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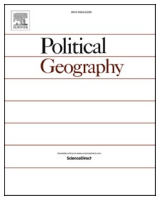

Full Length Article

Re-framing popular governance in Brazil: Re-insurgent and entrepreneurial arrangements in the urban peripheries

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A B S T R A C T

In the *periferias* of Brazil, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the role of local actors to organise and manage networks, resources and discourses to support and advance residents' demands. In this article, we argue that the pandemic gave visibility to emerging arrangements which remain under-theorised and under-analysed. Specifically, we examine how these arrangements reveal what we label re-insurgent and entrepreneurial forms of popular governance. Drawing upon fieldwork in Belo Horizonte and São Paulo, we examine how trajectories of autoconstruction and urban consolidation contribute to differently outline, legitimise and tend to local claims and demands. We show they rely and build on distinct networks of influence and resources, and encompass alternate combinations of state, private, and civil society actors, to both reinforce and challenge the urban inequalities and power asymmetries.

1. Introduction

On March 10, 2020, community leaders of the two largest favelas in São Paulo, Heliópolis and Paraisópolis, spoke to an audience of academics, policymakers and civil society. This was the first workshop in a research project on food access in urban peripheries (*periferias*)[1] and the representatives came to share the learnings and experiences from their communities. Both principal speakers were women. From Heliópolis, the speaker told a story of a path well-trodden by other social movements: residents struggling for recognition as citizens by the state, bringing together demands for worker and housing rights. From Paraisópolis, the speaker projected a different narrative. For her, favelas and their residents possessed both power and potential (*potência*), to be unleashed through enterprise, the spirit of entrepreneurialism and access to markets. Upon meeting one of us in the corridor after the presentation, this second speaker pleaded: 'people don't get our conflict with the state. What has it ever done for us? The state is virtually absent: if we want change, we need to organise it for ourselves'.

On the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, these speakers indicated different ways to frame the relationship between the state, the favelas and their residents, and between residents and the leaders of local organisations. The representative of Heliópolis built on familiar narratives of residents who, through a series of improvised, complex and inventive processes, contribute to producing the city in a transversal relation with the state (Caldeira, 2017; Holston, 2008). And in doing so, residents establish new forms of citizenship (Holston, 2008). These citizens expose opportunities in the law or adopt practices that make law, obliging the state to deliver on normative rights claims through actions in practice. A vital element is mobilisation in different forms to maintain the urgency of struggles and demand the attention of the state. This same narrative could undoubtedly be used to tell the story of many other communities. Indeed, the case that we develop later in the paper, Ocupação Vitória in Belo Horizonte, like other land squats in the peripheries, has reiterated and transformed insurgent forms of citizenship in the context of a neoliberal state. Similarly, the same insurgent narrative could be applied to Paraisópolis, yet their representative at the workshop produced an alternative framing of how neighbourhood organisations and residents project their claims; not so much vis–à–vis the

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[1] We use the Brazilian term *periferia* to refer to popular settlements produced by residents through autoconstruction (Caldeira, 2017). While it conveys both a physical and social location in relation to the idealised city centre, *periferia* is often used— including by residents of *periferias*—to denote the spaces of the urban poor (Holston, 2008, p. 151), even if these are not geographically located in the outskirts of cities. The present discussion focuses on two 'types' of *periferia*: favelas and *ocupações* (lit. occupations). Favela refers to more consolidated settlements, originally formed incrementally and with lower risk of eviction. *Ocupações* are more recent land squats, commonly organised by social movements, where risks of eviction are higher due to land conflicts. Throughout the article, we employ communities, territories and neighbourhoods interchangeably to disrupt the notion that these constitute the exception to the urbanisation process in Brazil.

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state but in terms of realising untapped economic possibilities.

Beyond discourse, these differences shape local forms of governance, including responses to the pandemic. During the Bolsonaro presidency, responses from governments at different scales were erratic and often insufficient to tackle the combined health and economic effects of the pandemic (Farias et al., 2022). As a result, local actors, like neighbourhood associations, played a vital role in supporting households and communities across *periferias*, organising and distributing food donations, providing hygiene kits and monitoring health conditions, establishing a wider social safety net for residents (Basile, 2023; Fahlberg et al., 2023; Friendly, 2022). These responses relied on social infrastructures built and supported by residents. But they were also dependent on how local leaders articulated visions of the community to legitimise demands and claims, to establish and expand social networks, and to secure material and financial resources.

In this article, we explore how these initiatives coalesce into popular arrangements of urban governance in Brazilian *periferias*. The analysis employs material collected as part of a project focusing on food access and well-being in São Paulo and Belo Horizonte, in southeastern Brazil. These cities were initially chosen for their distinct municipal food security policies, with five locations selected following initial discussions with leaders from nine different territories. The five were chosen to account for varying degrees of infrastructure and housing consolidation, their relative location in the city, and, importantly, consent from local leaders. The wider study involved a team of research assistants conducting semi-structured interviews, focus groups and daily follow-ups on food practices with 69 residents, plus discussions with 12 local activists, civil servants and members of NGOs. Specific material for this article is drawn from an additional 14 semi-structured interviews with community leaders, as well as informal conversations between 2020 and 2023, visits to the communities in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023; and continuous social media engagement. All these activities were conducted by at least one of the authors.

Building on this empirical material, we explore the trajectories of these communities and of local leaders to argue that these popular governance arrangements emerge from particular histories of urbanisation but also shifts in how communities frame perceptions of themselves and of *periferias*, as well as how these are perceived by external actors. We base this argument on the analysis of two very different *periferias*—Vitória, in Belo Horizonte, and Paraisópolis, in São Paulo. While different forms of governance co-exist in these and other *periferias*, the leadership in these territories most clearly outline the contrasting forms of what we call popular governance: re-insurgent, in the case of Vitória, and entrepreneurial, in the case of Paraisópolis. As we show, both project visions of a limited state that is unable to deliver adequate housing and infrastructure for the urban poor who experience exclusion, precarity and violence. While re-insurgent approaches build on the urban reforms of the 1990s and early 2000s, achieved through direct contestation to articulate rights-based claims, entrepreneurial approaches position the market and entrepreneurship as central mechanisms for improving living conditions. These arrangements challenge the notion of social disorganisation in the peripheries but also question dominant narratives of what comes in its stead. Beyond the centrality of state-sponsored and criminal violence and the celebration of incremental citizenship gains in the *periferias*, our analysis illustrates the contingent and context-dependent character of governance in these territories.

The differences between these ideal types owe much to spatiotemporal configurations that were mutually created in the production of space at the *periferia*. That is, the consolidation of these territories over time, a product of autoconstruction and struggle, has implications for the material and discursive elements that shape popular governance, including its actors, demands and actions. Paraisópolis is an older neighbourhood, where the struggle for the right to remain is largely held in the memory of residents, along with the fight for basic infrastructure, from water to electricity to transport. This is not to say there are not areas of extreme deprivation: Paraisópolis is in many ways a quintessential *periferia* characterised by socio-spatial inequalities and exclusions, both internally and in relation to the city. It is also, however, a sui generis favela as its relatively central location and proximity to high-income neighbourhoods allow for both visibility and resources unimaginable to other *periferias*. By contrast, barely a decade old, Vitória was built with a well-planned neighbourhood in mind, but the outline of this occupation is still being fought for as is the access to public infrastructure and services. To be clear. Vitória is not 'the past' of Paraisópolis, and neither is it moving inevitably towards an entrepreneurial approach to governance. Rather, the path of each has emerged from different configurations of alliances, knowledge, networks, and ideological alignments—what Richmond and Müller (forthcoming) describe as 'durable assemblages'—that impact on the arrangements to organise and manage territory and communities. These popular forms of governance were tested against the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic that both provided impetus to approaches and the combinations of agents and their networks within and without these territories. Exploring these differences provides insights to the understanding of durable governance assemblages at the margins by showing how *periferias* facing similar challenges develop distinct arrangements of popular governance that rely on different combinations of actors, discourses and organisational logics.

The article is organised as follows. First, we examine the literature on governance related to Brazilian *periferias*, acknowledging the ambivalent presence of the state in these territories and considering the combined effects of neoliberal restructuring and re-democratisation. We also consider how these processes enabled the emergence, consolidation and involvement of private actors, local or otherwise, in the governance of these territories. Drawing from our fieldwork, the next two sections unpack the arrangements for popular governance in Vitória and Paraisópolis. We introduce how the neighbourhood associations and other actors have sought to organise and manage, as well as to make visible, the demands within *periferias* and how these coalesced into re-insurgent and entrepreneurial arrangements of popular governance. Engaging with the trajectories of specific leaders, we consider how these arrangements have been employed to advance key struggles and to address the challenges brought by the pandemic. We wrap up our argument, reflecting on how communities at the margins of the state responded to the ambivalent combination of political and economic liberalisation with their own forms of governance and how moments of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, reveal the capacity and limitations of these popular arrangements.

2. Governance and the *Periferia*

Brazilian *periferias* are products of economic deprivation, political exclusion, class and racial discrimination, as well as resistance, solidarity and inventiveness. Many of these territories were autoconstructed by their residents (Caldeira, 2017), who effectively created and transformed the fabric of the city while reproducing structural forms of spatial inequality and segregation, notably along racial and class lines (Telles, 2015). Up to the 1990s especially, relations with the state were often tense and frequently transactional, organised around networks of patronage and clientelism, and personified in the reputation of neighbourhood leaders (McCann, 2014; Savell, 2015). While residents frequently exerted their agency through resistance to evictions and protests to claim services, as well as collective self-help (*mutirão*), the power to determine distributions of resources and recognise rights was largely held by politicians and the state; residents were subjects, not citizens (Holston, 2008; McCann, 2014).

As argued by Holston (2008), this 'differentiated citizenship' was marked by unequal access to rights in practice and an ambivalent and occasionally hostile treatment before institutions, especially the law. But this arrangement was increasingly challenged by insistent claims to rights, rather than needs, and to recognising peoples' place in the city.

Insurgency was unsettling as neighbourhood associations and community organisations—allied with religious-based and human rights advocacy groups—highlighted unequal lived experiences among apparently equal citizens and exhorted for more inclusive, participatory, urban policy (Rolnik, 1997; Wampler, 2007). Empowered by an objective entitlement to citizenship, *periferia* residents articulated a subjective sense of power and inclusion that supported their pursuit of an actual experience of citizenship.

These 'insurgent citizens' transformed the relationship with the state, forging new institutional, legal and policy frameworks.[2] Nevertheless, as Holston (2008) noted, exerting the right-to-rights faced its counters; other processes that shaped arenas for political deliberation, egalitarian citizenship and non-exceptional governance. The first was the increased role of criminal organisations with recourse to violence as a means to establish 'order' in the *periferias* (Feltran, 2020; Machado da Silva, 2004), requiring social movements, human rights groups, neighbourhood associations and informal organisers, and residents, to co-exist with these organisations. As Arias (2017) has argued, in the *periferias* criminal groups and the state adopted a repertoire of confrontational and symbiotic relations, the precise and often uncertain power balance resulting in either divided, collaborative or tiered governance arrangements. Even where negotiated accommodation was possible, the state and allied non-state actors adopted an increasingly securitised approach to the territory, that legitimated in the public imagination a necropolitical order whereby the lives of the black and brown poor are cut short by neglect and violence (Amparo Alves, 2018, p. 46; Mbembe, 2003). For residents, the 'world of crime' and potential for violence conditioned the possible 'parameters of action', including limiting the forms and confidence to engage with the public sphere (Beraldo et al., 2024; Feltran, 2020; Savell, 2015). Despite these conditions, however, some commentators have argued that attention to crime and violence has been over-centred in understandings of governance, underrepresenting the space afforded to civil society, and the agency of individual citizens (Beraldo et al., 2024; Fahlberg, 2018; Feltran, 2020).

The second process is the combination of political and economic liberalisation that reconfigured and in many instances constrained the state's capacity to deliver recognised rights (Friendly & Stiphany, 2019). The emergent neoliberal governance promoted a 'de-statisation of the political', whereby heterogeneous non- and para-state actors are endowed with the role of realising state objectives (Jessop, 1997, p. 574). Civil society organisations and private companies were given new and preferential roles and responsibilities (Friendly & Stiphany, 2019) affecting the scope and intensity of state presence in *perferias*. Public and increasingly private providers of social services and infrastructures had to work with neighbourhood associations and criminal organisations, as the de facto authorities in the territories, in plural arrangements of urban governance that were simultaneously technocratic and socially negotiated. And thus, while the availability of infrastructures and services became more universal, relations between providers and residents were based on a largely pragmatic, calculative and commodified rationality (Pilo, 2021). Repertoires of action and political discourses, while still often couched in terms of rights and inclusion were combined with a stress on market-economic notions such as productivity and enterprise, and citizenship tied to aspiration, social mobility and consumption.

Neoliberal governance has also manifested as an enhanced role for civil society organisations and NGOs, and a compliance and complicity with a post-political stance to entrenched social issues (Brown, 2015)—characterising what Dagnino (2007) has labelled a 'perverse confluence' of participatory and neoliberal projects. Rizek (2011, pp. 127–142), for example, highlights the managerial approach of NGOs to conceptualising and addressing poverty, including the promotion of cultural production as a strategy for the pacification of social conflict *and* an opportunity for private organisations to expand into new markets.[3] Under the PT (Partido dos Trabalhadores, Workers' Party), the government has cast the state as a guarantor of rights, including as a provider of a basic safety net, while putting an emphasis on consumption, including through access to credit, as the means to inclusion and social mobility (Feltran, 2020; Pinheiro Machado & Scalco, 2020). Popular subjectivities were reframed as the putative consumer-citizen and entrepreneurialism (Costa, 2020; Fontes, 2020; Silva, 2017; de Tommasi and Silva, 2020). The open question at this point was whether neoliberal governance translated to new forms of organising in the *periferias*.

At the 'margins' of the state, where its presence is patchy at best and deadly at its worst, different combinations of actors coalesce to form 'governance assemblages' which, as presented in the introduction to this special issue (Richmond and Müller, forthcoming), may potentially produce relatively stable modes of managing collective issues. This characterises a shift towards 'networked, integrated, cooperative, partnered, disseminated and at least partly self-organized' modes of governing that focus on processes (Brown, 2015, p. 250) and are led chiefly by non-state actors—businesses, NGOs, churches, civil society and organised crime—acting outside but often with the recognition of established institutions. Here, several permutations of these actors might emerge, co-exist and compete for governing over material concerns—livelihoods, resources and infrastructure—as well as subjective dimensions—including everyday practices and official narratives—that sustain the reproduction of the *periferias*, reinforcing but also challenging existing inequalities and power asymmetries.

In a useful contribution, Fahlberg (2018) takes up the argument that violence has been over-extended as the condition for understanding everyday life and politics in the *periferias*, closing out spaces for civil society. Based on fieldwork in a favela in Rio de Janeiro, Fahlberg observed the consolidation of three types of activism supporting nonviolent governance that coexist with the presence and authority of gangs and criminal organisations: cultural resistance, transformative *assistencialismo* and community militancy. Cultural resistance relies on the wide appeal of arts and culture as a potent form of 'protest and resistance against unjust government policies and practices' and discrimination more generally (Fahlberg, 2018, p. 501). Transformative *assistencialismo*—a term Fahlberg translates to welfare or assistance—encompasses largely feminised local organisations aiming at skills and human capital enhancement to realise education and employment opportunities, but also as a pathway for politicisation. Finally, community militancy aims for the consolidation of public policies and the fulfilment of constitutional rights. For Fahlberg (2018, p. 487) the '[violent] regime is not total' and activists 'play a critical role in the functioning and reproduction of the neighbourhood'. Good governance, developmentalism and the arts garner moral support from residents by championing nonviolence while bringing much needed resources to improve lives. Importantly, then, while these forms of activism provide an alternative to the 'world of crime' without jeopardising its activities—in other words, they co-exist (Feltran, 2020)—they foment popular governance arrangements in the *periferias* that may be characterised as democratic, anti-clientelistic and feminised. Nevertheless, these arrangements are not exclusively about rights but also market-centred (Ost & Fleury, 2013; Rocha & Carvalho, 2018).

Our research extends this observation by introducing two popular

[2] Holston defines insurgent citizenship as a counterpolitics through organized movements of the urban poor confronting entrenched national regimes of citizen inequality. The insurgent forms build on existing citizenship practices, attributes and relationships, that emerge out of people's everyday experiences of producing the conditions of urban life (2008, p. 248).

[3] Numerous organisations—especially in music, dance, visual arts, and sport—have entered partnerships with private companies and philanthropic actors, including sponsorships for events, involvement in international tours, Expo and Biennale, and promotion of government programmes or corporate products.

governance arrangements emerging from *periferias*. In implementing these arrangements, neighbourhood associations define and project themselves as de facto enactors of social rights and public policies, with or without the direct involvement of the state. Both forms emerge as bottom-up responses to perceived failures of the state in addressing urban precarity amidst the confluence of democratisation, neoliberalisation and violence. Framing demands in terms of rights, the re-insurgent form is an extension of longer-term struggles, whereas the entrepreneurial form is closer to a neoliberal approach to market-driven inclusion. Nevertheless, we do not wish to suggest an equivalence between entrepreneurial governance and neoliberalism and re-insurgent with deeper democracy. Rather, each nod to the appearance of new actors into the *periferias*, and the lower profile to others, new subjectivities and claims, and new discourses, alliances, arenas and strategies for struggle. We demonstrate how re-insurgent and entrepreneurial arrangements differ in how they perceive state failure and emphasise different channels for promoting improvements in the *periferia*. Further, the discussion presents how the COVID-19 pandemic put both governance forms to work, demonstrating how community-based initiatives to address impacts build on pre-existing arrangements. Finally, we highlight the limits of both arrangements revealed in the post-pandemic period.

3. Re-insurgency: with, despite, and against the state

The perceived failure of institutionalised responses to the housing deficit, the lack of services and the precarity of livelihoods in *periferias* spurred the rise of new social movements in Brazil, particularly in the 2000s. In the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, more than ten thousand families were living in thirteen land squats formed between 2008 and 2014 (Lourenço, 2014). Under the banner 'as long as housing is a privilege, occupation is a right', pro-poor housing movements such as the MTST (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto, Homeless Workers' Movement), the Brigadas Populares (Popular Brigades), and the MLB (Movimento de Luta nos Bairros, Vilas e Favelas; Movement of Struggle in Neighbourhoods, Vilas and Favelas) were constituted to support, plan, and execute land occupations as a form of 'grassroots urban planning' (De Souza, 2006).

The stress on the term occupation (*ocupação*) is important. It explicitly marks a distinction from earlier movements that had attained influence in public policy but were deemed too institutionalised and ineffective in pressing the state to deliver housing. And a distinction from invasion (*invasão*) emphasises the process of squatting on public or private land or buildings that do not fulfil a social function (Nascimento, 2016). Occupation, therefore, is repositioned as a form of 'rightful resistance' (O'Brien, 1996; Zhang, 2021) foregrounding the social function of property—a constitutional provision secured through the struggles of earlier insurgent citizens. These movements rely on 'illegal' squatting rather than institutional channels to secure the constitutional right to housing that the state is incapable—or unwilling—to uphold. In doing so, the occupation movement emphasises a struggle for rights as well as collective autonomy from the state. And, while the state is recognised by the movements as the guarantor of rights, it is also regarded by these actors as unreliable and as violating and limiting the exercise of certain rights, such as by imposing top-down planning decisions despite participatory procedures or by recourse to violence. The state is distrusted because it generally reacts towards occupations through violent repression and is perceived to represent the interests of the elites.

We see contemporary occupation movements as enacting a popular form of governance that we refer to as 're-insurgent'. While these movements share similarities with the insurgent demands outlined by Holston (2008), they have adapted past strategies in response to changed circumstances, from the existence of new legal frameworks to the transformed role of the state. As such, re-insurgency reveals the limits of Brazil's urban reform while building on its successes (Nogueira & Shin, 2022). First, it is sceptical towards the institutionalisation of social movements and their demands, seen as a form of co-optation by the neoliberal state. Past rounds of struggle by insurgent citizens have been successful in leading to the creation of new institutional and legal frameworks that recognise and expand the right to housing, create opportunities for direct participation, and shape housing policies. Contrary to more traditional housing movements and their trust in the institutionalised route, the occupation movement manifests a distrust in the (neoliberal) state's capacity and willingness to deliver rights to housing and to the city. As their motto suggests, direct action is seen as a necessary condition to by-pass the state and fulfil rights where these have been systematically neglected. Second, this mode of governance is associated with territories and communities in process of consolidation, where risk of evictions is ever-present despite an apparent right to housing and where basic services are not available to a great proportion of the population. Third, re-insurgent governance relies on the judicialisation of social demands whereby institutional changes are both an objective and a means to protect and frame their actions. Fourth, and related, re-insurgent discourses are enabled in practice by alliances with a variety of non-market actors, including universities, social movements and social justice lawyers. Students and academics in architecture and urbanism are especially relevant, whose technical knowledge supports the careful planning of individual plots, communal spaces and shared infrastructures, and avoidance of areas deemed high-risk or environmentally protected (Nascimento, 2016). This results in settlements which are designed to comply with planning regulations from the get-go as to 'stop the occupations from becoming slums' (Amin, 2014, p. 142). Therefore, although the occupation movement utilises similar tactics to the insurgent citizens analysed by Holston (2008), the new occupations are influenced by legal frameworks constituted through insurgency but adapt the discourses and alliances that reflect the insufficiency of the state to deliver on rights which they consider to be guarantees of citizenship.

Vitória was settled in 2013 as an occupation at the northeastern fringe of Belo Horizonte, near other working-class neighbourhoods and about 18 km from the city centre, and closer (around 4 km) to a popular commercial area in the neighbouring municipality of Santa Luzia. Vitoria was initially settled by families struggling to afford rent elsewhere in the city and later with the support of housing movements in the context of a contentious anti-eviction struggle. The occupation is part of a 10 km^2 area known as Izidora that encompasses three other occupations (Esperança, Helena Grego, Rosa Leão). The largest remaining green area in Belo Horizonte, Izidora is in an area of environmental protection (Área de Proteção Ambiental) and was area earmarked for a large development project which was to include the construction of social housing. Powerful interest groups, including the legal owners of the land (Granja Werneck S.A.) and investors (Rossi Incorporadora and Construtora Direcional), contested the occupation, initiating a four-year legal battle to evict the occupation. In 2016, Izidora was featured in the UN-Habitat III Conference as one of the most significant land conflicts in Latin America (Cruz & Silva, 2019). The anti-eviction struggle—partially gaining attention with the campaign hashtag #ResisteIzidora—brought together residents, social movements, other civil society groups and legal advisers. As noted by Holston (2008), the legal arena was a critical site for asserting rights. But unlike the interminable and ambiguous legal processes Holston described as the 'misrule of law', Izidora's efforts brought swifter and more definitive decision-making. A 2018 agreement signed by the then mayor and governor granted residents the right to remain—a victory that was sanctioned in a 2023 law that also granted Granja Werneck S.A. title to a similar-sized plot of land in Santa Luzia (Assessoria de Comunicação, 2023).

This anti-eviction struggle brought Vitória closer to social movements, such as Brigadas Populares and MLB, that organise and coordinate housing occupations elsewhere in Belo Horizonte and other cities. Nevertheless, Vitória remains independent, and its leaders—all of whom are women—are not official members of either movement. One of these leaders is Paulinha who, like many of her neighbours, first went to

Vitória to escape the unaffordable rents elsewhere in the city and build a better life. She arrived in 2014, when the occupation was facing a leadership vacuum: two of its former leaders had been murdered, whereas two others had been expelled from the territory by residents. In a context marked by violence and mistrust, Paulinha gained legitimacy as a community leader due to her participation in the anti-eviction struggles:

> On the day of the occupation at the city hall, we organised a movement to collect food donations and prepare meals […] The next day, people started calling me by my name. People I didn't even know were calling me by my name … 'Hi, Paulinha!' I'd say 'Hey!', but I didn't even know who they were. So I usually say that we were chosen to be leaders; leadership is truly earned, because we were chosen (Paulinha, interview, 25 November 2020).

The narrative goes on to highlight the presence of drug-trafficking gangs in the territory and how disputes over their control are part of everyday life. Nonetheless, in line with Fahlberg's argument, activists such as Paulinha occupy 'social, political, and moral spaces neglected by both the state and the drug trade' playing 'a critical role in the functioning and reproduction of the neighbourhood' (2018, p. 487). With the support of social movements and other civil-society actors, residents in Vitória organised to seek advancements and improvements to the territory:

> During this whole [anti-eviction] movement, we started seeing several things we could do in the community. The community is built with self-sustainability [in-mind]; we built the community ourselves. The improvements we have are thanks to us, to the supporters who helped us, to the professors from the Escritório de Integração[4] from PUC [Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais], from UFMG [Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais], the [NGO] Rede de Intercâmbio [that promotes] agroecology in the *periferia*—all these supporters came together to help us (Paulinha, interview, 25 November 2020).

As Paulinha underscores, these actors were crucial to lay out the plans for Vitória with its wide dirt roads lined with large-sized, single-house plots. Collaboration with the Rede de Intercâmbio e Tecnologias Alternativas (Network for Exchange and Alternative Technologies, known as Rede)—a not-for-profit organisation—was essential to incentivise and train residents to grow fruits and vegetables in their backyards (*quintal*) while also supporting the establishment of an organic vegetable garden. All the while, Vitória—and Izidora more broadly—kept close contacts with left-wing legislators from the PSOL (Partido Socialismo e Liberdade, Socialism and Liberty Party) aligned with the wider occupation movement and who brought up demands and issues faced by the occupations to the discussions with the local government. Combined, these efforts contributed to reinforce the image of a planned and sustainable settlement, while also fighting for the legal recognition of the territory and the consolidation of further urban improvements, including water and health services.

The importance of these different actors in managing the territory became more visible during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Vitória, as in many urban *periferias* in Brazil (see also Fahlberg et al., 2023), households were not only affected by the risk of the disease but also by the loss of livelihoods largely associated with informal activities such as domestic and construction work, and commerce. When we first contacted Paulinha in October 2020, she and other leaders in Vitória had been busy arranging donations—food, mostly, but also cleaning and personal hygiene products. For Paulinha, guaranteeing the right to food gained urgency and for the first year and a half since the pandemic was declared, donations continued to be received, mostly from individuals and organisations, such as Rede, who had long supported the occupation cause. With time, the MTST and the MST (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, Landless Workers' Movement) also became involved. The pandemic, therefore, obliged the leaders to extend their demands beyond existing themes, such as housing rights, and networks to establish new contacts with a broader range of social movements.

Mobilisation was supported by social media. An Instagram profile was created for Ocupação Vitória in March 2021 and used mainly to communicate with external actors to collect donations as well as publicise the distribution of items and thank donors. Vitória's use of social media was characterised by improvisation and its reach was limited, given the small number of followers (720 at the moment of writing). More widely used in Brazil and popular among low-income groups, WhatsApp was able to reach out within and beyond the occupation. Messages were sent to supporters to request donations and to communicate with residents about the availability of food and other items for collection. Paulinha and other community leaders managed the logistics of distributing the donations, from the identification of vulnerable residents to the collection of financial donations via bank transfers and, increasingly, via a newly government-created instant payment service (Pix). The legitimacy of their leadership as well as their knowledge of residents' needs was essential to build a positive reputation and material success.

Responding to the pandemic tested relationships with the state and other governance actors beyond the community and the limits of Vitória's re-insurgent approach. In 2021, UN-Habitat installed a drinking fountain (*bebedouro*) at the top of the territory's main road and principal access. At the time, only one such other fountain had been installed in Brazil and the intervention was a source of pride among leaders who regarded it as the UN's approval of their efforts to build the community. Importantly, it was seen also as an indication of investments to come. Some weeks later, pride gave way to confusion. An ambitious UN-Habitat's urbanisation project in collaboration with the city government was approved, funded by a loan from the World Bank. But, instead of recognising the decade-long occupation struggle and the efforts of the leadership and residents of Vitória, the project focused on the protection of water sources in the environmental protection zone and the removal of houses in areas deemed at risk of flooding. According to a 2023 PowerPoint presentation on the Sustainable Urbanisation Plan for Izidora prepared by the city government and available online (Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte, 2023), up to 726 evictions—over 25% of the estimated 2705 houses in the area—were expected to take place in Vitória. Residents rejected this proposal even though it was indicated that new housing would replace the houses that had already been built.

The project had a bittersweet taste for Paulinha, for whom urbanisation remained the biggest challenge of the community in 2023, but now with new contours:

> When the city government and the state arrived to undertake the urbanisation [of the occupation], the community was already established. Everything was already done. All they needed was to add to it. Because, in the past, we sought them, and they did nothing. They didn't come, not even to encourage us 'so, you will do this like so and so, you can't do this here, but you can do it there'. We called them many times, we pleaded with them, we demanded it in our protests […] They never came. Now they come and they want to change everything, to do it their way. I think this is a huge mistake […] They are coming and destroying everything we built. Instead of adding they are destroying to build something else […] They remove a house, so they build another house. This makes no sense (Paulinha, interview, 07 March 2023).

The quote encapsulates some of the main features of re-insurgent popular governance. It highlights the idea that autoconstruction will

[4] The Escritório de Integração (Office for Integration) was an extension project operated by students and academics from the Architecture programme at PUC. In Brazil, extension programmes are common forms to integrate academia and society, through direct interventions designed with the input from and, often, in collaboration with, local actors.

produce a neighbourhood defined by the priorities of their builder-residents if the grids, norms and rules outlined by the state are followed and current expectations of consolidation are met. The success of this approach relies on the proximity and shared experiences between leaders and other residents. This means that the process of building the neighbourhood is also imbued with the language of the state: residents learn about the workings of political and legal institutions, familiarise themselves with urbanistic norms and standards with the support of lawyers, academics and activists. This is used to produce a form of spatial organisation that simultaneously breaks with and complies with the state, necessarily dialoguing with it while demanding recognition and perhaps formalisation of their efforts. The absence of hard infrastructures notwithstanding, Vitória has the skeleton of a well-planned urban development waiting for the final stages of consolidation—the last touches that Paulinha was waiting for from the city government: access to mains water and paved roads, postal codes, health and educational services. However, this re-insurgent form of producing and managing the territory clashed with the interests of city government, international development agencies and their funders, leading to confusion and disillusionment from actors who had strived to pre-empt their demands and establish dialogue.

4. Entrepreneurial Governance: Unleashing the potential of the *periferia*

For many decades international agencies, governments and think tanks have endorsed entrepreneurialism as a development strategy. Enthusiastic claims have been made for the dynamism of informal economies and the opportunities presented by micro- and digital finance and new technologies (Dolan & Rajak, 2016; Roy, 2010). This entrepreneurial potential has been a constant referent at business fairs and training workshops, and in the promotion of incubators and tech hubs to support new business start-ups (Pollio, 2020; Roy, 2010). Popular enterprise, it is argued, can drive a bootstraps model for social and economic change, able to enhance social mobilities, gender empowerment, and inclusivity. Notwithstanding criticism that entrepreneurialism relies on cliched representations of the poor's, and especially women's, 'natural' creativity and business acumen, and for placing the responsibility of poverty alleviation onto individuals while disregarding the role of capital in reproducing inequalities (Roy, 2010), entrepreneurialism has become a trope of NGO, private foundations, evangelical churches and the media (McFarlane, 2012; Pollio, 2020). The practical claims for entrepreneurialism have meshed with an ideological shift to an individualist and competitive ethos, reaching beyond economic activities towards other spheres of social life (Dardot and Laval, 2014; Fontes, 2020). In the *periferias*, this can be illustrated by the dispute between and within communities for accessing external resources via competitive bids or curated links with philanthropic organisations.[5] Here, the motto is to move away from seeing the *periferia* as defined by its lacks (*carència*) and focus instead on its power and potential.

We see entrepreneurialism as another form of popular governance in *periferias*. It breaks with the rights-centred, state-oriented character of re-insurgent governance by, firstly, setting out partnerships with private actors and by an emphasis on entrepreneurialism and consumption as routes for social inclusion and local development—that is, through the 'lite' lenses of economic empowerment (Cornwall, 2018). Secondly, it does not seek the recognition or support from the state, which is seen as historically absent or antagonistic in terms of social provision and considered too partisan. Thirdly, this mode of governance is associated with more consolidated territories, where some access to basic infrastructure is complemented by a more diversified local economy and combination of civil society actors. This does not, however, engender a definitive process of inclusion of the *periferia* and its residents into the city and substantive citizenship. As such, and fourthly, rather than a 'global' reproduction of neoliberal discourses, this popular entrepreneurial governance also builds on experiences of autoconstruction and on existing forms of social mobilisation and activism, including the experience of insurgent citizens. They re-signify these experiences, rejecting victimisation and the representation of the *periferia* as spaces defined by absences in relation to the rest of the city but characterised instead by innovation, initiative and untapped consumer potential. As a result, this form of governance advances new grammars to approach struggles for citizenship and its outcomes in the *periferias* (see Rocha & Carvalho, 2018). In doing so, individual and collective subjectivities are (re)defined through enterprise and market-intermediated inclusion, incorporating, transforming and, to some degree, appropriating dominant neoliberal discourses. As a result, these also become entangled with long existing political practices at and from urban peripheries.

We can trace this process in the community and in the trajectories of the leaders and other key figures of the neighbourhood association in Paraisópolis. The second largest favela in São Paulo, Paraisópolis is home to more than 100,000 residents in over 21,000 houses across an area of 11 km^2. Its origins date back to the 1930s and its growth is associated with that of the surrounding upper-class neighbourhood, Morumbi. The demand for construction workers attracted Northeastern migrants who seized the opportunity to settle unoccupied (private) land in the area (D'Andrea, 2012; Gohn, 2010). The growth of Paraisópolis fostered tension with Morumbi and surrounding neighbourhoods as the favela densified from the 1970s. Faced with the heightened threat of evictions over the subsequent decade, the Paraisópolis neighbourhood association was founded (D'Andrea, 2012). Since then, Paraisópolis has continued to expand and its proximity to Morumbi has meant that, relative to other favelas, it has greater range of public services, more secure employment opportunities, and experienced a more vibrant, and pricier, real estate market.[6] Dozens of NGOs and private businesses from within and outside Paraisópolis operate, creating a complex ecosystem of actors with political, economic and social claims over the territory.

This dynamic is also reflected in the neighbourhood association which, since 2001, has been reformed to act as an all-round local government of sorts, with elections held every two years (Gohn, 2010). When we first visited in 2020, Gilson had been the president of the association for about a decade and wanted to step out to concentrate on a new venture: the G10 Favelas. Unlike the relatively conventional neighbourhood association, this Paraisópolis-based, not-for-profit organisation founded and presided by him brought together the leaders and entrepreneurs of the 10 biggest favelas in Brazil. Modelled on the G7, Gilson told us it aimed to both stimulate local enterprise, encourage business deals with external companies and crowd-in investment to favelas, including through the G10 Stock Exchange and G10 Bank, a fintech start-up to enhance financial inclusion through low-interest loans to micro and social enterprises, and channel social welfare payments through its debit card. The initial ethos was unapologetically to promote the entrepreneurial and consumer potential of the *periferias*. Gilson's intention to move away from the neighbourhood association and dedicate himself full-time to CEO of G10 was delayed by the pandemic and he remained its leader until 2022.

At the time of our first visit, just before the pandemic, the association housed a radio station, meeting rooms and several social enterprises

[5] Perhaps the best-known example is Gerando Falcões that from its favela origins provides vocational training via its 'university', an innovative range of digital platforms linking people to skills and jobs, and gaming apps to learn about public infrastructure (see Lyra, 2018). Funded largely by corporate donors, Gerando Falcões has presented its model at Harvard and the London School of Economics and has an extensive social media footprint.

[6] Paraisópolis holds a significant profile in popular culture, notably as the site of a well-known telenovela in 2015 and publication of a photo by Tuca Vieira in a 2004 edition of Folha de São Paulo that has become the iconic image for socioeconomic inequalities.

including Mãos de Maria, a women-led initiative started by friends Elizandra and Juliana. Juliana's life story illustrates that of other Paraisópolis residents: her parents, who migrated from the Northeast, met in adult literacy courses provided by the catholic church in the territory. 'My mother always incentivised us to study, to seek knowledge', Juliana told us, 'we might have nothing, but if we have knowledge we could get anywhere'. When Juliana was 14 years old, the neighbourhood association received a donation of personal computers and her father suggested she should teach others how to use them, as she was taking informatics classes at school:

> I had never been involved in the association. But when I got there, I saw these very humble, ordinary people fighting to transform the favela into a neighbourhood with very little knowledge. These people were like my dad, like my mom. They were going through a very hard time, but they were fighting for Paraisópolis. As for me, I had a bit more opportunity: what was I doing [for Paraisópolis]? (Juliana, interview, 28 August 2020).

Juliana's reflection connects personal trajectories and collective struggles that are constitutive to Paraisópolis: the fight to transform the 'favela into a neighbourhood'. However, she provides another rationale when presenting the difference between the 'little knowledge' of previous generations and the responsibility associated with the improved human capital of her own. Juliana's school friends, including Elizandra and Gilson, with whom she formed a student council (*grêmio*), would become central figures in the association and G10:

> We wanted to change the world starting from Paraisópolis, that teenage thing. We usually say that: when most teenagers were going for a night out, we were in the neighbourhood association, following up on projects of how to transform the favela into a neighbourhood. And that is where many projects were born, like Mãos de Maria, which is a social enterprise focusing on women's empowerment, to take women out of a situation of social vulnerability, generate income and provide them with financial autonomy. We show women they can be what they want to be. That we need opportunity, knowledge, to stick together, to believe in the human being (Juliana, interview 28 August 2020).

Created in 2017, Mãos de Maria trains and employs local women as cooks in their bistro and hosts fundraising events. Back in 2020, the project also included a small rooftop herb garden sponsored by Sodexo's Stop Hunger programme. This by, for and with women initiative aimed to support those who were vulnerable to physical, mental and financial abuse from partners, thus sharing some features of what Fahlberg labelled transformative *assistencialismo*. However, the emphasis on human capital weaved into Juliana's presentation of herself and of Mãos de Maria is not geared at skilling up for the formal labour market. Like other enterprises in Paraisópolis sponsored by the association and G10, Mãos de Maria was about transforming how women see and present themselves.

Similar processes have been described as generating what Freeman (2014) calls an 'entrepreneurial self' characterised by a conscious management of personality, energy and reputation, by the projection of self-mastery, innovation and fulfilment, and the embrace of stress. While Freeman's (2014) research concentrates on Barbadian middle-classes, an aspirational ethos and self-consciousness has also been noted in Brazilian *periferias* (Costa, 2024; De Tommasi & da Silva, 2020; Fontes, 2024; Richmond, 2020). According to Fontes (2024), the emergence of a 'neoliberal subjectivity' has been facilitated by the dynamics of working lives of the urban poor, who have been either historically excluded from wage employment or exploited in low-paid jobs. The rise of an entrepreneurial drive in the *periferia* is thus anchored in moral dispositions defined by the logics of getting by and the search for autonomy against degrading labour relations. But it goes further, projecting an experience of citizenship through market maxims of competition and meritocracy, as a collective re-imagination of the *periferias*. An article in Folha de São Paulo (Castro, 2024) quoted the co-founder of another Paraisópolis social enterprise, the Emprega Comunidades (Employing Communities)—which the piece dubbed 'the LinkedIn of the favela' and run by another local woman, Rejane—as the 'CEO of the favela'.

Entrepreneurialism generates new subjectivities but also fosters new forms of managing the territory. The COVID-19 pandemic provided this approach to popular governance greater purpose in Paraisópolis; a process led by local actors—most notably, the G10 and the association under Gilson. Already a popular figure in 2020 and referred to as the 'mayor of Paraisópolis', Gilson was key in transitioning the association from an ethos of *assistencialismo*—which he saw as putting the neighbourhood in the position of begging for favours, from school places to street paving—towards a market-oriented development agent. The creation of the G10 reflected this ambition to embrace a more entrepreneurial spirit.[7] Before the pandemic, G10 was gaining visibility among other favela leaders and big businesses alike, including by organising and hosting the first Favela Summit (that continues to take place annually) which aimed to launch, in March 2020, a crowdfund to invest in the most promising businesses from the country's biggest favelas.

If the pandemic redirected the initial strategies of the association and G10, the response was also an opportunity to showcase the capacity to organise the territory and manage resources efficiently and effectively. Within days of the declaration of the pandemic, these two organisations had put together an impressive infrastructure that included a quarantine ward, a crowd-funded emergency income for domestic workers, a street-based health and social care monitoring system with locally assigned 'street presidents', and a system for distributing thousands of freshly prepared meals and food baskets. Several of these initiatives were led and directed by women, including the street presidents and Mãos de Maria, now repurposed as a social enterprise to support local women's businesses and autonomy against the background of the health and economic crisis. The fact that this small team was able to transform the bistro into an industrial kitchen delivering thousands of meals within the space of a few days was used to demonstrate how these efforts were scalable, if the resources were present.

These responses were described as 'public policy' by Juliana, whereby the association became designer and implementer of local development. Management and knowledge of the territory were emphasised to the outside world and potential partners by blurring the limits between the association as a representative of residents and the G10 as a promoter of their economic prowess. There is no or very little talk of state in our interviews with Juliana and other members of the G10. Interestingly, there is also no talk of other social movements. Instead, policies are designed by a small group at the heart of these organisations and enabled by private donors and businesses. Paraisópolis's response to the pandemic was thus shaped by its entrepreneurial approach, characterised by a focus on building relationships with the private sector. Indeed, the G10 was able to attract and distribute an impressive quantity of resources—more than three million food baskets were donated across several Brazilian cities—and demonstrate, in practice, the power to unlock the potential of the *periferia*.

If social movements had no prominent role, the success of emergency responses catapulted the popularity of G10 and their governance model. Social media and networking have been crucial to publicise their projects and the leaders involved; from Gilson's numerous visits to Harvard Business School, speaking at elite galas in São Paulo and giving tours to celebrities, to G10 members' meetings with the Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in New York and opening of the Stock Exchange, and a business pitch competition transmitted live on YouTube. Each time,

[7] A similar shift seems to have occurred with another large, multi-city, social organisation, the CUFA (Central Única das Favelas, Unified Central of the Favelas). Founded by Celso Athayde in Rio de Janeiro, CUFA started out providing sports and social clubs, then online education, and more recently business training through its finance offshoot, Favela Holding.

Gilson took the opportunity to communicate the importance of entrepreneurialism, noting on YouTube: 'where people only saw violence, lacks and bad things, we are demonstrating that management, opportunities for transformation' and sponsorship could be the basis for change, if only the example was provided (Arcangeli, 2021). The pandemic served as a proof of concept. Newspaper articles, lifestyle and business magazine interviews, and regular guest spots on TV, and especially the almost daily posts on social media showed photographs of food parcels and queues of residents aligned with military precision, with captions that reinforced the message of the G10 which, at the time of writing, had over 59,000 followers on Instagram. Effectively, G10 rebranded *assistencialismo* as 'social entrepreneurialism' led and dictated by residents of the *periferia* themselves.

When we returned to Paraisópolis in 2022, we visited the G10's new headquarters inaugurated in 2020 near one of the favela's entrances. The G10 Pavilion houses the organisation's affiliated businesses, such as the industrial kitchen, a new vertical urban garden and a restaurant, all of which are run by Mãos de Maria; a sewing workshop and clothes store (Costurando Sonhos, Sewing Dreams); and the Emprega Comunidades job centre. The space also includes Gilson's office and a TV studio, as well as the headquarters of Favela Xpress. The latter is another social enterprise, launched during the pandemic to address the 'last mile' issue caused by the absence of formal postcodes and stigma associated with the favela, which constrained residents' access to online deliveries. The company's CEO, Gilvan, told us the idea came from Gilson: 'if we can get a food basket to people's houses, we can get everything else'. The service uses a map created during the pandemic by the street presidents to deliver products bought online from large Brazilian retailers to Paraisópolis. To increase efficiency, Favela Xpress has partnered with Google to provide digital Plus Codes to households, making the complex topography of the favela legible to and for business. In an interview for the press, Gilvan explained that Favela Xpress aims to 'break down the invisible walls that separate poor communities from the urban fabric of our cities' while 'bringing people dignity and a sense of belonging to society' (Scarpinelli, 2021). In his words, inclusion and belonging are achieved via access to the market rather than access to rights, a goal well-aligned with G10's focus on favelas' untapped market potential. Favela Xpress has now expanded to another seven favelas in São Paulo and to Rocinha, Rio's largest favela, and aims to become the first favela 'unicorn'—a startup worth more than $1 billion.

The visibility of these businesses and the heightened profile of G10 suggest that they have advanced their original goal, described in their website, of inspiring 'the whole of Brazil to look at the favela, shaping the communities into great business hubs attractive for investments, to transform exclusion into successful startups and social-impact enterprises' (G10 Favelas, 2024). Nevertheless, while market actors enabled the demonstration of the effectiveness of entrepreneurial governance the same processes also indicate its reliance during the pandemic on donations. This, despite explicitly stating that 'the objective is not to raise donations or sponsorship, but investments that generate both a return to the investor and the economic development of the communities' (G10 Favelas, 2024). This entrepreneurial approach—almost a business plan for the favela—informs the networks of the G10 and the neighbourhood association. As such, this form of governance deploys the unique locational advantage of Paraisópolis to curate collaborations with private actors outside of the community, but also on the purchasing power of those who live in the neighbourhood. The question however remains, whether this governance arrangement will promote income generation and improve the livelihoods of residents beyond those involved directly with sponsored social enterprises. That is, whether investments and resources will uplift the community or reproduce a meritocratic narrative of success based on a few cases sustained by outside investors and philanthropy.

5. Conclusion

In Brazil's *periferias*, collective life has been sustained historically by non-state actors that organised where the state's presence was inconsistent and ineffective. While all Brazilians were citizens in law, in practice the realisation and distribution of rights and material resources was highly uneven. By the 1980s, however, social movements, drawing in neighbourhood associations, religious organisations—mostly linked with the Catholic church—and residents demanded rights and a fairer distribution of resources, especially as access to urban services. But the cautious optimism of this democratisation through what Holston terms insurgent citizens seemed to have met its counters with the rise of organised crime, state-conducted violence, and the calculative managerialism of neoliberalism. Debates on the governance of the *periferias* were now dominated by attention to violence and security, and to the increasingly prominent role of private service providers or civil society as enablers of neoliberal policy. The contribution of neighbourhood associations and social movements as well as the emergence or potential role for other nonviolent actors in the governance of *periferias* received limited attention in the literature and public discourse.

This article serves partially as a correction, placing vibrant, innovative and original civil society organisations and their leaders at the centre of the analysis. Our argument is that these organisations and the networks that they operate within represent specific arrangements of popular governance. Each arrangement, which we characterise as re-insurgent and entrepreneurial, have had to co-exist with criminal organisations and to respond to the perceived failure or unwillingness of the state to address urban precarity. Re-insurgent actors emphasise rights-based discourses and therefore require a degree of engagement with the state, while also regarding meeting their demands as more likely to come about despite, rather than through, the state. The entrepreneurial approach, instead, positions the market as the path to inclusion and social mobility.

Re-insurgent governance directly references Holston's seminal argument around insurgent citizenship by building on the legal and institutional achievements created through Brazil's urban reform movement. But re-insurgency is characterised by an ambivalent and at times antagonistic relationship with the (neoliberal) state, which is seen as both guaranteeing and infringing on recognised rights. In the case of Ocupação Vitória, land occupation actualises the constitutional principle that property must serve a social function but bypasses the state to secure this right in practice. Occupations are formed, organised and maintained with the support of social movements, progressive politicians, legal advisers and university actors. The territory is configured to accord with legal and planning guidelines, while emphasising the autonomy of the community. This ambivalence to the state was at its clearest when Vitória mobilised to secure a right to remain in the territory, using the law and political voice to demand the state take their claim seriously. But, when the city government and UN-Habitat attempted to impose an urbanisation project, it rejected the proposal, asserting the occupation's autonomy from the state. Re-insurgent governance conceived inclusion as a demand on the state and not as a condition to be fulfilled by supplication to the state.

What we have identified as entrepreneurial governance, exemplified by the recent history of Paraisópolis, represents a divergent approach. A group of community leaders emphasise and demonstrate the *periferia* power and potential to oppose the stigma associated with crime and destitution. Their strategy however is not to draw the state in but to demonstrate the attractiveness of the favela to outside investors or as an unappreciated opportunity for business. Entrepreneurial governance represents precarious lives in the *periferias* as abundant with improvisation, agility and an ethic of work, rather than as a lack of organisation, skills or resources. The territory is organised as outward looking to business rather than the state or politics—indeed, it was notable how little attention, even during an election year, the leaders of Paraisópolis afforded to political candidates or parties, and by comparison with the

constant engagement with business leaders, celebrities and think tanks. Content on social and conventional media was also slick, professional, and more akin to a business campaign than social movement advocacy. The 'entrepreneurial self' cast as an entrepreneurial space and a form of activism.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented an enormous challenge to civil society and governance generally. For associations and leaders in both Ocupação Vitória and Paraisópolis, however, the pandemic also presented an opportunity to showcase their approach to governance. In both cases, the capacity to draw from existing networks and partnerships to attract resources and uphold an image of the *periferia* as organised, capable and effective was vital. Emerging in this context, was the role of women in leaderships reinforcing a gendered politics of care that shaped governance during the crisis—a point that is prime for further research. In Vitória, the reaction was shaped by pre-existing alliances with universities, social justice lawyers and social movements. The extreme precarity of living conditions in the territory, the limited response of the state, and crime, meant the association had to pivot to draw in resources and distribute donations of food and other supplies. Trusted by residents due to their positioning against eviction and struggle for services, and with an intimate knowledge of need, the association was able to respond. In Paraisópolis a combination of the association and social enterprises as part of G10 designed and executed a response. Donations were provided by existing private sector actors with more added as the impressive scale and organisation of the response was publicised. Existing social enterprises such as Mãos de Maria shifted their capacity to produce meals at scale while new enterprises such as Favela Xpress demonstrated how it could address the logistics of the 'last mile'. While both cases adapted to the demands of the crisis, blending pragmatism with degrees of *assistencialismo*, the essential qualities of re-insurgency and entrepreneurialism remained visible, or the disposition of each became more widely projected.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Aiko Ikemura Amaral: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Mara Nogueira:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Gareth A. Jones:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Conceptualization.

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