Body politics?

Teresa P. R. Caldeira

City of walls

Crime, segregation, and citizenship in São Paulo

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had become progressively more pronounced and dangerous to the extent that one might begin to wonder how such a society could possibly remain viable.

Teresa P. R. Caldeira describes something similar for the mega-city of São Paulo. In the early 1960s, with the beginning of industrialization, São Paulo was a relatively concentrated urban core, housing all social classes in a relatively contained space. From the 1940s onwards, with the constant immigration of workers and their families from the poor north-east of the country, the city took on another form, a series of concentric circles, what Caldeira refers to as the "diseased city". The city's social structure is first in houses and then in high-rise buildings close to the city centre, which the poor inhabited the circumference of the city which they expanded by building further and further into the surrounding countryside. Over the past decade, however, the structural geography of the city has changed yet again, as the rich move out of the central areas to reside in condominiums, planned very often in the middle of these areas on the circumference which the poor had previously colonized. From the swimming pools of their huge apartments, they can look out over the sitio above them, from which they are protected by high walls, closed-circuit television and armed guards. This more raccoonian process is a response to the dramatic increase in crime and the fear of robbery and kidnapping in the city.

The first part of Caldeira's book maps out the generalization of crime, not just urban but apparently across all strata of society. She shows how people of all walks of life have taken steps to protect themselves from robbery or violence. On the basis of police statistics and reports by non-governmental organizations, she then goes on to show that such fear is not in vain. Violence crime and the brutal repression of criminality at the hands of a seemingly forceful police force have grown in hand in hand over the past twenty years or more, exactly the period which followed the beginnings of Brazil's military dictatorship, which has been widely acknowledged as representing a successful concomitant with democracy.

But as Caldeira correctly points out, the vital cultural political relaciones between them are not so easily overcome by any number of repression. On the contrary, the state's neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights and the neglect of the human rights of the population has been covered by a series of opaque judicial procedures, which have been widely acknowledged as representing a successful concomitant with democracy.

But as Caldeira correctly points out, the violent repression of criminality at the hands of a seemingly forceful police force have grown in hand in hand over the past twenty years or more, exactly the period which followed the beginning of Brazil's military dictatorship, which has been widely acknowledged as representing a successful concomitant with democracy. But as Caldeira correctly points out, the violent repression of criminality at the hands of a seemingly forceful police force have grown in hand in hand over the past twenty years or more, exactly the period which followed the beginning of Brazil's military dictatorship, which has been widely acknowledged as representing a successful concomitant with democracy.

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