

LUIZ ANTONIO MACHADO DA SILVA: AN INTELLECTUAL OF THE MOST “REFINED DEMEANOR” IN BRAZILIAN SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Abstract

In this article, we recall the legacy of Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva, a victim of COVID-19 in 2020, for Brazilian Social Sciences and, more specifically, Urban Sociology. This was the field to which Machado had dedicated himself during more than 50 years of research and studies, opening new paths and analytical perspectives for the study of life on the “margins” (favelas and peripheries of large cities - contemplated through the city of Rio de Janeiro, where he lived and conducted his research). Within different contexts, Machado analyzed the State production of “urban marginality”, seeking to understand the life experiences, survival strategies, political struggles and challenges of the urban popular strata. As of the 1990s, he also dedicated himself to analyzing the effects caused by the erosion of the world of work and by state regulation that erstwhile accompanied it, thereby guaranteeing a minimum of rights and some social integration. Thus, within this context, he directed his analytical efforts towards understand both the meaning and the uses of the category of informality, and above all, was attentive to and concerned with the effects brought by the emergence of violent crime from within an urban structure torn apart by the labor crisis, as the social foundation to the times of deconstruction of our institutional and political paradigm of social integration. Since it would be impossible to gauge the true grandeur of his work, we have sought to reconstruct just a part of his research trajectory and his analytical contribution to Urban Sociology within the different contexts. We also emphasize a lesser-known aspect of Machado: that of a public intellectual who always sought to intervene in the public debate regarding the place of the urban popular classes within the city.

Keywords

Urban Marginality; Everyday Life of the Lower Classes; Social Integration and Work Crisis; Informality; Violent Crime; Slums and Urban Peripheries.

LUIZ ANTONIO MACHADO DA SILVA: UM INTELLECTUAL DA MAIS “FINA ESTAMPA” NAS CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS BRASILEIRAS

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Resumo

Neste artigo, recuperamos parte do legado de Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva, vitimado pela Covid-19 em 2020, para as Ciências Sociais brasileiras e, mais especificamente, para a Sociologia Urbana. Esse foi o campo ao qual Machado se dedicou durante mais de cinquenta anos de pesquisas e estudos, abrindo novos caminhos e perspectivas analíticas para o estudo da vida nas “margens” (favelas e periferias das grandes cidades – pensadas a partir do Rio de Janeiro, cidade onde vivia e realizava suas pesquisas). Machado analisou, em diferentes contextos, a produção da “marginalidade urbana” pelo Estado, procurando compreender as experiências de vida, as estratégias de sobrevivência, assim como a luta política e os desafios das camadas populares urbanas. Também se dedicou a analisar, especialmente a partir dos anos 1990, os efeitos do esgarçamento do mundo do trabalho e da regulação estatal que outrora o acompanhava, garantindo um mínimo de direitos e alguma integração social. Assim, dirigiu seus esforços analíticos para compreender o sentido e os usos da categoria de informalidade nesse contexto e, sobretudo, mostrou-se atento e preocupado com os efeitos do surgimento da criminalidade violenta no seio de um urbano dilacerado pela crise do trabalho, como fundamento social dos tempos de desconstrução de nosso paradigma institucional e político de integração social. Sendo impossível dar conta da grandiosidade de sua obra, as autoras buscaram reconstruir parte de sua trajetória de pesquisa e de sua contribuição analítica para a Sociologia Urbana em diferentes contextos. Também se enfatiza uma face pouco conhecida de Machado: a de intelectual público que sempre buscou intervir no debate público sobre o lugar das classes populares urbanas na cidade.

Palavras-chave

Marginalidade Urbana; Vida Cotidiana das Camadas Populares Integração Social e Crise do Trabalho; Informalidade; Crime Violento; Favelas e Periferias Urbanas.

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Fina estampa caballero
Caballero de fina estampa
Un lucero que sonriera bajo un sombrero
No sonriera más hermoso
Ni más luciera caballero
En tu andar andar reluce la acera al andar andar
“Fina estampa”¹

Introduction

When we began to write this article, the sociologist Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva had died only a few months before, a victim of COVID-19, which exacerbated the health problems he had already been suffering with for some time. His death caused considerable commotion, and the grief that we all felt was expressed through the numerous affectionate messages sent to his wife, Pina Chinelli (sociologist, research and publishing partner), and in the sad, sober notes from the postgraduate programs and from our associations, in the loving, heartfelt manifestations from colleagues, partners, friends, mentees, students and his many interlocutors throughout the favelas and peripheries of Rio de Janeiro, where he lived and conducted his research. Many tributes were also paid to Machado through round tables organized to celebrate his life, his work and his legacy.

All these tributes highlighted just a small part of the multi-faceted brilliance of this dedicated professor and supervisor, who was responsible for training generations of researchers and professors throughout Brazil. He was both a voracious reader, whose interests stretched across a wide range of topics, and a critical, although enormously generous, commentator, who paid great

1. “A refined gentleman/A gentleman of refined demeanor/A star, that even shines from under a hat/ There is no smile more beautiful/ Nor of such brilliance, gentleman/And the manner of your gait illuminates the pavement as you walk, as you walk along”. A free translation of the song entitled *Fina estampa* [Refined demeanor], by the Peruvian singer Chabuca Granda, recorded in Brazil by Caetano Veloso.

attention to detail. As a researcher, Machado always emphasized the importance of fieldwork, and considered his interlocutors with great seriousness, valuing their skills, while never romanticizing them. As an author, he developed his very own style, which has largely contributed to consolidating Urban Sociology in Brazil.

Having been supervised by Machado at different times, and partners throughout various research projects, courses and publications and, above all, as friends, we have chosen to begin this article with the verses made famous in Brazil by the voice of singer Caetano Veloso. We are aware that a *Fina estampa* [Refined demeanor] alludes to a romantic relationship. Evidently, that is not what this is about. First, we wish to give emphasis, following the lyrics of this song, to his *Fina estampa* as a master, in the strongest sense of the word, which, for many of us, Machado was and continues to be, inasmuch as the dialogues we have had with him, even today, continue to resonate throughout our thinking.² His smile, often ironic, was always welcoming and open within the horizontal relationships that Machado insisted on establishing. He felt that if it were not in this fashion, then it was not worth having. But, in the interests of this article, we must focus on the lyrics of *Fina estampa*: your “brilliance [...] illuminates the pavement as you walk, as you walk along”. With this poetic reference, we refer the reader to the legacy of Machado da Silva, built over fifty years of research on the “urban popular layers”.

We intend to demonstrate that for Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva, and even though he enjoyed emphasizing his own “marginal” character (in life, whenever he could, he experienced living on the margins; in academia, he always emphasized that his career as a sociologist and the research questions he contemplated had just “fallen into his lap”), there was, throughout his professional life, an axis of research and public action that directed his work, and this stunning, consistent legacy has been left in our hands.

For those who lived alongside Machado, his legacy includes a number of important dimensions. The first is perhaps the value he attributed to constant, frank dialogue with his interlocutors (who were not only researchers of his generation, but also, were his students and mentees, as well as those he liked to call the “organic intellectuals” from the favelas). A second dimension would be his focus on everyday life, as indicated by Araújo (2019), and the avoidance of normative and/or institutionalist analyses. Lastly, giving value to the observation of spaces and scenes considered banal, i.e., focus on the “margins”.

2. Auspiciously expressed by Mariana Cavalcanti: our “imaginary dialogues with Machado that have not been interrupted ...”. At a round table to pay tribute to Prof. Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva, held at the Núcleo de Estudos da Cidadania, Conflito e Violência Urbana [Center for the Study of Citizenship, Conflict and Urban Violence] at the Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro (NECVU-PPGSA/UFRJ), on November 3, 2020.

1. An epistemology of the margins

Perhaps the one who best captured, defined and acclaimed Machado's way of being was Luiz Cesar Queiroz Ribeiro (professor at the Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano e Regional [Institute of Research and Urban and Regional Planning] at the Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro – Ippur/UFRJ – and friend), who highlighted that he had always been deeply committed to his work as a researcher and teacher with an “epistemology of the margins”.³ Over more than five decades of research, Machado wrote about urban marginality, the life experiences, political struggle and challenges of which he tirelessly sought throughout his “work” – a term that the author would emphatically criticize for never having pursued a unified theoretical project.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Machado's objective was to understand the place and practices of marginalized workers in the process of Brazilian capital accumulation (Machado da Silva [1971] 2018a). In the 1980s, he criticized the limitations of the forms of struggle by urban social movements (Anpocs) and, from the 1990s onwards, he showed himself to be concerned with and attentive to the effects of the emergence of violent crime within an urban structure torn apart by the work crisis, as the social foundation of the period of deconstructing our institutional and political paradigm of social integration. Forever critical of the theory of marginality, he began discussing the category of “informality”: what it represented within this context and the meaning of its heuristic depletion (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2002a). However, during the 2000s, he once again talked about the “margins”, now in dialogue with the formulations of Veena Das (particularly in DAS; POOLE, 2004). He produced few citations regarding the “margins of the state”, and there was no lack of criticism towards the Foucauldian foundation of its more widespread use in academia. Between the “marginality” of Development Sociology and the “margins” of contemporary Urban Sociology, Machado remained intellectually and politically interested, in everyday life, in the “forms of life” (according to the elaborations developed by Veena Das, inspired by Wittgenstein) of those who continued to exist almost always in spite of the State – often against the State. In short, the margins were always Machado's focus, whether reflecting upon the city of Rio de Janeiro, its favelas and peripheries, or discussing the regional and national dynamics that involved them and that, in part, guided both the success and the failure of those agencies, such as the efforts of researchers who sought to understand them and influence their possible conditions, in both the sociological and public debate.

3. A round table to pay tribute to Prof. Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva, held on November 28, 2020, by the Postgraduate Program in Political Sociology at the Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense (PPGSP da Uenf).

2. The urban issue: territories, daily life and politics

In the introduction to his book *Fazendo a cidade* [Making the City] ([1967] 2016a), Machado emphasized that his object had always been the “practical organization of ‘everyday’ life”⁴ in the city, and a large part of his production was dedicated to this subject since, while still a student of Social Sciences at PUC-Rio, in the mid-1960s, he had the opportunity of working with Anthony Leeds. ‘Tony’, as he used to call him, as well as being his great intellectual mentor, was also a friend (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2018b). Although he addressed other themes and problems, carried along both by the winds of analytical turnarounds in Brazilian social sciences and by the injunctions of public debate that imposed upon him the need and urgency to intervene, analyzing their often harmful effects on the “urban popular layers”, Machado addressed several issues, all related to what he defined as the issue of “social integration” (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2016b). In what follows, we attempt to demonstrate the manner in which he understood the “social question”, encompassing, in chronological order, some of his contributions to Urban Sociology and Brazilian Social Sciences.

His first published article, *A politica na favela* [Politics in the favela], dates back to 1967 [2016a] and focused precisely on this issue, reflected upon territorially in terms of his fieldwork, conducted with Anthony Leeds, in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. At the time, one of the most current themes in Brazilian Social Sciences was populism. Recognizing the contributions of these studies, Machado, however, rejected their affiliation to perspectives that favored institutional analysis and focused on analyzing how the State and its operators, technicians and politicians produced a subordinate incorporation of the “people”. In what was already viewed as one of the hallmarks of his work, namely, regarding the components as competent actors, in line with Isaac Joseph – who, by the by, was also a friend – Machado da Silva inquired of himself how they, seen as “clients” according to this analytical perspective, effectively operated in daily life, in the territory and in relation to the State. How did they deal with the State and its operators pressuring them to become incorporated and silenced in their daily life? Did they submit? Did they find ways around them? Did they confront them? In what way(s)? In *A politica na favela*, Machado also highlighted the “nodal points” created by certain residents, those who occupied better positions on the labor market and, consequently, in the social stratification within the favela – the “bourgeoisie of the favela”. The role of intermediation and conversion of internal (voting) and external (urban services)

4. This and all non-English citations throughout have been translated by the translator, Brian S. Honeyball.

resources emphasized the agency of workers. Years later, in dialogue with a series of other research projects that unfolded from his seminal article, Machado (2002b) returned to what he called the “structural root of the favela problem”: the analytical and political separation between labor and housing in Brazil. Almost forty years after he conducted his first fieldwork in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, the logic of “negotiated control” persisted. Residents continued to be subjected to power arrangements that reiterated their position of subordination. *A política na favela* ([1967] 2016a) and *A continuidade do problema da favela* [The continuation of the favela problem” (2002b) made it possible to understand that politics and citizenship, or the demands for them, in collective movements or in territorial action, were more complex than clarifying institutionalist interpretations (which operated based strictly on constitutional laws and inscriptions – thus, from the top down) with regard to daily life “on the margins”.

Published more than fifty years ago, *A política na favela* is extremely current in terms of the question that it addresses on social integration (bearing in mind, of course, the new power relations present in these locations), expressly because it took into account the agency of the favela residents and their very diverse projects, plus, as throughout his entire work, it radically dispensed with any attempt to romanticize them. Poor, excluded and exploited, yes. This did not mean however, that they would necessarily form a political community, a social movement, or even a “community of meaning” (WEBER, 2000), which could be the basis of a common struggle. On the contrary, the concept of the “bourgeoisie of the favela” highlighted the social heterogeneity of favela residents⁵ (and the diversity of their projects, contrary to theoretical and political perspectives that sought to build and challenge the “*favelados*” – those who live in the favela – as a collective). However, what is interesting is that Machado never returned directly to the point in order to continue deeper, perhaps because of the urgency of the other issues that aroused his interest in understanding and acting in the public sphere. With the social heterogeneity across favela territories well established in his thought process, he never bothered to define it. Meanwhile, he maintained that the social heterogeneity of favela dwellers did not dilute the distance between the boundaries and the “asphalt”.

5. Anticipating in decades what Preteceille and Valladares (1999) and Ribeiro and Lago (2000) later demonstrated through quantitative data in competent research and publications. PRETECEILLE, E.; VALLADARES, L. *Favela, favelas e desigualdades socioespaciais* [Favela, favelas and socio-spatial inequalities]. A paper presented at the seminar *O futuro das metrópoles: impactos da globalização* [The future of metropolises: impacts of globalisation], 1999, [Teresópolis, RJ]. Mimeographed. RIBEIRO, L.C. de Q.; LAGO, L. *A divisão favela-bairro no espaço social do Rio de Janeiro* [The favela-neighborhood division in the social space of Rio de Janeiro]. A paper presented at the 24th Annual Meeting of Anpocs, 2000 [Petrópolis, RJ]. Mimeographed.

He argued (2013a; 2008a) that, despite whatever quantitative data was able to demonstrate in terms of proximity of income, education and occupation on the fringes between the two, social perception distinguished them well and activated mechanisms of social segregation, as did the State, in an evidently more forceful manner, operating with its power to control, encase, submit, and oppress (2013a).

Furthermore, until the end of his life and production, Machado almost always worked with a vague, imprecise notion of “urban popular strata”, even though he had been very well acquainted with the debate since the seminal text by Sader and Paoli (1986). But his concerns had been different (under the injunctions of sociological debate and of public debate) and, it seems to us, these mattered more to him.

3. Collective action and urban social movements

In the 1990s, Machado also became exceedingly interested in the theme of collective action in what he called: “territories of poverty”. He was also a vital, active member of the working group of the Associação Nacional de Pós-graduação e Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais [National Association for Postgraduate Studies and Research into Social Sciences] (Anpocs) on urban social movements, which incorporated the formulations of Castells (1974), at the beginning of the post-dictatorship democratization process. He produced a vast amount of significant work in the field of studies on social movements and was unceasingly interested in collective action in the favelas and peripheries – the grassroots, as he insisted on putting it. However, here too, he was strictly averse both to the romanticization of these population segments and to their belittlement. This led him to produce a critique of our/his analytical perspectives in two memorable articles: the first with Alícia Ziccardi (MACHADO DA SILVA; ZICCARDI, 1983) and the second with Ana Clara Torres Ribeiro (MACHADO DA SILVA; RIBEIRO, 1985). Machado and the co-authors problematized the transposition of the discussion on Castells’ urban question to the Brazilian reality. Two important criticisms were then put forward. On the one hand, the organized struggles for the self-built shacks to remain did not correspond to the struggles for collective consumer goods. These made part of an earlier stage, dealing with the struggle to exist. On the other hand, the favela and neighborhood movements had no autonomy in relation to the State, as the analysts had often wished for. As, among others, Cardoso (1984), Durham (1984), and Sader (1983), in São Paulo, and Santos (1981), in Rio, had already demonstrated so well, new unionism, the Catholic Church and resistance movements against the dictatorship formed a political network rooted within the neighborhoods that, in the early 1980s, began to occupy parliament, bureaucracies and executives. He returned to the theme once again in Machado da Silva and Leite (2004), reflecting on the limits

to collective action in the favelas, but then already adding to his reflection the new contours of treating the social issue in Brazil.

Despite this, he always supported the favela movements, as well as illegal and clandestine subdivisions (FIGUEIREDO; VERAS; MACHADO DA SILVA, 1986). Here, once again, his public intellectual face spoke louder.

4. Fragmentary integration: crisis in the “world of work” and social regulation

In the early 1990s, Machado turned to the subject of criminal violence. This became an analytical unfolding of the issue, which he pursued and worked on throughout his entire life: that of social integration, then polarized by the work crisis and the dismantling of social protection already in place, and always from the viewpoint of a “territorialized ‘native’ understanding of social conflict” (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2016b, p. 16). With this, he emphasized that it was not about addressing the issue normatively, but “from the collective discussion that transforms the theme of integration into a **problem of practice** - the social question as defined by the actors themselves and not by the observer” (emphasis added).

As we have highlighted throughout this article, this issue was transversal throughout his work, guiding his analytical efforts, his dialogue with Francisco de Oliveira (1972) and the developmentalist theory, many of his articles and his master’s dissertation (Machado, [1971], 2018a). His viewpoint of the city and its “fringes”, together with informality, was based on the same dynamics that Oliveira had analyzed: the production of a “marginal sector” that nourished the capitalist production of cities and regions. He viewed the favelas and peripheries in large Brazilian cities in much the same way that Francisco de Oliveira had considered the relationship between the rural and the urban as being similar to that between the primary and secondary sectors, through which he identified the continuous production of the conditions of their submission by various mechanisms of exploitation: constituting a workforce reserve, labor exploitation, the denial of rights, and an absence of urban public policies (in the case of the city), among others.

He returned to the theme several times in transversal reflections towards the issues he was examining in his research, and consolidated his perspective in the various articles later collected in *O mundo popular: trabalho e condições de vida* [The popular world: work and living conditions] (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2018c). He spent more and more time thinking about transforming the pattern of social integration, which had been promised and poorly implemented ever since the Vargas government. By this time he had situated this discussion within the profound changes that neoliberalism had produced in terms of the dissolution of the “world of work” and the rupture of the “social pact” through integrating urban popular layers into citizenship and the city.

With Chinelli (1997), he discussed new meanings attributed toward informality and its transmutation from an analytical category (albeit residual) into a category of management. Machado was one of the first (2002a) to highlight the creation of a new work culture, entrepreneurship, as an answer to the problem of “employability. Over the past twenty years, we have seen the expansion and strength of this particular language of worker accountability by the very situation of the market itself. More than a transformation in employment contracts, entrepreneurship as a value and ‘entrepreneurship’ as a form of labor have proved to be a new social regime. Following Polanyi (2000), Machado claimed (2010d) that the winds of the satanic mill had reversed: it was no longer a question of politics governing the market, but of the market defining politics and thus producing a fragmented integration.

This profound transformation in social relations produced, for Machado (we must remember that he aimed to think of social integration as a practical problem, as defined by the actors), a radical erosion of social relations in large Brazilian cities. This was due to the relationships between the State, the market and society, the development of violent crime and a deepening of the precarious ways of living and even of causing death, on a daily basis within the territories of poverty.

5. Violent crime and sociability

It was the 1980s, and “urban violence” had become a topic of public debate in Rio de Janeiro as well as a specific object of research for social scientists. Again rejecting institutionalist interpretations, which at the time related the growth of urban violence to the absence of institutional responses, focusing on themes such as the need to reinforce punitive, penal, and police provisions (thus, focused on the theory of deviation), Machado decided to embark upon new reflections, this time based on criminal actors. His first article on the subject dates back to 1993, and he went on to develop his analytical premises, anchoring himself in the research he either carried out and/or coordinated (MACHADO DA SILVA, 1995; 1999; 2004a; 2008b; 2010d; 2014a, among others).

Consolidating a culture of self-employment, given that regulated, protected work had crumbled, was not, however, the only fragmentation of the social fabric indicated by Machado. The agenda of the struggle for human rights had similarly eroded and, in the 1980s, a new language had been created, which he called the language of urban violence (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2010b). It began to incorporate social conflicts, previously centered on the struggle for rights, much as a “war”, for which there would be no possible solution other than annihilation (indubitably, in the field of public security policies), which fueled repressive and segregating public policies. Meanwhile however, Machado sought to understand what was being

processed in the field of urban criminality, which also seemed to have changed in this fragmentation process of the social fabric. Thieves, bookies, corrupt police, drug dealers – it was no longer the same. For Machado, a new type (sociological and historical) of crime had been organized as a result of the violent criminality of drug trafficking. Several other social actors started to gravitate around the drug dens. Thus, the representation of “urban violence” began to orientate action and thereby produce a new grammar of social conflicts, articulated by widespread fear and a discourse involving an “absence of the State” (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2011) with contradictory meanings – an absent State that provides no services, an absent State that does not fight crime. The consequences for social integration were perverse. Urban marginality accumulated fragmentations: between workers and criminals, two ways of life and, among the former, two work cultures.

Such premises were developed, with the favelas of Rio de Janeiro as the locus of observation (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2008a). This is because, in the case of Rio de Janeiro, since the criminal organizations had established themselves inside the favelas and had expanded there, these territories came to be seen “as the cover for criminals who interrupt, in reality or potentially, the routines that constitute ordinary life in the city” (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2010d, p. 297). Consequently, favelas were no longer thematized in the “language of rights” and began to be processed in the “language of urban violence”. This signifies that there was a “reductionism of a language, which restricted the treatment of problems (in this case, maintaining public order) to a war against activities that disturb the routine continuation of social life” (idem, p. 293).

Over the past few decades, with his face of “public intellectual”, Machado has repeatedly specified that the blame for this “war” has been attributed to favela residents, who became criminalized, consubstantiating them as the ideal type of the *Other* who needed to be removed at any price. As a result of this process of criminalizing favela dwellers, the call for “tough” action grew, aimed not so much at specific social groups but more towards the control and territorial segregation of urban areas considered as being dangerous. Thus, as stated by Machado (2008a; 2010d), the “iron circle”, which redefined the space in the city, based on the relationship between “urban violence” and “violent sociability”, had closed.

Within this configuration, Machado da Silva proposed that urban violence should be thought of as a collective representation, or, more specifically, a representation of practices – threats of looting private property and towards physical integrity – and of models of conduct that are subjectively justified. In other words, for him, urban violence was a symbolic construction that “constitutes what it describes” (2008a, p. 35), i.e., “a category of common sense understanding that consolidates and brings meaning to the experience lived in cities” (idem, *ibidem*)

and that, instrumentally and morally, guides the courses of action that city dwellers consider most convenient in the different situations in which they act.

The notion of violent sociability was developed by Machado at the turn of the 1990s, as a general form of interaction devoid of what Norbert Elias called the self-control of the actors. This would be a completely utilitarian historical type, driven by pulsion rather than intersubjectively shared values. Thus, Machado sought to describe, and understand, a unique way of life in which physical force, with or without instruments and technologies capable of enhancing it, would no longer be a means of action regulated by ends to be achieved; but rather, it would become a principle for coordinating (an “action regime”) of practices. For Machado, force “becomes an end in itself, inseparable from its instrumental function as a resource for action” (2011, p. 286), i.e., “it is its own explanation and is self-regulatory”. Moreover, “at least in Rio de Janeiro, the ‘carriers’ of ‘violent sociability’ are typically (but not exclusively) the gangs of drug dealers responsible for the functioning of the ‘dens’” (idem, *ibidem*).

Always under considerable criticism – even from significant partners and colleagues - he sustained his hypothesis, which was that of the emergence of another way of life, violent crime, produced in part by fragmented integration and contiguous to the city and poverty. Within it relations of force would be applied, which would not know any alterity.

Over the years, and in the face of criticisms - which he knew he would always have to admit to, smiling, because he also knew he would need to play the field in order to test his hypothesis (which, what with his age and health conditions and with the changes in power relations in the favelas and peripheries, would never be possible) –, he incorporated some of them and, with Palloma Menezes, wrote a stunning article in which he discussed and reassessed them (MACHADO DA SILVA; MENEZES, 2019). The text attempted to demonstrate how, even with the passage of time, the notion of violent sociability has not completely lost its validity, especially because, until today, trafficking companies have conformed to the Weberian notion of “adventurous capitalism”, given that there is no state regulation aiming to discipline and limit competition between them.

However, Machado never failed to admit that the notion had become weakened as a result of a broad rationalization process of the economic accumulation activities of drug trafficking. This process is related to a series of transformations that have taken place over the last decade, such as the intensified economic rationality in organizing the retail drug trade; the changes in power relations between factions;

the growth and expansion of the *Primeiro Comando da Capital* (PCC)⁶; the growth of militia groups – and a reduction in the differences between trafficking and militia groups, supported by a process whereby the militias have become involved in trafficking, and trafficking in the militias.

Even though he had not undertaken any fieldwork over recent years, Machado da Silva was nonetheless very attentive to all these transformations. Furthermore, what he elaborated as a rationalization of “violent sociability” was a process that involves, on the one hand, the loss of centrality and power of those who bear “violent sociability” in the trafficking hierarchy and, on the other, changes in the very conception of what it is to be a “good dealer” or what type of dealer is most valued within the “world of crime”. This signifies that, in his view, as in the past, the so-called “bearers of violent sociability” no longer occupy as many high-ranking positions in drug trafficking. Nonetheless, although the “disposition” and the “warrior ethos” have remained highly-valued elements within this hierarchy, examples of drug dealers who have a profile far removed from the “crazy beast” have gained more space in factions, and more prominence in the public debate on violence urban.

Throughout his classes and lectures, Machado da Silva liked to stress that the rationalization process of “violent sociability” was only partial, and could not be thought of in a linear manner – since it could involve moments of “advances” and “regressions”, comings and goings. However, for him, it seemed to be a trend that deserved monitoring and investigation, since it was directly related to a series of other fundamental processes for understanding “urban violence” in the current scenario of Rio de Janeiro.

Final considerations

We would like to close by stressing that, although this article has highlighted Machado’s academic trajectory, one of his aspects that we most admire was his face as a “public intellectual”. Machado da Silva was always present in the territories where there was collective action, talking, discussing and supporting movements

6. The “First Command of the Capital”, which is, according to a 2012 Brazilian Government report, the largest Brazilian criminal organization, with a membership of almost 20,000, 6,000 of whom are actually in prison. As Feltran (2011; 2018) has demonstrated, the PCC, operating from prisons, has managed, for years, the illicit drug market in São Paulo, while at the same time regulating everyday violence within its peripheries. Moreover, it has been expanding its connections into other states in Brazil, supporting other local groups of illegal drugs trafficking operators and crossing the country’s borders with its actions in the lucrative market for stolen vehicles. FELTRAN, G. S. *Irmãos: uma história do PCC*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2018; FELTRAN, G. S. *Fronteiras da Tensão: um estudo sobre política e violência nas periferias de São Paulo*. São Paulo: UNIFESP, 2011.

in the favelas and peripheries. He never considered it something minor to devote part of his time and intellectual effort to writing for newspapers and blogs and giving interviews, trying to influence public debate from the perspective of deconstructing the “favela problem”.

Vida sob cerco [Life Under Siege] (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2008b) was born out of precisely this concern. At the time, there was a forceful campaign in Rio de Janeiro to criminalize favela dwellers (led by the mainstream media, some NGOs and government sectors), who were accused of not denouncing drug trafficking leaders based within these locations (which within the field became known as the debate between collusion and coexistence). This theme, which nurtured public security policies in the field of the metaphor for war (LEITE, 2000), led the Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas [Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis] (Ibase) to organize a forum in order to link social movements in the favelas, bringing together activists from the field of human rights and from the favelas and some professors from public universities. Many conversations with grassroots organizations evolved from this, together with a number of texts and finally a research project for the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro [Research Support Foundation of the State of Rio de Janeiro] (Faperj), the result of which was *Vida sob cerco* – still widely read and which, without doubt, has influenced the public debate.

The introduction of the Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora [Pacifying Police Units] (UPPs) in Rio de Janeiro, in 2008, also deserved Machado’s attention in terms of research (2015; 2014b, among others), although, in addition, from the initial moments (and continuing onwards in time with regard to the analysis and critique of its segregating and repressive foundation), he encouraged the development of various assemblages in line with his public performance.⁷

Finally, in order to bring this article to a close in a less analytical manner, and more along the lines of a tribute, we highlight a face of Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva that has certainly already transpired throughout the lines of this text. Machado, in addition to being a great master and researcher, was a public intellectual, totally

7. Luiz Antonio Machado da Silva wrote several texts aiming to influence the public debate, and participated in several debates with favela dwellers and human rights activists to analyze and discuss the UPPs. See Machado da Silva (2013b; 2010a; 2009; 2004a, among others). MACHADO DA SILVA, L. A. Amarildos, onde estão? [Amarildos where are they?] Interview with Juliana Sayari. *O Estado de São Paulo*, São Paulo, Aug. 25, 2013b, p. 1. MACHADO DA SILVA L.A., Afinal, qual é a das UPPs? [And finally, what’s up with the UPPs?] *Boletim do Observatório das Metrópoles*, Rio de Janeiro, March 18, 2010. [Republished on the Iser website (press), Rio de Janeiro, April 12, 2010, and on the InEAC/UFF portal, Rio de Janeiro, April 15, 2010], [2010a]. MACHADO DA SILVA, L. A. Refundar a polícia ou a sociedade? [To refund the police or society?] *Observatório da Cidadania*, Rio de Janeiro, p. 18-21, 2009. MACHADO DA SILVA, L.A. Licença para matar nas favelas [License to kill in the favelas.] *O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, April 5 2004b, p. 7.

guided by questions from the public debate on the “urban popular layers” and their possibilities and difficulties of social and urban integration. And thus he acted in the strongest sense of the word intellectual, as Gramsci reminds us (1966, p. 139; emphasis added by the author):

The error of the intellectual consists in believing that it is possible to know, without understanding, without feeling and being in love (not only by knowing, but also by the object of his knowledge), understanding them and thus justifying them in a given historical situation.

In our opinion, our dearest colleague, teacher and friend never made the mistake that Gramsci mentions and, thus, he is admired, wept over and read repeatedly by us all.

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