

Construction and Deconstruction of a Homicide Reduction Policy: The Case of *Pact for Life* in Pernambuco, Brazil

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Abstract: This paper tries to demonstrate that both the fall in homicides in Pernambuco (from 2007-2013) and the resurgence in them that followed (2014-2017) are fundamentally linked to two explanatory variables, which are in turn connected: the model of governance of public security produced in Pernambuco at the level of state government strategy and the capacity for deterrence produced in the framework of the Criminal Justice System (especially that of state police, who are under the responsibility and "control" of the executive power of the state). This article argues that the construction of this specific model of governance of Public Security and the definition, monitoring and realization of deterrence strategies within the police were crucial to the reduction of the number of homicides in the most violent areas of the state. On the other hand, the dissolution of the capacity for integrated governance of the police, with the consequent dismantling of the deterrence capacity aimed primarily at the reduction of homicides and crimes against life that had been successfully conceived and realized between 2007 and 2013, explains the increase in intentional violent crimes that has been observed since 2014.

Keywords: Reduction and Resurgence of Homicides, Governance, Deterrence, Pact for Life, Public Security.

1. ACUTE VIOLENCE IN A CHRONICALLY VIOLENT STATE

Pernambuco is one of the most historically violent states in one of the world's most violent countries. From 1990 to 2015, 96,108 people were killed in the state, accounting for 8.14% of the total number of 1,179,798 homicides committed in Brazil over the same period (Datusus, 2017)

Between 1996 and 2009, the rate of homicide in Pernambuco did not once fall below 40 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. In the 20 years between 1996 and 2015, there were 17,007 incidences in Recife, the state's capital, alone (a city which has had a steady population of 1,600,000 people for some time). Taking the above statistics into consideration, it is hardly difficult to observe the existence of a situation of chronic violence. This is because we are only examining official data on homicide, which is more reliable than that concerning other types of crime.

The explanations available to us in Social Sciences for such a phenomenon, in Brazil or in other Latin American countries that share similarly violent situations, point to a combination of complementary and/or conflicting causes for these elevated rates of violent crime: poverty, social inequality, weakness of the State (including the inefficiency of the police and the Criminal Justice System), the impunity derived from

such governmental deficiency, the existence of out-dated cultural patterns in disorganized urban contexts, and the introduction of conflicting, lethal dynamics within modern drugs trades, etc (Adorno, 2008; Adorno & Salla, 2007; Beato, 2008; Daudelin & Ratton, 2017; Misse, 2006; Soares, 2007; Zaluar, 2007).

However, in the last 30 years, there was a period in which a distinct fall in violent crime took place in Pernambuco. Between 2007 and 2013, homicide rates fell by around 40% in the state and by around 60% in the capital. This downwards trend was completely contrary to what was happening in the 8 other states of the Brazilian Northeast region during the same period, where the same statistics increased at an alarming rate (Cerqueira *et al.*, 2017). It is worth noting that all nine North-eastern states, Pernambuco included, (Cacciamali & Tatei, 2016) observed, in the same period, a significant improvement in social indicators, and yet only Pernambuco managed to reduce violence at that time. So what was it that happened in Pernambuco that did not take place in the other North-eastern states?

Several authors have identified the development and implementation of a Public Security strategy entitled *Pacto pela Vida*, or 'Pact for Life' (herein referred to as PPV-PE), as the distinguishing factor responsible for the fall in homicide rates in Pernambuco.

The implementation of the PPV-PE coincides with the beginning of a period of sustained reduction in

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homicide within the state (2007-2013), which took place in spite of the continued deterioration of the situation with regards to violence in the other states in the North-east of Brazil.

Silveira, Ratton et al. (2013:8) argue that there was “an average reduction of 9.1 percentage points in the homicide rate in Pernambuco, when compared with its synthetic control for the period of 2007-2011, which equates to a reduction of around 17.3% in comparison to the rate as it was in the year of the implementation of the programme, or around 2,213 lives saved as a result of the policy.”

Confirming these findings, Ratton & Silva (2015) compared the results of the month-on-month behaviour of homicide patterns in Pernambuco with its neighbouring state Alagoas, as well as patterns in their respective capitals, Recife and Maceió, during a similar period that ended in 2013. Conducting a comparison with the control group throughout the same period verified that the PPV-PE had impacted the reduction of homicides during its period of implementation (starting from October 2008). The results showed significant reductions as much throughout the whole of Pernambuco as in Recife alone when cross-referenced with Alagoas and Maceió. In the case of the states, the average estimated reduction was 115 homicides. When examining the capitals there was a reduction of 50 deaths throughout the duration of the period.

The central argument of this paper is that both the fall in homicides in Pernambuco (from 2007-2013) and the resurgence in them that followed (2014-2017) are fundamentally linked to two explanatory variables, which are in turn connected: the model of governance of public security produced in Pernambuco at the level of state government strategy and the capacity for deterrence produced in the framework of the Criminal Justice System (especially that of state police, who are under the responsibility and “control” of the executive power of the state). This article argues that the construction of this specific model of governance of Public Security – through mechanisms of integrated management of the police through the Department for Planning and Management (*Secretaria de Planejamento e Gestão – SEPLAG*) – and the definition, monitoring and realization of deterrence strategies within the police – but which also effected the Military Police, the courts and the prison system – were crucial to the reduction of the number of homicides in the most violent areas of the state. On the other hand, the dissolution of the capacity for

integrated governance of the police, with the consequent dismantling of the deterrence capacity aimed primarily at the reduction of homicides and crimes against life that had been successfully conceived and realized between 2007 and 2013, explains the increase in intentional violent crimes that has been observed since 2014 (SDS or *Jornal de Comercio*, 2017).

2. SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF A PUBLIC SECURITY POLICY: THE TRAJECTORY OF THE PACT FOR LIFE¹

The PPV-PE can be understood as as a series of public security actions effected by the state government, derived from the State Plan for Public Security (*Plano Estadual de Segurança Pública – PESP-PE 2007*). For some, it was a public policy, for others, a public security program implemented by the government of Pernambuco between 2007 and 2013 (Macedo, 2012, Ratton et al., 2014). It was started as part of the first mandate made by governor Eduardo Campos in January 2007, and reached peak success in 2009 and 2010, when there was a significant reduction in homicide rates in the state (12% in 2009, 14% in 2010). It collapsed in 2014, with subsequent increases in violent crime, raising CVLI rates to levels comparable to the years before the beginning of the PPV (in just the first half of 2017, there were 2876 homicides in Pernambuco).

The political decision of the then executive head of state to take the problems of violence and the lack of public safety – which had plagued Pernambuco for years – as priorities under his leadership is the starting point for understanding what happened in Pernambuco during this time (Macedo, 2012).

Even within the first six months of 2007 a number of measures were put into practice: the elaboration of the State Plan for Security (*Plano Estadual de Segurança, PESP-PE, 2007*), some incremental changes to the structuring of state police (with the modification of the criteria for promotion and immediate impact with

¹The factual reconstruction and analysis presented here are based on direct observation – which resulted in a personal field journal – related to the participation of one of the authors of this book, José Luiz Ratton, in the formulation and implementation of the PPV-PE, as a special assessor to the governor of Pernambuco, between 2007 and 2012. Alongside this, 60 interviews with the most diverse actors in the integration of the PPV (military and civil police officers, staff from the Department for Social Defense, the Department for Planning and Management, secretaries of state, experts from various departments, members of social movements and non-governmental organizations etc) were used as part of the process of evaluating the PPV-PE, coordinated by José Luiz Ratton and supported by the World Bank and the *Open Society Foundations* in 2014 and 2015.

regards to the renewal of leadership positions within the police), closer relations with the judiciary and the Public Prosecution Service and dialoguing with important sectors of organized civil society, such as non-governmental organisations and social movements which act in the field of human rights (Ratton *et al.* 2014)

The PESP-PE 2007 was developed through a collaborative process, and articulated that the public security policy that would be implemented, the PPV-PE, should combine measures for the “qualified repression” of criminality and actions for the “social prevention of violence,” with emphasis on the reduction of intentional lethal violent crimes (*crimes violentos letais intencionais, CLV²s*), for which a goal was set at a decrease of 12% per annum.

In the first few months of 2007, a mechanism for the governance of the actions from different organizations (the state police, the Public Prosecution Service, the judiciary, the Prison Service, the departments responsible for prevention programs for violence) did not yet exist in the field of public security. However, it is possible to identify the carrying out of integrated operations by the civil and military police that had the aim of dismantling death squads and criminal organizations responsible for the on-going perpetration of homicides in the state (Ratton, 2013).

In the second half of 2007, work began designing the model of governance that the PPV would follow, with the first meetings of a group coordinating integrated security actions which, however, would only take the shape of a formal Managing Committee (Comitê Gestor, CG-PPV), complete with a leadership, proper procedures, an information system and the capacity to implement actions, from September 2008.

One diagnosis produced by the NEPS-UFPE Research Group at the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE) – which subsidised the building of the PESP-PE in 2007 and gave rise to the PPV – had identified serious obstructions in the operations of state police and the Criminal Justice System which making impunity more likely (impacting the chance of someone being arrested, judged, and found guilty of homicide).

The option chosen by the government, in implementing the PPV, looked to integrate the actions of the Civil and Military Police, the judiciary and the Public Prosecution Service with the intention of producing an immediate impact on homicide rates, through deterrence methods, with various approaches, aimed at groups of criminals who carried out homicides in a continuous and consistent way (death squads, gangs linked to the drugs trade, etc).

For this to take place, according to the vision of the coordinators of the PPV-PE (Ratton *et al.*, 2014), it was first important to work around the separate jurisdictions of the Military Police (responsible for patrolling the streets) and the Civil Police (responsible for the investigation of crimes). However, police integration would only be possible if there was a coordinating mechanism above the police, at both the level of central government and in the Department for Social Defence (MACEDO, 2012)

The Managing Committee of the PPV began functioning regularly as a mechanism for the management of public security policy (and police policy) in 2008, with the political coordination of the Governor of the State and the technical coordination of Department for Planning and Management (*Secretário de Planejamento e Gestão – SEPLAG*).

The fact that the SEPLAG was on the frontline of the technical coordination of the CG-PPV can be interpreted as an indicator of the prominent role this department had in the direction of security policy at the time of the PPV, and paints a picture of the specific and rare form of state governance of public security from 2007 onwards. There was a clear shift of power and control, traditionally exercised by the Departments for Public Security and Social Defence, or more commonly by the state police, towards an authority outside of the police situated organizationally above all of the state’s departments, and which had a direct, intimate link to the governor himself: the SEPLAG.

According to a number of those interviewed as part of research carried out by Ratton *et al.* (2014), the political consolidation and legitimacy of the PPV’s model of management and monitoring – which combined the capacity for management and control based on territorialized criminal data supplied by the SEPLAG with police expertise, aimed at the reduction of lethal violence in each of the 26 integrated areas of security of the state – appears to have been one of the principle causes of the success, temporary though this

²Intentional Lethal Violent Crimes (*Crimes violentos letais intencionais – CVLIs*) include the penal categories of *homicide, grievous bodily harm followed by death, and armed robbery*, present in the Penal Code of Brazil, which includes deaths resulting from police actions in the field. As homicide is used in the academic literature of Social Sciences as the equivalent of murder, we will treat CVLIs and homicides as synonymous in this article.

was, of the PPV-PE. Senior police officers, judges, prosecutors, defence lawyers, members of non-governmental organizations and social movements as well as officials from the SEPLAG interviewed in 2013 and 2014 (Ratton *et al.*, 2014) suggest that some of the principle changes effected by the new model of governing security in the state might have been:

1. Public Security being placed at the heart of political agenda in Pernambuco by the governor himself;
2. The governor's capacity and will to take the lead in the executive direction of the Pact for Life;
3. The decision, outlined in the State Plan for Public Security and in the practice of the Managing Committee of the PPV-PE (CG-PPV), through processes of controlling police activity, that homicides would become the primary focus of the action of the police and public security policy;
4. The (progressive) pact made at the level of central state government that the principal strategy for reducing violence in Pernambuco, in both short and long term, would be realized by means of police action aimed directly at the reduction of homicide rates and controlled, at a strategic level, by central government (the Governor and Secretary of Planning), at an intermediate level, by the Secretary of Social Defence³, and at a third level, by the commanding officers of the Civil and Military Police.
5. The orientation of police forces towards the development of mechanisms of action that specifically addressed the reduction of homicide rates. At the level of the Military Police, this was by prioritizing new ways of patrolling and operating permanently in areas of with the most concentrated incidence of homicides. At the level of the Civil Police, this was in the development of institutional processes emphatically aimed at investigating those responsible for attempted homicides as well as homicides.
6. The development of a specific form of governance and a body responsible for managing and monitoring Public Security Policy (CG-PPV), with participation from the heads of the state police and leaders of the State Judiciary and the Prosecution Service. The manifest aim was to integrate, in some way, the actions of all of these state agencies responsible for the deterrence of crime, creating an environment of inter-institutional collaboration, working towards the territorial monitoring of violent crime rates as well as the monitoring of intervention protocols used by the police with intention of reducing crimes against life in each integrated area of security;
7. The expansion and elaboration of the Department for Homicides (*Departamento de Homicídios e Proteção à Pessoa – DHPP*) with priority for operations in the metropolitan region of Recife and the formation of teams of civil police officers responsible for the investigation into those responsible for crimes against life (CLVIs) in the interior of the state, which enabled the notable increase in the ability to investigate crimes against life in the state;
8. The elaboration and implementation of specific, compulsory protocols and procedures for action taken by the Civil and Military police aimed at reducing the number of homicides. Weekly or monthly goals for seizing arms, uncovering the instigators of crimes against life, investigating death threats, fulfilling judiciary mandates to imprison those charged with homicide etc were established and constantly monitored with the coordination of the CG-PPV in each of the 26 areas of security into which the state was administratively divided for the purpose of a territorial governance of the Pact for Life. Reports of police output which was (supposedly) aimed at reducing homicide numbers were compared with the indicators of crime for each area and for the whole state with the help of experts from the SEPLAG and direct coordination from the Secretary of Planning as well as the Governor, in the presence of leaders from all the organizations mentioned above (for each of the 26 integrated security areas (*Áreas integradas de segurança – AIS*) in Pernambuco);

³The Department for Social Defence of Pernambuco (*Secretaria de Defesa Social de Pernambuco – SDS-PE*) is the name given to the former Department for Public Security of the state, which is responsible for the coordination of the activities of the Civil and Military Police. It was never wholly accepted by the commanders of both state police forces in the form it took on in the 2000s, notably by the Military Police, but also by the Civil Police. There is a distinct problem regarding legitimacy of the forms of governance of Public Security linked to the growth of Public Security departments and the resistance of state police to being commanded by a secretary who is hierarchically superior to them (at least on a formal level).

9. The creation and optimization of incentives for special bonuses to all police throughout the 26 integrated security areas who reached the target set for the reduction of homicides, as well as special incentives rewarding effective performance in seizing arms.⁴ Such incentives looked to encourage the police to direct their efforts towards reducing homicide rates, be this through patrolling in vulnerable areas or investigating the instigators of crimes against life. This strategy helped to promote cooperative measures within the PPV's network of implementation, which benefited police adherence to the PPV's objectives. As well as this, monitoring the performance of the commanding officers in the integrated security areas enabled the controlling of police activity and the substitution of professionals who were not attuned to the objectives of the PPV-PE, or who were not able to achieve goals set in consecutive periods. In this sense, the individual gains became collective gains, which could in theory promote institutional change across the police forces: orienting them towards the desired solution to what is considered by the strategic level of government to be its most relevant political problem, crimes against life.
10. Promoting the coming together of actions of the police and other agencies within the Criminal Justice System (the Public Prosecution Service, the Courts of Justice, the Public Defence Attorney, the Prison Service). The increase in the Civil Police's capacity for investigation and the increase of the fulfilment of arrest warrants for killers (as well as non-killers) required negotiations and inter-organizational adjustment at the level of the CG-PPV in the presence of superior directors from the MP, DP, TJ and Prison Service, in order to resolve impasses and bottlenecks, with the objective of overcoming poorly structured systemic processes (Ratton *et al.*, 2012). In theory, it was possible to begin and make advancements – albeit timidly- during the adjustment period of the Civil and Military Police forces of the Public Prosecution Service, the Public Defence Attorney and the Judiciary and the Penitential Administration;
11. The conversion of general distrust in support of the primary means of communicating from the state towards the PPV-PE, from the end of 2008, when there was a clear perception that the PPV-PE was producing tangible results for the reduction of violent crime. Such support helped to promote public perceptions that the situation concerning public security was providing real positive change.
12. The dialogue with civil society organizations, between 2007 and 2009. Both regional and state forums and meetings focused on debating different strategies and ethos adopted by the police and non-police organizations for the reduction of violence in the framework of the PPV-PE, with the participation of governmental as well as non-governmental agents. The dialogue with the organizations from civil society, at this point, did strengthen the state's mechanisms for governance of security, but it was then prematurely dismantled.

The 12 points made above can be reduced down two significant changes, which structure the central argument of this article:

- The emergence of a form of **integrated governance** of Public Security, which had not previously existed, characterized by the participation of the Governor as coordinator of the Security Policy (the PPV-PE), strategically positioning the Department for Planning as the organ which drew up, monitored and oversaw the Security Policy; valorizing the SDS as an institutional space for coordinating the police, whilst in a partially subordinate, partially collaborative way with the SEPLAG; the subordination of the Civil and Military Police to the agenda with the reduction of violent crime as a priority, as well as to the new mechanisms of governance put into practice by the Governor.
- The development of mechanisms of state governance of security, whilst precarious, created concrete possibilities for the exercising

⁴Bonuses for seizing crack were also set up, which relied on imprisonment of those responsible for its sale. This initiative was introduced in the PPV-PE monitoring mechanisms, as a response to both police demand and influence from the central level of state executive power, from the Governor. The two ideas were linked firstly in an attempt to respond to the emphasis placed by the media on crack as a social problem and the fact that the same issue echoed in opinion polls carried out by the government itself. The opinion of the authors of this book (Daudelin and Ratton, 2017c) is that the actions of the police in the drugs trade in Recife, according to reports collated through interviews, provokes disruptions within the drugs trade which in fact tend to increase incidences of violence within it. Gonçalves (2016) carried out interesting analysis on this subject in the metropolitan region of Recife.

of **focalized deterrence** in reducing homicide rates. In some sense, the initial conditions were created – as well as some steps made in this direction – for some form of “democratization of patrolling” and for the “universalization of the investigation” (with the attempt to observe demographic criteria and the prevalence of homicides in each territory⁵). Of course, factors such as corporate resistance from the police as well as cultural resistance, as well as the structuring of the police for other purposes etc did not allow the consolidation of this model to take place.

The first two years of the PPV-PE (2007 and 2008) brought rather moderate positive results (a reduction in homicide rates of less than 2% per year). They were years of debate and dispute around the policy’s values and strategies of the policy; time spent developing a public security agenda, making incremental changes within police organizations and building up a model of integrated governance of public security. It could be said that, the concept of public security as a public policy was consolidated – even if this concept was still precarious and provisional – within the state government, all branches of the police, and other agencies of the Criminal Justice System – the Judiciary Power, the Public Prosecution Service and the Public Defence Attorney – as well as in the areas of civil society that participated in the public discussion.

In political terms, this period was strategic, for as well as promoting a tense and intense public debate between figures inside and outside of government who did not traditionally communicate, it enabled the Governor to practically commit himself to a public security agenda aimed at the reduction of crimes against life – whether this was because of pressure from the media or from civil society, or because a personal belief in the plan.

From the second half of 2008, the fine-tuning of governance mechanisms at the strategic level (the creation of the Managing Committee, the CG-PPV, and the outlining of police protocols aimed at the reduction of violence) and deterrence mechanisms at the level of the execution of the security policy, began to produce results. Between 2009 and 2013, there was a

substantial reduction in homicide rates in Pernambuco with particularly significant results in 2009 and 2010, when the target reduction rates were met (reductions of 12% and 14% respectively)⁶.

It is important to note that the targets for the reduction of homicide rates were reached during the period following the implementation of strategic, integrated, security governance mechanisms. Operational managers and police involved with the PPV’s implementation are unanimous in designating the CG-PPV as the turning point for the development of processes and actions that resulted in the significant reduction of homicide rates (Ratton, Galvão e Fernandez, 2014).

Ratton and Silva (2015) confirmed this opinion by carrying out a month-on-month analysis of homicides in Pernambuco between 2004 and 2014, a length of time in which two distinct periods – the first being the period before the creation of the CG-PPV and the second, the period following it – were treated in a specific way in order evaluate the impact of the introduction of the PPV-PE on the incidence of this type of crime.

If, on one hand, the success of the Pact for Life appears to be linked to a new form of governance of Public Security, on another, this model demanded an enormous amount of energy from the central level of government (the Governor and the SEPLAG), controlling the police whilst simultaneously offering them rewards and incentives for cooperation (Daudelin e Ratton, 2017c)

Furthermore, the failure of the Pact for Life is also partially linked to a new configuration of police forces. The police’s will to conform to the governance model based on control from politicians and technocrats (with budgets and bonuses as the way of guaranteeing

⁵The placing of these terms inside parentheses indicates that there was an attempt to expand both the patrolling carried out by the Military Police and the investigating of homicides in poorer in a way that had never been done before. In effect, neither one nor the other were actually democratized or universalized.

⁶In the year 2011 there was practically no reduction in the rate of homicide. Some of the crises in the governance of security, with disputes between the SDS-PE and the PM, likely impacted the capacity for deterrence. A further point that should not be left unaddressed and which is rarely discussed in academic literature is that the control of the Military Police forces in Brazil can be directly linked to higher or lower homicide rates. Poor control from superiors over lower hierarchical levels of the Military Police can signify a tacit authorization for violent and illegal operations of wings of the Military Police within the homicide trade. However, strikes by the Military Police, with tacit or explicit support from officials, or a reduction in the intensity of police patrolling activity, when these issues endure, can be read within the potential violent crime trade as an incentive for violence in the absence of police deterrence. All of these factors combined show just how sensitive the role of the Military Police in the governance of Public Security is, in a country and state that are chronically violent. Although the Military Police strike has ended, the continuation of the dispute between police syndicates and the state government, which has lasted for over a year may well have some connection, albeit a partial one, with the increase in violence in the state.

action aimed at reducing number of homicides) appears to have run out. Resistance from police corporations to external control over its activities intensified in a new context. The following changes at the central level of state government signal a shift in priorities and produced a lack of governance at the strategic level. The Secretary for Planning and Management who implemented the PPV became Mayor of Recife in 2012, and distanced himself from the activities of the PPV. The Governor Eduardo Campos entered the running for the 2014 Presidential Elections as early as 2013, and asked to step down from state government at the beginning of 2014. In all of these departures, civil servants with backgrounds in management who had participated in the earliest stages of the implementation of the PPV followed their superiors, opening up spaces which would lead to holes in governance at the level of the execution of public policy.

As mentioned above, all of these changes, which are directly related to the PSB's (*Partido Socialista Brasileiro, Brazilian Socialist Party*) ambition to occupy the political scene, riding on the coat tails of the Governor's popularity, directly affect the intensity of the different levels of control, and the quality of governance of Public Security. All the while, the resistance of police forces to external control became favourable. The police learned to "play" in the space of a politically weakened PPV Managing Committee. The governing language of indicators, processes and goals ceased to function in an environment with neither political leadership nor external control (bills to establish, compulsorily, the observance of protocols in the area of public security were not passed – the state Public Prosecution Service has been under the control of the state Government since the beginning of 2007, and does little by way of avoiding the dismantling of the PPV-PV and civil society, now weakened, has not found even a tenuous channel for participating in the control of public security policy).

In this study, the authors demonstrate that the first phase of the implementation of the Pact for Life (May 2007- August 2008) did not present significant results in statistical terms. In other words, it cannot be said that this phase significantly affected the linear trend seen in month-on-month homicide numbers. In this first phase, those in charge of coordinating police activity and the Public Security Policy at the central level of government were still finding their feet, and were not yet functioning effectively, as indicated by Ratton, Galvão and Fernandez (2014).

On the other hand, the fact that the period following the implementation of the Managing Committee of the PPV-PE (CG-PPV) did have an impact on the monthly sequence of homicides was confirmed, as much across the State of Pernambuco as a whole as in the intra-state subdivisions examined by the study: Recife, the Metropolitan Region and the Interior of the state. Without question the largest impact was felt in Recife, the capital, in which an average reduction of almost 3 deaths per month was observed after the implementation of the CG-PPV.

3. DISCUSSING AND INTERPRETING THE PPV'S DEATH

We have attempted to demonstrate that the reduction of violent criminality in Pernambuco between 2007 and 2013 has a direct relationship with the increased capacity of the state police (and the Criminal Justice System as a whole) to produce what we are defining as localized deterrence, that is to say: improving methods of identifying and detaining individuals who are involved in the perpetration of violent deaths or those vulnerable to being the target of homicides. This was only possible because processes of governance of Public Security in Pernambuco were established, which, from top to bottom, allowed the creation and implementation of concrete mechanisms that defined the agenda and the implementation of police deterrence strategies aimed at the reduction of violent crimes.

To deconstruct the argument: the expansion of the Civil Police's capacity to investigate the instigators of homicides and attempted homicides combined with the increased presence of the Military Police in areas susceptible to violence, as much by patrolling in non-patrolled areas as by the operation of tactical sectors such as the GATI in areas with a strong prevalence of homicides, led to the increase in the number of perpetrators and probable victims of violence being detained, reducing the number of homicides, firstly, by diminishing the supply of aggressors and targets (who, after all, are in some cases one and the same), as well as by sending out a message that murder was no longer a worthwhile enterprise because the chances of being arrested had notably increased (although of course this does not deter all eventual killers). Moreover, the carrying out of integrated police operations focusing on groups responsible for the systematic perpetration of violent deaths in urban areas with a history of violence had a substantial impact on

the reduction of homicide. These operations at least provisionally dismantled criminal gangs that were killing in a continuous way, by detaining and incarcerating a number of their members, and demobilizing networks of homicide perpetration.

Returning to a wider analytical level, this was only possible because protocols for the governance of Public Security had been developed, using the support of Governor himself, the (relative) control of the police by the Secretary for Planning, the Managing Committee of the Pact for Life (CG-PPV), which – through mechanisms for monitoring indicators and protocols in the territorial actions of the police aimed at the reduction of homicides, and incentives for carrying out such protocols (*bonuses + control – explain*) – guaranteed, on some level, the governance of the police, by prioritizing activities focused on reducing the number of homicides.

It is therefore possible to argue, in this way, that the principle change promoted by the Pact for Life was the prioritization of the reduction of homicides through the management of the police based in the territory in question and in the resolution of problems. The problem in question to be resolved was that of the elevated rates of Intentional Lethal Violent Crimes (*Crimes Violentos Letais Intencionais – CVLIs*), and the objective was to reduce the rate of CVLIs in Pernambuco by 12% per annum through a combination of the strategies of qualified repression of criminality, and of social prevention of violence – merging the work of the police with the activities of the Criminal Justice System.

It has come to light, however, through recent evaluations of the PPV, that the initiatives of the social prevention of violence were never successful, and that the reduction in the number of homicides observed (Ratton and Silva, 2015; Silveira, Ratton *et al.*, 2013) was only possible thanks to the impact of the integrated operation of the police in areas with elevated homicide rates, to the rise in incarceration of perpetrators of homicides and attempted homicide linked to criminal gangs and thanks to the increased capacity for judgement and sentencing within the Justice System (Zaverucha e Nóbrega, 2015, Ratton, Galvão e Fernandez, 2014, Gonçalves, 2016). It is worth pointing out, that the rise in incarceration of those accused of crimes against life occurred at the peak of “super-incarceration” movement that also targeted and

affected – on an excessively large scale – those accused of selling drugs (Gonçalves, 2016)⁷.

The *top-down* strategies (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973) for implementing public policies were fundamental for enabling the government’s expressed intention to reduce homicides to produce effective results (O’Toole Jr, 1995) throughout the period in question (2007-2013). The participation and direct involvement of the Governor and the Secretary for Planning in the development and implementation of the PPV played a vital role in the success of the policy, encouraging and enforcing the cooperation of agencies who historically competed over resources or power (Military Police vs. Civil Police; Civil Police vs. Public Prosecution Service; Public Prosecution Service vs. Courts of Justice).

On the other hand, the gradual distancing of the central level of state government from the coordination of the PPV-PE, in the changing of the principal leaders of the SEPLAG, who were transferred onto other government projects, as well as in the change to the Governor’s personal agenda with his involvement in the presidential race from 2013 onwards, reached its peak with Eduardo Campos’s disappearance. It is perhaps possible that the development of a new model of governance, without a charismatic leader like Governor Eduardo Campos is the primary challenge for the rebuilding of public security policies in Pernambuco. In any case, the end of the model of governance that the PPV-PE produced impacted the capacity for police deterrence and constitutes, for the authors of this study, the fundamental explanation for its decline, with the consequent relapse into the explosive growth of homicide rates seen between 2014-2017 and the return to thresholds from before 2007.

Ratton, Galvão and Fernandez (2014) suggest that some fundamental conditions necessary for the continuity of the virtuous cycle of innovations that

⁷The subject of incarceration has not been directly addressed in this article, but it has a direct and indirect relation with the behavior of homicide rates. In the case of Pernambuco, between 2007 and 2016, the prison population rose from just over 16,000 to more than 31,000 prisoners (FBSP, 2016). If, on one hand this is an indicator of police activity – and perhaps deterrence – which could be linked to the capacity to take people involved in violent crimes off the streets, it is acknowledged that the majority of those who were incarcerated were implicated in property-related crimes (theft, in particular) or had inferior positions within gangs that sell illegal drugs, especially in the metropolitan region. The super-incarceration, when added to the inhumane, degrading conditions within a prison system with unstable governance structures impacted the conditions of rational deterrence, and now influence focalized police activity and encourage illegal agreements made between governmental and non-governmental agents inside prisons, with repercussions in the number of homicides committed on the streets.

produced clear results between 2007-2013 in the field of Public Security in Pernambuco did not materialize and probably influenced the return of the rise in homicides in Pernambuco from 2014 onwards. The expansion of investigation processes carried out by the Civil Police and patrolling methods carried out by the Military Police would only ever have a sustainable impact if they were accompanied by focalized violence prevention methods⁸ in the same vulnerable areas that the police were operating in. With the exception of *Programa Atitude* (Ratton, West, et al. 2017) aimed towards the social protection of crack users in situations of social vulnerability, almost nothing was done. And *Programa Atitude* always had a very small demographic reach. The creation and implementation of violence prevention programmes in the same areas as the rise in the capacity for deterrence could have been legitimately conferred to police action on the small scale, and to state action in a larger scale. These could also induce mid- to long-term impacts in the reduction of homicides, at the same time as making it clear to the police that they are not operating alone within a public security policy, which was a former demand from the leaders of the police, as initially agreed in the original text of the State Plan for Public Security (PESP, 2007), which led to the creation of the PPV-PE.

The passage from an initial moment, in which the Governance had the capacity for leadership situated in the highest post within the State Government as something to lean on, would need to encounter a moment of equilibrium in the permanent development of mechanisms for the institutionalization of aims of the political agenda (with the reduction of homicides as a permanent priority) and in the permanent adaptation of the intermediate levels of implementation of the Pact for life (Ratton, Galvão and Fernandez, 2014). But this did not take place and the governance mechanisms were progressively weakened, allowing for different state agencies involved in deterrence within the PPV-PE's framework (the Civil Police, the Military Police, the Public Prosecution service, the Courts of Justice, the Public Defence Attorney, the Prison System) became accustomed to short-term corporate projects. In other words, Pernambuco went from a period of high governance capacity and efficient mechanisms for deterrence to a state of poor governance capacity and the dissolving of the capacity for deterrence.

However, this governance was being eroded for various reasons: the breaking of the dialogue with civil society in 2009, the conflicts generated between heads of police syndicates – especially that of the Military Police – and the commanders of the SDS and of the government on more than one occasion, between the commanders of the Military Police with the SEPLAG concerning police promotions, and the relatively passive position of the Pernambucan Public Prosecution Service, and the freeze on public security spending⁹. All of this, combined with the distancing of the central of government from the PPV-PE's original agenda, gradually affected the governance that would prove fatal to it.

It is important to point out that the managerialist way of thinking widespread throughout all sectors of state government, which believed that the rational running of the PPV-PE would resolve everything, helped to sabotage the political foundations of the governance. The negotiations and the building of agreements that allowed the running of the police to occur without a significant increase in the public security spending (“Do more with less” was the motto of both the SEPLAG and the government) in the early years of the PPV no longer held up public security policy (Ratton, Alencar and Fernandez, 2015). As years went by, as the public security spending was kept concentrated on conventional forms of realizing public security (contracting and paying the police, buying vehicles and guns) without significant investments in process to structure the increase in the capacity for focalized deterrence against crimes against life (within police organisations), the PPV-PE dried out. The capacity for organisational adaptation and training of police organisations, which would be central requisites for preserving the processes of institutional change and for maintaining the positive results obtained in the PPV's heyday, no longer had political support nor budget (Ratton, Galvão and Fernandez, 2014; Ratton, Alencar and Fernandez, 2015).

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this article sought to point out and discuss the main political, institutional and social mechanisms that contributed to the construction and deconstruction of governance and police deterrence in Pernambuco and its impact on homicide rates.

⁸To be understood as the prevention of violence.

⁹Ratton, Alencar and Fernandez (2015) carried out an analysis of Public Security spending in Pernambuco between 2007 and 2013

The dissolving of governance had direct impact on the PPV-PE's capacity for deterrence, driving it down. Less effective governance resulted in less deterrence, which resulted in more crimes against life. In a context of intense social inequality, inexistence of institutional reforms in the police and in the penitentiary system, lack of specific violence prevention programs, the collapse of police governance and deterrence was fatal.

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This article deals with a discussion similar to that discussed by the authors in Chapter 4 of *Illegal Markets, Violence, and Inequality - Evidence from a Brazilian Metropolis* (Jean Daudelin and José Luiz Ratton, 2018 - forthcoming). However, the form of exposition, the set of evidences raised, the options of analysis and the conclusions present significant differences and result from different possibilities of understanding the topic under debate.

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