institutions in Rio de Janeiro set a pattern for the establishment of similar institutions in other smaller and large cities throughout the rest of Brazil, like São Paulo.

This same part traces the development of urban public life in the early nineteenth century in Rio. It discusses efforts to criminalize popular practices such as *Jogo do*

*Bicho*² and the “enclosure of the commons” as informal strategies to survive were curtailed not because of their immorality. Rather, this enclosure constituted early efforts to privatize public shared spaces that were previously used as strategies for survival of the urban poor (Chazkel, 2011). This case presents the theme of uneven marginalization due to privatization and the counter-claim of citizenship to reoccupy the commons by the oppressed.

The second part of chapter 2 covers social control efforts of modernization, characterized by efforts at the beautification of Rio through public health and urbanization regulation in order to attract foreign investment. Such efforts resulted in a separation, a form of spatial segregation between the city elite and lower classes that had to be relocated to distant suburbs and accrue the higher costs of having to move around the city in order to accommodate urban development projects that imitated European cities with modern facades (Meade, 1989; 1997). This segregation resulted in local collective action movements that sought to address “collective consumption” concerns.

The third and last section of this chapter moves into the twentieth century and introduces a connection between poverty and citizenship, a legacy of unequal distribution of citizenship. During the era of the New Republic under Getúlio Vargas, known as the “Father of the Poor”, political, social, and economic rights were extended to the working class, but the urban poor were still excluded. This exclusion is then connected to more modern forms of segregated urbanization which originated in the 1980’s in the forms of “fortified enclaves.” Wealthy neighbourhoods that were closed out to non-proprietors or their friends became like fortresses, which reinforced earlier forms of spatial segregation (Caldeira, 2000). The concept of “insurgent citizenship” proposed by Caldeira (2000) and Holston (2008) is then introduced in order to explain the manner in which Brazilians seek

² Jogo do Bicho is an animal lottery. It originated as a raffle at a zoo in Rio de Janeiro in 1892. During the next decade, it became a cultural phenomenon all over Brazil, where it remains popular today.

to address the inequality of citizenship in the peripheries of São Paulo, including the *rolezinhos* movement.

2.1. Urbanization, citizenship, and policing in Rio de Janeiro (1800s to 1930)

In a study analyzing the historical development of the police in Rio de Janeiro, Holloway (1993) claims that an exclusionary hierarchy was first established through three centuries of colonization by Portugal. Later, during the years of the coffee boom and state building of the nineteenth century, the political elite developed a level of internal security they thought was a reasonable compromise between smothering control and the flexibility necessary for agrarian and commercial capitalism to prosper (Holloway, 273). This analysis resonates well with the reality of the twenty-first century, as modern efforts to suppress crime, violence, and urban unrest have been initiated with the objective of attracting tourism and foreign direct investment.

The development of police in Brazil occurred under a dialectic of repression and resistance, and one whose responsibilities included public works and collective security, such as public order, surveillance of the population, investigation of crimes, and apprehension of criminals (Holloway, 1). The police force was organized along military lines and assigned with the general authority to maintain order and pursue criminals (Holloway,33). It was intended to replicate in Rio an institution in Lisbon, since the police force was formed as a separate institution prior to Brazil's formal independence with the transfer of the Portuguese Court to Brazil and the establishment of the General Intendant of the Police Court. That organization had been based on the French model that was previously introduced in Portugal in 1760, and then in Brazil in 1808 (Holloway:1, 34). Even though Holloway's study pertains to the development of police force in Rio de Janeiro, it set a precedent for the same in the rest of the country as police institutions in Florianopolis and Santa Catarina were similar to those in Rio de Janeiro (Holloway, 335). A study on the history of police institutions in São Paulo from 1820's to 1920's pays particular attention to the repressive and internal discipline of the militarized forces, and another study covering from 1880's to 1910's concludes that most police activity in São

Paulo was more concerned about social control of the poor, rather than apprehending criminals (Holloway, 335-336). Toward the poor, in general, the police used force and arbitrary arrests as a way to both intimidate and immediately punish (“correct”) target individuals who happened to be slaves, indigents, or foreigners. This form of legal ambivalence is also shown in urban development policies in both Rio and São Paulo.

In order to keep the hierarchy in place, only limited freedoms were permitted in places that were safe for a particular class. Those who had the financial resources and means wanted to use their resources without fear that an arbitrary absolutist state would unduly limit their options or confiscate their capital (Holloway, 273). At the same time, that class of people wanted a secure environment in which their activities would not be disrupted, their profit margins compromised, or their lives and property endangered (Holloway, 273). As a result, what was created in Brazil was a government based on liberal principles designed to benefit the elite. However, unlike the bourgeoisie in Europe, the neocolonial elite of independent Brazil maintained slavery for the productive base of export agriculture and continued to control the free rural lower classes through exclusion or coopting clientelism (273). Resistance in urban centers, however, presented a distinct challenge for the police in controlling the lower class.

Caldeira (2000) notes that the new institutions established during the Empire from 1822 to 1889 had ill-defined boundaries between keeping order and judicial tasks (including punishment) (146). Therefore, in the fight against crime, race and class play a prominent role; a phenomenon noted by the author as having its historical roots in the evolution of a professional police force that in the colonial period confronted the task of controlling black slaves in an urban environment (*ibid.*). Echoing the observations made by Holloway, Caldeira notes that:

In a context where slaves enjoyed a degree of freedom, anonymity, and distance from their masters, the need for efficient social control was the primary motivation for the establishment of a standing police force in Rio de Janeiro. Charged with the mandate to preserve the racial hierarchy of a slave society, the police assumed responsibility for the full procedural range of a criminal justice system. When slaves were thought to have violated a strict code of conduct (e.g., they were prohibited from wearing shoes), it was the police who apprehended, judged, and punished them. With his

description of the evolution of the police in Rio during the 19th century, Holloway illustrates how the institution and progressive institutionalization of the police forces have been associated with the use of violence and arbitrariness, which is perceived as a legacy left by 300 years of slavery (Caldeira, 142).

The development of the police force during the imperial period in Rio underwent an incomplete transition from private to public forms of control, thereby institutions supported and allowed the continuity of traditional hierarchical social structures and extended them into public spaces (Holloway, 3; Caldeira, 142). The police force in Brazil serves as an example of the continual historical processes that account for many of the characteristics of contemporary Brazil, such as a disconnection between formal law and the institutions ostensibly charged with enforcing it, and socio-cultural norms guiding individual behavior (Holloway, 3).

In the twenty-first century, the military police is still in charge of suppressing resistance to the state and reinforcing social separation (Holloway, 39). This continues from its past mission to subjugate the lower classes and maintain an acceptable level of order and calm, to enable the city to exercise its functions of meeting the interests of the elite that had made the rules and created the police to enforce them (Holloway, 37).

Chazkel (2011) notes the uncertain legal status of *jogo do bicho*, a game based on bets, which was common amongst Brazilians, but also served as a way for the lower class to generate income thorough informal means. In her study, Chazkel notes a kind of commoditized relationship existing between players, street vendors who sold the game, judges, police, and politicians, and how the power was transferred from the rural oligarchy to urban centers. This power was exerted and illustrated another form of control by the elite, as the *jogo do bicho* is but one example of many of how the livelihoods and avocations of the popular classes aroused official suspicion. Even though they directly threatened “neither life, limb, nor private property”, they were criminalized under a policy of moral hygiene that categorized practices such as street vending and gambling as crimes (17). As Chazkel notes, even samba lyrics and gambling fell outside the realm of popular culture that the ruling classes were willing to permit (250). However, the history of *jogo do bicho* also illustrates that certain individuals who committed crimes such as

selling the game, often had impunity and were seldom prosecuted despite high rates of arrest.

A connection between the criminalization of *jogo do bicho* and labor unrest also exists. Chazkel notes a campaign named “Kill the Animal,” which was launched in 1917, to illustrate the dynamics between an existing sentiment of solidarity against the violent authoritarian state repression during the first twenty years of the First Republic (*ibid.*) According to Chazkel, one of the motives for heightened repression was insecurity felt by the government following the Mexican Revolution and local protests in favor of social equality. Following the criminalization of the game in 1946, Chazkel notes that although it resulted in an increased number of police underground operations, practices related to *jogo* were already established and traditional customs dominated the legal codes. The alliance that was created between all of those actors involved in the game (lenient judges, game sellers, corrupt cops) serves as an illustration of how public life worked in Brazil. As the author explains,

In the *jogo do bicho*, ‘what’s written down counts.’ . . . For over a hundred years, these words have attested to the bonds of trust that allowed the game to function. The reliability of the game depended on the compliance of a self-policing community of individuals who together formed a business network regulated only by legally insubstantial oral contracts, promises, and customary expectations (Chazkel, 206).

Chazkel’s research is relevant to the *rolezinhos* because the *jogo do bicho* appears at the same time that the city started modernizing itself, when capitalism and urbanization started to take place. Its criminalization and the “enclosure of the commons” (public spaces) amounted to the privatization of shared spaces that the urban poor used as part of their survival strategies in the informal sector (*ibid.*, 28). This was more than simply trying to curtail gambling, but actually the criminalization of popular practices. Such criminalization can also be applied to the *rolezinhos* given that *rolezeiros* also have their own cultural practices, which involve funk music and dressing in a particular way that is not the same as those from different social strata living in the city.

Chazkel also notes that the conflict generated by the control of two resources, urban space, its enclosure, and revenue derived from the local commerce, allowed the

persecution of the game, but also his continuation. Industrialists and the state acted to enclose the spaces where petty trading would occur, yet citizens looked for work, commerce and leisure outside of that increasingly small domain (*ibid.*). Just like malls are today one of the main places for entertainment in São Paulo and *rolezeiros* struggle to find a place for entertainment, they also feel the enclosure of public spaces: being removed from malls for being private spaces, to parks, which do not have the infrastructure and investment to ideally suit them.

2.2. Urbanization and social control by the elite

Initiatives to urbanize cities in Brazil in the past also illustrate social-control efforts by the elite, and the struggle between those who were benefitting from urban reforms and those who were not. A number of urban reforms undertaken at the beginning of the twentieth century serve to show that they “...never resolved the issue of social control entirely; instead, they merely introduced a new set of antagonisms and changed the contours of the struggle between those who were benefitting from the new Rio and those who were not” (Meade 1997, 122).

A study by Meade (1997) examines the dynamics of social control through a series of reforms in sanitation, work and housing in Rio de Janeiro between 1889 and 1930 and the forms of resistance (protests and riots) that took place as the Brazilian economy grew and became heavily dependent on foreign trade. It was this economic dependence on both the export market and foreign investors that exacerbated internal class divisions (Meade 1997, 22), leading to an increased dissatisfaction and resentment of workers towards policies intended to modernize the city and benefit the wealthy elite. The author uses the protests and riots that occurred in 1893, 1904, and 1916-1917 to illustrate the social and urban problems that were provoked by the social, economic and infrastructural transformations in the city. The protests were particularly concerned with public services, the increased cost of living, a lack of job opportunities, and inadequate access to medical services (4). Again, the same happens in contemporary Brazil’s large cities, especially in São Paulo.

Similar to points made by Chazkel, Meade portrays Rio of the twentieth century as the capital of the newly formed republic, a place undergoing beautification and urban reforms to attract foreigners and their investments. But such reforms resulted in the separation between the elite from lower classes, which were relocated in *subúrbios* further from the city centre (Meade 1989:248). The city saw a high influx of European, Asian, and Arab immigrants who had worked for a few years in plantations during the post-abolition period. They decided to move to the city at the same time as free former slaves also moved to the city in search of a better life following the abolition of slavery in 1888. The city also accommodated diplomats and travellers from North America and Europe, in addition to becoming one of the first cities receiving independent commercial agents and merchants (Meade 1997, 33). As Brazil tried to demonstrate to the world that its economy was growing, Rio became crowded, unhealthy, unsafe, and lacking basic city services (33). City authorities blamed the crime increase on “insolent vagabonds” and “uncontrollable idle youngsters” who roamed around the city centre and market place areas causing business and political leaders to be alarmed by the proliferation of “vice, petty crime, vagrancy, gambling, and begging”, which was difficult to be policed to the Rio’s landscape comprising of large mountains, valleys, bays and beaches (34-36). In fact, what happened in Rio at that time was that its fast and disorganized growth made distinct social classes and races to come into close contact. In turn, this resulted in a need by the ruling class for greater vigilance, echoing ideas common in that era that a policed country is a civilized country.

According to Meade, the elite brought in “civilizing” features, such as sanitation, advanced infrastructure, safe streets, and promoted a healthy environment by addressing concerns over tuberculosis and smallpox with public health campaigns. However, a clash occurred when the interests of the elite collided with that of the working class: while the city addressed concerns over sanitation and epidemics for the elite, it did not safeguard the interests of the working poor. Innovations in policing and civilizing Rio were directed towards meeting the interests of the wealthy bourgeoisie but they marginalized the working class.

The abolition of slavery in 1888 also removed important obstacles to urbanization as former slaves performed a range of skilled and unskilled labor and were able to meet the demands of the city itself, such as the need for work at manufacturing companies. Brazil was entering a new phase of economic and political relations, and as more agricultural labor was freed, commercial and artisanal activity increased in the cities (Meade, 8). Also, urban migration caused Brazilian cities to grow, not so much as a result of increased economic activity, but because of the large numbers of rural laborers, who were former slaves who migrated to urban areas looking for work as their livelihood in the countryside could no longer be ensured and were forced to look for work elsewhere (*ibid.*).

The urbanization that took place in Brazil was thus extremely exclusionary. While the elite prospered from coffee exports and sought to strengthen its ties with Europe (primarily France and England) and enjoy the wealth brought by these ties through cultural inspiration in the form of literature, fashion, and architecture, the rest of the Brazilian population (the rural and urban working classes, the small petit bourgeoisie, and the urban poor) saw little of the new wealth and made a living by producing, buying, selling, and processing goods for the narrow domestic market (Meade, 9). These groups were also not involved in the design of the city and they also had no participation in the decisions involving urbanization. The relations between town and country, and between Brazil and the world economy affected the type of social conflicts that erupted, and provided a common thread uniting their seemingly disparate causes (*ibid.*). The result was a collective action, a “cross-class alliance” against beautification and public health plans by the Brazilian bourgeoisie and British imperialists which resulted to address problems over “collective consumption” – the fact that many had to pay more to move around the city when many were relocated from *cortiços* (a form of ghetto where rooms are rented in a place with poor sanitation and hygiene) to distant suburbs (Meade 1997, 112; 1989).

Meade’s research is relevant to the *rolezinho* movement because it traces the history of urban development which was not accidental. In fact, it was administered in way that purposefully separated the rich city elite from the poor, creating a form of

spatial segregation, and forcing the poor to be relocated to suburbs where infrastructure for the satisfaction of basic needs was scant. The riots, protests and rebellions were a result of segregation and exclusion. This is also seen in São Paulo where *rolezeiros*, mainly from suburbs and the periphery and relying primarily on public transport, have a need to reach the malls in the upper-class suburbs because this is where these seemingly public spaces are located. But their owners soon turned them into private, segregated spaces aided by the state.

2.3. Brazilian “modernization” under G. Vargas and into early 21st Century. Spatial Segregation and a Legacy of Unequal Citizenship

One of the products of urban social control is spatial segregation. It is a common characteristic of most Brazilian urban landscapes described in the studies by Weinstein (1996), Meade (1997), and Fischer (2008). The design of the Brazilian urban landscape illustrates the deep inequalities which characterize its society: while elite neighborhoods have access to modern facilities, implement renovation and conservation projects and are served by a variety of public services, the poor areas still exhibit precarious living conditions similar to those that prevailed a century earlier. Brazilian cities display the marks of their sociopolitical heritage with their squares, streets, public services, and buildings, (Fischer 2008, Holston 2008, Weinstein 1996, Meade 1997, and Caldeira 2000). But this is a legacy of inequality and unequal citizenship, where social, political, and legal reforms allowed citizenship to be expanded, but not for everyone, thereby creating a “poverty of citizenship” as theorized by Fischer (2008). Formally, citizenship is universal and inclusive under the Brazilian Constitution. However, it has elitist qualities when it comes to the benefits, especially social rights, because only a small portion of the population is able to fully enjoy them. It can thus be said that urban space in Brazil mirrors the unequal distribution of wealth, and the political and social exclusion of the lower classes.

In São Paulo, urbanization followed a similar pattern to that in Rio. From 1890s to 1940 urban space and social life in São Paulo was heterogenous and concentrated during

the coffee boom. During the period of industrialization, as new factories were built and new workers started to arrive in the city for work, demand for more housing increased. The elite and workers lived relatively close to each other, but there was social segregation thorough housing (Caldeira 2000, 215). The elite, composed of industrialists and coffee producers, and a small middle class lived in their own mansions close to Avenida Paulista, while workers lived in *casas de cômodos* (tenements) throughout the city. This pattern lead to a large concentration of people in urban areas. As it was typical in European cities during the time of industrialization, there were concerns with controlling the population, classifying and discriminating the population through the means of sanitation and health concerns, which were always associated with morality (Caldeira 2000, 216). Urbanization thus raised questions about how to organize urban space and house the poor. The elite became increasingly concerned and the government followed a pattern of policies dealing with sanitation in the state of São Paulo after the implementation of the Sanitary Code of 1894. In addition, the elite in the state tended to categorize social disorders in the city “in term of disease, filth, and promiscuity”, which were soon associated with crime (Caldeira 2000, 216).

In the 1920s and 1930s, industrialists, the federal and municipal government, the trade unions, and popular movements were all concerned with social control and sanitation, as government officials sought to widen streets and avenues, and organize the downtown area and open the city as Haussmann had done in Paris. The earliest urban legislation was the *Código de Posturas* of 1875 (Postures Code of 1875), which dealt with sanitation, natural resources, and the ordering code of public space and public behaviour (Caldeira 2000, 217). This code established standards concerning width of avenues, height of buildings, number of floors, as well as width of windows and doors, and prohibited nearly all private use of streets, which were supposed to be clear for circulation at all times. In the mid-1910s, the first laws on construction and zoning were passed, and the most significant pieces of urban legislation and intervention came in the late 1920s. For example, Municipal Law 1.874 of 1915 divided the city of São Paulo for the first time in four areas: urban, suburban, central, and rural; the Municipal Law 2,611 of 1923 established the minimum requirement for an urban lot to be that of 300 square meters. For developments larger than 40,000 square meters, developers had to be

responsible for donating areas for the construction of streets and gardens (Caldeira 2000, 402). While the first law established city limits, the second one was heavily influenced by The City of São Paulo Improvements and Free Hold Land Co., Ltd, a development company that produced the exclusive neighbourhood of *Jardins* (Gardens). This was inspired by the British Garden Cities of 1912, where the upper and middle class of São Paulo have lived since the 1920s. Similar to Rio, these early urban laws caused a separation between the central urban territory for the elite, which was ruled by special laws, and the suburban and rural areas where workers lived and the urban poor were moving to, which was mostly unregulated, and laws were not enforced.

This legal ambivalence, also seen in the development of the police force, lead to exceptions to be formulated when legislation was extended to the suburban and rural areas, thereby causing residents to build their own homes and pavements through means of self-construction (Holston 2008, 8-9; Caldeira 2000, 218; Holston 1991). Unoccupied hinterlands in suburban and rural areas became places composed of city builders who could not afford the high cost of living in urban centres anymore. These workers also did not have basic infrastructure provided by the government. They relied on the executive branch to make final decisions concerning which streets met the criteria for urban improvement and which did not because the law was left ambiguous. As a result, it perpetuated and transformed urban segregation causing São Paulo's peripheries to be developed through a mechanism of constant displacement and transformation since the 1980s.

Four factors that influenced the urbanization and further segregation in São Paulo after the 1930s. First, the *Plano de Avenidas* (plan of avenues) developed during the last mayoralty under the Old Republic which proposed the construction of large avenues to connect the center of the outskirts. This caused the demolition and remodeling of the central area and commercial zones to be enlarged and renovated thereby stimulating real-estate speculation and leading the working class to move out. The implementation of a bus system after the enlargement of avenues facilitated the poor residents to move away from the center, and the expansion of the city toward the periphery. Second was the influence of the Federation of Industries group, which was interested in the patterns of

consumption and housing of the working class in order to change them so as to reorganize space for industry expansion. The industrialists favored home ownership for the working class as housing was considered a social problem at the time and believed that the working class would have more disposable income available as their housing expenses decreased. Third was the trade union movement, which organized a series of strikes from 1910s and 1920s, and joined forces with other opposition movements to overthrow the Old Republic in 1930, as it was ruled by Paulista coffee oligarchs. Despite their success overthrowing the government, the mobilizations by working class movements and the formation of “renters leagues” (*ligas de inquilinos*) to go on rent strikes were not enough to address the housing problem (Caldeira 2000, 219). This was primarily because they were not successful in organizing collective action with other opposition movements to address such problems.

The fourth factor was the implementation of a new structure of labour management by the federal populist government of Getúlio Vargas after the revolution in 1930. This corporatist model of politics is still present in the twenty-first century and is based on the Italian Fascist model (Caldeira 2000, 219; Weinstein 1996, 281-287). Similar to the Industrialist model in the previous decades, labour officials wanted to increase home ownership among the working class so as to decrease home expenditures and even out the allocation of homeownership in order to maintain social stability. However, World War II and the remodelling of the downtown area caused a housing crisis leading the working class to live further in the periphery, where they could find cheaper and irregular housing where self-construction took place.

Chapter 3.

Unequal Citizenship, Social Protest, and Policing: The Rolezinho Movement in Early 21st Century Sao Paulo

In this chapter I outline the findings of my fieldwork. First, an introduction to the *rolezinho* movement is provided through a brief literature review on social protests in Brazil. A review of the historical process of urban segregation in São Paulo is outlined through the urban developmental characteristics of the Morumbi neighbourhood. This is relevant to the extent that a number of *rolezinhos* occurred in shopping malls located there. After this introduction, I report my findings and shed light on specific themes brought by the participants' responses that pertained to policing, political authority, distinct middle classes, mainstream media, and physical and symbolic power struggles between the ruling classes within the context of *rolezinhos* in São Paulo.

3.1. The Rolezinho Movement

My principal interest in this study was to investigate the interaction of social protest movements and societal/policing responses in an urban setting in contemporary Brazil. A new form of popular gatherings at malls organized through social media by young Brazilians called *rolezinhos* gained notoriety in local and international media. I thus chose to investigate what had evolved into the *rolezinho* movement, even though it was not entirely clear whether participants, or observers, perceived the movement as such or whether it was perceived merely as youths behaving badly and possibly dangerously.

3.2. Contemporary Urban Social Protest in Brazil

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, Meade (1997, 1989), Fisher (2008), Caldeira (2000), and Holston (2008, 1991) highlight the important social and urban transformations caused by a dissatisfaction of the masses given the numerous physical, economic and social changes that occurred in Brazil during the 20th century, and how these changes have strengthened the discrepancies between the elite, living closer to

urban centres, and the working class, which started to move further out to the peripheries. Such distance caused further discontent as working class needs for basic infrastructure and sanitation were not met by the government or their employers. The elite brought in “civilizing” features, such as sanitation, advanced infrastructure, safe streets, and promoted a healthy environment by addressing concerns over tuberculosis and smallpox with public health campaigns. However, a clash occurred when the interests of the elite collided with those of the working class: while the city addressed concerns over sanitation and epidemics for the elite, it did not safeguard the interests of the working poor.

Fischer’s study of the efforts to reform the city of Rio de Janeiro during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries traces the origin of systemic exclusion of the urban poor in Rio and how the establishment of systemic denial of access to citizenship rights prevented the extension of those rights in the future. Such exclusion perpetuated inequality and even encouraged the early growth of *favelas* (informal urban settlements) by allowing unstable shacks to stay in the hillsides. Per the building code of 1903 and the sanitary code of 1904 (36) Rio banned *favelas* from central areas and wealthier southern suburbs. The 1903 building code was the most comprehensive at that time. The code systematized and revised current legislation concerning the licensing, property preparation, and administration of all structures in Rio. It also required proof of ownership for any new construction and outlawed several residential arrangements that were common among the urban poor, such as wooden and “rural” structures in central Rio but allowed them to be built on the hills. These were uninhabited hills at that time.

The 1904 sanitary code regulated the federal health system as a whole, allowing inspection at every corner of the city and granting the right to condemn and demolish any that presented a public health concern. The code criminalized cooking in corridors and other common practices like washing clothes, which was an informal type of labor that generated income for many women at the time who lived in *cortiços*, *casas de cômodos*, and *estalagens* (guest houses) - all arrangements that the poor relied on to live in the city. These types of legal measures shaped the city for years to come, resulting in the segregation that we see today in large cities like São Paulo.

Another relevant change taking place during the Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945) administration was the extension of social and political rights through labour, social security and welfare reforms, but only for those who fit a certain category concerning formal employment. These reforms, however, were detrimental and limited the extension of the same rights to those who did not have formal jobs. This is due to the fact that new extension of rights was only applicable to those who had a signed employment card (*carteira de trabalho*), which became a requirement in 1932. Only with the card could you have access to social benefits pertaining to healthcare, pensions, and legal protection (Fischer 2008, 124-136). Citizenship “became a vessel for every imaginable hope, and its lack became the explanation for every ill” but this led to the exclusion from citizenship of all workers in the informal sectors, such as domestic and rural workers (Fischer 2008, 124-136, 306).

Such restricted citizenship in turn became a source of patron-client relations and something to be exploited by politicians through political bargains, even though those rights should have been universal. Vargas was known as the “Father of the Poor”, but he still received letters from a number of poor urban residents pleading to not be evicted. Similar to the *rolezinhos*, even though the urban youth should have access to public spaces that are safe, in good condition, and well-lit streets, they still had to appeal to the mayor for these amenities to be available so that they could be away from shopping malls. This political patronage and clientelism in turn became a source for political bargain before the elections and *rolezeiros* expressed their discontent when their concern for citizenship became politicized and a bargaining chip for the next election.

Anyone who has lived in or visited São Paulo notices that this is a highly segregated city and society due a social construction based on the fear of violence and crime that is typically fueled by mainstream media. Most residents tend to live in poor areas of the periphery under various conditions, such as in illegal or irregular homes and around urban centers that usually benefit from their labour services (e.g., drivers, maids, custodians, security staff and so on) and live mostly in poverty (Holston 2009, 245), while many build their own homes by means of *autoconstrução*, or “self-construction”.

The case of the *rolezinhos*, which illustrates how urbanization and democracy are extremely interrelated transformations, can be characterized by what Holston (2008, 2009) conceptualizes as an “insurgent citizenship.” Youth from the peripheries of São Paulo organized *rolezinhos* to confront the dominant form of citizen inequality that the urban centers in São Paulo have implemented to segregate them. The youth engaged in *rolezinhos* by occupying these centers’ spaces in malls in urban centers and public parks as well as by demanding their right to occupy such urban spaces. They circulated through malls in large numbers while ostentatiously singing funk songs—a cultural production prevalent in the peripheries that is somewhat related to rap in the United States (Caldeira 2015, 135). By simply attempting to circulate, however, the youth were met with police repression, discrimination, marginalization, and criminalization in an effort to control their actions and reestablish the dominant order in urban centers. This repressive response pattern goes back to the origin of Brazilian police institutions, where Afrodiscendents and the urban poor were the primary targets of police beatings, and one of the primary criteria for arrest (apart from *flagrante delicto*, caught in the act) was if the person was black.

Social and spatial segregation is an important feature of Brazilian cities (Caldeira 2000; Holston 1999, 2008, 2009). Yet they are still places where people from different social classes “mingle, however reluctantly and agonistically, to produce a common, if perpetually changing and transitory life” (Harvey 2012, 67). Cities have been the places for citizenship’s—however unequal—expansion, as noted in Brodwyn Fisher’s *A Poverty of Rights: Citizenship and Inequality in the Twentieth Century Rio de Janeiro*. Similarly, in the presence of deep inequality, the modern peripheral urbanization generates particularly volatile conditions wherein marginalized citizens and noncitizens contest their exclusion and claim their urban citizenship (Holston 2009, 246).

3.3. São Paulo, a segregated city: The case of Morumbi and its malls

Morumbi, the neighborhood where I lived until I was sixteen years old, is one wherein *rolezinhos* took place in three nearby malls and where I conducted most of my interviews for this study. This upper-class neighborhood clearly illustrates what Caldeira

(1999, 2000) refers to as “fortified enclaves” that usually have high walls, increased monitoring, and interconnected security but also a labor supply that originates from either the nearby *favelas* (Paraisópolis, Peinha, and Santo Antônio) or the peripheries (Grajau, Penha, Campo Limpo, Capão Redondo). More interestingly, Morumbi also illustrates “the new face of social segregation” after fifteen years of intensive real estate development to accommodate the upper class, combined with hazardous infrastructures due to the proliferation of *favelas* (Caldeira 2010, 246; Gohn 2010). Remarkably, the real estate development or occupation of Morumbi led to a chaotic space situation due to scarce planning or state control (Caldeira 2010, 246), thus resulting in an area where *favelas* grew, and upper-class properties were simultaneously developed (Gohn 2010, 269). A large number of my research participants live in Morumbi, Panamby or Campo Limpo nearby, where one mall was reported to have experienced at least two occurrences of *rolezinhos*. Another mall where *rolezinhos* were held was in Shopping Campo Limpo, located in the less privileged neighborhood near Campo Limpo.

Although separated by what Caldeira (1999) calls “status symbols and instruments of social separation,” many residents in the peripheries face the same public safety challenges as higher-income residents (118). The main difference is that one part of the city receives more support than others, which Holston (2014, 2008) attributes to urban policies enacted between 1930 and 1970. These policies shaped the development of urban peripheries and the institutionalization of social rights based on cheap urban labor provision. They consolidated a segregation pattern among Brazilian cities and “modernized the already different citizenship of Brazilians” (Holston 2008 146). For David Harvey (2013, 15), this discrepancy is attributed to neoliberal policies from the 1980s that polarized the distribution of wealth and power and are reflected in urban spaces, thereby creating a city of “fortified fragments...gated communities and privatized public spaces kept under constant surveillance.” Such urban distribution extends to private schools, hospitals, clubs, and malls (Shopping Morumbi and Jardim Sul) that differ from those in the peripheries.

Shopping Jardim Sul is a luxurious mall that meets the demand of those living in upper-class buildings in Panamby, Morumbi, and Vila Andrede (Gohn 2010,

269). In the neighborhoods of Morumbi and Real Parque, for example, there exist luxurious condominiums and exclusive private schools near Giovanni Gronchi Avenue, which is the same place where Paraisópolis—the city’s second largest favela—is located (Gohn 2010, 273). The Panamby neighborhood was developed most recently, and a new division of Colegio Porto Seguro was built to meet the demand of this growing neighborhood. However, a new road called Hebe Camargo Avenue—which is supposed to connect distinct areas—was built, cutting right through Paraisópolis. Many passersby avoid using this road in the evenings due to their fear of kidnappings and other forms of crime that have been reported. A road known to go through favela Santo Antônio was built nearby, but middle- and upper-class residents refrain from using it due to concerns about crime. As Caldeira (2010: 244) notes:

Morumbi and Vila Andrade had significant population growth in the 1980s. Although Morumbi had been an upper-class neighbourhood for at least twenty-five years after the 1980s, it changed radically. What used to be a neighbourhood of immense mansions, vacant lots, and green areas is being transformed, after a decade of frenetic construction, into a forest of high-rises. In the late 1970s, it was “discovered” by developers, who decided to take advantage of its cheap land and favourable zoning code and transformed it into the fastest growing neighbourhood in the city during the 1980s and 1990s . . . Vila Andrade, adjacent to Morumbi, is an expansion of the same process in a place that used to be poorer but has continued to expand as Morumbi seemed to lose its dynamism in the last few years.

This quote highlights how Morumbi serves as an example of a contradictory and highly segregated neighborhood. On one hand are closed condominiums such as the Portal do Morumbi, a complex of 16 25-story block buildings with all the infrastructure one needs; on the other hand is favela do Paraisópolis—the second largest favela in São Paulo, fifth largest in Brazil, and fourth largest in Latin America (Gohn 2010)—which supplies domestic servants for the neighborhood (Caldeira 2010) and houses a number of *rolezeiros*. *Rolezeiros* feel this segregation, as reflected by two security guards from Shopping Jardim Sul:

Listen, this is a mall that serves most of [the] residents of Morumbi and Panamby. This is an exclusive mall; we cannot deny entry, but they cannot come here playing loud music or making a mess. It was alright when the kids from the middle class were doing it, but then, if you have people from Paraisópolis or Santo Antônio then, it scares the customers, the shop owners. It intimidates them, and many prefer

to just leave the mall; then, what if they rob one of the stores here? (Ivan, 34 years old, Capão Redondo)

When asked what kind of “mess” these individuals make, he replied:

They come to the food court, start messing around, speaking loudly...you know, making baderna [turmoil] ...I don't know if you're aware, but one of the stores was robbed at gunpoint in broad daylight, so was HSBC [Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation]. So, we have to keep on the lookout. Some are kids, but some are not. The minute it starts to cause disturbance to customers, intimidating others...we need to talk to them, and if necessary, we call reforço [reinforcements].

Reforço (reinforcement) is a word security guards use when they talk about calling the police. When asked how these individuals intimidate other shoppers, the security guard replied:

I don't mean to sound preconceituoso [prejudiced] against them, but they come here wearing flip flops, shorts, talking loudly, singing, playing funk music on their phones, and we don't know if they are armed. Then, what's next? Sometimes they come well-dressed too, like funkeiros, but we are never sure who is who and what they are going to do, so we must do everything to protect the customers.

On that day, I noticed something I had never witnessed before at Shopping Jardim Sul: police SUVs were parked at the main entrance, which is where they now stay until the mall closes. The same has been observed at Shopping Morumbi's main entrance facing Berrini Avenue, where several buildings from multinational corporations are located and where the exit from the train system that connects Campo Limpo to Itaim-Bibi is visible.

The statements from security guards regarding their concerns about crime reflect a trend wherein crime in São Paulo has increased since the 1980s. During this time, crime and violence became a concern in the city and shaped the current built environment and social dynamics (Caldeira 2015, 135). This growing crime trend led the city to become further enclaved by its residents, who preferred to retreat to securitized spaces (e.g., their homes and malls) and treat the public as rejects. While some residents hid behind their walls, however, the periphery's youth transformed their experiences of circulating through the city due to the rise of a number of cultural productions and interventions in urban spaces through hip-hop songs, tagging, and graffiti, among other methods. As of 2019, one way through which the periphery's youth expresses themselves is “ostentation

funk,” a hallmark of *rolezeiros*. In this music, consumption is highly glamorized and police violence is criticized.

Since the late 1990s, poor young men from the periphery have experienced improvements in their income due to conditional cash transfers implemented by the Labour Party (PT) from 2002 to 2016 (e.g., Bolsa Familia) and increased remuneration through manual labor. But racial inequalities have not been affected, “as African Brazilians continue to be amongst the poorest, the least educated, and the most discriminated against social group” (Caldeira 2015, 130). In addition, African Brazilians and working classes from the periphery are the main targets of police discrimination, abuse, and killings (Caldeira 2015, 135; 2000, 139). Another guard also claimed that:

The problem got worse when we started having them coming from the periphery nearby Campo Limpo and Capão Redondo because they bring alcohol and drugs. They don't consume them inside the mall, they do it outside, but then they would be either drunk or high, singing [and] speaking loudly, and this is a private property; you cannot do that. Rolezeiros sing, scream, dance, and it bothers those who must work, and in order for this place to generate profit, we need customers. Customers complain, and we can't sell if the customers don't want to come to be bothered by noise, too. We lose customers (Wilson, 28, Jardim Angela).

To roam free and walk around the streets is a practice strongly associated with modern cities. Even if it constitutes a real experience or a myth, circulation on the streets has been strongly regulated in Brazil (Caldeira 2014; Chazkel 2011). As noted in Chazkel's (2011, 10) study on the making of Brazilian urban life, urbanization involved regulation and privatization. Brazil went through an “enclosure of the commons” process during Rio's beautification and the privatization of the commons, “and [the] monetization of public life in Rio around this time extended to many dimensions of people's daily lives.” In the case of *rolezinhos*, we observe an encroachment of shared spaces that were previously reserved for leisure. The mall is where most Brazilians go to enjoy themselves, and *rolezinhos* at malls reveal significant changes in the city and its public sphere within the highly inequitable class dynamic (Caldeira 2014, 14). As of 2019, the enclosure of the commons—combined with the city's high crime rates—is experienced by the population, several of whom prefer to visit malls rather than open spaces:

They are gentinha [Portuguese slang meaning someone from the lower class, in reference to rolezeiros], and we get scared. We can't walk around the city anymore. If the city is not safe, and we feel unsafe even inside the malls, then what can we do? (Pillar, 56, Panamby).

The malls provide more security these days. We used to go shopping on the street, and now we can't anymore. We used to go to Ipiranga in the 1990s, we used to have easy access then, but afterwards it was downhill. Now those people invade the malls, causing everyone to get scared, and the store closes (Veronica, 48, Morumbi).

Where can I go if not to the mall? Did you hear they just bust into a restaurant, and robbed everyone at a Japanese place here in the South Zone? Now there are these rolezinhos at the malls, and we get scared (Arlette, 56, Real Parque).

At another mall located in upper-class neighborhood Itaim-Bibi, Shopping Morumbi, I had the opportunity to interview shop owners who were not happy but were nevertheless forthcoming when discussing the subject. They claimed they could not discriminate against *rolezinhos*, but customers tend to leave the mall if it becomes filled with loud kids making *baderna*, as most people visit the mall to relax and shop. If the store cannot contain these kids, then the shopkeepers call security, and if security is not able to handle them, then they call the police. When I asked whether or not the *rolezeiros* purchased anything during their visit, one shop owner exhibited a bit of repugnance and distaste, claiming “*no, they don't want to buy anything, and our fear is that they will end up robbing the stores as they did at other malls.*” Furthermore, the media contributes to this narrative of fear, discrimination, and the further criminalization of the *rolezinhos*.

3.4. Findings

In this last section I report the main findings of my fieldwork pertaining to police, political authority, distinct middle classes, mainstream media, and physical and symbolic power struggles between the social classes. I highlight my findings by briefly linking earlier historical processes that are relevant to the areas mentioned above.

3.4.1. Criminalizing the *Rolezinhos*: Police, Marginality, Discrimination and the role of mainstream media

According to Caldeira (2014, 13), since primordial times, walking around the city—especially in groups of young men—with no particular objective (e.g., taking a stroll or going for a “roll”) is an activity that ends up being scrutinized unless the protagonists belong to a privileged group. This scrutiny is also noted by Holloway (1993, 277), whose study traces the institution building of the Rio police, wherein the elite preemptively controlled public order and oppressed the urban poor to eliminate actions that were deemed disruptive or disorderly. This control and oppression were thoroughly illustrated by security guards, customers, and mall shopkeepers regarding the (primarily male) *rolezinhos*, as their presence in private and public spaces caused these individuals unease. My first finding concerns the elite and ruling classes’ fear of chaos and crime, and overall disorder in places of forced homogeneity, such as shopping malls, due to the disproportionate response of the police. It was the elite reaction against *rolezinhos* that brought to surface the culture of fear and social segregation that underlies Brazilian society, the creation of spaces of forced homogeneity (such as malls), where there is a fear of disorder, and the urban poor are not welcome.

These practices of going for a stroll in large numbers typically generate apprehension because they are perceived as causing “disorder” and often attract the police. The *rolezinho* phenomenon also helps illustrate what Caldeira (2000: 19-21) refers to as “the talk of crime.” Throughout my interviews, it became clear that those who did not participate in the movement articulated and reinforced the criminalization of *rolezeiros* by calling them “marginals” or “vagabonds,” and the root of such stereotypes is often found in neighborhoods, local malls, and parks in which urban violence tends to occur. As noted by Caldeira and Holson (1999: 695):

With the increase in criminal and police violence, public space in many cities has become characterized by muggings, assaults of various kinds, shootings, drug trafficking and addiction, violence in traffic, and a general scofflaw attitude. Violence of one sort or another is a common experience of daily life. As a result, a culture of fear and suspicion has taken root, giving support to extraordinary and often extra-legal measures for dealing with violence.

Such approach has applied in the case of the *rolezinhos*, which are perceived as a potential threat for crime. As noted by Caldeira (2000) and Caldeira and Holston (1999), São Paulo citizens tend to construct questionable and incomplete narratives to cope with and try to understand everyday violence and socioeconomic inequality. Due to the increase of violent crimes in the daily lives of these São Paulo residents, the “talk of crime” emerged, which includes “a proliferation of everyday narratives, commentaries, and even jokes that have crime as their subject” (Caldeira 2000: 19–20; Caldeira and Holston 1999: 698). This talk helps produce and proliferate stereotypes (by, for instance, comparing the *rolezinhos* to criminal acts), formulate opinions, and shape perceptions that are typically fueled by the mainstream media. The “talk of crime”:

bestow[s] a specific type of knowledge...[It] attempt[s] to establish order in a universe that seems to have lost coherence. Amid the chaotic feelings associated with the spread of random violence in the city space, these narratives attempt to reestablish order and meaning. Contrary to the experience of crime, which disrupts meaning and disorders the world, the “talk of crime” symbolically reorders it by trying to reestablish a static picture of the world (Caldeira 2000: 20).

When covering the *rolezinhos*, the media played a role in feeding into the idea that *rolezinhos* were criminal acts and *rolezeiros* were vandals committing *arrastões* in malls across the city. This idea was articulated and reinforced by the media, which legitimized the criminalization of *rolezinhos* by claiming that they caused “insecurity, disorder, and chaos” (Poets 2015, 187), thus becoming the dominant narrative of Paulistanos. Pinheiro-Machado (2014) mentioned the media’s negative coverage of the *rolezinhos*, citing as an example a blogger³ of *Veja*, one of the most widely read

³ Rodrigo Constantino was a blogger of *Veja* magazine from 2013 to 2015, and well known for his conservative and neoliberal inclinations. As of December 2019, he’s a political commentator for Radio Jovem Pan, a radio station based in Sao Paulo and one of the largest Latin America radio stations network.

conservative media outlets in Brazil. In Constantino's (2014) column⁴, which was at the time accessed by millions of readers, he claims that a *rolezinho* is an *arrastão*— an “invasion” combined with robbery of private property, “delinquency,” “a product of poors’ envy,” “savages who envy the consumption of civilization”—and that *rolezeiros* are “barbarians unable to recognize their own inferiority and envy the rich youth, others’ wealth and educated people” (Constantino cited in Pinheiro-Machado 2014: 12). This narrative concerning *arrastão*, the invasion of malls, and the *rolezeiro*'s criminal role was later voiced in many of my interviews—even by those from the working class who support violent police repression, thereby enforcing ideas of homogeneity that had been created by the ruling classes, or the so-called elite.

Francileide (Fran), one of the residents I interviewed from Paraisópolis, was perhaps one of the most interesting and fruitful research participants, as she highlighted themes related to crime, violence, and marginality. She is a full-time maid who has worked for the same family for more than ten years. During our long conversation about *rolezinhos*, *cafezinho* (coffee), and *pao de queijo* (delicious Brazilian cheese bread), we ended up touching upon many topics, one of which was the “myth of marginality,” wherein Perlman (1976; 2010; 148) concludes that *favelados* are not marginals, but are rather inevitably integrated into society in a however “asymmetrical” and self-detrimental manner that exploits them. Fran is neither separate from nor within the system's margins; she pays income taxes, accesses healthcare, uses public transportation, and is quite aware of the country's political situation. According to Fran, “*politicians...they come to the community during the elections, kiss us, but after the elections?! They disappear.*” As Perlman (1976) points out, Fran is entirely aware of the discrimination residents from the

⁴ After his tenure at *Veja* ended in 2015, all of his posts were deleted; however, as of December 2019, the same post can be accessed at his *Gazeta do Povo* blog at <https://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/rodrigo-constantino/artigos/o-rolezinho-da-inveja-ou-a-barbarie-se-protege-sob-o-manto-do-preconceito/>

favela face, and she reveals where she lives to very few people. Her sons also have difficulty accessing youth programs because of where they live.

When asked if she had heard about *rolezinhos*, Fran loudly asserted “*Ah yes, we don’t call it rolezinho, that’s arrastão! They make a mess and carry everything they see in front of them. My younger son wanted to participate in that, but I did not allow him.*” She was not the only one to refer to a rolezinho as arrastão, which is a common practice of conducting massive robberies with a large number of criminals within one location. The first arrastão occurred in the 1990s, which gave origin to its name and caused panic among those living in Rio Janeiro and beachgoers alike (*O Globo* 2013). The first of its kind was covered on October 28, 1999 by *O Globo*, one of Brazil’s newspapers with the largest circulation, under the headline “Ratos de praia fazem arrastão e trocam tiros em Ipanema” (translation: “Beach rats conduct arrastão and exchange bullets in Ipanema”). This practice later became common in tunnels, luxury neighborhoods with open-air street restaurants, and—later—malls. Several—if not all—interviewees claimed that their biggest fear associated with a rolezinho at a mall is the possibility of the situation turning into an arrastão if the participating kids were to make *arruaça* (a riot) or baderna.

Fran described what happened and how she reacted during a rolezinho at Shopping Campo Limpo:

I saw it on the paper and on TV that a lot of kids lacking judgement go to the mall, drunk, drugged, steal, cause a mess and steal things, a lot of insecurity and apprehension to others. And those who are not involved are the ones negatively impacted by it...the cops were there and beat some of the kids because they can’t just go up to them and say “my son, don’t do that,” so the police reacted and had to throw nitrogen bombs. They don’t obey, they don’t listen to us, you can’t arrest them, can’t go to jail. But teens steal, they kill, what are you going to do?

Without even asking, Fran described her own fear of potentially witnessing a rolezinho:

I don’t like to see anyone hurt and getting hurt, I see a lot in the favela. Even because there’s no other way, the police beats and beats harshly using cacete [club] because they won’t obey. There is no other way.

When asked how exactly the police officers reacted toward the rolezeiros at the mall, she said: “*they were trying to do their job, to contain the kids. Some said that they shouldn’t*

have done that, but I've seen what teenagers can do; they can be dangerous, they can be terrible...no one controls them."

Other interviewees articulated the same fear, claiming they were afraid of *rolezinhos* and would leave the mall if they were to witness one. Others referred to *rolezeiros* as vandals and unemployed vagabonds:

I would fear if they were at the mall. They're taking the spaces of others, we are there at the mall to shop, and then all of a sudden, we see a bunch of young people, and dressed up like MCs⁵, all this mess...we get scared and leave. The mall is a place to work and shop, and they're there for what? To walk around and piss the other people off? Then I don't think it's right.

*They claim that they do not have a place for entertainment where they live in the suburbs. But the malls are not a place for the kind of entertainment they want. It causes disorder, it's messy, they don't go there to have fun. I think it's incorrect . . . It's a way the *rolezeiros* found to react to the situation they face.*

As is exemplified above, the talk of crime regarding *rolezinhos* produces a repetitive narrative, and due to fear and violence, the interviewees reiterate and circulate this discourse to make sense of what they do not quite understand (Caldeira 2000, 19; Caldeira & Holston 1999, 698). By attempting to establish order, this talk of crime consequently provokes fear and produces stereotypes and prejudice (Caldeira 2000, 19; Caldeira & Holston 1999, 698). *Rolezeiros'* actions are considered *arrastão* (vandalism and robbery), which provokes fear in shoppers. Some of my interviewees feared that the severe commotion at malls might result in them being stepped over. As a result, this reordering of the world also proliferates violence (Caldeira 2000, 20; Caldeira and Holston 1999, 698). The police try to repress *rolezinhos* and by doing so abuse their authority, which will be demonstrated in the second half of this chapter. This discussion excludes the majority of those involved in the *rolezinho*—that is, the *rolezeiros*—by stereotyping and discriminating them and thereby reinforcing the inequalities between the social groups in the city. The only productive result of criminalizing *rolezinhos* has been further spatial and social segregation.

⁵ An MC is a term originated in the late 1970's to refer to a rapper and their work within hip hop music and culture. It is a short form of "Master of Ceremonies". MCs in Brazil have gained notoriety by publishing their songs on YouTube.

Holloway (1993, 1989) asserts that the Brazilian police was developed under a dialectic of repression and resistance of a state that aims to maintain public order and the safety of a particular class via repression and brutal punishment for correctional purposes. The police did so by applying a definition for who was good and who was bad (who was a criminal and who was not, who was considered a threat and who was not) on the streets; for example, they punished those who practiced *capoeira*—a form of martial art of resistance used by enslaved people that was a constant threat to “public tranquility” (similarly to *rolezinhos*).

Four interviewees who witnessed *rolezinhos* being held at Guarapiranga Park and Villa Lobos Park approved the violent police interventions that followed:

We were at the park on a Sunday, and then we saw these poor people, acephalous, half lucid, playing loud music, making algazarra [uproar]. Then the police came, telling them to stop, and beating some of them up. And you know what, they have to beat the crap out of them. They rob, steal, and God knows what else. What if it becomes an arrastão? They must learn that you cannot do that at a park. If their objective was actually to socialize...it would be maximum 20 people, playing sports, disc, things of that sort. But when you come to the park in a group of 100 people, it's to make baderna, muvuca [mishmash].

Again, “the talk of crime” is the discourse on crime that relies on the media’s propaganda in which “fear and violence, difficult things to make sense of, cause a discourse to proliferate and propagate” (Caldeira 2000, 19). This condition becomes evident when comparing *rolezinhos* with *arrastão*:

I don't see any objective to this. They go there to do the same that they do at funk clubs: meet girls, play loud music. The girls are barely wearing anything, and the guys are wearing those funkeiros clothes, Oakley sunglasses, Hollister shirts that are probably fake. This is what I saw. But in terms of objective and goal to this, I see none. This is what I read. And this is actually what revolted me. The problem is not to make muvuca, that's fine, it disperses later on. My problem is when they go to the mall to do arrastão. Not everyone who has a store at the malls has money, and then these guys come to rob their stores. This is worthy of revolt. (Diego, 26, Panamby)

Unfortunately, the talk of crime pertaining to *rolezinhos* produced what Caldeira and Holston (1999) claimed; in other words, it not only created and articulated stereotypes and prejudices, it also reinforced *rolezeiros*’ inequality related to other groups within society, provoked abuses from the institutions of order (the police), denied their

citizenship rights, increased violence toward movement members, and reordered an undemocratic, intolerant, and inequalitarian reality.

I was interviewing a woman as she waited for her bus in Campo Limpo when her young daughter interjected once she noticed we were talking about the *rolezinhos*, asserting that:

Rolezinho is nothing more than a bunch of vandals going to malls and parks. I was at the Shopping Santo Amaro once when that happened, and they ruined my day there because they were not allowing unaccompanied minors to go in. The security staff was rude to us, too, because they thought we were with them. All security guards were around the mall, barring people from coming in, and asking for their IDs. I was with my sister who is of legal age, but they did not allow us to go inside; only if we were with our parents.

Her mother then mentioned that she went to Shopping Campo Limpo once to pay her bills, only to find the mall closed:

I went to Shopping Campo Limpo to pay my bills and the doors were closed and several security guards [were] around it. The police were there too, and the kids were running from them, crossing the street mid traffic, disturbing traffic. I don't know, they were probably afraid of the police because there were other kids being beaten and some put against the wall.

The daughter then interjected again:

They want to cause chaos. They scream, shout, sing, right in the middle of the mall. I don't think they want to have fun, they want to cause a furor, and by doing so they make everyone else angry. And they also do a lot of wrongful things.

When I asked what those “wrongful things” were, the daughter replied that she had heard of many kids who participated in *rolezinho* by vandalizing, stealing, and fighting with others, some of whom had been arrested for doing so. She then concluded “*they want to show off, you know? Show that they can do what they are doing by wearing all those branded clothes and thick golden necklaces.*”

The periphery culture is a characteristic of *rolezeiros*, as noted by Pinheiro-Machado (2014, 2012) and Caldeira (2015). *Rolezeiros* may also be characterized as “everyday forms of resistance,” as theorized by James Scott (1990, 1989, 1985). “Everyday forms of resistance” are defined as those that are not as dramatic or visible as

protests, strikes, or riots in the context of direct confrontation; rather, they are what Scott (1985) refers to as “infrapolitics,” or methods of everyday resistance that go unnoticed, such as foot-dragging, feigned ignorance, flight, or folk songs (Scott 1990, 183, 188; 1985). In the case of *rolezinhos*, these methods relate to the periphery culture, which went unnoticed until it bothered mall shoppers and park goers in urban centers. However, these forms of everyday resistance have existed in the periphery for years and are articulated in the form of consumption. Similar to folk songs, which Scott (1989, 1985) claims to be a form of everyday resistance, *rolezeiros* have ostentation funk (*funk ostentação*)—a version of rap. Brazilian rap is a critique of city inequalities and their ambivalent relationship with consumption (Caldeira 2015, 135). On the other hand, ostentatious funk praises cars, money, and expensive brands at purposely exacerbated levels, thereby denying previous roles associated with poverty, destitution, absence, and scarcity (Pinheiro-Machado 2014, 7; 2012). This music style emerged due to an increase in individual income to celebrate exaggerated consumption (Caldeira 2015: 135). Thus, it is not surprising that *rolezinhos* were initially held at malls – the very temples of consumption. When asked if she had heard about *rolezinhos*, another interviewee responded:

From what I've heard and read, it's just a bunch of kids who have nothing else to do, so they set up these meetings online, wanting to meet people and destroy the public patrimony. I've read that there was an arrastão as well. (Bia, 24, Guarapiranga)

Another interviewee expressed a similar view:

Oh yeah, those young people going to the malls and breaking everything. I saw it more on TV, and they organize themselves through social media to meet at the malls, but there are always three or four members who want to cause disorder, even though that may not have been the objective. Even stealing cars in parking lots and robbing shoppers, mainly in North and East Zones. (Mario, 43, Riviera Paulista)

3.4.2. A Struggle for Physical Space: Lack of access to public spaces in São Paulo

I asked all my interviewees if they knew of another place where *rolezeiros* might visit as an alternative to a private mall. Although Burle Marx Park is available as an open

area for public leisure, those from the lower-class refrain from attending due to their fear of catching police attention. Fran asserted that “*it’s complicated because there aren’t many options for them and that they are also undisciplined.*” According to Fran, “*the world has made them crazy, only thinking about sex, drugs, and alcohol,*” but she later elaborated that there is no place in the favelas for the youth to play sports and prevent them from becoming *maginais* (marginals). She expressed that, if a place opens for kids to play sports, “*whoever has more will access more.*” Fran tried to register her son in a soccer school, and when he was not selected, Fran felt he had been rejected because he lived in Paraisópolis—on the “inside.” She expressed that those from the “outside”—meaning those living in higher-income neighborhoods, who possessed the financial means to pay for such a school, ended up being selected over students such as her son:

If a space opens, the kids from the favelas will have less access to it. They will give it to someone from a better place [i.e., a higher-income neighbourhood] because...you know the discrimination we face here. And we face a lot of discrimination, even though we pay taxes. We pay taxes for someone better [i.e., wealthier] to have access to something that we desperately need. It has to be equal for everyone—a place where there is sport, dance, music, anything. “You like to do this? We have it.” I think that would be good. A lot of times we see good kids fall into marginality, get beaten up and killed by the police because of lack of opportunity. It’s a complicated subjected, my daughter, and [this kind of discrimination] happens every day.

Another interviewee noted “*the periphery is forgotten by the government; it lacks public transportation and parks, so they come closer to the center.*” Paulistanos refrain from working there because “*there isn’t proper infrastructure, and crime is even worse than [in the center],*” to which he added “*I prefer to work here than there.*” This statement sheds light onto what Holston (2014) observed during the 2013 street protests in Brazil that pointed to “*the segregation between the center and the periphery,*” where those from urban centers in São Paulo did not experience socialization with those from the periphery but rather “*suffer[ed] its violence, endure[d] its infrastructure, or...[understood] its life conditions*” except when it is imposed or commercialized. In the case of rolezinhos, their demands were imposed on the upper-class, who considered it an invasion of their space (891).

3.4.3. Political authority

The rolezeiros perspective

Before conducting this fieldwork, São Paulo City Hall had approved two official *rolezinhos* in public spaces, outside of malls. The first *rolezinho* was scheduled at Praça Morcegão (Morcegão Square) in the periphery of Penha nearby Itaquera, and the second was scheduled at Ibirapuera Park, in the heart of São Paulo. The movement's association, titled "Rolezinho, the Voice of Brazil," was founded in January 2014 by Darlan Mendes and Ricardo Sucesso after all the *rolezinhos* were held between mid-2013 and early 2014. During our first interview in September 2014, then-president of the association Darlan Mendes defined the *rolezinho* as "*a meeting amongst the youth via social media, especially Facebook, so that they can hang out, have fun, and meet MCs or pretty girls that they started to follow online.*" He articulated one form of James Scott's (1990, 1989, 1985) everyday resistance that would have gone unnoticed had it not attracted thousands of people. The result was an "insurgent citizenship" (Holston 2009, 2008), as the negative coverage of the media and police oppression produced a demand for their space and a claim for their equal citizenship.

According to Mendes, "*our first meeting at Itaquera Mall was [held] there because we were looking for a place that provides safety and infrastructure, but we had no idea that so many people were going to show up.*" He stated that, due to police repression and brutality, negative media coverage, complaints from mall administrations (and the risk of having to pay a hefty fine of 10,000 reais for conducting *rolezinhos* inside malls or parking lots), as well as complaints from customers and shop owners, the local government approached the *rolezeiros* to understand what was going on. Thereafter, a dialogue was initiated to "*tirar os jovens dos shoppings e parques*" (translation: "remove the youth from the malls and parks") and take them back to their communities "*in an organized fashion and with governmental infrastructure, as well as by taking social actions to address social problems like the use of lança-perfume,⁶ marijuana, alcohol*

⁶ Lança-perfume is a drug typically used during carnival parties. It is inhaled from a high-pressure tube and primarily contains ethyl chloride enhanced by a strong perfume scent.

consumption by minors, and STDs.” The *rolezinhos* organized by the association with funds provided by São Paulo City Hall are called “Rolezinhos da Cidadania” (Citizenship Rolezinhos) and are referred to as *rolezinhos organizado* (organized rolezinhos). The Secretaria Municipal de Promoção da Igualdade Racial (SMPIR; Municipal Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality) was responsible for mediating this process between the association and São Paulo City Hall, which also provided heavy public security for the events alongside Serviço de Atendimento Móvel de Urgência (SAMU; Mobile Emergency Care Service).

The organized rolezinho is additionally supported by the following entities: Secretaria de Governo do Município (SGM; City Government Secretariat); Secretaria do Verde e Meio Ambiente (SVM; Secretariat of Green Environment); Secretaria Municipal de Direitos Humanos e Cidadania (SMDHC; Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship); Secretaria Municipal de Coordenação as Subprefeituras (SMSP; Municipal Secretariat of Coordination of the Subprefectures); Secretaria de Segurança Urbana (SSU; Secretariat of Urban Security); Secretaria Municipal de Esporte, Lazer, e Recreação (SEME; Municipal Secretariat of Sports, Leisure, and Recreation); Secretaria Municipal de Cultura (SMC; Municipal Secretariat of Culture), and Companhia de Engenharia e Tráfego (CET; Company of Engineering and Traffic).

The first organized rolezinho was held at Ibirapuera Park on February 15, 2014, accompanied by the strong reinforcement of 58 Guarda Civil Metropolitanos (GCM; civil municipal guard) and another 25 agents. The second Rolezinho da Cidadania was a form of “Rolezinho Movel” (Mobile Rolezinho) on March 30, 2014, held at Praça Morcegão (Morcegão Square) at Companhia Metropolitana Habitacional (Cohab) 1 in the periphery of Penha. Cohab comprises apartments built for the working classes that have been

It offers users a euphoric, short-lived rush and heart palpitations. The chemical was at one time applied as an anesthetic, but its use declined due to users’ risk of arrhythmia. Presently, ethyl chloride remains in legal circulation as an industrial thickening agent and binder.

offered by a state agency since 1965. They are usually associated with high crime and drug use, are extremely devalued, and are located in the eastern and poorest periphery (Caldeira 2000, 284), as is the case of Cohab 1. This authorized *rolezinho*, which attracted four thousand attendees, was reinforced by the presence of the military police and the *Guarda Civil Municipal* (GCM; Civil Municipal Guarda).

Here, I make a distinction between two types of *rolezinhos*: unofficial and organized or authorized. Unofficial *rolezinhos* are informal and unrelated to “Rolezinho, the Voice of Brazil,” while official *rolezinhos* are formally organized with São Paulo City Hall and directly related to the movement. I had the opportunity to attend two *rolezinhos* at parks (one of which was unofficial, the other organized) and two at Itaquera Mall (unofficial), the second of which drew more attention from public security. Caldeira (2000) notes that “the few major parks in the city are used in quite a democratic way,” but the *rolezeiros* did encounter difficulties at Ibirapuera Park (320). A park located in the city periphery, such as Bosque Maia, tends to be most frequently visited by working-class individuals, while parks such as Ibirapuera and Burle Marx, both located in rich neighborhoods, are visited by individuals of all social classes (Caldeira 2000, 320). These fenced parks are some of the few remaining green areas of the city that have been appropriated in the last few years by weekend visitors who jog, bicycle, rollerblade, or just enjoy being outside (Caldeira 2000, 320). Areas such as these remain scarce in São Paulo among all classes and are particularly scarce in periphery neighborhoods.

Unofficial rolezinho: Recanto Municipal da Árvore – Bosque Maia (Forest/Park Maia).

Bosque Maia is located in the greater region of São Paulo, in the municipality of Guarulhos. I visited the location on a Saturday, and the drive took approximately one hour from Morumbi by car. Bosque Maia is the largest urban park in Guarulhos, accounting for more than 100 thousand square meters. It is home to four multisport courts, bicycle paths, trails, gym apparatuses, two playgrounds, and an area reserved for events, including an open-air stage that was empty that day. This *rolezinho* was organized by teenagers and young adults from one of the many Facebook groups I joined that was oriented around *rolezinhos*. Approximately three hundred *rolezeiros* were dispersed

throughout the park, which was fairly quiet. Merely a few people were playing funk music, taking selfies, and occasionally smoking shisha or marijuana, while families and small children were at the playgrounds, and two police SUVs were poised at the park entrance. I was informed that their presence is normal on weekends.

I asked some of the *rolezeiros* that day what exactly a *rolezinho* was, to which most replied:

rolezinho is when we meet our friends from Facebook, some of them we don't know in person, so we meet them here or somewhere else, take selfies, share music and interests. We take pictures and then post them on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

Most also liked to talk and boast about how many followers they had, of which they were clearly proud. One stated “*Look, I have more than 300 followers,*” and then another would interrupt by saying “*that's nothing, I have almost 700, and a lot of MCs.*” MCs are artists who compose and sing ostentation funk music. Others, specifically the males, replied that they wanted to meet the *gatinhas* (Brazilian slang meaning “cute girls”) and *paquerar* (flirt), and they chose to visit the park because at malls they “could get into trouble.” When asked what kind of trouble they might face, the *rolezeiros* mentioned *preconceito* (prejudice), claiming that “*we arrive at the mall [Shopping Internacional de Guarulhos] in groups and everyone starts to tremer [slang meaning to cause fear, to tremble], thinking we are there to rob everyone.*”

During this exchange, the *rolezeiros* explained what had previously happened at both Shopping Internacional de Guarulhos and Bosque Maia. On December 14, 2013, the *rolezeiros* had arranged a “*rolezinho do shopping*” (a *rolezinho* at the mall) via Facebook. They mentioned that more than two thousand *rolezeiros* showed up to the *rolezinho*, which was surrounded by security guards. I thought the number sounded too high, but I later found an article from *GloboNews* (2013) titled “*PM e chamada para conter arrastão em shopping de Guarulhos*” (translation: “Military police is called to contain arrastão at a mall in Guarulhos”), which confirmed that around 2,500 *rolezeiros* had gone to the mall, 22 of whom were arrested during a supposed “arrastão.” The kids mentioned that around 100 officers surrounded the mall, while the article mentioned 90. 20 of the arrested people were charged with theft and disorder and 3 for inciting crime via social media.

However, the military police did not find evidence of any theft, and the rolezeiros were released later that same day.

The same kids also told me about an altercation that happened between the police and some rolezeiros at Bosque Maia in January 2014. According to them, “*one guy was smoking hookah, and the police thought it was drugs, and accused him of consuming alcohol, too.*” Another mentioned that a group was consuming alcohol, and out of fear of being arrested, “*the entire group started beating up one member from the Guarda Municipal, but they just wanted to have fun without getting into trouble.*” Again, I decided to look for any information in the media about this event, and in *GloboNews* (Santiago 2014b) I found an article titled “Parque reforça segurança e jovens fazem rolezinho com narguilé em SP” (translation: “Park strengthens security and youngsters do rolezinho with hookah in SP”). According to the article and my interviews with this group, rolezeiros “*smoke hookah because the girls like it, and we like to show off*” and because “*It helps to get the minas [girls]. We also like to dress well, drink Red Bull with vodka.*” (Wellington, 18, Guarulhos)

Organized rolezinho at Ibirapuera Park (September 2014)

Ibirapuera Park is São Paulo’s largest urban park and a famous tourist attraction located in the central neighborhood of Vila Mariana. The park attracts visitors from all over the city due to its architecture, exuberant fauna and flora, and infrastructure. It is home to a large sports gymnasium, Ibirapuera Auditorium, Afro Brasil Museum, Foundation Bienal of São Paulo, and the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art, among other facilities. Ibirapuera is compared to other global urban parks, such as Stanley Park in Vancouver and Central Park in New York.

On the day the rolezinhos were held, the park was busier than its usual weekends. There was heavy police presence (I counted around seventeen police SUVs), and a stage was set up where all kinds of music was playing (primarily funk). Some MCs were promoting their own work, and whenever they finished singing, they would provide the audience with their Instagram and/or Facebook profiles and a message stating that they were representing their neighborhood; some examples include: “MC Kevinho,

representing Guainanases!"; "MC Leo, representing Campo Limpo!"; and "MC Brinquedo, representing Itaquera!"

Kids of all social classes and several from the periphery attended, taking selfies, playing and promoting their own music, and smoking hookah. I noticed that hookah was at its peak in Brazil while I was conducting this fieldwork. I was informed that its appeal lies in various flavors and smells and that this activity is a common characteristic among *rolezeiros*. During the *rolezinhos*, I was offered to smoke with a few of them, and therein I met twenty-year-old Rodrigo from Itaquera. Rodrigo told me that the *rolezinho* at Ibirapuera was very peaceful but that he was afraid of being approached by the cops. I queried the reason for his fear, which he elaborated upon:

I was leaving a rolezinho at Raul Seixas Park, going back home, when a police viatura [car] stopped... The cop got out of the car with a gun on his hand, told my friends to stop. My friends and I ran, and they started running after us. Then I stopped and he told me to lay down on the floor with my hands behind like this. I told him that I wasn't going to because I'm not a criminal, I didn't rob anyone. Still, he told me to lay down. Then he got on top of me, like this, and pressed my hands and my wrist, it hurt.

Rodrigo then told me that the officer inspected him while pushing his knee into Rodrigo's back. The officer let Rodrigo go after he did not find anything, although Rodrigo was left with bruises on his back, wrists, and hands—and he was not the only one left in such a condition. His friend, nineteen-year-old Bruno who also attended Ibirapuera, endured a similar treatment, but also he had a gun pointed to his head while pressed against a wall during an inspection. When I asked Rodrigo if he had any idea why he or his friends were searched, he said "*I think it's the way we dress, they see rolezeiros and they think it's bandido [thug], marginal, delinquente [criminal]. They don't do that with boyzinho [a young man from the upper middle class].*"

Rolezinhos at Shopping Metrô Itaquera (October and November 2014)

Itaquera is a district located in the eastern periphery of São Paulo. I reached the mall by taking the train from São Judas station along the blue line and then switching to the red line on Se station. The red line is the busiest in terms of the number of passengers, and its last station is located in the same district. The mall, called Shopping Metrô

Itaquera, is located in this station and is connected by a covered pathway. In São Paulo, at least five malls are directly connected to train stations, including the Shopping Metrô Itaquera (Barbosa Pereira 2016: 546).

The two *rolezinhos* I observed at the Itaquera mall were quite similar. I arrived at around 3 pm and noticed about 5 cars parked inside the parking lot. They were playing loud funk music, and their owners were talking amongst one another. Five military police officers were situated near the mall entrance, while a sign displayed that, due to a *rolezinho* scheduled for that day, the mall would not allow the entrance of any unaccompanied minors. Although the sign was up, I nevertheless witnessed minors arriving and later learned that they achieved admission through an alternative entrance.

The mall traffic seemed normal for a weekend, and I decided to go for a stroll since this was my first visit. The stores were not as fancy as those of Jardim Sul, Shopping Morumbi, or Iguatemi, as Itaquera's large mall has modest stores that meet the demand of the residents who live in the periphery. Next, I headed over to the food court for a meal, which is where I stayed for about an hour. I noticed the mall started getting busier around 5:30 pm, at which time the security guards started roaming around more actively. As I decided to go for another stroll, I suddenly observed a group of teenagers and young adults strolling—or perhaps more accurately, “marching”—and shouting “*Vamos ocupar o shopping! Queremos nossos direitos!*” (translation: “Let’s occupy the mall! We want our rights!”). The *rolezeiros* started on the first floor and moved onward to the upper floors, at which time the security guards were taking no safety or preventive measures.

I decided to wander outside the mall and take a look at the exterior’s activities, and at that point I noticed the parking lot was filled with even more cars playing funk music and more people talking, smiling, flirting, and drinking. The mall entrance was occupied by a greater number of police officers, and one security guard was requesting everyone’s IDs before allowing them entrance. He denied entrance to unaccompanied minors, many of whom were complaining. I asked the guard what was going on, and he said, “*It’s a rolezinho, senhora.*” Thus, I asked why he was requesting their IDs, and he

explained “*the mall administration is not allowing any minors to enter to avoid anything to escalate into an arrastão and frighten our customers, I’m just doing my job.*” When I asked his opinion about the *rolezinhos*, he said:

They want to come here and se divertir [have fun], but they come here in large groups, bother the other customers, o cliente reclama (the customer complains), so we have to contain them, otherwise it will turn into baderna. This is private property, so it’s our duty to address it.

While conversing with the security guard, a woman started complaining about the *rolezinhos*, saying that the mall should do more to contain “*a garotada [kids]*”. The mall closed its doors early (8:30 pm), and the train was at its maximum passenger capacity, most of whom were young people and most of whom got off in other neighborhoods of the nearby periphery.

Distinct social classes and discrimination

While talking to president Mendes of “*Rolezinho, the Voice of Brazil,*” I was informed that what happened at Itaquera Mall was blatant discrimination:

Itaquera is a mall that serves the periphery, and they treated us like, I’m sorry to say it, garbage. We, the poor youth from the periphery, are the ones who use and consume the most at that mall. The first time we were there, the police said that we either had to obey them, or they would shoot rubber bullets at us. And for what? We were not committing any crime. Plain truculência [belligerence] on behalf of the police, and he helped others to discriminate against the movement. This is the reason one of our efforts now is to fight against police violence. There was a lot of disrespect against us.

He then mentioned “*it’s not the duty of the police to do that at the mall. The mall is public and private*” and that the issue of police violence and discrimination he and his *rolezeiro* friends face has been going on for years—a *doença* (disease) expressed through a series of events that are unknown to most Brazilians. Mendes asserted that, if the government stopped paying attention to them, “*we would go back to malls to demand our rights to occupy public spaces in São Paulo.*” He asserted that *rolezinhos* are held across the entire state of São Paulo and that the youth is faced with an unprepared police force that represses, oppresses, discriminates, and criminalizes them.

Although *rolezinhos* were held at Ibirapuera Park, Mendes confided that the Association Amigos do Parque Ibirapuera complained about the event and claimed that the park was for classes A and B. Clearly upset about this situation, Mendes decreed “*the park is for everyone; they can’t prohibit us from going there just because we are from the periphery.*”

Classes A and B are Brazilian upper classes, while C is the middle class, which is divided by C1 and C2: upper middle class, and lower middle class respectively. According to the Brazilian Association of Survey Companies (Abep), since 2007 the “Brazilian Criterion” of economic classification main goal is to estimate the purchasing power of individuals and urban families and predict the consumption capacity of individuals and families. (Paiva et al. 2016: 211-212). It takes into account household characteristics pertaining to the ownership and quantity of durable goods, “number of bathrooms, employment of domestic workers, and educational level of the head of households”. Each item receives a score and the sum of scores is then associated to an economic grade or stratum – A, B1, B2, C1, C2, D and E (Paiva *et al.*: 212; Abep, 2018; Abep, 2017). As of 2014, Abep adopted a new criteria for social classes by establishing seven economic strata instead of eight (Kamakura and Mazzon 2017, 2016; Abep, 2016). Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 showing the thresholds for the Brazilian Criterion used by Abep and the monthly income estimate for each socioeconomic stratum.

During my interviews, many referred to the *rolezeiros* belonging to the “class C2”, the low-middle class. Renato Meirelles, a researcher of Brazilian consumption and public opinion, was the first one to draw the connection between the class C and *rolezinhos* (De Faria and Kopper 2017, 248). Meirelles is also the founder of Data Popular and Data Favela, two private research institutions that focus specifically on charting trends, explaining behaviours and forecasting reactions pertaining to the classes C, D, and E (De Faria and Kopper, 248). It is relevant to note that Meirelles turned his marketing agency into a private research institute in 2001, a time when the purchasing power of classes C, D, and E were gaining the notoriety among marketing professionals and Goldman Sachs designated the acronym BRICS to designate the emerging economies of the South at that time. Therefore, it can be said that new members of class C were

included economically as consumers, but not socially, since they faced discrimination concerning the way they dress and show off their expensive purchases and were excluded from public and semi-public places.

De Faria and Kopper (2017) note that the process that culminated in the occupation of Itaquera Mall on December 7th, 2013 where 6 thousand young people participated, had started on March of that same year when the Municipal Chamber of São Paulo approved the first Bill 2/2013 forbidding funk parties from taking place (244). This proposal was from two former heads of the Military Police from the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and Brazilian Labour Party (PTB), well known defenders of the use of force to address issues pertaining to drug and alcohol use in Funk venues, convenience stores, and gas stations (De Faria and Kopper, 244). Soon after, in May of the same year, Law 1.777/13 which sought to contain funk gathering events, commonly referred to as *pancadoes* (loud beats) and their noise emanating from sound systems installed in cars, a cultural characteristic of those in the periphery (De Faria and Kopper, 244). This in turn caused a reaction from DJs, producers, and entrepreneurs related to the funk scene in São Paulo after legislation was passed and came into force under Fernando Haddad, mayor of the city of São Paulo and member of the PT.

Chapter 4.

Conclusions

One of the main characteristics of social movements are that they are “involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents; are linked by dense informal networks; [and they] share a distinct collective identity” (De la Porta & Diani 2006, 20). McCarthy and Zald (1977) define social movements as a preferred structure for social change, local or global, or “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure of a society” locally or globally (1217-1218). In the case of the Rolezinho Movement, their members demanded the availability of public space for leisure.

One of the principal characteristics of social movements is that they tend to go through four stages as first noted by Herbert Blumer (1951): “social ferment”, “popular excitement”, “formalization”, and “institutionalization” (De la Porta and Diani, 150; Buechler 2011, 141-144; Blumer 1951: 199-220). George Macionis (2001, 601) eventually revised the four phases of social movement as “emergence”, “coalescence”, “bureaucratization”, and “decline”. The “decline” may be due to repression, success, organization failure, establishment with mainstream media, or cooptation, as it was in the case of *rolezinhos* in the city of São Paulo under the PT administration.

William Gamson (1990, 1989) notes that there are several specific indicators that show whether a movement was successful or not by dividing them into two clusters: one concerning the acceptance of challenging groups by opposition groups as a valid representative leader for their interests; and second, whether the challenging groups gain new advantages during the uprising and aftermath (Gamson 1990, 249). Within these two clusters, four outcomes of success are outlined. First, a *full response* when challenging groups are successful in both recognition of a leader and the achievement of new advantages. Second, movements *collapse* because they are not successful in either of the previous aspects mentioned. Third, *cooptation* where groups gain acceptance without new advantages. And fourth, *preemption*, where groups gain new advantages without

acceptance. The *rolezinho* movement represents the third case, where they were accepted by the local government as interlocutors. Yet, they did not gain new advantages since they were once again spatially and socially segregated and confined to conduct their *rolezinhos* in the periphery. They were not accepted by society as a whole as they continued to face discrimination from other social classes and their actions potentially criminalized. The movement later collapsed when the PSDB came into power, political authority was changes, and funds for the movement's association were cut.

With regard to the cooptation outcome that I suggest happened for the Rolezinhos Movement, Coy (2005:405) makes the following conceptualization:

as social and political movements gain enough strength to seriously challenge the more powerful forces that legitimate and protect status quo arrangements in a country, a society, an institution, an agency, an organization, or other social system, those in authority who are being challenged may reach out to and attempt to bring the challengers into the system as participants. This formalized inclusion of challengers into the authority system that they are challenging is the essence of co-optation.

Cooptation is therefore precisely what happened in the case of *rolezinhos*. As stated previously, members of City Hall decided to contact members of the movement “in order for a pact agreement to be made” so as to allow its members to use public spaces without infringing upon the freedom of others, and the right to come and go from those areas” (CBN 2014; Medina 2014, Santiago 2014a). This also illustrates what William Gamson (1990;1989) described as a movement that was successful by means of cooptation even though it gained acceptance with some new advantages. But they were not successful in bringing policy changes to foster enough changes to either integrate rolezinho members in malls, expand on the availability of public spaces in the urban periphery, or decrease police brutality towards the working and urban poor. The latest 9 deaths on December 1st of 2019 after police decided to intervene a funk party at Paraisópolis that gathers around five thousand people every weekend (Barros 2019) demonstrate that little has changed since 2014, especially due to the fact that most of those who lost their lives were from the periphery of the city, who go to funk parties in favelas in search for leisure and entertainment.

By January 16th of 2014, Haddad stated that three secretaries from his administration had started a dialogue with *rolezinho* members. They were Netinho de Paula, from SMPPIR, Juca Ferreira from SMC, and Rogerio Sottili from SMDHC. This announcement was followed by a meeting between *rolezinho* leaders, the Public Ministry, São Paulo City Hall, and the Associação Brasileira de Shopping Centers- Abrasce (Brazilian Association of Shopping Centers) with the intention of turning Rolezinhos into a “cultural activity” (Piza 2014). This meeting also culminated with a prohibition of large Rolezinhos occurring at malls, but also the commitment of City Hall to providing public spaces available to young people where they could gather in large numbers, listen to their music, and spaces where MCs could promote their songs, as stated by MC Chaveirinho.

Haddad left the city’s government in January 2017, and the next incumbent became Joao Doria from the PSDB, a center-right party. As per my last communication with Darlan Mendes, he had left the presidency of the association at the end of 2017, beginning 2018. When asked about the reason, Darlan replied:

I noticed that there was too much politics and an ideology that did not have the wellbeing of Brazilian youth as its main concern. The new and current administration [referring to the PSDB] stopped all social projects and measures we had, decreased about 40% of the funds to cultural incentives.

As per Darlan’s statements, the new government under the PSDB led the movement to collapse. In turn, this lead him to pursue initiatives on his own by organizing events in partnership with well-known MCs and UNICEF.

4.1. Summary of Findings

The findings of my fieldwork can be divided into 5 specific themes: Brazilian police, political authority, distinctive middle classes, mainstream media, and the deep symbolic struggle between the ruling and the working class. In fact, these themes were brought to light due to the violent and repressive responses and reactions of the ruling class that did not accept the rolezinhos and viewed them as a threat to public order in primarily homogenous and consumerist spaces of malls, places that are relatively safe and serve as a place for leisure activities to the urban poor, who usually lack any

alternatives. The historical background provided throughout this paper, besides tracing the development of police institutions, urbanization, and urban protests, was illustrated by the dialectic of efforts of the ruling class to control, and efforts of the working class and the urban poor to resist such control.

To conclude, the *rolezinhos* helped to illustrate the colonial legacy in police institutions across the country, which condoned and continue to condone the arbitrary arrest and physical abuse of the urban poor from *favelas* and *periferias*. Such response by the state resembles earlier institutions and officers in the past who were legally immune to face the consequences of their brutal actions against the enslaved and urban poor. The reaction of mainstream media, who were quick to criminalize *rolezeiros*, begs the question of who in fact has political authority in the country. Is it the media who has the power to create and foster a homogenous narrative where *rolezeiros* are deemed criminals and dangerous, or the elected officials? My findings point that Brazilian mainstream media played a critical role in demonizing the *rolezinhos*, which caused the ruling classes to discriminate and marginalize them further.

Lastly, the *rolezinhos* revealed different, supposedly new, middle classes who benefited from social programs with increased wages and saw themselves without options for leisure activities. My findings point out that *rolezeiros* demanded social inclusion, greater public investment in culture and leisure activities for the urban youth. But instead they encountered discrimination, racism, and violence making the deep symbolic struggle between the ruling and working classes clear. Even though the working class had been “included” through higher levels of consumption, they are not yet fully included materially or symbolically: there is still a lack of access to services and public goods and the ruling class did not accept the sole acquisition of goods as sufficient to bring about long-lasting social changes.

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Appendix.

Supplemental Tables

Table A.1. Thresholds for the Brazil Class Criteria scale

Cortes do Critério Brasil

Classe	Pontos
A	45 - 100
B1	38 - 44
B2	29 - 37
C1	23 - 28
C2	17 - 22
D – E	1 - 16

Source: ABAPE, 2018: 3

Note: The “new middle class” is supposed to start at C1 and C2.

Table A.2. Monthly income estimate for each socioeconomic stratum in Brazilian Reais.

Estrato Sócio Economico	Renda média domiciliar
A	23.345,11
B1	10.386,52
B2	5.363,19
C1	2.965,69
C2	1.691,44
D-E	708,19
TOTAL	2.908,32

Source: ABAPE, 2018: 3.

Note: Income average is shown by calculating the average of each income bracket for different strata.