Mass Death and Disappearance in Contemporary Necropolitical Democracies: Brazilian and Mexican cases

Paola Díaz [1] [2]
Jussara Freire [3] [2]

[1] Universidad de Tarapacá, Chile
[2] Centre de Mouvements Sociaux, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, France.
[3] Universidade Federal Fluminense, Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Brasil.

Abstract

Based on ethnographic research in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Sonora, Mexico, we analyze mass deaths and disappearances under (formally) democratic regimes. A comparison by contrast reveals the similarities and differences between these two places. We establish a dialogue with the structural perspective of necropolitics and studies of victims' experiences in different national contexts. We seek to link the notion of the necropolitical environment with analysis of practices of valorization of human life. To do so, we start by analyzing the experiences of people whose lives, as well as those of their families, are socially devalued (valuation studies). The concept of *maternal body* emerges from this analysis, enabling us to understand the dynamics of friction between the necropolitical environment and the emergence of possible forms of life, defined on the basis of inter-corporeal links between the families and their dead or disappeared loved ones.
Keywords: death and disappearance; necropolitics; practices of valorization; maternal body: Brazil/Mexico.

e20600
https://doi.org/10.1590/1809-4341.2023v20a20600

Morte e desaparecimento em massa em democracias necropolíticas contemporâneas: Casos brasileiro e mexicano

Resumo

Fundamentando-nos nas pesquisas etnográficas que realizamos no estado do Rio de Janeiro, no Brasil, e na cidade de Sonora, no México, analisamos a morte e o desaparecimento em massa no quadro de regimes (formalmente) democráticos. Uma comparação por contraste permite-nos evidenciar dinâmicas de semelhanças e contrastes entre estes dois lugares. Estabelecemos um diálogo com a perspectiva estrutural da necropolítica e trabalhos que analisam experiências de vítimas em diferentes contextos nacionais. Propomos relacionar a noção de ambiente necropolítico com uma análise de práticas de valorização da vida humana. Para tanto, partimos dos pontos de vista de experiências de pessoas cujas vidas, bem como aquelas de familiares e próximos, são socialmente desvalorizadas (*valuation studies*). Desta análise emerge a noção de corpo materno que nos permite compreender dinâmicas de fricção entre o ambiente necropolítica e a emergência de formas de vidas possíveis, definidas a partir de laços intercorporais entre as famílias e os entes queridos mortos ou desparecidos.
Palavras-chave: morte e desaparecimento; necropolítica; pratica de valorização ; corpo materno: Brasil/México.

Mass Death and Disappearance in Contemporary Necropolitical Democracies: Brazilian and Mexican cases

Paola Díaz; Jussara Freire

In recent years, political demands and movements that mobilize in the simple defense of human life have multiplied across the globe. We have seen large-scale protest movements such as Black Lives Matter, which took shape in 2013 in the United States later appeared in several countries such as Brazil and France. In Latin America, the movement against femicide emerged in Argentina in 2015 with the slogan "Ni una menos" ("Not one more killed") and has since spread across the continent and beyond. On the United States-Mexico border, the grassroots organization "No More Death" condemns the death of migrants who attempt to cross the border, searches for the people who have disappeared in the Sonoran Desert and honors the memory of those who have died.

These movements defend the conviction that such "wasted lives" (Bauman, 2004) should be valued precisely because they were formed in response to the documentation of violence illustrating the extent to which these lives are devalued or under-valued compared to other human life.

Common to these types of political demands is their development within democratic countries which are not at war and which adhere to international principles regarding the protection of human rights. Death is not circumscribed by a specific period of extreme violence, like in dictatorship and totalitarian regimes, but operates rather as a part of everyday life, only rarely becoming a public event, such as in the case of George Floyd's death in 2020. As documented by Fassin (2015, 2018), social inequalities, which are often chronic and invisible, such as access to health care, go hand in hand with inequalities in the face of direct violence.

Regardless of the specific population in question, all these movements make visible—through claims regarding the value of such lives—the systematic nature of death, disappearance and violence experienced by certain categories of people.

On one level, the large-scale death and disappearance of particular groups and individuals—in certain cases, people of color—has been studied through the notion of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003), defined as a form of sovereignty (not exclusive to the State) which functions on the production of physical or social death and which is rooted in the hierarchization of human life. Like colonization and slavery, this sovereignty has a long history and continues to operate within contemporary liberal democracies.

On another level, the consequences of violence, death and disappearance have been analyzed in relation to the subjective experience of victims and survivors, as Das *et al*. (2000, 2001) and Kleinman *et*. *al* (1997) have investigated in anthropology. Such works describe not only tragic *pathos*, but also the experiences of victims, their suffering and the ways in which they are able to cultivate an existence after events marked by violence or devastation.

Using ethnographic research on parents of disappeared and murdered persons in the state of Sonora in northern Mexico and in poor neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro, this article aims to analyze the relationship between contemporary systems of necropolitics which devalue certain lives and the practices of valorization and care of lives by parents of victims. This relationship is studied through the lens of what we refer to as the *maternal body*, which we consider to be a site of *friction* between a logic which negates the value of certain

lives as well as a practice of valorization and care of these lost lives. Through these objectives, we hope to address two aspects of the phenomenon: the systems in and through which violence is generated, and the lived experience of this violence by the victims.

The phenomenon of necropolitics in democratic regimes is not limited to the Global South, however we chose to analyze the cases of Brazil and Mexico because of their particularly salient necropolitical dynamics, revealed through the large number of deaths and disappearances, increasingly cruel forms of killing and the growing impunity of corrupt institutions (Santos, 2020).

The first part of this article situates our approach and presents key concepts used to understand the experiences of mothers of dead and disappeared persons in Mexico and Brazil. During our respective fieldwork, we met women who were the wives, sisters and daughters of a disappeared person but, in this article, we focus on the figure of the mother because of the centrality she acquires in the environments where we investigated.

The second part discusses our analyses with regards to three primary dimensions: necropolitics that operate in the social spaces studied; practices which valorize lost lives; and the maternal body as the site of friction between necropolitical systems and the practices of valuing and care. We will conclude by reflecting on the new cultural and political arrangements that the presence of these mothers and their bodies, seen as sites of friction, could produce.

Objectivity of Violence and Subjectivity of Victims

The question of the death and disappearance of individuals seen as being of less value has been particularly studied in terms of the systems that produce these phenomena, the normative frameworks of (de)valorization of lives and the lived experiences of violence by victims and survivors. We will briefly revisit these approaches, while also elaborating our own research perspective.

In recent decades, the analysis of the large-scale death and disappearance of certain categories of the population builds upon notions that are increasingly utilized by authors. Biopolitics (Foucault, 2004), necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003), thanatopolitics, the state of exception and bare life (Agamben, 1998) are among the most mobilized concepts in diverse sub-disciplines such as migration studies, post-colonial studies and critical geography.

Central to these approaches is the attempt to explain the origins of these phenomena using global social systems. Whether referred to as institutions, structures or apparatuses, it is a question of systems of power that kill, allow to die or disappear migrants, poor people and Black people, among others.

In addition to these approaches, which objectivize the causes of large-scale death, one also finds works that study the impacts of violent death and disappearance on victims and survivors, in other words, that study the subjectivity of victims. From classical literature on testimony, especially concerning victims of the Holocaust (Feldman & Laud, 1992), we turn today to anthropological studies on suffering (Das *et.al*. 2000, 2001; Kleinman *et.al*., 1997; Fassin &Rechtman, 2009). This research is less centered on the accounts of witnesses than on the ordinary or everyday practices of survivors, including the ability or inability to experience grief, affective and physical wounds as well the silence surrounding death and disappearance. These anthropological studies have guided our approach and will orient a situated analysis of the valuing of life in the context of necropolitics.

In the cases of Brazil and Mexico, there has been extensive research into mass deaths and disappearances in contemporary times. As we develop our description and argument, we will draw on this work, especially that addressing the question central to our work, namely, what the bodies of mothers do in and with a necropolitical environment (Vianna 2014, 2015; Diéguez, 2013, 2021).

Necropolitical spaces and frames of war

Building on the work of Mbembe, who understands necropolitics as "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death" (Mbembe, 2003: 39), we define a *necropolitical environment* as a social assemblage that contributes to the production of death and disappearance as agents of necropower or the sovereignty to bring about, or expose someone to, death or disappearance. An assemblage is a diverse group of social actors and devices (which can be political, economic or humanitarian) that functions within a flexible and transforming relationship. The assemblage does not follow a single logic, but rather functions according to several definitions (Ong & Collier, 2004).

In Sonora and Rio, we carried out observations in different everyday necropower situations where sovereignty exerts itself not only through policies tied to increasingly militarized and deadly state security policies, but also in the broader context of a social assemblage of both legal and illegal socio-political and economics orders. These orders operate according to diverse forms of racial and class discrimination and comprise various mechanisms of exploitation: in the case of Sonora, the economic orders are particularly extractive while, in the case of Rio de Janeiro, the socio-political order is manifested through the city's neoliberal governance.

While armed groups (the police, the army, militias and criminal organizations) are directly responsible for physical death or disappearance, we assert that the social assemblage in

its entirety is what allows for the production and reproduction of large-scale death and disappearance in these locations[1].

Usually these deaths do not result in public outcry or elicit moral indignation on the part of the population not directly affected by the violence. Although certain high-profile deadly events led to collective mobilization, as in the case of the 43 students (from Ayotzinapa, Mexico) who disappeared in 2014, the majority of these daily deaths and disappearances silently add to an already-normalized death and disappearance count. The fact that some deaths/disappearances draw attention while others do not is at the core of studies on the value attributed to the lives of certain subjects (Butler, 2004, 2009; Fassin, 2015, 2018), the disposability of certain segments of the population (Bauman, 2004) and the commodification of life and the body (Satz, 2010). The works of Butler examine "the norms by which the 'human' is constituted" (Butler, 2004: 46), that is to say, the frames that establish cognitive, ontological and political norms defining what counts as a valuable life, worthy of being mourned.

Butler's frames of reference also address social conditions that support these lives (health, education, housing, etc.)—forms of support that can be understood as political decisions: "The frames through which we apprehend or, indeed, fail to apprehend the lives of others as lost or injured (lose-able or injurable) are politically saturated" (Butler, 2009: 1). According to Butler, these frames are constantly reproduced, but not necessarily always repeated because such reproduction can also lead the frames to collapse, which in turn brings about the collapse of norms that condition the value of lives as well as the recognition of this value.

Drawing on the works of Butler, our analysis seeks to link the normative frames that condition the value of life with everyday practices that produce, reproduce and potentially transform these frames. To do this, we used heuristic tools from three perspectives: pragmatist theories of valuation; the notion of care; and the anthropology of suffering. The last two highlight the issue of the body, which helps us to conceptualize the maternal body.

1 Understanding the necropolitical environment in terms of its functioning through complex and interconnected assemblies is not to fuel a perspective that would seek, in one way or another, to exonerate the material perpetrators and the institutional context responsible for such crimes.

Valuation, care and body

To describe our ethnographic fields analytically, we decided to examine necropolitical environments by situating them in relation to practices of valuation of life and care. Underpinning both elements is the question of the body: the body of the deceased or disappeared person and the body of the loved one who mourns such a loss.

Situated practices of valuation (Lamont, 2012; Dewey 1939) are a socially situated process centered around two poles: valuing (forms of immediate emotional and sensory appreciation that involve caring for or rejecting someone or something) and evaluation (reflective assessment based on valuing). According to Dewey (1939), valuing corresponds to a sensibility whereas evaluation implies comparing and examining causes and consequences. In our analyses, we are particularly attentive to valuing since it represents an emotional and moral practice central to the mothers with whom we spoke. They attribute value to the lives of their missing children without using equivalents or comparisons. Quite the opposite, these mothers endow their children with an unconditional value that designates them as beings of absolute and immeasurable worth. While the theory of valuation is useful for analyzing normative frames within the context of everyday practices, the perspective of care is all the more instructive regarding the attention putted to the particular and irreplaceable loved ones.

According to a classic definition, care is "[...] a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web" (Tronto, 1993:103). To this idea of a life-sustaining web, we must also add the lives and bodies of others and, particularly in the case of the mothers of the disappeared, the life and bodies of their loved ones.

Tronto identifies several aspects of care: caring about, taking care of, caregiving and care receiving. In the gendered division of pain (Das, 1996), caregiving and taking care of missing children are roles fully taken on by mothers. The action of "caring about" is especially useful for understanding how devalued lives are valued in necropolitical spaces. Caring about refers to the sensory and perceptive ability to be attentive to others, in the sense of recognizing them (and thus recognizing their value) and recognizing their vulnerability. In the case of mothers caring about their lost children, the relationship is often naturalized and reduced to the natural feelings of love that a mother has or has to have toward her children. Beyond the "mothering mandate" in patriarchal societies such as Brazil and Mexico (Segato, 2016), this attention to one person—to a daughter or son in particular and the unique bond built with him or her—makes it possible to understand caring about as a more general practice of restoring value to these lives, in opposition to necropolitics and indifference.

The attribution of value does not only occur through discourse, but also by way of the body and the sharing of suffering (Das, 1996). The expression of pain, in the case of the mothers with whom we spoke, manifests as laments (crying, moaning and yelling) as well as through physical pain and illness. We can read in these expressions of suffering a call to recognize the importance of the life, death or disappearance of the child. Such is how Das describes it: "If, however, pain destroys one's capacity to communicate, how can it ever be brought into the sphere of public articulation? It is my submission that the expression of pain is an invitation to share" (Das, 1996: 194).

To share can mean compassion (to suffer with) or even to step in for another and act as "one body" (Leder, 1990). This sharing can build a moral community or a *communitas* (Diéguez, 2021) in the midst of pain, as in the case of groups that search for the missing in northern Mexico. Yet this is not always the case for the mothers living in the favelas and suburbs of the state of Rio de Janeiro.

However, in Brazil and Mexico, the maternal body, can also be understood as a corporal connection with the lost child—a connection through which the maternal body becomes the extension of the child's missing body and can also represent a political presence within the public sphere. Diéguez calls this a liminal body,

referring also to an "extended body of a mother that supports the absence of the son, of the daughter, as double bodies of the piétas" (Diéguez, 2021: 17). In court cases and the collective actions of families and activists for young people murdered in Rio, Vianna (2014, 2015) notes that the central symbolic figure of all this process is the mother-son dyad where the mother's body, as she calls it, turns into "a support and a language of a perennial injustice" (Vianna, 2014: 235).

By connecting Das's analyses, regarding sharing and the expression of pain, with Butler's proposition, concerning the frames that allow for (or not) the recognition of the value of certain lives, we can assert that the expression of pain in the maternal body and the embodiment of the child's absent body, is the expression of the *friction* between, on the one hand, the necropolitical environments which deny the value of these lives and, on the other, the valuing and forms of care that these parents reattribute to these lives. Thus, the body of the mother as a support can be conceived as a maternal body, a category that refers to a process where the mother's body can function as an operator of transformation of the frames of valuation of lives, deaths and disappearances in a necropolitical environment.

Here we have adopted the metaphor of friction used by Tsing to describe the destruction, but also the resistance to extractivist practices: "A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road [...] As a metaphorical image, friction reminds as that heterogeneous and unequal encounter can lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (Tsing, 2005: 5).

Everyday death and disappearance: From Rio de Janeiro to Sonora

This article is based on several ethnographic studies and interviews of family members (particularly mothers[2]) of murdered and disappeared persons. Ethnographic observation was conducted in Hermosillo, the capital of the state of Sonora which borders the United States in northern Mexico. In 2019, we accompanied families of disappeared people in their search for clandestine graves in the city and the surrounding countryside. We also conducted 15 unstructured interviews (between 2019 and 2020) with 7 mothers and 8 daughters and sisters of men—between 19 and 40 years old—who disappeared between 2018 and 2020 in three cities of Sonora: Hermosillo, Guaymas and Caborca.

In Brazil, multiple ethnographic studies were carried out with people living in peri-urban zones and favelas of the state of Rio de Janeiro (Araújo, 2007; 2014; Barros & Farias, 2017). This article is based on our work conducted between 2017 and 2019 in two cities: Rio de Janeiro (henceforth referred to as Rio) and Campos dos Goytacazes. We also draw on 15 interviews with the mothers of murdered and disappeared youth by nacrotraffickers, militias or the police. These unstructured interviews were conducted with 8 mothers in the north of Rio state and 7 mothers living in and around the city of Rio.

By taking these two cases, we do not intend to do a classical comparative study of two national contexts (Sanjurjo, 2017). Rather, basing on these cases allows us a cross-sectional analysis (in two socio-historical situations) of the relationship between global necropolitic dynamics and valuation practices embodied in relations of affection and bodies.

In these two sites, the necropolitical environment can be reconstructed from descriptions of multiple situations of daily life experienced during our fieldwork. However, we opt to provide a general overview, using figures to highlight the massive and systematic nature of the necropolitical machine. We know that, in Brazil and Mexico, official reporting should be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless the figures underscore the considerable scale of the phenomenon.

2 We have changed the names of the interviewees cited in this article.

In Brazil, between 2009 and 2016, 57,956 deaths were registered, of which 21,762 resulted from "police intervention", to use the official term. In 2020 alone, deaths associated with police violence rose by 19.6%, or 6,220 (FBSP). Based on these numbers, it is clear that the Brazilian police is the most lethal police force in the world (Zilli, 2018).

In Mexico, security forces (different police units and armed forces) have been accused of having participated in homicides and disappearances, with members of the district attorney's office facing accusations of corruption and negligence. Multiple criminal groups are also responsible for crimes often committed in collusion with security forces. According to official figures, more than 360,00 homicide victims (INEGI, 2022) and more than 100,000 disappeared people (CNB, 2022) have been registered between 2006 and 2022.

Although the necropolitical environments of these two countries are shaped by characteristics unique to their specific histories, in both cases, death and disappearance on a large scale is strongly associated with ways in which violence is framed and handled. In both countries, the issue of so-called "criminal" violence is conceptualized in relation to the metaphor of war (Leite, 2000; Escalante, 2013). One finds that two primary war paradigms coexist simultaneously: the "war *between* narcotraffickers" and the "war *on* narcotrafficking" or the "war *on* drugs".

In the official discourse, death and disappearance is overwhelmingly attributed to wars between criminal organizations over territorial control. These deaths and disappearances define hierarchies of disposability and the value of human life. On the one hand, the fatalities of these wars, defined as "internal" conflicts between criminals, are not mourned in the way the deaths of innocent citizens would be. As the saying goes in Brazil, "a good thief is a dead thief". Essentially, these deaths do not represent a loss, but rather a gain. On the other hand, within these groups tied to criminal activity, there also exists a hierarchy of the value of life. Those at the bottom of the illegal economy (neighborhood drug dealers, amateur lookouts and hitmen, or *sicarios*) are the most vulnerable and the least mourned.

The metaphor of war also includes the "war *on* narcotrafficking" that entails security policies designed by government institutions and military interventions. In this case, war presents itself as a solution to the "crime problem" directly tied to the trade and use of drugs. In Brazil, this war translates into the creation of spheres of exception within poor neighborhoods where police act arbitrarily and with total impunity (Grillo, 2016). Such was the case, for example, during the violent armed confrontation triggered by the intervention of the Peacekeeping Police Unit (UPP), created by the government to fight drug trafficking in several cities in Rio state between 2008 and 2014 (Hirata & Grillo, 2019).

In Mexico, the war on narcotrafficking officially began with the "Joint Michoacan Operation" announced by President Caldéron (2006-2012) in December 2006. The operation, which deployed the army and police units, was subsequently expanded throughout the country, in the context of security cooperation agreements with United States (Hunt, 2019). Like in Brazil, militarization did not reduce illegal trafficking or crime—on the contrary, it led to a rise in deaths and disappearances.

These necropolitical environments are not backdrops to action, but are rather real agents of death and disappearance, constituting an assemblage of legal and illegal powers. They exert sovereignty over militarized territories, over populations reduced to silence and fear, and over the body of people branded "disposable" and "disappearable" (Barros & Farias, 2017; Wright, 2018). The disregard for these bodies is a disregard for the value of these lives and deaths. However, within these necropolitical environments, we also observe practices of positive valuing and care by families of dead and disappeared persons, as we will see in the following section.

The dead and disappeared: valuing the devalued and unvalued

Based on our research, it is clear that a considerable number of murders and disappearances in Sonora and Rio are tied to the illegal drug economy with the involvement of state agents, whether through trafficking or through the war on drugs. All this takes place in a context of deep social inequality and racial discrimination and, in the case of Rio, extreme urban segregation (Cordera & Provencio, 2020; Machado da Silva, 2008). Historically in Brazil, the "disposable" category has been Afro-Brazilian, which leads Nascimento (2017) to speak of "black genocide" and structural racism.

Those who find themselves at the heart of the necropolitical assemblage can be characterized as the *underclass of illegal trafficking*, which includes small-scale drugs dealers, lookouts, soldiers and *sicarios*. These groups of young men are more vulnerable to death and disappearance, due to conflicts between narcotrafficking groups, confrontations with the police, the army or militias in Rio. They may also face violence because of a debt or after being accused of working for a rival group.

Yet in Rio and Sonora, many young people die or disappear entirely because they consume drugs without selling them. As a mother of a young man who disappeared in Sonora indicated: "I noticed that in these situations, there are many of our families. Young people will buy drugs in the street and they get kidnapped". Consuming drugs or associating with a dealer can lead to death or disappearance and in Rio, being young and black is enough to be suspected of participating in trafficking. Such is how Moema's son was killed: "the police officer shot him in the back because he saw a young black man living in a favela and he figured he was a drug trafficker".

Other parents describe the death and disappearance of their children in completely random circumstances, simply finding oneself in the wrong place at the wrong time or being the victim of mistaken identity by police or the mafia.

In both Sonora and Rio, regardless of the reasons behind the death and disappearances, all these young people are suspected of having done something wrong, according to Karen, the mother of a young man who disappeared in 2019 in Sonora: "unfortunately in our society, disappeared people are considered criminals and I don't doubt that a lot of criminals have disappeared, but that's not the point. The point is that no one has the right to hold someone against their will, and much less to make them disappear". In Rio, Julia tells us that young people are seen as "criminals who deserve to die".

The lower value placed on the life of these young people can also be observed within the justice system. When families decide to file complaints, despite fear, threats and distrust of legal institutions, the investigations lead nowhere and the crimes remain unpunished. In Sonora, after Carmen reported the disappearance of her son, an investigator came to her house "only to figure out what we knew because he had been involved in my son's disappearance". Similarly, most parents that we met in Rio don't file a complaint since, as in Louisa and Lilian's case, the people responsible for the murder are connected to the neighborhood precinct.

Whether through negligence or corruption, legal institutions do not advance investigations and as a result, there is practically no sentencing (Colectivo vs. Impunidemia, 2020; Nery & Nadanovsky, 2020). Since the killing or disappearance of these young people does not have any consequences, for the families, impunity translates into disdain and reproduces violence. According to Angelica, who has been searching for her son who disappeared in 2020 in Sonora, these young people are not considered important: "if they were the sons of politicians, [the investigators] would have turned the earth upside down to find them and serve justice. But us ordinary people don't get justice".

In Brazil and Mexico, these young people are clearly devalued by being categorized as delinquents, criminals or suspected wrong doers. This stigmatization can be seen in the words of Maura from Rio: "When you arrive at the police station, you give the name [of the disappeared child], they see if the person has a criminal record and if so, the police don't care about the case". Within the social narrative, these young people are essentially

seen as responsible for their own misfortune and society's problems more generally. On the contrary, the parents—mothers in this case—that we met associate "evil" with society, the state and criminal groups, rather than with their loved ones.

These women defend the value of their children as human beings who deserve not to be killed or disappeared, as in the words of Karen, "no one has the right" to kill them or make them disappear. Yet this humanization is not a generalized process based on universal principles, but rather individualized (Freire, 2017; Díaz, 2018). As Anna of Sonora explains, "people treat them like delinquents, but to me he is my son. Regardless of what he may or may not have done, I love him and miss him so much". We could also take the example of Carolina, who describes how she addresses the police involved in the kidnapping of her son: "You didn't take a dog. You took part of my life. He's my son, my flesh, my heart". In Brazil, these mothers portray the loss of their children in similar ways. Geovana tells us that "we [the parents] always encouraged him to have a better life, but he was a good son and always said he was going to make it, but he didn't get the chance". Thus, through affective valuing, these women and mothers attribute a positive value to their loved ones.

In Sonora, where groups looking for disappeared people began forming in 2019, we were able to observe certain valuing practices. When these women traverse the countryside looking for clandestine graves, they speak lovingly to the missing: "We speak to them with beautiful words to try to find them. We ask them to reveal themselves so that we can take them out of this horrible place, return them home, give them a dignified grave and let them and their families be in peace".

In Mexico, forms of killing have become increasingly cruel (Diéguez, 2013; Robledo, 2016). The remains recovered by women attest to this: "We find them dismembered, chained, beheaded or burned", says Francisca, a young woman searching for her brother. "They dissolve them in acid and sometimes we only find traces of human fat". As in the accounts of extermination camp survivors, family members are compelled to affirm the humanity of these individuals. The women searching for graves also emphasize the humanity of their loved ones: "We have found many remains, reduced to bones, that have been thrown around and scattered. A skull here, a backbone there. We then reassemble the bones with a lot of love and respect. Because it's a human being" (Karen). Carefully arranging and touching the bones is a form of caring about their loved ones and the disappeared in general. The remains contain an emotional and moral value, which are not merely forensic evidence, but 'treasures', as many describe them.

In Rio, while certain mothers are heavily involved in the mother's collectives (Birman & Leite, 2004; Leite, 2004; Vianna & Farias, 2011; Vianna, 2014, 2015), it is less the case for the mothers we met. Some refuse to join the collectives due to the risk and in order to protect their other children. Others do not participate because of the "loss of any faith in society's justice," to quote Lilian. These mothers restore their children's humanity in the privacy of their home, by leaving the dead child's bedroom untouched, by keeping his or her clothes or even by visibly displaying photographs of them around the house or in well-kept albums. Some turn to the church and "pray for them", lighting altar candles and connecting spiritually with their children. The affective valuing practiced by Mexican women searching for graves manifests for Brazilian mothers through the work of memory: by nurturing the memory of their children, they continue to take care of them.

As we have shown, for these women the valuing of dead and missing loved ones is a singular process that is not centered around universal principles of human value, but rather particular emotional and blood ties since, for the women, a part of them has been ripped away. In the final section of this article, we will analyze the role of these women's bodies, and in particular the maternal body, in the valuing of lost loved ones as a figure that challenges the necropolitical order.

Maternal body

The concept of necropolitics, as defined by Mbembe (2003), underscores the importance of corporality and, as we see with Foucault (2004), questions of sovereignty and power are framed around the ways in which power shapes the bodies of subjects. In both sites of field research, necropolitics is embodied in the remains of the young murdered and disappeared people, but also in the bodies of their mothers, which we refer to as the *maternal body*. As argued above, this category does not intend to essentialize the mother, her body, or maternity, but rather conceptualizes the maternal body as a body-subject understood as an embodied experience of the world, others and oneself (Merleau Ponty, 1976). The maternal body can be considered as a physical and symbolic incarnation of the pain of absence and loss, as a body-to-body connection visible in the public sphere.

This image of the maternal body as the incarnation of pain is particularly apparent at the time of the child's disappearance. The mothers in Sonora explain that they felt in their bodies and especially in their hearts that something bad had happened to their children at the exact time of their abduction. Carmen tells us that "he was taken away at 12:15 a.m and at that moment, as they took him away, I felt a pain in my heart, a twinge. This is the bond, the love so strong between mother and son". For Lucia, a Brazilian mother, this heart pain expressed itself through crying: "He told me he was going to the corner of the street. But after waiting 20 hours for him to come back, all of a sudden, I screamed: 'They killed Paulo!' before anyone even told me". In these circumstances, the heart is the organ that represents love and it is there that mothers feel or foresee the loss of their children.

These mothers often describe the loss of a child as "an open wound". In the words of Laura from Rio, it constitutes "a wound that will never heal" and Carmen from Sonora describes it as a tearing away of "a piece of myself". The mothers experience this wound in their bodies and souls and the body/spirit binary disappears because the pain is both physical and emotional. Grief and physical affection are one and the same experience**.**

In Rio, some mothers of disappeared children became seriously ill following police arrests (Araujo, 2007). One mother, after learning from a witness that her child had been dismembered by the people who kidnapped him, developed an atrophy condition that led her to lose a finger. In the case of missing persons, complaints and investigations are long, draining and futile. The mother's body exhausts itself in the search for justice that typically leads nowhere (Freire, 2015).

The maternal body suffers, particularly from imagining the suffering of the child as *one body* (Leder, 1990), as in a body bonded to another by mutual suffering. However, the maternal body does not represent a fused body and the separation from the child is all the more intense since he or she is dead or missing. In this way the maternal body is rather a body-chiasmus: mother and child are united by and within the gap between presence and absence.

Regarding the maternal body as an inter-corporal tie, it can be seen as a type of continuation in which the mother, suffering from the grief of losing her child, becomes in some sense an extension of this absent body.

Studies have often underlined the extension of death and disappearance concerning the devastating consequences on the family and community (Araujo, 2014; Lira, 2010). Essentially, in Rio and Sonora, mothers often claim that following the disappearance of a child, the family is destroyed and that sometimes a heavy silence takes root around this absence, which fractures the family bond.

Necropolitics is devastating, as Juana of Sonora describes the perception of being half-alive: "I'm no longer really alive. The only reason I'm still living is to look for him" In Rio, we encountered several mothers who have considered or attempted suicide, such as Lucia: "he died the 23rd, I found him the 24th and he was buried the 25th. On the 26th, I tried to kill myself by taking poison". Of course, suicide is a manifestation of devastation, but also of the possibility of contact with the child: "I wanted to die in order to find him again and know where he went, what they did to him", says Lucia.

Without negating the destructive way in which this extension of violence impacts the family, in the case of these mothers, we would also like to draw attention to the creative role this extension plays in the creation of an inter-body link, both sensitive and emotional, between mother and child. The death and disappearance of a child breaks what Carmen of Sonora and Maura of Rio call "the law of life" whereby children bury their parents: "parents should pass away first, not them" says Carmen. This inversion of the natural order intersects with another type of reversal—that of the body's natural order. Normally, the child represents the genetic continuity of their parents, yet in this case the mothers become, in a sense, the continuity of their offspring.

This extension occurs when mothers hold conversations with their absent children, speaking directly to their photos at home. They fill a void left by their sons' absence with their own voice, at times laughing, at times through imagined dialogue or prayers. In Rio especially, the connection with the children is maintained through prayers which provide a sense of continuity with the child's life by essentially putting into perspective the finiteness of the human body in order to share a spiritual space with their children.

The mothers looking for their missing children in clandestine graves in Sonora speak to them during their search. However, this connection is not only formed through linguistic communication. In both countries, the mothers often dream of a bodily connection with their children, of a kiss, of an embrace or of the child's head resting on their shoulder. As Maria of Sonora explains, "I dreamed of him, he came, he held me in his arms". In Rio, mothers describe the discussions they have with their sons in dreams. "Sometimes I dream very deeply. He's there speaking to me, playing in front of me", says Laura who emphasizes the word "there" as if her child was physically present in the same room.

The mother/child inter-body link can be built through certain talisman objects, such as the missing child's clothes. For example, Karen of Sonora sleeps with the T-shirt of her child over her eyes. The expansion of the son's body on the body of the mother also takes the form of accessories with the name of the child, which mark the body. Such is the case with Ana, who got a tattoo illustrating her son's absence, which she accompanied with posts published on Facebook: "There are things that are tattooed without ink, like the loss of my son".

Figure 1. The tattoo on Ana's arm with the initial of her son "K", who disappeared in March 2020 in Sonora (Photo author 1)

In this situation, the maternal body becomes the site of an inter-body link within the flesh. Importantly, this tattoo accompanied by public words also reveals that the maternal body can become present in the public sphere. In these cases, the mother's body *carries* the presence of the child, as seen in Rio when mothers who have filed complaints, appear in court with the photo of their children on their T-shirts. It can also be observed when Mexican mothers go out in search of their children, participate in marches or fundraise in the streets, wearing the photo of the missing loved one on their chests.

The cases presented in Sonora and Rio do not concern political causes, at least according to the terms used by victims' family groups that existed under military dictatorships of the 1970s in the Southern Cone of South America (Díaz, 2014; Sanjurjo, 2017). The majority of the families interviewed for this research do not call for truth or justice and believe more in divine justice than in the worldly kind. Nevertheless, we can still identify a politics of presence each time the cries and bodies of these mothers constitute a disturbance. Take the case of Carmen, for example, who went to identify her son, disappeared in 2018, at the morgue after having found his body in 2020 in a clandestine grave in Sonora and was asked to stop crying so loudly because it bothered the prosecutor who was in a meeting nearby. These suffering individuals are thus dreaded reminders of what indifferent citizens do not wish to see and of what authorities do not wish to investigate.

In this sense, the uncomfortable presence of the mothers' suffering bodies can be considered a way of publicizing death and disappearance, marking the presence of the missing in the mother's body, as also observed by Diéguez (2021) in her work with the mothers of disappeared people in Mexico. This publicization projects a unique and immeasurable relationship between mother and child into the public sphere. This assertion may seem an oxymoron, but this is because most publicization processes are forged from universalizable principles like truth and justice. In the case we have studied, neither truth nor justice (human) are very present, but the figure of the mother (Vianna, 2015) plays the role of an operator of universalization in the sense that everyone can identify with the mother-child relationship. Nevertheless, the process also has an irreducibly singular and non-universalizable aspect: each mother-child relationship and each loss is unique and irreplaceable. We argue that, in this singularity, mothers share (Das, 1996) the pain inhabiting their beings, their bodies, which can constitute a micropolitics of presence. The presence of the suffering mother disturbs us or invites us to understand what makes her suffer so much.

Thus, the presence of mothers could constitute the rejection of a necropolitical regime built around the participation of the State (through its actions or negligence) as well as various "machines of war" (the police, the army, the *sicarios*, the militias).

Conclusions

In this article, we have shown the relationship between necropolitical environments in Sonora and Rio, as a vector of devaluation, death and disappearances of young people and the practices of affective valuing and care performed by families, and particularly mothers. From this relationship stems the figure of the maternal body—a body-subject where pain and grief express themselves. This is the site where an inter-body link forms with the absent loved one and the child's absent body extends into the present body of the mother.

This article concludes with a consideration of the political significance of the maternal body in situations of extreme violence. Within necropolitical assemblages described here, the child's death and disappearance reverse the natural order of bodies, lineage and carrying which open into a bodily space that we can understand as a site of friction between necropolitics and practices of valuing and care.

Of course, the mother's love and suffering, however deep and sincere, are part of a mandate of motherhood, that is, how a mother-woman must feel the affliction and loss. Nevertheless, it is from this same mandate that mothers' bodies can become a maternal body; an instance of friction of necropower.

As mentioned above, the friction metaphor draws on the image presented by Tsing (2005) of the wheel that turns thanks to the friction that exists between it and the road. Within necropolitical contexts, the encounter between the wheel and the road leads to death and disappearance, transforming into *spaces of death* (Taussig, 1984). It is in such a space that the wheel destroys lives and bodies, but it is also within this space that the maternal body, functioning as a one body with the missing body of the child, emerges as a key social figure.

The metaphor of friction is also used to represent what Tsing generally refers to as "new arrangements of culture and power" (Tsing, 2005: 5).

We propose to analyze the maternal body as a site of valuing and care which resists the devaluing of the lives of the disappeared, but also the devaluing of death resulting from disappearance. In this sense, the maternal body could be understood as a new cultural and political arrangement, because the maternal body compromises with death and disappearance, becoming the bearer of silent, forbidden or impossible mourning. These constitute forms of grief and impossible grief that transform the very meaning of liminality (Turner, 2008). Liminality has typically been conceived as a threshold which family members use to clearly delineate the boundaries of life and death through cultural rites. However, in contemporary necropolitical environments, liminality no longer constitutes a threshold, but rather a space in itself and a form of life. It can be considered an extended space in which one finds mothers' bodies and more generally those who love the dead and missing persons. This liminal space is no longer a line or frontier to be crossed, but rather transforms into a texture connecting the lost loved one and those mourning their loss through the body and bodily expressions.

One can also interpret the maternal body as the site of a new political arrangement, in the broad sense of the term, and as a space of public life, since mothers become a bothersome presence (Loraux, 1990). Maternal bodies suffering like grains of sand in the wheel impede the smooth functioning of the machine. In the words of Das: "We find here a powerful political narrative in which criticisms of the excesses of a political program cannot be verbally expressed within that milieu but are literally carried by the body [...] the language of the body becomes criticism when the individual encounters events that are placed outside the flow of normal experience. (Das, 1996: 177-178)

The mere presence of mothers, "dead alive" (Fregoso, 2020) as they often describe themselves, can thus represent a manifestation of criticism or, at the very least, noise in the engine. Valuing and caring after their children and their memory is a humanizing act that could reintegrate these dead and missing persons into a lineage, a community and a memorial space. It represents a gest of affective care that incarnates a politics troubling a naturalized necropolitical order.

Received: February 08, 2022
Approved: March 21, 2023

Translated by Josephine Blount

Acknowledgments

Paola DIAZ would like to thank ANID – Millennium Science Initiative Program - VioDemos Millennium Institute (ICS2019_025), the Center for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES) and the French Collaborative Institute on Migration.

Founding

Da "justiça dos homens" à "justiça divina": experiências públicas de familiares de vítimas em Campos (2017-2019). Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq)- Brazil.

Exiting Violence Project (2017-2021), National Research Agency (ANR)-France.

Centre for Social Movement Studies EHESS/CNRS UMR8044/INSERM U1276.

References

AGAMBEN, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

ARAÚJO, Fabio. 2007. *Do luto à luta: a experiência das mães de Acari. Dissertação de Mestrado*. Programa de Pós Graduação em Sociologia e Antropologia Social da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

ARAÚJO, Fabio. 2014. *Das "técnicas" de fazer desaparecer corpos: desaparecimentos, violência, sofrimento e política*. Rio de Janeiro: Lamparina.

BARROS, Rachel; FARIAS, Juliana. 2017. "Political Displacements between the Periphery and the Center through Territories and Bodies". *Vibrant: Virtual Brazilian Anthropology*, 14(3). DOI: 10.1590/1809-43412017v14n3p279

BAUMAN, Zygmunt. 2004. *Wasted Lives. Modernity and its Outcasts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

BIRMAN, Patricia; LEITE, Márcia Pereira (eds.). 2004. *Um Mural para a Dor: movimentos cívico-religiosos por justiça e paz*. Porto Alegre: EdUFRGS/Pronex-MCT/CNPQ.

BUTLER, Judith. 2004. *Precarious Lives. The Power of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.

BUTLER, Judith. 2009. *Frames of War: When os Life Grievable?* London: Verso.

COLECTIVO VS IMPUNIDEMIA. 2020. *Fiscalómetro. Como enfrenta nuestro país su impunidemia.* México. URL: http://www.dplf.org/es/resources/fiscalometro-como-enfrenta-nuestro-pais-su-impunidemia

CNB (n.d.). *Comisión Nacional de Búsqueda*. Gobierno de México. Ciudad de México. https://versionpublicarnpdno.segob.gob.mx/Dashboard/Sociodemografico

CORDERA, Rolando; PROVENCIO, Enrique (eds.).2020. *Perspectiva Regional. Informe del Desarrollo en México*. Informe del Programa Universitario de Estudios del Desarrollo (PUED). Universidad Autónoma de México. ISBN: 978-607-30-3705-1. http://132.248.170.14/publicaciones/43/Perspectiva_Regional.pdf

DAS, Veena; KLEINMAN, Arthur; LOCK, Margaret; RAMPHELE, Mamphela; REYNOLDS, Pamela (eds.). 2001. *Remaking a World. Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

DAS, Veena; KLEINMAN, Arthur; RAMPHELE, Mamphela; REYNOLDS, Pamela (eds.). 2000. *Violence and Subjectivity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

DAS, Veena. 1996. *Critical Events. An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

DEWEY, John. 1939. "Theory of Valuation". *International Encyclopedia of Unified Sciences*, 2(4). Chicago: Chicago University Press.

DIAZ, Paola. 2018. "La desaparición política de un ser querido". In: J.C. Guerrero; A. Márquez, G. Nardachionni, S. Pereyra (eds.), *Problemas públicos. Controversias y aportes contemporáneos*. Ciudad de México: Ediciones del Instituto Mora. pp. 414-441.

DIAZ, Paola. 2014. *L'expérience publique des crimes politiques du passé. Le cas du Chili post dictatorial (1990-2004)*. Doctoral Thesis of Sociology. École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris.

DIÉGUEZ, Iliana. 2021. *Cuerpos Liminales. La performatividad de la búsqueda*. Córdoba: Ediciones DocumentA/ Escénicas.

DIÉGUEZ, Iliana. 2013. *Cuerpos sin duelo. Iconografías y teatralidades del dolor*. México: Ediciones DocumentA/ Escénica.

ESCALANTE, Fernando. 2013. "Paisaje antes de la batalla. Notas sobre el contexto de la guerra contra las drogas en México". *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales*, 58(218). DOI: 10.1016/S0185-1918(13)72290-6

FASSIN, Didier.2018. *Life: a critical user's manual*. Medford, MA: Polity Press.

FASSIN, Didier. 2015. "The Value of Life and the World of Life". In: Veena Das & Clara Han (eds.), *Living and Dying in the Contemporary World*. California: University of California Press. pp. 770-783.

FASSIN, Didier; RECHTMAN, Richard. 2009.*The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

FELMAN, Shoshana; LAUB, Dori. 1992. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York: Routledge.

FOUCAULT, Michel. 2004. *Naissance de la biopolitique. Cours du Collège de France 1978-1979*. Paris: Collège de France/ EHESS.

FBSP (n.d.). *Mortes violentas intencionais*. Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública. https://forumseguranca.org.br/estatisticas/

FELMAN S., LAUD D. (eds) (1992) *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. New York and London: Routledge.

FREGOSO, Rosa Linda. 2020. "Stolen lives: What the dead teach us". *Death Studies*, 44(11): 736-745. DOI: 10.1080/07481187.2020.1771856

FREIRE, Jussara. 2017. "Voix et souffrance de 'mères de victimes de violence policière' à Rio de Janeiro". *SociologieS* [online] URL : http://journals.openedition.org/sociologies/6267; DOI: 10.4000/sociologies.6267

FREIRE, Jussara. 2015. "Sociabilidade de grades e cadeados e ordem de tranquilidade: da cidadania dos adimplentes à 'violência urbana' em condomínios fechados da Zona Oeste do Rio de Janeiro". In: Patrícia Birman, Márcia Pereira Leite, Carly Machado, Sandra de Sá Carneiro (orgs.), *Dispositivos urbanos e trama dos viventes: ordens e resistências* Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV. pp. 343-376.

GRILLO, Carolina Christoph. 2016. "Frontières tacites. Confrontations et accords dans les favelas de Rio de Janeiro". *Confins*, 28. DOI: 10.4000/confins.11246

HIRATA, Daniel Veloso; GRILLO, Carolina Cristoph. 2019. "Movement and Death: Illicit Drug Markets in the Cities of São Paulo and Rio De Janeiro". *Journal of Illicit Economies and Development*, 1(2): 122–133. DOI: 10.31389/jied.26

HUNT, Edward. 2019. "Staying the course in Mexico: the role of the US in the drug war, 2006–present". *Third World Quarterly*, 40(6): 1184-1205. DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2019.1574562

INEGI (n.d.). *Defunciones por homicidio*. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática. https://www.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/olap/proyectos/bd/continuas/mortalidad/defuncioneshom.asp?s=est

KLEINMAN, Arthur; DAS, Veena; LOCK, Margaret (eds.). 1997. *Social Suffering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

LAMONT, Michelle. 2012. "Toward a Comparative Sociology of Valuation and Evaluation". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38: 201-221. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-120022

LEDER, Drew. 1990. *The Absent Body*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

LEITE, Márcia Pereira. 2004. "As mães em movimento". In: Patricia Birman & Márcia Pereira Leite (eds.), *Um mural para a dor: movimentos cívico-religiosos por justiça e paz.* Brasília: Pronex-CNPq/ Porto Alegre: Editora UFRGS. pp.141-189.

LEITE, Márcia Pereira. 2000. "Entre o individualismo e a solidariedade: dilemas da política e da cidadania no Rio de Janeiro". *Rev. Bras. Ci. Soc.*, 15(44): 43-90. DOI: 10.1590/S0102-69092000000300004

LIRA, Elizabeth. 2010. "Trauma, duelo, reparación y memoria". *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, 36: 14-28. DOI: 10.7440/res36.2010.02

LORAUX, Nicole. 1990. *Les mères en deuil*. Paris : Seuil.

MACHADO DA SILVA, Luiz Antonio (ed.). 2008. *Vida sob cerco: Violência e rotina nas favelas do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Faperj/ Nova Fronteira.

MBEMBE, Achille. 2003. "Necropolitics". *Public Culture*, 15(1): 11-40. DOI: 10.1215/08992363-15-1-11

MERLEAU-PONTY, Maurice. 1976. *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Paris: Gallimard.

NASCIMENTO, Abdias. 2017. *O genocídio do negro brasileiro: processo de um racismo mascarado*. São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva.

NERY, Felipe Souza; NADANOVSKY, Paulo. 2020. "Homicide impunity in Brazil between 2006 and 2016". *Revista de Saúde Pública*, 54(144). DOI: 10.11606/s1518-8787.2020054002284

ONG, Aihwa; COLLIER, Stephen, J. (eds.). 2004. "Introduction". In: *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*. Malden: Blackwell. pp. 3-21.

ROBLEDO, Carolina. 2016. *Drama social y política del duelo*. Mexico: El Colegio de México.

SANTOS, Victoria, M.S. 2020. "Untangling Violent Legacies: Contemporary Organized Violence in Latin America and the Narrative of the 'Failed Transition'". *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, 73: 18-30. http://journals.openedition.org/ revestudsoc/47923

SATZ, Debra. 2010. *Why Some Things Should Not Be for Sale: The Moral Limits of Markets*. New York: Oxford University Press.

SANJURJO, Liliana. 2017. "Our Dead Can Speak: Social Displacements, Affects, and Political Action in Comparative Perspective". *Vibrant: Virtual Brazilian Anthropology* ,14(3). DOI: 10.1590/1809-43412017v14n3p113

SEGATO, Rita. 2016. *La Guerra contra las mujeres*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.

TAUSSIG, Michael. 1984. "Culture of Terror—Space of Death. Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture". *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 26(3): 467-497. DOI: 10.1017/S0010417500011105

TRONTO, Joan. 1993. *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. New York: Routledge.

TSING, Anna L. 2005. *Friction. An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

TURNER, Victor. 2008 [1969]. "Liminality and Communitas". In: *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Transaction Press. pp. 94-130.

VIANNA, Adriana. 2015. "Tempos, dores e corpos: considerações sobre a 'espera' entre familiares de vítimas de violência policial no Rio de Janeiro". In: Patrícia Birman, Márcia Pereira Leite, Carly Machado, Sandra de Sá Carneiro (orgs.), *Dispositivos urbanos e trama dos viventes: ordens e resistências*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV. pp. 405-418.

VIANNA, Adriana. 2014. "Violência, Estado e Gênero. Considerações sobre corpos e corpus entrecruzados". In: Antonio Carlos Souza Lima & Virginiza García-Acosta (orgs.), *Margens da violência. Subsídios ao estudo do problema da violência nos contextos mexicano e brasileiro*. Brasilia: ABA/ Ciesas. pp. 209-237.

VIANNA, Adriana; FARIAS, Juliana. 2011. "A guerra das mães: dor e política em situações de violência institucional". *Cad. Pagu*, 37: 79-116. DOI: 10.1590/S0104-83332011000200004

WRIGHT, Melissa W. 2018. "Against the Evils of Democracy: Fighting Forced Disappearance and Neoliberal Terror in Mexico". *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 108(2): 327-336. DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2017.1365584

ZILLI, Luis Felipe. 2018. "Letalidade e Vitimização Policial: características gerais do fenômeno em três estados brasileiros". *Boletim de Análise Político-Institucional*, 17: 71-80.

Paola Díaz
University of Tarapacá, Chile
Centre for Social Movement Studies, School for Advances Studies in Social Sciences.
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3606-516X
paola.diaz@ehess.fr

Jussara Freire
Fluminense Federal University, Social Sciences Department, Brazil.
Centre for Social Movement Studies, School for Advances Studies in Social Sciences, Paris/ France
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0942-8364
jussarafreire75@gmail.com