

Call for Special Issue (2nd Semester): “(In)Security and the Urban in Rio de Janeiro”

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In this thematic edition, we invite academics, researchers, and public managers to submit articles exploring the theme “(In)Security and the Urban in Rio de Janeiro”.

Public spaces, understood as the prime locations for community building and the creation of social bonds, are now perceived as places of danger and neglect, which enhances their privatization. (...) This neglect not only fosters crime but also reinforces social inequalities, since wealthier neighborhoods tend to receive more investment, while poorer ones are left on the margins (Dammert, 2025, p. 25).

The above excerpt, by Peruvian-Chilean researcher Lucía Dammert, refers to the urban space in Latin America in general, but it could especially describe the city and metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro. Recent data indicate that approximately 49% of Rio de Janeiro's population lives in regions controlled by or under the direct influence of illegal armed groups (factions and militias). This corresponds to more than 4 million citizens and 18% of the municipality's total area (Hirata; Couto, 2025).

These territories are inhabited by the most socially vulnerable and racialized segments of the Rio de Janeiro capital. They are people with the lowest family income, lowest level of formal education, and subjected to the greatest precariousness in labor relations. Caught between the violence of the de facto criminal government and the lethality and frequent abuses of police forces, this population survives in a daily life marked by the systematic violation of their most fundamental rights, such as the right to the city, to education, to health, to political organization, to religious freedom, and to leisure.

Since the 19th century, Rio de Janeiro has been a laboratory for state actions and omissions in territory management, protection of elitized regions, facilitation of business for capital, and control of the poor, favela, and peripheral fractions. At least since the 1970s, this complex scenario has been the object of a vast, dense, and qualified critical literature in the field of Social Sciences that deals with issues such as the articulation between urban space and public security, violence and citizenship, formal and informal markets, imaginaries about security and order, police lethality, organized crime, the animal lottery, among other themes (Misse, 1985, 2006, 2007, 2023; Chinelli e Machado, 1993; Zaluar, 1995, 1998; Alvito, 2001; Cano, 2008; Leite, 2010; Soares, 2015; Pires e Kant de Lima, 2021; Alves, 2019; Kant de Lima, 1995; Lemgruber, Musumeci, Cano, 2003; Chinelli e Machado da Silva, 1993; Machado da Silva, 2010;

Monteiro, Fagundes, Guerra, 2020; Desmond Arias, 2013; Grillo, Policarpo, Veríssimo, 2011; Manso, 2020; Batista e Malaguti Batista, 2012; Souza e Serra, 2020).

Despite the intense critical work and the mobilization of part of civil society and actors from the world of institutional politics, rates of lethal violence, theft, robbery, feminicide, transfeminicide – in addition to the expansion and increasing complexity of so-called "organized crime" – have only grown over the last four decades, fueled by public security policies of a militarized nature, supported by hyper-punitivist discourses, and marked by mass incarceration and low efficiency and effectiveness in crime investigation and resolution.

Given the urgency of thinking about solutions for public security in Rio de Janeiro that do not ignore the existence, depth, and seriousness of the problem – but that maintain a commitment to democratic values, to the validity of human rights, and to the pursuit of efficiency for the concrete reduction of insecurity – the *Coleção Estudos Cariocas* proposes this thematic dossier, inviting specialists, activists, academics, and security professionals to submit article proposals around – mainly, but not exclusively – the following themes:

Territorial control by armed groups and citizen reclamation of urban space: analyses of forms of control and management of territories and populations by illegal armed groups; relations between public agents and criminals in the management of controlled territories and their populations; critical analysis of state programs historically implemented aiming at public control of areas under de facto criminal government; proposals for security policies for the citizen reclamation of territories in regions under de facto criminal government.

Management and Economy of Illegalisms: analyses of the modalities and forms assumed by illicit economic activities in the urban space of Rio de Janeiro; history and transformations of illegal economic practices in the city of Rio de Janeiro; debate on the regulation of illegal markets and public security; ethnographies of illicit economies and public security.

Urbanism and (In)Security: analyses of the relationship between urban policy and public security; spatial segregation and forms of violence management; real estate speculation, big capital interests, and their relations with public space, urbanization, and public security policies.

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