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The injustices of urban securitization in the Brazilian city of Campinas

Lucas Melgaço

Translator: George Mc Gairl

Summary

Large metropolises, particularly in Latin America, have gone through deep transformations due to fear of violence. New urban forms - such as gated communities, deterrent architecture and security cameras - have answered the increasing demand for security. With no real prior consideration, towns such as Campinas-SP, in Brazil, have opted for a policy of video surveillance and the construction of buildings which incite segregation and stifle individual freedoms. But if this movement has led to increased security for some, it has also encouraged the militarization and privatization of public space, leading to injustices and even further insecurity to others.

Key words: urban securitization, security, gated communities, surveillance, socio-spatial segregation.

Introduction

Discussing security has become a common phenomenon in all walks of life. And yet it is not confined to mere discussion. The modern wish for security has also been manifested in ways which alter the urban landscape. In this respect, two principle movements are readily identifiable. One of them being "concrete", or even "material", which we shall call here "the creation of exclusive spaces"; the more practical examples of which are gated communities (the best English translation of the Brazilian *condomínios fechados*¹) and deterrent architecture, such as spikes to prevent people from sitting down. A second more "intangible" and technologically developed movement, which we will call the "computerization of daily life", has resulted in a tendency to install appliances such as surveillance cameras, and will form the second part of our analysis.

The main objective of this article is to show that the way in which security has been conceived up to now in Brazil – aside from the fact it is largely inefficient for the majority of the population – has led to strongly segregated spaces, considered unjust, and even violent to some.

In order to corroborate our hypothesis, we will dedicate the first part of this article to the concept of "urban securitization"² as it is important to grasp this idea to understand the current trend of installing security tools and its consequences.

The second part will concentrate on putting into context the social transformations that have occurred in Brazil, and more specifically, in Campinas. This examination will help us to understand why the architectural changes – that have come about due to the process of securitization - have been so extensive in Campinas. Located in the state of São Paulo, Campinas is a very prosperous Brazilian city, home to both large companies and universities, but also very poor neighborhoods, where the crime rate and level of antisocial behavior are above the national average.

¹ In Brazil, the term *condomínio fechado* can refer to very different urban forms. It is possible to identify at least four principle types of residential condominiums (Melgaço, 2010): vertical ones, comprised of towers and communal leisure areas; the small horizontal ones, with twin detached buildings, usually with few communal leisure areas and which occupy a space barely larger than an urban plot; the closure of public streets at the residents' initiative, such as those in the Parque Alto Taquaral neighborhood, and the large urban complexes such as the Swiss Park, both of which we will address hereafter. As regards the disputes over the illegality of the *condomínios fechados* in Brazil, see Sarmiento Filho (2009).

² The word securitization is most used in the world of investment banking. According to Oxford Dictionary securitize means "convert (an asset, especially a loan) into marketable securities, typically for the purpose of raising cash by selling them to other investors". This new application of the word, a neologism for securitization, does not reference finance but rather security studies.

Based on examples from local inquiries and on observations made from our own work on maps and photographs taken in this town, the third part will show how this excessive quest for security through the creation of exclusive spaces can lead to new instances of violence, considered by some residents to be forms of spatial injustice.

The final part of the article will examine the new trends of securitization based on the control of information, and more specifically on the use of video surveillance and its consequences on criminality and every day urban life. Despite being less visible, this type of transformation, which uses new, computerized technology, can also be seen as a generator of violence and injustice.

The concept of urban securitization

To best encapsulate the installation process of urban forms and objects, which aims to promote some kind of urban security, we suggest the concept of "urban securitization". We can therefore regroup within this one expression all forms of architecture based around the fear of violence, as it refers just as much to the creation of exclusion areas – such as gated communities, or the "fortified enclaves" referred to by Teresa Caldeira (2000) – as it does to the computerization of daily life for the purposes of security. We can, nevertheless, express one reservation here, as "securitizing" does not necessarily transform any area into a safer place. The term refers to the installation of objects designed for the sake of security, and does not guarantee the efficiency of these objects.

If we make the distinction between the notions of risk and actual insecurity – the former would be construed as a likelihood, a real chance of falling prey to violence, and the second would concern a state of anguish, a sense of fear of violence – we can assert that securitization has a greater influence on the feeling of insecurity, than on an effective diminishing of any risk. In Campinas, for example, there are different gated communities which, despite having installed all manner of security equipment, such as cameras, gates and barbed wire, have still come under attack.³ The security measures have repeatedly shown themselves to be inefficient, with numerous cases where the assailant, having disarmed the doorkeeper or the residents themselves, has managed to access buildings through the main front door. Securitization therefore appears to be a hasty response within a culture of fear.

To criticize the current process of urban securitization is not, however, to condemn every quest for greater security. If, on the one hand, excess securitization can lead to increased authoritarianism and injustice, a total absence of security, on the other, would prompt chaos and violence.⁴

The concept of violence is seen here as a wide notion, not merely limited to physical aggression, crimes or other offences; it also encompasses the least explicit of displays. Amongst the various existing definitions of violence, we consider that one of the more interesting ones can be attributed to Galtung (1969, p. 168). He defines it in terms of the difference between the potential and the actual: "Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realization". Morais (1981, p. 24) refers to

³ According to the State Ministry of São Paulo for Public Security, there were 32 cases of burglary of closed residential structures in this area in 2009.

⁴ There is an incompatibility between security and freedom which must be noted. To make the most of our freedom, it is fundamental that we enjoy a certain level of security, but in order to gain this security, we must abandon part of our freedom. Extreme freedom can lead to a complete anomy, to a lawless land, where there would be no guarantee of a right to life. Excessive security creates an unbearable society, where almost every act is supervised and controlled. As Zygmunt Bauman shows (2003, p. 24), "freedom and security, which are both crucial and indispensable, are hard to reconcile without conflict". Or, as Jean Delumeau warns us (2002, p. 80), "great pressure for security can open the door to the acceptance of dictatorship".

something similar when he maintains that violence “is not, however, something that can be defined by true or by false, but only a thing or a situation which threatens our personal integrity, or which expropriates us from ourselves”. In the same line of thinking, Odália (1983, p. 86) shows that “every time that I sense a feeling of deprivation, that some things are refused me, with no real reason, I can be sure that I feel violence towards me”. It is this enlarged definition of violence which was central to our understanding why security can, itself, generate new forms of violence.

Security is the ultimate goal of securitization, but not the only one. Securitization is also a means of social segregation, thanks to the creation of homogenous spaces free of people considered undesirable. The idea of security here does not correspond to a potential risk of encountering violence, but more to the assurance of residing in a group of people from the same social background, as is the case in gated communities.

The concept of urban securitization refers to a complex and dialectical⁵ conception of geographic space. As authors such as Santos (1999) or Soja (2009) affirm, space is not merely a receptacle of human actions, because as society alters space in search of greater security, simultaneously space acts on society; either in granting it greater tranquility, or in recreating fear, violence and injustice. This conception of space brings our attention to the consequences emerging from the installation of new technical instruments on the land. For example, the setting up of a surveillance camera or the closure of a street changes the behavior of those that come across the area in question.

The emergence of securitization in Campinas

Today, the process of securitization has become a worldwide trend. Surveillance cameras, deterrent architecture and even gated communities have been on the increase in numerous countries. Even though the process has become global, this quest for security adopts many different forms in different places. Campinas, for example, has its own particularities, different from the rest of Brazil and from the world. However, for us to better understand these traits that are peculiar to Campinas, they must first be put into context within the Brazilian socio-spatial formation (Santos, 1999).

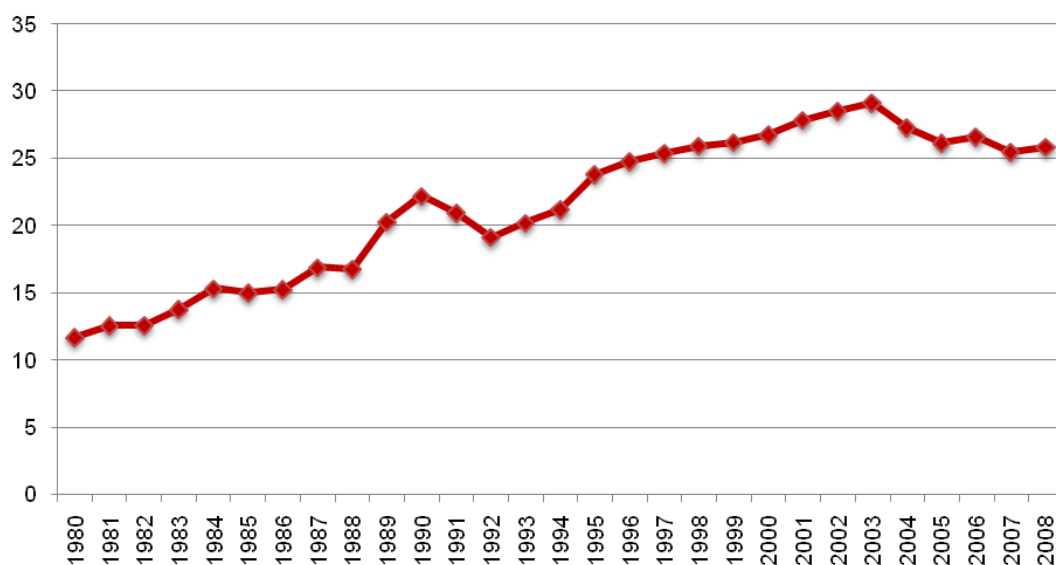
Even if it is a recent process, securitization in Brazil results from significant historical events, such as Coronelismo. From its origins during Brazil’s colonial period (1500-1822), Coronelismo established itself during the First Republic (1889-1930) as a common practice in the way politics were conducted across the country. It derives its name from the rank of colonel (coronel in Portuguese) attributed by the National Guard to all the major landowners. The colonel would not only be the owner of local goods and services, but also an important political figure, capable of influencing and even managing the actions of law enforcement officers. As a result, Brazilian public security has, since its inception, been tarnished by individual and selfish interests.

The use of security forces for political means gained strength during the military dictatorship, as for more than twenty years (1964-1985) the country suffered under a cloud of violence, brought about

⁵ In this study, the dialectal method is understood to be the conjunction of four essential elements: the perpetual movement of the transformation of things, totality in the course of totalization, coherent contradiction, and complexity. The first element grabs our attention through the submission of the social happenings to a time variable. Everything is defined historically, including the notions and the concepts. The second element reminds us that we should never lose sight of the principle of totality (Kosik, 1976). Totality not being understood here as totality of reality, which is not in itself tangible. It concerns the perception of the social reality as a whole structure, where it is impossible to reach an individual element without upsetting the balance of the entirety. The third element pertains to the notion of contradiction, which is present in the concept of dialectic. We are not going by Hegel’s idealistic proposition here, but rather using Marx’s rereading as a basis, in which contradictions are seen as symbols of class. Finally, for a method to truly be considered as dialectic, it must, on principle, confront the notion of complexity (Morin, 2005). We turn to the dialectic when we find ourselves incapable of understanding and interpreting the world through ordinary and Cartesian methods.

by an excessive quest for security and order. Throughout this time Brazil was governed by the military, with no democratic elections. During a particularly agitated 10 year period (1968-1978), symbolised by the promulgation of the Institutional Act Number 5, the "AI 5", which gave exceptional powers to the President of the Republic, the culture of security resulted in severe restrictions on individual freedoms.

Coinciding with the end of the military regime in 1985, and more importantly with the new Federal Constitution signed in 1988, the country's transition period gave way to a more democratic regime. Political opening, however, also led to a dramatic rise in inequality, and, as a result, to a very visible increase in criminal violence. One of the crimes which soared, just after the final years of military dictatorship, was homicide. Graph 1 shows the increased homicide rate in Brazil between 1980 and 2008.



Source: DataSUS/MS for the homicides and the IBGE for the population.

Graph 1. Brazil. Rate of homicide for 100,000 inhabitants. 1980-2008.

Just after the democratic transition, not only did the number of crimes and other offences rise, but there was also a distinct acceleration in the increasing number of Brazilians being imprisoned. According to the figures from the Brazilian Ministry of Justice, during the twenty years of military dictatorship the prison population doubled, whereas during the twenty democratic years that followed, it tripled. It was during this period that aspects of prison life began to appear in the ordinary urban landscape. Privacy walls, enclosures, video surveillance and socio-spatial segregation became widespread.

Just prior to the political era of openness, various forms of urban securitization were already appearing across Brazil. We can even claim that it was in the early 1970's that fear and security began to play a significant role in the makeup of the Brazilian urban landscape. Symbolically, still under the military dictatorship, an important event occurred, namely the creation of Alphaville in 1973, the first Brazilian "condominium", entirely enclosed. Situated in the town of Barueri, in the outer suburbs of the City of São Paulo, this property investment promised to combine the security of large buildings with the advantages and the freedom of individual homes.

It was in 1997 that Campinas' own version first saw the light of day. Today, Alphaville-branded housing estates are scattered over 40 towns in 16 Brazilian states. Furthermore, numerous other construction companies have begun to design buildings based entirely on the enclosed-condominium model. The emergence of Alphaville was, therefore, a pivotal factor in a new era of Brazilian urbanism.

Several other more recent events have contributed to reinforce this process of securitization through the collective sense of fear they have inspired, with those orchestrated by the self-proclaimed First Commando of the Capital (PCC) at the top of the list. On 18th February 2001, prisoners linked to the PCC organized a simultaneous rebellion in several prisons across the country. On television, viewers from all over Brazil witnessed an impressive demonstration of the criminals' capacity for organization, contrasted with the fragility of the State's justice and security systems. In 2006, the same organization caused panic in multiple Brazilian towns, especially in São Paulo, through targeted attacks against military and civilian targets. Some of these attacks were carried out in Campinas, a town of strategic importance for the PCC.

According to José Enéas Marinello Jr., head of the Madri Group, one of the biggest private security firms in Campinas, the demand for security equipment, already on the rise prior to the attacks, rocketed following the PCC's acts. The fear generated by these attacks, which was subsequently exponentially overlaid by the media, served as a catalyst towards urban securitization.

The growth of the electronic security market in the past ten years proves that the securitization process is expanding. According to figures from the Brazilian Association of Electronic Security Systems Firms (ABESE), this flourishing market sees annual average growth of 13% between 1999 and 2008.

The Brazilian Armor Plating Association (ABRALIN) provides further data which supports the notion that quest for security has become a more widespread necessity across the country. According to them, the quantity of armor-plated cars in Brazil increased 18 times between 1995 and 2008.

It is not merely the equipment, such as armor-plated cars, which has significantly increased in number; the number of employees working in private security has also risen. Just after the military dictatorship, there was stagnation in the number of people in the police forces (federal, state, and municipal) as well as in the army. By comparison, the number of private security officers increased noticeably. The 2008 figures from the Federal Police's Coordination Unit for Private Security show that there were already 431,600 private security officers in Brazil, 5% more than the total number of public police officers, of which there were 411,900.

It is important to remember that, even if the quest for security is a veritable national preoccupation, it varies greatly from one region to another. Table 1 shows the greater number of private security officers in the south-eastern region of Brazil.

Region	Officers	Number per 100,000 inhab.
South East	234.019	307
West Central	24.435	195
South	45.536	173
North East	45.744	92
North	11.223	80

Source: SESVESP/IBGE

Table 1. Brazil. Number of private security officers for 100,000 inhabitants. 2004.

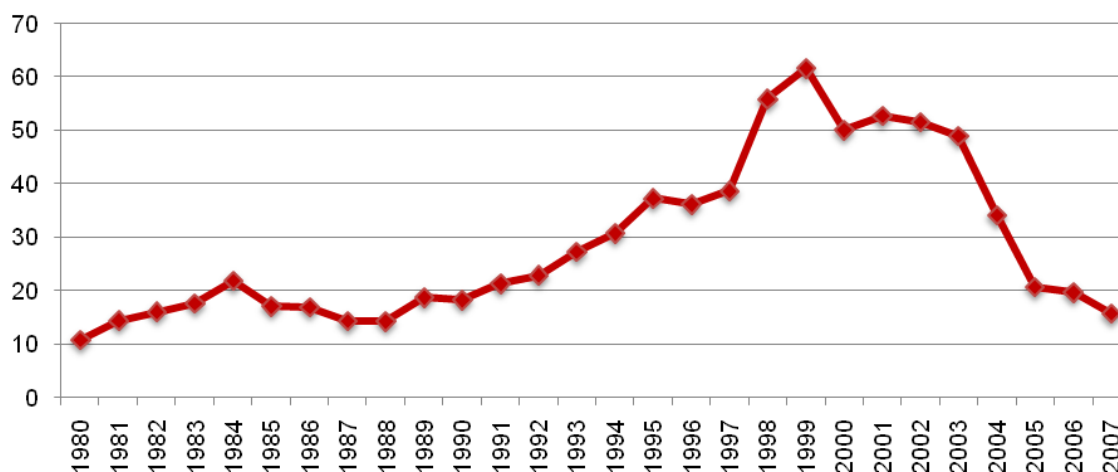
The fact that Campinas is situated in the South East Region, the most economically active part of the country, helps to explain the specificities of its securitization process. As is widely the case in Brazilian territorial formation, and particularly in the South East, Campinas is full of deep spatial inequalities, which goes some way to justifying the spread of fear-inspired architecture within the town.

Situated 90km from the City of São Paulo, Brazil's main financial hub, Campinas is known as a technological center. It is considered by many to be the "Brazilian Silicon Valley". It is home to several well-reputed universities, famous centers of research, and large national and multinational companies. On the flip side of the coin, it is a town awash with squatters and favelas, with a very active drug trade, and can be considered as a core of the national organized crime network.

We must not lose sight of the fact that up until the 1970's there were practically no favelas and no gated communities in Campinas. In 40 years, the town has leapt forward economically, leaving in its wake an urban landscape of profound transformations and contrasts.

There are yet more socio-economic statistics that shed light on the obvious inequalities within the municipality. In 2007, its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 27 million reais, putting it in 10th position in Brazil, higher than many other cities. Equally, though, Campinas is 10th on the list of municipalities with the most homeless residents.

Despite its particularities, the territorial inclinations in Campinas are heavily influenced by the wider Brazilian socio-spatial formation. If, for example, we analyze the number of homicides over the years within this municipality, we notice that the curve follows the nationwide trend. We note also that there was a significant increase in this crime just after the political opening at the end of the 1980's, with a diminution as of 2003.



Source:

DataSUS/IBGE.

Graph 2. Campinas. Number of homicides for 100 mille habitants. 1980-2007.

In spite of the reduction in homicides since 2003, the fear and the securitization in Campinas have continued to increase. And neither a fall in the homicide rate nor an increase in security measures have resulted in a higher sense of spatial justice. The principle victims of homicide remain the poor (Melgaço, 2010).

Putting into context the particularities of Campinas' makeup, and the profound spatial inequalities that exist in this municipality, becomes fundamental here. Without this perspective, we cannot attempt to understand the current process of seeking security at all costs. Furthermore, the privatization of public security which emanates from this process not only fails to combat this criminality at its root, but rather encourages growth of existing fear and the socio-spatial inequalities.

Urban securitization as a tool of socio-spatial segregation

The way in which securitization has been implemented up to now in the large majority of Latin American cities follows a model of militarization of the urban space. It is not uncommon, in front of some homes in Campinas, to find a sentry box, or even barbed wire above walls, creating a scene reminiscent of war trenches.

However, the equipment that has almost become obligatory for the façades of buildings, and which is the best-seller for security firms, is the electric fence. Despite the Municipal law 11,674 (Campinas, 2003) which provides that all electric fences must be placed at a height of at least 2.1 meters, at an angle of 30° towards the inside of the building, Figure 1 below shows that these installation rules are normally ignored. A less attentive passer-by could easily touch these wires and receive an electric shock. Even as a very isolated example, it rightly points to a way in which securitization can lead to further unrest and new forms of violence.



Figure 1. Non-compliant electric fencing in the Barão Gerlado neighborhood of Campinas, 2010.
Author's photo.

The violence of securitization, though, becomes even more evident when we analyze the urban mechanisms whose aim is to keep criminals at bay, but which, in reality, dissuade the presence of any “undesirable” people: beggars, young people, drug users, prostitutes.⁶

In Campinas in 2006, a viaduct in the wealthy neighborhood of Guanabara underwent a major facelift, with various modifications allowing the town’s authorities to install sharp-edged stones, with the sole aim of repelling street dwellers and beggars (Figure 2). Politicians took on the poor, as undesirable blots on the landscape, rather than tackling poverty itself. And all the more remarkably; this was a public project, built by the town’s authorities.



Figure 2. Anti-undesirable architecture under the viaduct of Campinas, 2007. Photo: Tiago Macambira.

Even the Catholic Church, an institution whose entire set of beliefs revolves around helping the least advantaged members of society, has put in place deterrent architecture. Campinas Cathedral has installed stakes on the church’s steps, with the sole aim of preventing the poor and disheveled from sitting for too long (Figure 3).

⁶ Better known in Brazil under the title of anti-beggar architecture (*arquiteturas anti-mendigos*, in Portuguese), these objects are in fact designed to repel all undesirables. If they are principally used to dissuade tramps from settling, they are also designed to scare away other badly regarded social groups.



Figure 3. Stakes on the steps of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Campinas, 2007. Photo: Tiago Macambira.

Anti-undesirable architecture can be considered, according to the theory of Milton Santos, as an example of "form-substance"⁷. The symbolism associated with these objects is of great importance, because once the town's authorities conceive architecture to repel the poor, they have created a form whose substance reveals its true aim.

A comparison of the following two photographs taken in Campinas is also high in symbolism (Figures 4 and 5). They reveal two constructions within the town whose similarities might lead one to believe they are fit for the same purpose.

⁷ "With every event, the form recreates itself. Therefore, the form-substance cannot be considered as simply as a form, nor merely as substance. It entails that for the event to occur, it must do so in the most convenient available form in order to achieve its particular function. What is more, once the event has occurred, the form takes on another dimension as a result of this occurrence. In terms of significance and reality, one can neither exist nor be understood without the other. It is impossible to envisage them separately. The form-substance idea unites process and result, function and form, past and future, subject and object, natural and social. It supposes an analysis of space as an inseparable entirety of systems of objects and systems of actions." (Santos, 1997, p.71).

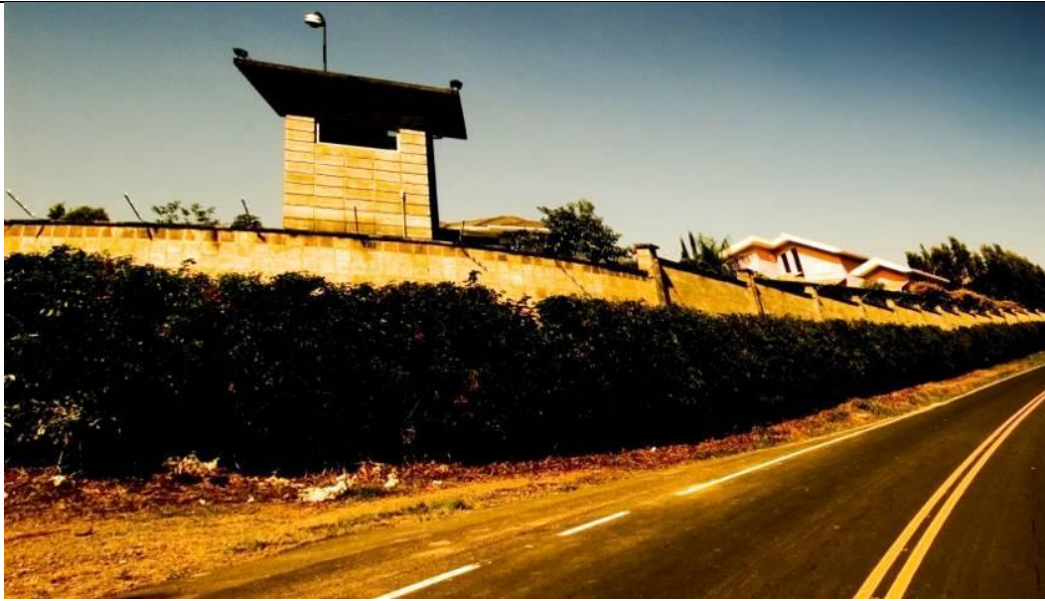


Figure 4. Façade of a gated residential community in Campinas, 2007. Photo: Tiago Macambira.



Figure 5. Façade of Campinas Prison, 2007. Photo: Tiago Macambira.

In the first photo, the wall and the tower form part of a gated community, whereas in the second they belong to the largest prison in the region. Their forms are practically the same and their functions can be distinguished by a small change in direction: whereas the first aims to prevent the entry of those on the outside, the second intends to prevent the exit of those on the inside. Even if the gated community's architects did not deliberately base their design on the prison architecture,

the striking resemblances in these two forms reveals a desire for exclusivity that can lead to excesses.

This desire for exclusivity becomes very apparent through the closure of streets in neighborhoods that are already built. Such is the case in the Parque Alto Taquaral neighborhood of Campinas, where, with no concern for the law, residents have got together and closed off the streets, limiting any access by the construction of a sentry box and obstacles to block traffic. Some of the neighborhood's residents, opposed to the closure, reverted to civil court to obtain unlimited access to these streets. The Mayor, Izalene Tiene, armed with a warrant, ordered public workers from the town authority to remove all barriers which enclosed the estate. The reaction from the residents favorable to the enclosure was immediate. In an act of provocation, and in total disrespect of the Mayor, they once again closed off the streets, this time by installing large flower beds (Figure 6), planting shrubs, large palm trees, or simply by dumping inorganic waste.

This process of reopening and closing of the neighborhood's streets was repeated several times. It served to highlight the Mayor's weakness when confronted with the political power of some of the neighborhood's residents. The pressure they applied has guaranteed that a large part of the estate is still shut off to this day.



Figure 6. Flower beds blocking the vehicle access to a street in the Parque Alto Taquaral neighborhood, Campinas, 2010. Author's photo.

In Campinas at least thirty cases remain of neighborhoods shut off at their own residents' initiative. The map below shows the Cidade Universitária neighborhood, where, following the closure of streets marked with a red dot, access to the Catholic University of Campinas (PUC) – situated in the heart of the local community – was severely disrupted as a large quantity of vehicles were drawn to the crossroads marked with a blue square in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Closed streets surrounding the Catholic University of Campinas (PUC), 2010.

Source: Google Earth. Author's illustration.

In order to avoid traffic jams, a considerable part of the student body started leaving classes a few minutes before they were supposed to, in a demonstration of how a secure space for some can lead to trouble for many others. Furthermore, in a potential emergency, the evacuation of the area and access for firemen and ambulances would be severely compromised by this shutting off of streets.

In the name of security, veritable enclosed towns have been created, as is the case for the Swiss Park complex in Campinas. It consists of 19 closed off estates built in a large urban area and which will house, once complete, 35,000 people. Situated near to several favelas and protected by high walls and video surveillance cameras, the whole project occupies more than 6% of the city's urban area (Figure 8).

In Campinas, in response to the high crime rate between 1999 and 2003, a public project for the installation of cameras was launched under the Mayor's authority, called the Integrated Center for the Monitoring of Campinas (CIMCAMP). Created in mid-2006, it encourages the surveillance of streets and road junctions. 121 cameras had already been installed and 169 potential sites had been identified, awaiting public – and especially private – funds.

However, the majority of the cameras in Campinas do not belong to CIMCAMP, but come from the private initiative of individual residents and shop owners. They were installed without any real prior reflection on their potential efficiency, and even less thought to the impending infringement of privacy. In addition, there is almost no mention – be it in municipal or federal legislation – of regulations that might control the installation or usage of these surveillance cameras.

Cameras therefore began to spring up not only in public places and in gated communities, but also in more private areas such as schools. In Campinas, the cameras were set up in educational establishments without consideration for the negative effects they might have on the moral development of the children (Westacott, 2010). Or if these potential effects were identified, they were considered of less importance than the increased security, a necessity which was gaining in urgency.

The example of the Anglo school, built within one of the town's shopping centers (in itself a source of controversy), is revealing. The school installed an integrated system of video surveillance, using cameras whose scope extends inside the classrooms. Their aim is not merely to guarantee the pupils' security, but to add discipline to their behavior and that of the teachers. During an interview, one teacher told us how she had been reprimanded by the headmaster for spending a whole lesson sitting down.

These cameras are also used for maintaining a certain moral code, in the name of discipline. During a meeting, a teacher from a traditional Catholic school in Campinas told us that a controversy had erupted after the sexual antics of two pupils had been caught on camera. The rumor spread to the teachers, to the other staff, to the parents and to the pupils. This new technology can therefore lead to new forms of violence, as these cameras were a source of shame for the two young adolescents involved. To free them from any type of harassment or humiliation, their parents decided to transfer them to another school.

This surveillance of schools in the pupils' education generates a panoptic environment (Foucault, 1975), where the stranger, the outsider, is always seen as a suspect. Surveillance by cameras does not only identify suspects, it creates them too. As Bauman established (2003, p. 104), the fear of uncertainty shows itself on the face of the stranger. And he adds: "given the intensity of the fear, if these strangers do not exist, they must be invented. And they are invented through the surveillance of the area by closed-circuit cameras" (ibidem, p.105).

What is curious is that in the majority of schools under surveillance, it is the parents themselves who petition for this policy of observation, not realizing that the same treatment is given to both their children and to imprisoned criminals. What is more, these children receive a distorted education with regard to rules; respecting them because they are being watched and not because of their importance within a society.

A bill is currently before the Municipal Council of Campinas which supports the obligation to install video cameras in private and public school buildings used by children under the age of seven. According to the councillor in charge, "on the face of it, these pictures will be kept within the school. Eventually, they would ideally be available online so that the whole of society can protect the children" (Campinas, 2009). Once the image of a child becomes digital data, however, it is open to hacking, and to all sorts of uses different from those originally intended. If the bill is passed as law, schools and daycares would have 90 days to comply, or face a fine. The cameras would therefore be

imposed, and parents and head teachers would not have the right to refuse that their children be monitored.

If we consider these spaces in their complexity, we notice that the technical equipment put in place to promote security can be used – or create usages – for purposes entirely different from those initially conceived. The cases of subversion involving video surveillance are numerous. Amongst the rarer examples, we can cite the drug traffickers of Rio de Janeiro who use the cameras to anticipate any police activity in the favelas (Leitão, 2008). In Campinas, we have the case of the installation of cameras by street peddlers⁸, for whom securitization has become a source of technical support for an illegal activity (Figure 9).



⁸ Street peddlers in Brazil (« *camelôs* » in Portuguese) are sellers of diverse goods and hardware, not always but very often illegal. Many of them are mobile sellers, running off at the first sign of any authority, but there are also those who work in small shops or in shopping centers, known as “*camelódromo*” in Portuguese.

Figure 9. Street Peddlers market (the « camelódromo ») guarded by cameras, Campinas, 2010.
Author's photograph.

The computerization of daily life created through video surveillance technology is not, therefore, the panacea ready to solve all the problems of urban security. The urban space, transformed into a controlled area, not only receives new securitizing actions, but in turn transforms itself, dialectically, into an inquisitive and often unjust eye in this quest for security.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that a level of protection from risk and a reduced feeling of threat are essential elements of a happy and peaceful life. We must not therefore refuse this fundamental right to security. The crux of the argument, however, lies in the way in which this quest for security has, to date, been undertaken.

With this in mind, the concept of urban securitization has shown itself to be important. It has brought about the process of militarization of public spaces in Brazil. Moreover, this concept has been fundamental in highlighting the individualistic and segregationist nature of the privatization of security in the city of Campinas.

Rather than combating the causes of violence or seeking relationships built on trust within a neighborhood, the role of creating a more secure community has been delegated to specialized private companies. The notion of security has therefore been objectified, seen not as a final state for which to aim, but rather as a commodity which can be financed, acquired and consumed.

Through the choice made for gated property complexes and the emergence of architecture designed to deter undesirable people, we have seen a new and extremely segregated form of urbanism appear, which, for some, is unjust. The security which counts in this context is that of a small elitist group and not any kind of collective security. These security practices are therefore individualistic, as they only seek to resolve isolated problems, even if, in addition, they can generate negative consequences for an entirely different portion of the population. What is more, in many cases, the current securitization process only uses violence as an excuse to justify the creation of areas which are becoming more and more exclusive.

This transformed space transforms society too. The closure of streets is a prime example of a security practice which can be a promoter of spatial injustices: while it is liable to bring greater security to those inside the closed compounds, it generates other problems for the neighbors, who end up suffering from an increase in traffic in those streets that remain open.

As a result, we can claim that the geographic space doesn't simply benefit from security interventions, because when it is transformed into a secure space, it acts in a dialectic way on society as a whole. For example, children from gated communities and schools with video surveillance grow up in denial of that which is different, of "the other", and they will attempt to reproduce this model of society in their own adult lives. The complexity of space leads us, therefore, to consider spatial justice well beyond a simple "spatialized justice". More than the distributive access to justice, the spatiality refers to the way in which a space can, itself, be a promoter either of justice or injustice.

Given the example of the video cameras, it was not our intention to reject them out of hand. We were eager to know if they were really necessary, and, above all, what would be the consequences of their emergence. To claim simply that, following their installation, the signs of indiscipline in schools or the rates of theft in a town were diminished is not a sufficient argument to justify the

choice of surveillance. Included in the equation must be all the silent forms of violence and the threats to freedoms which this new technical equipment can create.

The ultimate goal of the cameras is not merely security based. In such cases as those schools with cameras installed inside the classroom, it becomes clear that video surveillance is also used to discipline and condition behavior. Instead of launching educational projects, instilling trust and a sense of responsibility in these children, the schools chose the surveillance technology.

It is necessary, therefore, to review the question of security and to try to establish a potential alternative to the current process of securitization. The challenge is laid down, to seek security through practices which respect individual freedoms, which prioritize collective behavior and which increase urban solidarity and partnership. A large and open space would be much more efficient and far less violent in the quest for security.

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