https://doi.org/10.4322/dilemas.v17.n.2.57436 **Articles**

Torture on the streets: Lynchings in three Brazilian metropolis (2011-2020)

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This article presents the main results of a research conducted on lynchings in three Brazilian metropolis from three distinct regions: Manaus, Greater São Luís, and Greater Vitória. By analyzing newspapers articles, we obtained the frequency of cases, the proportion of deaths, motivations, instruments used, the profile of the victims, police action, and an analysis of the nature of the journalistic record. Compared to similar previous studies, the results show the differences in lynching assemblage and support a theory that recovers, in a new perspective, the relationship between this practice, state violence, and racism.

Keywords: Lynchings, cities, journalism, torture, racism

A tortura nas ruas: Linchamentos em três metrópoles brasileiras (2011-2020) O artigo apresenta os principais resultados de uma pesquisa sobre linchamentos em três metrópoles brasileiras de três regiões distintas: Manaus, Grande São Luís e Grande Vitória. Por meio da análise de reportagens, obteve-se frequência de casos, proporção de mortes, motivações, instrumentos, perfil de vítimas, atuação policial e uma análise sobre a natureza do registro jornalístico. Em comparação com estudos semelhantes e anteriores, os resultados mostram diferenças no agenciamento de linchamentos e sustentam uma teoria que retoma, em nova chave, a relação entre essa prática, as violências de estado e o racismo.

Palavras-chave: Linchamentos, cidades, jornalismo, tortura, racismo

Introduction

Lynching was one of the most important themes in the formation of the Brazilian field of studies on violence in the last decades of the 20th century, especially in the sociological and anthropological studies of the Southeast region. Interest in the topic has emerged in intense articulation with human rights organizations, at a time when lethal conflicts in urban and rural regions have become the subject of a broader research, alongside studies and public debates on forms of popular political participation (SINGER, 2003). Such debates were marked by concerns about the urbanization of the countryside and big cities, and especially about the process of re-democratization of the country within the scope of state institutions and the "political culture" of the popular classes (MARQUES, 2018; SINGER, 2003). The main methodology used was the analysis of newspaper articles, with a production of quantitative and qualitative data, in a sequence of cumulative and dialogued efforts that unfolded into a considerable set of publications (BENEVIDES, 1982; BENEVIDES; FERREIRA, 1983; CERQUEIRA; NORONHA, 2006;

MENANDRO; SOUZA, 1991, 2002; SINGER et al., 1999; SINGER, 2003; MARTINS, 2015), subsidizing and stimulating studies of a more qualitative nature through the analysis of legal documents and interviews (ADORNO, 1999; ADORNO; PASINATO, 2007; ALMEIDA, 1991, 1997; SINGER, 2003; SINHORETTO, 2001, 2009).

In the 2000's, this effort to systematically produce data on lynchings ceased, and the academic and political debate on the subject slowed down as studies on "urban crime" grew. No institution took on the task during this period of radical expansion of the scientific research capacity in Brazil, the creation of civil society organizations dedicated to human rights and public safety, and increase in access to newspaper articles. Meanwhile, the lynchings did not stop. On the contrary, according to the only researcher who continued the work of systematic collection of information in Brazil, José de Souza Martins (2015), the number of cases from 1999 to 2014 was higher than that found in the entire 20th century.

This article was born from a research project that had the ambition to recover the collective effort of producing information and analyses about lynchings, with the intention of igniting the public debate on the subject once again. We will present a first general and summarized interpretation of the data, built from news articles on events that took place from 2011 to 2020 in three "peripheral" Brazilian metropolis: Manaus (state of Amazonas), Greater São Luís (state of Maranhão), and Greater Vitória (state of Espírito Santo). The research emerged in 2018 from an intuition that an appalling growth of this practice had been happening in Manaus, together with the development of new street security and justice devices (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019). Hence, a network was built by institutions from these three locations and from other states with the aim of collecting and analyzing news articles, as well as reports, documents, videos, and publications on social media. The main product of this process, with a synthesis of analyzes and interpretations, was launched in December 2022 as scientific dissemination digital book (CANDOTTI; SILVA; LOURENÇO, 2022).[1]

The study, unfortunately, confirmed our initial intuition: 600 lynchings were found, resulting in 677 victims, of which 176 had their deaths confirmed. There were 345 cases (57.5%) in Manaus, 118 (19.6%) in Greater São Luís (GSL), and 137 (22.8%) in Greater Vitória (GV). Together, as of 2010, these metropolitan areas had 4.8 million inhabitants. Considering the population estimates for each place and year within the period surveyed, the average annual rate of lynchings is 1.05/100 thousand inhabitants.[2] In Manaus, the metropolis with the highest proportion of cases, the rate reached 3.5/100 thousand inhabitants in 2020. The lowest annual rate recorded, from 2014, also refers to Manaus: 0.5/100 thousand inhabitants.

In the prime of studies done on lynchings, research based on news articles found much lower proportions. Benevides and Ferreira (1983) found 82 lynchings from 1979 to 1982 in a national survey. Menandro and Souza's research (1991) presents 533 cases reported in Brazil from 1853 to 1990. The Núcleo de Estudos da Violência [Center for the Study of Violence – NEV] (SINGER et al., 1999) found 795 records distributed across all Brazilian states from 1980 to 1996. In the largest study carried out on a national scale, Martins (2015) found 2,028 cases from 1945 to 1998, and 2,505 cases from 1999 to 2014. In order to extract accurate rates from these studies, it would be necessary to have access to the number of cases per year, the distribution by location, and local population estimates per year. In any case, if we make an approximate calculation based on Martins' last data (from 1999 to 2014), considering the average number of cases per year and the Brazilian population average for this period, the average annual rate is 0.13/100 thousand inhabitants. Therefore, even considering the most impressive amount found in previous studies, in our survey we found a rate of lynchings per population with an average value eight times higher.[3]

The only Brazilian survey whose result was close to ours was carried out using another type of source. According to official data from the government of the state of Bahia, from 1988 to 1996 there were 581 lynchings, which resulted in an annual average of 64 cases and (by approximate calculations) an average annual rate of 0.5/100 thousand inhabitants. As the NEV's study shows, only 17% of these records were reported by news articles (SINGER et al., 1999). Although it is important to consider the increase in journalism's coverage capacity and how it became easier to collect news articles nowadays, intuition leads us to think that, even today, the actual amount of lynchings is probably much higher than the number of cases reported.

However, in addition to the methodological differences, the quantitative comparison between different historical and geographical contexts encounters serious limitations. There is a sociological, anthropological, and political misconception when we equate events that are very distant in time and space and amidst power relations of different natures. The oldest lynching found by Martins (2015), which victimized an Indigenous leader who proclaimed himself pope in 1585, is a very distinct event from the oldest lynching found by Menandro and Souza (1991), in which a slave driver was killed by slaves in 1853. Both, in turn, cannot be equated to the lynching of Black and Indigenous people, enslaved or freed, by white men in the 19th century. These three events have abstract qualities in common, or the same "abstract machine" that is actualized and differentiated according to "concrete assemblages" (DELEUZE, 2005).[4]

In our research, we started from these abstract qualities only so that we could find, through careful analysis, the concrete and current specificity of lynchings in Brazil — or at least, elaborate

strong hypotheses to foster a broader study. Precisely because we desire this research expansion, we now present below, in detail, the methodological strategies and procedures adopted.

Data construction

The analysis of news articles is the most common method used to study lynchings in Brazil and other countries in Latin America (BENEVIDES; FERREIRA, 1983; FUENTES DÍAZ, 2005; FUENTES DÍAZ; GONZÁLEZ, 2022; GAMALLO, 2012, 2017; MARTINS, 2015; MENANDRO; SOUZA, 1991; NATAL, 2012; NOBRE, 2022; QUIROZ, 2019; SINGER et al., 1999). This is related to a number of already well-known reasons.[5]

When studying news articles, the first challenge is to define a group of events that can be framed as lynchings. There has never been a consensus; a fact that says as much about the process of objectification as about the objectified multiplicity itself. A very common element is the "summary execution", that is, extra-legal, violent death, without the right to defend oneself; therefore, events without death were generally classified as "attempts" of lynching. This is also a definition used by journalists. However, in the main Brazilian studies, the proportion of cases resulting in deaths ranges from 30% to 50% (BENEVIDES; FERREIRA, 1983; MARTINS, 2015; MENANDRO; SOUZA, 2002; SINGER et al., 1999), without confirming if the other events were prevented by other people or were just interrupted before the occurrence of death. This is in relation to the fact that it is difficult to presume whether or not there was an attempt at homicide or simply the production of physical suffering up to a certain limit, defined by other criteria. In addition, it is impossible to count how many people died on their way to the hospital, during hospitalization or after, or due to sequelae. To further complicate the search for news articles, not all those describing scenes of a collective production of suffering, even resulting in death, use the term lynching.

Faced with these difficulties, we decided on a broad definition of the abstract machine of lynchings, which involves three criteria: a) production of extreme bodily suffering, at the limit between life and death, with or without the use of instruments — which we summarize later through the notion of *torture*; b) collective and asymmetric action, that is, two or more protagonists acting against a smaller number of victims; and c) publicity of the act, that is, act committed in a common place of coexistence, mainly in streets but also including schools, shops, institutions of internment etc. We chose to leave out another element common to other definitions, related to the immediate "motivation" for this practice, which is defined as punishment for the transgression of norms and values, private revenge etc. Excluded from the general delimitation of the set of

events to be studied, these motivations are the central object of analysis and allow us to delineate important differences and similarities in relation to distinct historical and geographical contexts.

The research started from a crossing of ethnographies (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019) and an initial survey of news articles (FACCIO, 2019), with the hypothesis that there was an increase in cases in Manaus in the middle of the last decade. This motivated a study on the period from 2011 to 2020, a moment in which there was no similar research being produced in Brazil, but the possibility of online access to newspapers articles had expanded considerably.

By observing the few cases reported by news articles in the hinterlands of the state of Amazonas, the current relevance of the difference pointed out by previous studies between lynchings in large urban centers and small cities could be noticed (BENEVIDES; FERREIRA, 1983; MARTINS, 2015).[6] In the same period, we proposed a comparative study with other metropolitan areas from two other regions of Brazil with populations of comparable size that had not been the object of similar research. Another survey, carried out in 2018, showed recurring records in Greater São Luís, located in the Northeast Region, and in Greater Vitória, in the Southeast Region, as well as researchers interested in the subject in these places.[7] In Greater São Luís, we selected the municipalities conurbated with the capital (Paço do Lumiar, Raposa, and São José de Ribamar), which together had about 1.3 million inhabitants in 2010 (IBGE Census). In Greater Vitória, all municipalities of the metropolitan area entered the survey (Cariacica, Guarapari, Serra, Viana, Vila Velha and Fundão), totaling about 1.7 million inhabitants in 2010 (Censo IGBE).

The survey of news articles was improved during the projects that executed this stage of research (BOAES MACÊDO, 2022; FACCIO, 2019; NOBRE, 2022; SOUSA, 2022; VIEIRA, 2021). We have defined a group of four newspapers or online news portals for each location, an amount which was exceeded in Greater Vitória. The newspapers were selected among those with greater circulation and relevance in the journalistic field, with free access to content, varying the editorial style and the target audience.[8]

To cover the largest possible set of events with lynching characteristics, we used 45 terms in Portuguese (please see the corresponding terms in English in endnote 9), processed with the websites' own search systems or in Google's advanced search tool.[9] We created a digital database in spreadsheet format, in which we classified the information described in the articles based on categories common to the other studies mentioned, for comparison purposes, with some adjustments. Twenty-five categories were defined and grouped into six thematic classes: frequency of cases and deaths, immediate motivations for lynching, description of the events, the profile of the lynched people, police action, and journalistic discourse. In this regard, the main novelty lies in the

attempt to analyze, based on quantitative data, the characteristics of the journalistic record, using the old hypothesis that this is a central element for the legitimation and reproduction of lynchings. Our main inspiration was the research on violence against women carried out by the Observatório da Violência de Gênero no Amazonas [Observatory of Gender Violence in Amazonas – OVGAM], which was based on police reports, either because of the form of categorization adopted or their concern to analyze the nature of the record itself.[10]

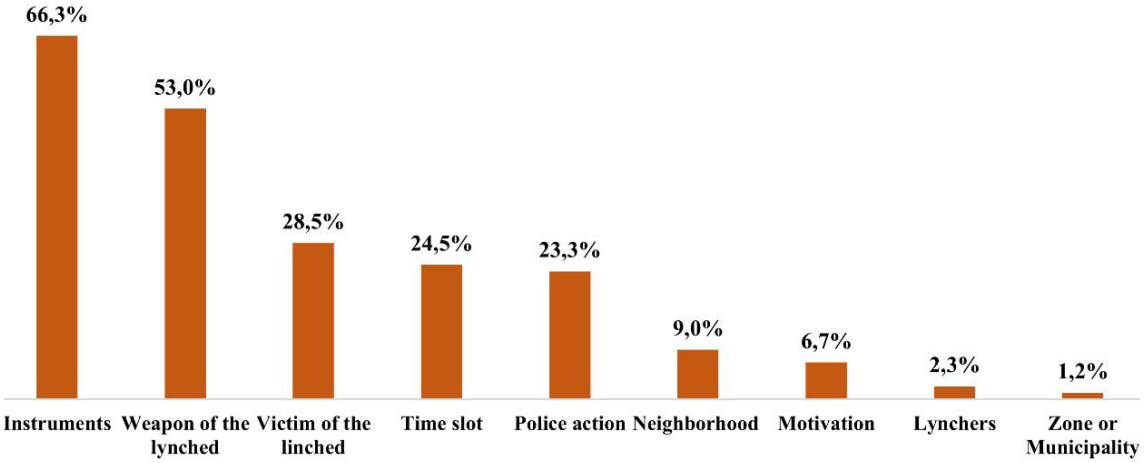
Due to a concern for analyzing the journalistic discourse, we carried out a process of extracting the texts from the news articles for a computerized analysis of the textual content, which until now, has resulted in the study of the frequency of terms of headlines and stories.[11] The research led to the extraction and analysis of 1,776 comments made on a digital platform about the news piece related to the case which had the greatest repercussion in the period surveyed. The results of this specific study were presented in the aforementioned book (CANDOTTI; SILVA; LOURENÇO, 2022) and will be the subject of another research article. The two databases can be freely accessed.[12]

The research on lynchings based on newspaper articles has well-known methodological and epistemological limits that are similar to studies on other types of violence that use police records (MELO, 2014; SINGER et al., 1999). With regard to newspaper articles, it is important to consider the editorial and journalist interest in the topic, as well as the moral lexicon, which can vary greatly over a year or a decade, thus affecting the quantity and quality of police occurrences. In any case, studies based on police reports also need to consider several factors, such as the interest of the victims in reporting the violence, the ease of access to police stations or the internet, the importance of the reports for various purposes, the incentive (or disincentive) by the state itself, the perspectives of the agents who produce these documents, among others (MELO, 2014). All of this is surrounded by a micropolitical field that deserves specific study in the case of news articles on lynchings. This endeavor would help us to understand how records unfold and can overcode meaningful events through limited discursive ordering. Therefore, when we deal with a newspaper article or a police report, the central issue is not the correspondence, if true or not, between the record and "the fact". The most important part is to understand the characteristics of each discourse, the way that they are situated in time and space, the power relations that condition them, and knowing how to turn such discourses into a means of accessing another universe of non-discursive events (FOUCAULT, 2008).

Not reported: The journalistic record

The first important analysis concerns the quality of the journalistic record and discourse. To understand this, the most relevant data is the proportion of "not reported" variables about each event (Graph 1) and about lynched people (Graph 2).

Graph 1 - Data not reported in articles by categories of analysis of lynchings in Manaus, Greater São Luís and Greater Vitória (2011-2020)



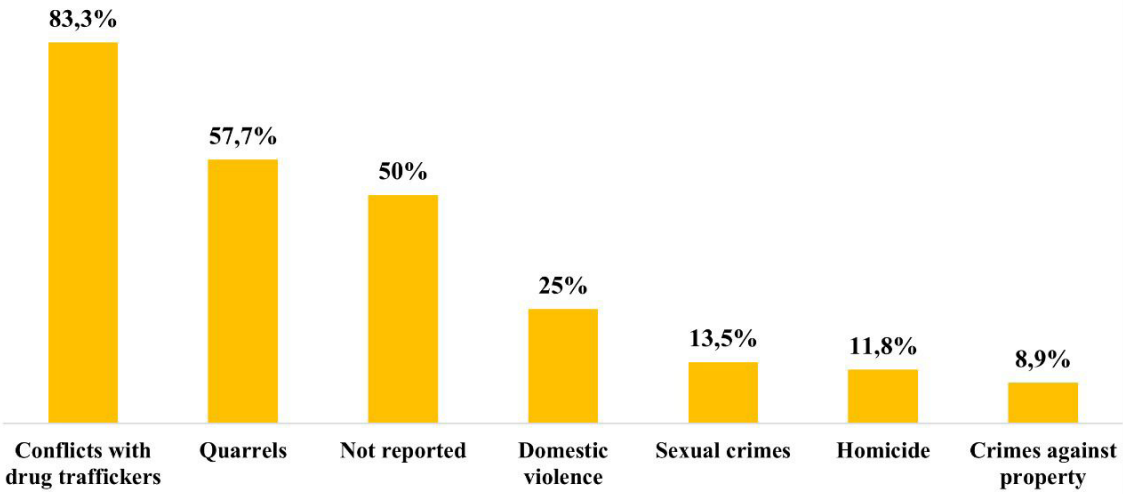
Graph 2 – Data not reported in articles by categories of analysis of the profile of people lynched in Manaus, Greater São Luís and Greater Vitória (2011-2020)

The graphs show that newspaper articles frequently reproduce information that is likely present in police reports of crimes that the people who were lynched have been accused of. On the

other hand, only in one-third of the cases the instruments used for lynching are named. Even in this regard, to a large extent, the description is summarized through generic terms like "thwacks." At the same time, the description of the person lynched normally consists of a hetero-identification of gender and (at less than 60% of the time) age. In 83% of cases, there is not a single effort in providing a general characterization of that person, not even a stigmatizing description such as "drug user". Finally, race and/or ethnicity appear only in four cases.

This distribution of data not reported should be related to the way that news stories refer to people who lynch.[13] After transcribing the terms used, we chose to classify them as accusatory or non-accusatory. We considered accusatory terms such as "aggressors", "suspects", "criminals" etc., and non-accusatory terms like "residents", "neighbors", "*populares*"[14] etc. Only in 16% of cases were accusatory terms used against people who, according to the article, conducted lynching. When we cross this classification with the immediate motivations (Graph 3), we see that the accusatory terms are used: a) in almost all lynchings attributed to drug dealers; b) in cases where there is no information about the motive; c) in most cases of "quarrels" (which include personal conflicts of various types and gather motivations that in other studies have been defined as "futile"). These are the same situations in which the lethality rate of lynchings (number of deaths per number of people lynched) is higher than 50% on average in the three locations surveyed. However, what draws more attention is precisely the fact that it was in the most common situations, motivated by crimes against property (excluding robbery followed by death), that journalism used fewer accusatory terms against lynchers.

Graph 3 – Use of accusatory terms against lynchers for motivations for lynching in Manaus, Greater São Luís and Greater Vitória (2011-2020)



The frequency analysis of the words used in the headlines (Table 1) and in the articles (Table 2) helps to understand the logic that organizes the journalistic discourse. Most headlines draw attention to a lynching event through two words: "beaten" and "assaulted". These are words that are very far from describing what actually occurs in these events (as we will demonstrate in the section "Torture") and can be defined as euphemisms. The word "lynching" appears with a frequency proportionately higher only in GSL newspapers — which may be explained by an adherence to the term after the case of greatest repercussion in the period, during July 2015.[15] In the body of the articles, however, even this softened description loses space to the crime attributed to the lynched person, named as "suspect" — while the term "victim" refers, most of the times, to the person harmed by them. At the top of the list in the three places surveyed is the term "police", which can be explained by the almost omnipresence of public security institutions and agents (military and civilian) in the articles as a source of information and as central subjects of the event — during and after it. Everything is exposed as if there were no contradictions. The police perspective sheds light on the crime attributed to the lynched person, which, in turn, casts a shadow over the lynching event. To the editorial and journalists' interest in the topic, we shall add the police officers' interest in disseminating information.

Table 1 – Most frequent terms in the headlines of articles on lynchings in the four main newspapers by location (2011-2020)

Manaus		**Greater São Luís**		**Greater Vitória**	
Terms	**Frequency**	**Terms**	**Frequency**	**Terms**	**Frequency**
Man	108	Robbery	27	Beaten	50
Suspect	93	Man	26	Suspect	46
Beaten	93	*Populares*	25	Assaulted	40
Assaulted	67	Suspect	24	Man	29
Robbery	60	Attempt	20	To rob	21
Populares	47	Lynched	17	Robbery	21
Zone	42	Lynching	16	*Populares*	17
To steal	34	Beaten	16	Arrested	14
Lynched	33	Assaulted	15	To steal	13
Dies	32	Mugger	11	Population	10

Table 2 – Most frequent terms in the body of articles on lynchings of the four main newspapers by location (2011-2020)

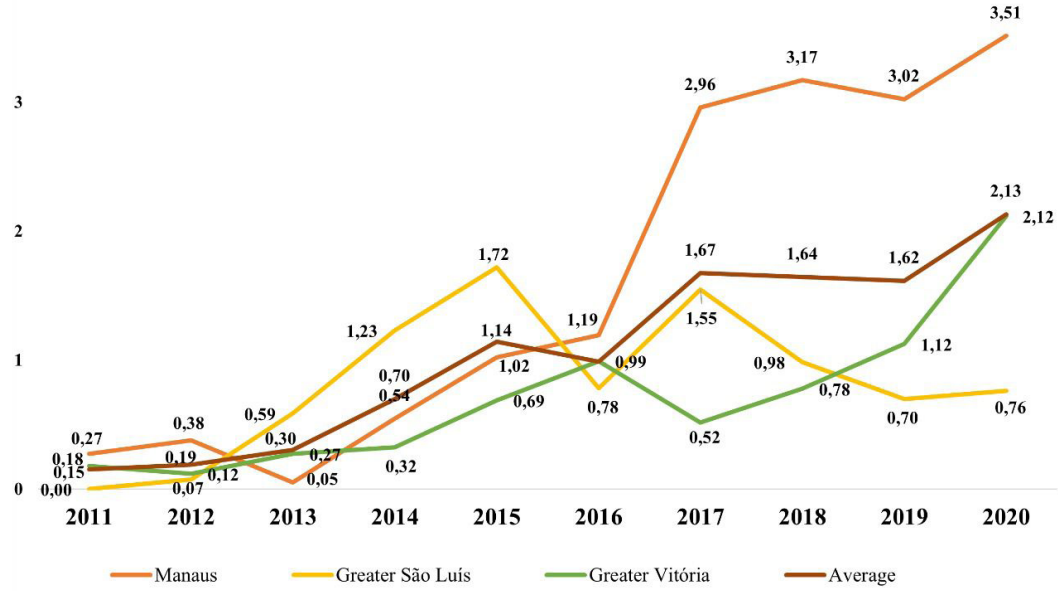
Manaus		Greater São Luís		Greater Vitória	
Terms	**Frequency**	**Terms**	**Frequency**	**Terms**	**Frequency**
Police	530	Police	139	Police	267
Man	525	Suspect	96	Suspect	237
Zone	459	Neighborhood	95	Neighborhood	151
Neighborhood	398	Man	88	Man	150
Suspect	364	Victim	86	Victim	143
Victim	293	*Populares*	84	Residents	103
Street	257	Robbery	70	Location	97
Location	247	Identified	63	Assaulted	96
Crime	227	Location	55	People	93
Cicom*	219	Lynching	54	Police station	93

* Acronym for the Companhias Interativas Comunitárias da Polícia Militar do Amazonas [Interactive Community Companies of the Military Police of Amazonas].

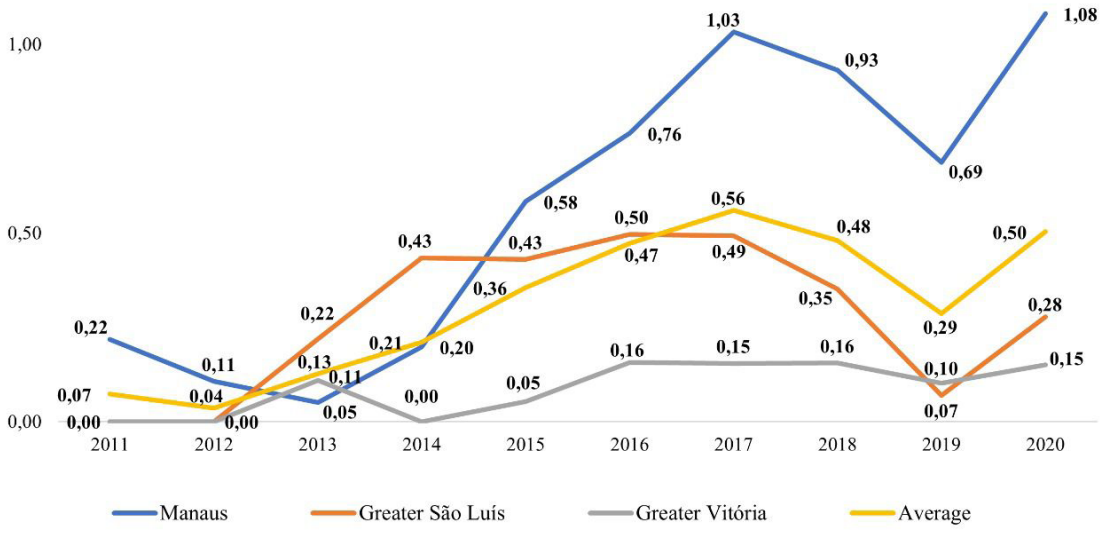
Distinct growths

The distribution of records regarding lynchings (Graph 4) and confirmed deaths (Graph 5) over the years shows three very distinct curves. Although the three locations surveyed have populations of similar sizes, in order to carry out a more careful observation, we calculated the rate per population based on the IBGE's estimates for each year. The use of the estimate is important, mainly due to the probability of the relatively higher growth of the population of Manaus in the period (21%). To understand the comparison between the graphs, it is crucial to consider that the lethality of lynchings (deaths per lynched persons) varies over time and according to locations. Considering the data from the second half of the decade, when 80% of cases took place, Manaus and GSL showed close annual averages (31.6% and 33.8% respectively), and GV presented a much lower value (15.8%). The average lethality of the whole period is 27.4%.

Graph 4 – Rate of lynchings per population, year and location (Rate per 100 thousand inhabitants based on the IBGE's estimates for each year)



Graph 5 – Rate of deaths resulting from lynchings per population, year and location (Rate per 100 thousand inhabitants based on the IBGE's estimates for each year)



The first location that had a rise in cases is GSL, which reached its highest rate of lynchings in 2015 (1.72/100 thousand inhabitants) — a year before State of Maranhão gets the highest rate of violent intentional deaths in that decade (FBSP, 2021).[16] However, it is interesting to observe that in the first half of that year, the number of news articles (2) was much lower than in the previous year (9). News articles have multiplied precisely after the case that had the greatest media repercussion of the entire sample, which occurred in July (see endnote 15). In that month alone,

six other cases were in the news. Journalistic interest in lynching may have also been influenced by this broader event (SOUSA et al., 2022). In 2016, the number of cases began to fall, although 2016 had the highest rate and absolute number of deaths. The curve of these last years may be related to the decrease in criminal tension and to a robbery control activity on the part of criminal organizations in the peripheral areas.[17]

Greater Vitória, as already mentioned, was the place where we found the lowest lynching lethality rate. This is reflected in the average annual death rate (0.09 against 0.28 in GSL and 0.57/100 thousand inhabitants in Manaus). The case curve makes a movement that is almost opposite to that of the IVD in the state of Espírito Santo. While this data decreases from 2013 onwards, the news pieces on lynchings grew from 2015 on and reached their first peak in 2016. From 2017 to 2020, the lynching rate rose to four times higher, reaching its highest value in 2020 (2.12/100 thousand inhabitants). This rate falls only in the year in which the number of IVDs grows significantly (2017) under the influence of the strike organized by the Military Police of Espírito Santo (RIBEIRO JUNIOR; ROSA, 2022). In this period, there was only one case reported — which reinforces the hypothesis that the journalistic record is influenced by police activity.

The Manaus curve, the most impressive one due to its high values, also had its first jump from 2014 to 2015, following the increase of IVDs in the state of Amazonas. However, from 2016 onwards, the situation changed: while IVDs fell slightly and remained at a lower level compared to 2015, the lynching rate increased to approximately 150% in a year, accumulating a rate of almost 250% growth in the second half of the decade. The death rate by lynching, on its turn, fell in 2018 and 2019 but reached the highest value of the decade in 2020 (1.08/100 thousand inhabitants). Both IVD and lynching variations do not reveal a simple correspondence with the dynamics of conflicts between criminal organizations. In addition, according to current research, there are reports of drug dealers authorizing lynchings in cases of robbery, but there is also the condemnation of this practice in the criminal universe. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the tensions between criminal organizations and police groups have intensified since 2017 (CANDOTTI, 2022a). The main explanatory hypothesis for the jump in lynchings in Manaus is the expansion of a "diffuse vigilantism" through informal networks aimed at producing "security" on the streets with the intense participation of police officers on duty or off duty (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019). We will return to this hypothesis in the last section of this essay.

Overall, the drop in death rates in 2019, with the lowest values in the three locations over the second half of the decade, is something that calls our attention. The decrease is proportionally

larger in GSL and smaller in GV. In these two locations, this difference follows the decline in IVDs in the same year. Even though lynching records are of a much lower order of magnitude, the data comparison suggests that lynching dynamics may be associated with the main factor responsible for the general variation of IVDs — that is, conflicts around certain illegal markets, involving criminal and police collectives (FELTRAN et al., 2022). Inversely, if we consider the hypothesis that the amount of reported lynchings corresponds to a small proportion of the totality, the actual amount of deaths resulting from lynchings in Manaus may explain a relevant proportion of IVDs.

Property motivation

The distribution of the immediate lynching motivations is the main difference from past decades' research. Such distribution may be the key to understanding both the jump in case rate and the historical singularity of this practice in the last decade — the concrete assemblage of the abstract machine (DELEUZE, 2005).

In the NEV's research concerning the 1980s and 1990s, the absolute majority of lynchings started from accusations of crimes against persons and sexual crimes. The most frequent motivation was homicides, corresponding to one-third of the cases. Both bodily injury and rape motivated 15% of the actions. On the other hand, crimes against property appear as a motivation for a quarter of cases. In the 1990s, this figure dropped to one-fifth, and crimes against persons reached 70%, with 38% motivated by homicides.

Our research found a very different distribution. Crimes against persons — including events such as assault, bodily injury, homicide, attempted homicide, domestic violence, and kidnapping — amount to 6.0% of the motivations. Crimes against sexual dignity are 8.7% of the total — ranging from 7.0% in Manaus to 13.1% in GV. There are also other less recurrent motivations, such as conflicts with drug dealers (2%) and quarrels (4.3%). On the other hand, crimes against property[18] were the immediate motivation for lynchings in 70.4% of cases in Manaus, 70.3% in GSL, and 73.0% in GV. In total, robberies motivated 64.3% of cases. In short, in our survey, the reality of data is different and reveals an impressive regularity.[19]

Torture

Lynchings are named by both academic literature and journalism as "popular justice", "street justice", "taking the law into one's own hands", "private revenge", among other terms that do not properly describe the practice itself. As we have shown above, journalistic records most often use the verbs "to assault" and "to beat". However, when the newspaper articles describe

in more detail how the violence was perpetrated, they reveal the use of several instruments. We found references to 33 objects, which we classified into five classes. The most frequent (present in 133 lynchings) is the one that brings together instruments used for beating which may cause bone fracture, depressed skull fracture, and internal and external hemorrhages. This class includes: iron bar, barrel, helmet, wheel key, shovel, manhole cover and, most commonly, pieces of wood. The second most frequent class (in 57 cases) is that of thrown objects, such as: stone, tile, brick, and even a television. The third is that of sharp objects (found in 40 cases), which can be used for perforation: hoe, knife, machete, sickle, glass bottle, dagger, *terçado* [bush machete], and scissors, in addition to the generic reference to "bladed weapons". The fourth class is firearms, which appear in 31 cases and are used before (in an attempt to capture), during (as an intensification of suffering), and at the end (as a form of execution) of the lynching act. Lastly, there are a set of objects that are residual (in 22 cases), but no less important: stun gun, bicycle, car, mason's pencil, nettle, and instruments used for immobilization (which, in our intuition, are more recurrent than the records show), such as shoelaces, safety belt, rope, chain, and wire. The greater presence of beating instruments seems to stem from a journalistic tendency to reduce the instruments to "pieces of wood" or to simplify violence by using the term "thwacks". There was no record of burn victims — which seems to be a characteristic of lynchings in small towns, motivated by actions with a high degree of cruelty.[20]

The description prepared by Lobato (2022), based on information on the criminal proceedings concerning the lynching of young Cleidenilson Pereira da Silva and teenager Antônio Gabriel Texeira da Silva, which took place in São Luís in 2015 (see endnote 14), helps us to visualize how these instruments are used:

> In a random, intense sequence of blows such as kicks, stonings, and hitting with bottles, the young man had his body undressed, raped, humiliated, and tied to a streetlight, while the teenager, who had already been beaten several times, with his feet and hands tied, pretended to be dead to avoid further aggression. The young man tried to survive the blows by clinging to the post. His naked, bloodied body, with his back facing the people who tortured him. More kicks, punches, and flasks were thrown at him until a fatal blow pierced his chest between his heart and lung and left his body hanging between the post and the rope (LOBATO, 2022, pp. 78-79).

The newspaper article used as a reference for our analysis describes this event in another way, absolutely softening.

> Also according to the chief of police, after being dominated by the bargoers, the offender was tied with a rope to a post, where he was attacked and completely undressed by the people [*populares*] who live in the neighborhood (HOMEM…, 2015).

Made against the backdrop of journalistic silence, the systematization of data on instruments shows a dimension little analyzed by studies on the subject, precisely the one that is probably most relevant to those who are victims of lynching (and for whom their life matters):[21] materiality. By giving central importance to this dimension, what becomes clear is a public spectacle of *torture*. A term that, despite carrying the limit of a state category and possessing a colonial history of relativized uses (ASAD, 1996; CANDOTTI, 2022b), synthesizes a process of production of bodily and affective sufferings — accusations, threats, and humiliations that are never described by journalism but were highlighted by Rodrigues (2013) — which involves a certain calculation of actions, of the limits borne by the living body, and of the degree of disfigurement of the body when deceased.

Precarious victims

The lack of information on the profile of lynched people has already been discussed. We know that 97.8% were identified as men. However, the few cases in which women were victims are no less important and show relevant qualitative aspects. Of the 15 lynched women, six were next to a man and were accused of robbery or robbery followed by death. In addition, the only case of a lynching described as racist victimized a Black woman who was a "university student"; she was beaten inside the condominium where she lived in the city of Manaus. The only death recorded was of a woman identified as a "*travesti*",[22] a characterization also attributed to another victim whose lynching was filmed but had no information reported by the police. There was also a woman described as "transsexual", lynched after stealing a bicycle. The few news stories with women victims expose, in a more accentuated manner, the way norms and morals related to gender, race, and sexuality have constructed the lynching assemblage in general in Brazil in the last decade.

Age or at least the age group was recorded for only 409 of the victims (60.4%). In this group, 63 were adolescents, 224 were young adults, 117 were adults, and 5 were elderly people.[23] In other words, 70.2% of the victims that had their age informed were teenagers or young people, showing a similar proportion to other Brazilian studies (MENANDRO; SOUZA, 1991, 2002; SINGER et al., 1999).

The third important characteristic concerns social class. Of the 386 cases motivated by crimes against property, only ten had the profession of the victim mentioned. Of the 71 victims who had their profession recorded (10.4%), only three worked in an activity that can be considered middle class, in addition to the aforementioned "university student". Among the professions with more than one occurrence are: motorcycle courier (6), mason (5), industrial worker (3), assistant mason (3), low-ranking military police officer (2), driver (2), rideshare driver (2), electrician (2),

and waste picker (2), in addition to the "self-employed" figure (11), which appears at the top of this list. Considering the little data available, the profile is simple to trace: they are mostly working-class people, who perform informal, low-paying, and unstable remunerated activities. The same profile was found in the NEV's study (SINGER et al., 1999).

Finally, regarding race and/or ethnicity, the news articles only mentioned the cases of four people: an Indigenous man, recognized as an advisor to an Indigenous organization and lynched by people suspected of drug trafficking; two Black people, thus identified in light of statements denouncing lynching with a racist motive; and a white person, the only one who had his/her race recognized without any specific reason. Faced with this almost absolute absence of data, we carried out a process of racial hetero-identification by observing photographs of living and dead bodies.[24]

The main procedure was inverse to the most common racialization processes: whiteness was marked, distinguishing white and non-white people. This work was possible in 227 photographs, covering 33.5% of the total number of victims — a very relevant proportion. In this group, only 6.6% of the people were identified as white. This data is radically different from that found by Menandro and Souza (1991), Martins (2015), and in the study undertaken by Clark (2011) based on NEV's data. When we compare the proportion of self-declared white people in the 2010 IBGE census, this data becomes more significant. In Manaus, while 5.0% of lynched people were identified as white, from the total population 26.6% declared themselves that way. In GLS, the census indicates 27.8% against 7.1% of the victims. Finally, in GV, the region with the highest proportion of victims of this race (11.1%), we found the highest proportion of the total population (38.4%). In short, the proportion of white people lynched is three to five times lower than their presence in the population of the locations surveyed. And although the number of deceased people who had their race recognized is small (25), the lynching lethality among non-white people was 70% higher than among white people.[25] As it is possible to see, the profile of lynched people is similar to that of victims of homicide, police violence, and incarceration in Brazil (BRASIL, 2015; CERQUEIRA; FERREIRA; BUENO, 2021; SINHORETTO, 2021).

Police (omni)presence

The last part of the analysis is closely linked to the first, about the journalistic discourse. As we have shown, "police" is the most frequent word in news articles. To analyze police action, we used categories similar to those used by the NEV (SINGER et al., 1999), focusing on the presence of military and civilian police officers *at the lynching location*, excluding forensic police

presence in cases with death. In a few cases, we considered the presence of municipal guards, who have been holding an ostensive police function in many Brazilian cities.

The result shows a relevant difference. In the previous study, considering the data average from the 1980s and 1990s, police were absent in 39.8% of lynchings, of which 9.8% had no information. Police presence, in turn, was recorded in 52.6% of the events; from this total, in 41.2% of events the police "reacted", in 10.2% they were "powerless", and in 1.2% they were "conniving" (Singer et al., 1999). In our research, we identified police absence only in 1.8% of cases, in addition to 23.3% without information. The absence is greater only in lynchings motivated by conflicts with drug dealers (8.3%); the same happens to the lack of information (41.7%), which is also high in cases initiated by quarrels (42.3%). On the other hand, the police presence on site was recorded in 74.8% of the cases, considering that in 43.3% they were present, in 30.8% they were present and intervened, and in 0.7% they were conniving.[26] Police presence is higher in situations initiated by accusations of crimes against property (80.8%) and lower when motivated by homicides and robberies followed by death (61.9%). Overall, police presence is 40% higher and absence is 20 times lower than in previous decades, data that does not reveal any significant variation in the three locations surveyed.

Two factors may explain this increase. The first may be an intensification of communication between police officers and journalists, a relationship enhanced by digital and mobile technologies, but not only. Even in cases where the police action on site is not recorded, chiefs of police, investigators, or even the Civil Police appear as the main source of information. This interaction can also be an explanatory factor for the inexpressive amount of records concerning police connivance, which would deserve a separate article. Without entering the subject, this data contrasts with reports, ethnographies, and what is exposed in television programs, mixing journalism with misogynistic and homophobic humor that exalt lynching (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; GODINHO NETO, 2021). The second factor concerns the effective increase in the presence of the Military Police in large urban centers, including in the inner cities, as well as the police capacity to respond to complaints (SINHORETTO, 2022). Another data obtained by our analysis expresses this factor quite well: in 59.5% of lynchings, at least one lynched person was arrested and sent to the police station on a criminal charge; this data does not include those who were hospitalized, remained detained, and escorted at hospitals.

Sparking off the debate

In the Brazilian academic and political debate of the 1980s and 1990s, lynchings were placed in a special position amidst other types of violence, urban and rural. On the one hand, it was questioned

whether such events could be a form of "political participation" of the popular classes alongside riots, looting, and other forms of collective action that would carry a contestatory background. On the other hand, this "popular justice" would have similarities and continuities with the state (police and prison) and parastatal (extermination groups) violations and violence, in addition to being legitimized by the repressive and penal selectivity of the state's security and justice institutions — perspectives of problematization that do not make one another null and that were mobilized simultaneously by the same authors, with different emphases. What connected them was, in a way, a desire to insert lynchings in a sociological theorization of Brazilian re-democratization.

However, the theory that has endured for the last two decades becoming a mandatory reference has deliberately dissociated these two perspectives and, to some extent, freed lynchings in relation to concerns about re-democratization. We refer to the work of Martins (2015), whose argument, developed in the 1990s, is complex and valuable. In short, this sociologist perceived in the perspective that focused on the continuities between institutional and popular violence a theorization that was too reductive of lynchings and of institutional and cultural modernization in Brazil, as if the former did not have a specificity and as if the latter was not itself a producer of new violence. Martins then bet on an improvement of the perspective dedicated to popular collective actions, criticizing it insofar as it presented "a certain implicit romantic tolerance in relation to forms of delinquency of the poor against the rich or of the people against the State" (MARTINS, 2015, p. 74). Against this, he elaborated a theory that considers a long-lasting history crossed by the "cultural centrality of death." The "actuality" of lynchings, in his terms, "is not that of the new, but that of the persistent" (MARTINS, 2015, pp. 10-11). Hence the importance of a historically broader survey. The sociological explanation was thus shifted to the field of the symbolic, to the "conservative mind", and lynchings were interpreted as a form of "participation" — considered "anomic" and "irrational" — of the popular classes in the conservation of the social order, a "tragic expression of the divorce between the legal and the real that historically presides over the stalemates of Brazilian society, between power and people, between the State and society" (MARTINS, 2015, p. 11).

In the study that gave rise to our research, Martins' theory (alongside others) had already been the subject of criticism (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019). The results we present reinforce the initial criticism and lead us to create a distancing in two aspects. Firstly, we found lynchings that seemed different to us from those analyzed in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as from the more extensive set analyzed by Martins. It was not homicides, rapes, and other types of violence which violated people's bodies that motivated a thunderous growth of cases; it was robberies — an action that involves armed violence, but aimed at taking someone's property.[27]

At the same time, lynchings motivated by these crimes occur today amidst a vast and complex socio-technical network centered on the production of "security" on the streets, which is the focus of increasing economic and affective investments. Not surprisingly, news articles on lynchings are predominantly records of people arrested for robbery.

The study of the news articles, therefore, joins the ethnography on "street security" in Manaus, which launched the hypothesis of a "diffuse vigilantism" practiced through sedentary and mobile networks of human and non-human agents, with the intense participation of police officers and also dedicated to lynchings (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019). Vigilantism is the concept used for decades to define a collective action with some degree of continuity and planning (that is, not exactly spontaneous) dedicated to the production and vigilant regulation of social and moral order through violent punitive threats. Like lynchings, there is no consensus on its definition, especially regarding the relationship between vigilante groups and the state (JOHNSTON, 1996; MONCADA, 2017).

Twentieth-century Brazilian research, not without good reasons, classified lynchings by using the opposite concept: mob lynching, that is, as spontaneous practices.[28] The concept of "diffuse vigilantism", in turn, is born from the dialogue with studies from the last two decades, inspired by a new theorization of the state in Africa and other Latin American countries, which perceived forms of vigilantism on the margins of the state or in a "gray zone" between the state and private groups (BUUR; JENSEN, 2004; FUENTES DÍAZ, 2017; FUENTES DÍAZ; GAMALLO, Leandro; QUIROZ ROJAS, 2022; PRATTEN, 2006, 2008). Our proposal is to think of vigilantism as a power exercised in a micro-political way, as an assemblage that promotes and relies on diverse collective groups, more or less organized or spontaneous, including state agencies and agents, and that is driven by the vigilant and punitive *production* of social and moral order through various types of violence, including lynching.

This diffuse vigilantism is exercised currently in Brazil under the name of "security" and against property crimes. This is how lynchings fit into the process of mass incarceration in Brazil. In the last decade alone, incarceration rates in the states of the three metropolitan areas surveyed have grown within a range from 63% to 123%, and the sum of their prison populations exceeded 50 thousand people in 2020. In that same year, in the states of Amazonas and Maranhão, almost half of the crimes attempted by prisoners were against property.[29] The racial and class selectivity of this incarceration is unquestionable. Capturing, arresting, and imprisoning poor, peripheral, Black, and Indigenous people, especially young men, became a practice whose degree of regularity and normality would be unimaginable in the 1980s and 1990s. The torture inflicted by police officers

at the time of arrest became so scandalous that in 2015 the state justice instituted a new procedure, the custody hearings, in an attempt to throw a wet blanket on the matter. It is not just the profile of lynched people that resembles that of imprisoned people. The meaning of lynching in the metropolitan areas does not seem to be that of "private revenge", but that of collaboration in the bodily punishment of a "crime" in the name of "security". Torture in the middle of the streets becomes one of the possible beginnings of the lengthy state punitive process. Nowadays, this practice seems to be not a "divorce" (separation) between "State and society", but a rite of "marriage" (alliance) that institutes a punitive *continuum* different from the one analyzed by Foucault (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019; FOUCAULT, 1987). If there are differences, perhaps they can be thought of as variations in the "management of suffering" and the "torture regime" (CANDOTTI, 2022b).

This perception leads us to the second aspect of distancing. Martins uses the comparison with lynchings in the U.S. to conclude that, among us, lynchings occur when a "moral line" of separation between social groups is violated — and not a "racial line" (MARTINS, 2015, p. 24). For this, he makes use of data such as the relevant proportion of white people lynched and the participation of Black people in the lynching of other Black people. The comparison with the U.S. context, however, cannot be made without mediation, since racism in the U.S. is different from what we have experienced in Brazil, especially in the 20th century after the spread of the "racial democracy" theory supported by the state policies (NASCIMENTO, 1978). The absence of racial and ethnic data on lynching victims in reports can be understood as a product and means of reproduction of a dominant knowledge that denies, on the discursive level, the existence of racism as well as of racial and ethnic inequalities.

However, in recent decades, this "denied" and "disguised" racism (Gonzalez, 1988) has been increasingly exposed by social movements and by a new generation of Black and Indigenous intellectuals who have made state violence a privileged focus of public denunciation and theoretical elaborations. These new academic and political efforts converge in the definition of racism (and not of a culture of death in general) as a persistent element in Brazilian history. In the small universe of studies on lynching, this new attention can already be noticed, either in a central (OLIVEIRA FILHO, 2021) or peripheral manner (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019; GODINHO NETO, 2021; JESUS, 2022; NOBRE, 2022; PACHECO, 2019; PORTO, 2021). Nonetheless, more than confirming the centrality of the "racial line", the data we present provides more raw material for this essential debate and suggest that the analysis of lynchings may be an important way to understand the actuality — as well as the regional diversity — of racism in Brazil.

Through these two aspects of distancing, we revive the perspective that, in the 1980s and 1990s, brought lynchings and state and parastatal violence closer together. However, we do it in another way, immersed in another context and with another theoretical-political concern, as it is not a question of equating different forms of violence and human rights violations, but of showing practical and micropolitical connections that intensify a kind of punitive and racist rationality, a "diffuse and continuous torture" (GODOI, 2017). As much as nowadays the "reconstruction of democracy" is on the agenda, the context is not that of re-democratization, but that of the transformation of neoliberal democracy in the face of the capillary and institutional expansion of a new fascism. Finally, we agree with Singer (2003), for whom lynchings served as an object of support for an enlightenment critique that, by attacking the inability of the state justice to punish in a more efficient and fair way, ended up feeding the penal state. The theoretical-political concern we share is, first of all, to recognize that lynchings are a central issue of our social life (which Martins has been insisting on for decades), and then to assume that their actuality demands a collective effort against punitive and racist expansion and in favor of other forms of justice and conflict resolution.

Notes

[1] Two projects were carried out: "Lynchings and street safety in three Brazilian metropolitan areas", funded by the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico [National Council for Scientific and Technological Development] (CNPq, 2019-2022, 425876/2018-7), and "Lynchings in the Manaus Metropolitan Area: a multidimensional and comparative study on street justice, the State and moralities", funded by the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Amazonas [Amazonas State Research Support Foundation] (FAPEAM, 2020-2022). The research also benefited from the results of the individual projects of Faccio (2019), Vieira (2021), Nobre (2022), Boaes Macêdo (2022), and Sousa (2022). Finally, all this collective effort resulted in postgraduate research findings (ALVES, 2018; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019; PINHEIRO, 2017) that were supported by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior [Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel – Capes].

[2] Population data was obtained from the website of the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia Estatística [Brazilian Institute of Statistical Geography – IBGE). Available at: https://sidra.ibge.gov.br/. Accessed on: 4 Aug. 2022.

[3] In the United States, where the longest and most systematic research effort was carried out, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP, 2021) found 4,743 cases from 1882 to 1968 spread across the country. In other Latin American countries, the proportions do not get close to our result (FUENTES DÍAZ, 2005; GAMALLO, 2012, 2017; QUIROZ, 2019). The exception appears in a recent study by Fuentes Díaz and Gonzalez (2022), who identified 918 cases from 2012 to 2021 in the state of Puebla (Mexico), whose population is 6.5 million inhabitants. The approximate average annual rate, in this case, is 1.41/100 thousand inhabitants, reaching 4.3 in 2019. The study shows an impressive growth of cases in a proportion that is higher than that of Manaus exactly in the same period.

[4] In dialogue with Foucault (1987), Deleuze (2005, p. 46) defines the abstract machine as a "map of relations between forces" that acts as an immanent cause of concrete assemblages, which in turn, integrate, actualize, and differentiate it. Concrete assemblages are singular events in which elements of heterogeneous natures form networks and enter into symbiosis. Foucault's notion of "device" can be experienced as a concrete assemblage.

[5] First, lynchings are not easy to observe directly — even though it is not impossible (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022; CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO; ALVES, 2019). The use of interviews, especially with protagonists and witnesses, is more common, involving other difficulties, common to studies on crimes (GODINHO NETO, 2021; SINHORETTO, 2001, 2009). In Brazil, as in many countries, this conduct is not defined as a specific crime in the legislation, which makes it difficult to search for records as well as to produce data based on police reports, police investigations, and criminal proceedings. In any case, for decades, events of this nature have not received proper attention from state justice operators (ADORNO; PASINATO, 2007; SINGER, 2003; SINGER et al., 1999).

[6] We considered extending the study to the municipalities of the Manaus Metropolitan Area, which comprises municipalities with low demographic density and with little journalistic coverage. However, it would imply more complex research, to be carried out in 2020 and 2021 — which, in the end, was impossible due to the covid-19 pandemic.

[7] Especially in Maranhão, where Thiago Allisson C. de Jesus had already started his research (JESUS, 2017, 2022; JESUS; SANTOS, 2021).

[8] For Manaus, the portals *A Crítica*, *D24am*, *Em tempo* and *Portal do Holanda* were chosen; for Grande São Luís, *G1 Maranhão*, *Imirante*, *Jornal Pequeno*, and *O Imparcial*; and for Grande Vitória, *A Gazeta*, *ES Hoje*, *Folha de Vitória*, *Folha do ES*, *Gazeta Online*, *G1 Espírito Santo*, and *Tempo Novo*.

[9] The terms used were: *agredida* [assaulted]; *agredido* [assaulted]; *agrediram* [assaulted]; *agrediu* [assaulted]; *amarrada* [tied]; *amarrado* [tied]; *amarraram* [tied]; *amarrou* [tied]; *apedrejada* [stoned]; *apedrejado* [stoned]; *apedrejaram* [stoned]; *apedrejou* [stoned]; *assassinada* [killed]; *assassinado* [killed]; *assassinaram* [killed]; *assassinou* [killed]; *espancada* [beaten]; *espancado* [beaten]; *espancaram* [beaten]; *espancou* [beaten]; *espancamento* [beating]; *fúria coletiva* [collective rage]; *justiça coletiva* [collective justice]; *justiça com as próprias mãos* [taking the law into one's own hands]; *justiça de massa* [mass justice]; *justiça de rua* [street justice]; *justiça popular* [popular justice]; *lincha* [lynches]; *linchada* [lynched]; *linchado* [lynched]; *linchagem* [lynching]; *lincham* [lynch]; *lincharam* [lynched]; *linchamento* [lynching]; *linchou* [lynched]; *pauladas* [thwacks]; *queimada* [burned]; *queimado* [burned]; *queimaram* [burned]; *queimou* [burned]; *torturada* [tortured]; *torturado* [tortured]; *torturaram* [tortured]; *torturou* [tortured]; *tribunal de rua* [street court]. As one can imagine, it took careful manual work to select news articles that described lynchings and not other types of events. When more than one story was found about the same event, we decided to use the one that contained the largest amount of information according to the defined categories.

[10] To learn more about OVGAM's work, including the "Mapa da Violência de Gênero do Amazonas" [Map of Gender Violence in Amazonas] and the OVGAM-App (database access application), see https://ovgam.wordpress.com/. Access on: Jan. 14, 2023.

[11] To extract the textual content of the news articles, a Python code was developed directly in Google Colaboratory. The programming code is available at: https://github.com/PSCM/projeto-linchamento. Accessed on: 14 Jan. 2023.

[12] The database, as other project's products, is available on the website of the research group ILHARGAS: www.ilhargas.ufam.edu.br.

[13] In this regard, a methodological note should be made: previous studies have considered it possible to extract categories of groups that lynch from journalistic texts. "Neighbors" and "residents" would be different from "*populares*" (please see endnote 14), for example, and these terms would help to understand the way the lynching took place (MARTINS, 2015). In our analysis, these terms did not allow us to reach any conclusion in this regard.

[14] Term in Portuguese that names, in a generic way, people in general.

[15] It refers to the lynching of young Cleidenilson Pereira da Silva and teenager Antônio Gabriel Texeira da Silva on July 6, 2015. In the article that appears in the database, the term "assaulted" [*agredido*] was used instead of lynching. The same article also describes that the victim was tied and undressed. Furthermore, the lynching of the teenager was not described.

[16] The IVD data for the 2011-2020 period was extracted from the editions of the *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública* [Brazilian Yearbook of Public Safety]. To verify the data, access the website: https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/.

[17] The curve of cases and deaths from lynching in the GSL invites a more detailed study regarding possible correlations with the dynamics of homicides and other lethal violences, which also increase throughout the first half of the decade and decrease in its second half. The dynamics of homicides were well explained in a recent article based on ethnography and written by Luiz Eduardo Lopes Silva, that demonstrates the centrality of power relations between factions and between them and the police (FELTRAN et al., 2022).

[18] In our study, crimes against property include robbery, theft, theft by deception, and public property damage. The crime of robbery followed by death was excluded because it is an action with greater severity.

[19] The difference discovered can be influenced by the geographical focus of the research. The data presented by NEV do not make a distinction between city and countryside or metropolises and small towns. When this distinction was made, in the case of the state of Bahia, 50% of lynchings in Salvador may have been motivated by crimes against property, while in the rest of the state, only 20% (SINGER, 1999). Similar values reappear in the study by Cerqueira and Noronha (2006) about the same state, which analyzed records from 1997 to 2001. On the other hand, based on NEV's data, Natal (2012) found a decrease in motivations for crimes against property in the São Paulo Metropolitan Area: 42% in the 1980s, 22% in the 1990s, and 24% in the 2000s.

[20] For an analysis of a lynching case in the countryside of Amazonas, see Porto (2021).

[21] During the launch of the report at an event at the Federal University of Amazonas (UFAM), Priscila Serra, a family member of a young lynched man as well as an important Brazilian leader in the field of human rights and anti-carceral struggles, spoke about how the exposure of the words concerning the instruments used was the most difficult part to watch.

[22] *Travesti* is an emic term used in Brazil to refer to a male-to-female (MTF) transgender person.

[23] The distribution by age group goes after the following classification: teenager (up to 17 years old), young people (between 18 and 29), adult (30 to 59), elderly (60 or over).

[24] This was a complex (and painful) exercise undertaken by the Black sociologist from Manaus, Israel Pinheiro. In the text, we expose the data of the first classification procedure, which distinguishes white and non-white people. In addition to the difficulty in recognizing skin tones through photos (to differentiate Black and multiracial people), this choice is mainly justified by the impossibility of recognizing Indigenous people through photographs. As the Indigenous presence is substantial in Manaus — and even more invisible in other places — it would be a mistake to summarize the group of non-white people as Black. In a second procedure, we sought to identify, among non-white people, who would most likely be Black. Of the 212 non-white people, the following percentage was recognized as Black: in Manaus, 34%; in GSL, 79%; and in GV, 100%.

[25] Research conducted in previous decades did not obtain a substantial sample of information on race and ethnicity. In the NEV's study, this absence is interpreted as a pattern in the news, which "reinforce the impossibility of characterizing Brazilian racism" (SINGER et al., 1999, p. 187). Clark (2011) made a study based on a small dataset from NEV's database and arrived at more interesting conclusions about gender than about race. In a study on a more extensive period, from 1853 to 1990, Menandro and Souza (1991) identified racial data from 32% of the victims — perhaps due to the presence of racial naming in older records. Only 62% of these people were classified as Black or "mulatto". However, a careful comparison with previous studies seems to be unreliable, since we do not know if it is a historical or methodological difference.

[26] We considered "not recorded" when it is not possible to confirm this presence; "absent" when the news confirms the absence; "present" when the presence is described without further details; "present and intervening" when the report describes the intervention to prevent the continuity of lynching; and "present and conniving" when there is a record of the presence and some type of conniving behavior. The category "powerless" was not included in our study simply because there was not even a single record of police action prevented by lynchers — which appeared in the news from cities from the countryside, where victims were forcibly removed from police stations.

[27] Something that deserves more studies is the importance of the cell phone in intensifying lynchings. As a bus collector describes in a lynching report: "I gave him the money, but the blessed one asked for my cell phone. Well, you know what then, right? My precious cell…" (CANDOTTI; PINHEIRO, 2022, p. 63). In previous decades, workers did not carry with them goods of such high value and part of such a pungent market, perhaps international, that involves obtaining stolen property, resale, and/or dismantling.

[28] With the exception of the study by Paes Machado and Nascimento (2012, 2013) on taxi drivers, which did not have lynchings as its main focus.

[29] Data obtained or calculated from the analytical reports of the Departamento Penitenciário Nacional [National Penitentiary Department] (DEPEN). Available at: https://www.gov.br/depen/pt-br/servicos/sisdepen/relatorios-e-manuais/relatorios. Accessed on: 25 Nov. 2022.

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