Urban Planning
2025 • Volume 10 • Article 9674
https://doi.org/10.17645/up.9674

ARTICLE

Open Access Journal

Precarious Settlement Upgrading and Racial Capitalism: Planning Authoritarianism and Its Crossroads for Democracy

Luana Xavier Pinto Coelho [1] and Lorena Melgaço [2]

[1] Center for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, Portugal
[2] Department of Human Geography, Lund University, Sweden

Correspondence: Lorena Melgaço (lorena.melgaco@keg.lu.se)

Submitted: 26 November 2024 **Accepted:** 11 March 2025 **Published:** 21 May 2025

Issue: This article is part of the issue "The Role of Planning in 'Anti-Democratic' Times" edited by Carina Listerborn (Malmö University) and Kristina Grange (Chalmers University of Technology), fully open access at https://doi.org/10.17645/up.i422

Abstract

A key critique of urban planning in postcolonial contexts is the persistence of Western/Eurocentric approaches that disregard the spatial production of Black and Indigenous populations as legitimate. In Brazil, despite shifts from authoritarian to democratic governments, racialised territories have consistently been subjected to state intervention. While policies have evolved—from deregulation and disinvestment to infrastructural investment—the underlying patterns of violence, dispossession, and undemocratic practices endure. This article explores the connection between Brazil's authoritarian urban planning history and the tenets of racial capitalism. Through a qualitative research synthesis, we examine scholarly literature focusing on the Growth Acceleration Programme on Urbanisation of Precarious Settlements (PAC-UAP) during the Workers' Party (PT) administration (2003–2016). Our aim is to (a) identify the conceptual and analytical approaches used by researchers, and (b) put these studies into dialogue with racial capitalism. By doing so, we unveil the inherent non-democratic tradition of planning in Brazil despite the implementation of a progressive policy. Furthermore, we point to the relevance of using racial capitalism as a lens to understand the causes of structural violence that remain in urban planning.

Keywords

authoritarianism; PAC-UAP; precarious settlement upgrading; racial capitalism

1. Introduction: Democratic Regimes, Authoritarian Planning?

Growing literature in Latin America (Gardella & Pinzón, 2023; Sadighian, 2023), Brazil (Brito et al., 2023; McDonald, 2021; Melgaço & Coelho, 2022; Paterniani, 2022; Tavolari, 2023), and beyond (Bates et al., 2018; Dantzler, 2021; Dorries & Harjo, 2020; Goetz et al., 2020) focuses on the intertwinement of urbanisation

and racial capitalism. Critical to the traditional class-centred perspective on urban development and inequality, studies have demonstrated the role of race and racism in urban processes. These studies not only recognise the historical legacy of colonial exploitation and economic dependency, but also the system that benefits from racial hierarchies as mechanisms of power and accumulation. For instance, in Latin America, precarious settlements and peripheral urban areas are predominantly inhabited by Black and Indigenous communities, yet the racialised nature of their exclusion is often overlooked in favour of broader socioeconomic analyses (Torino, 2024). Similarly, processes that often displace these communities, such as urban renewal, gentrification, and infrastructure development, are primarily explained through class-related theory. These explanations obscure the intersection of race and economic exploitation (Brito et al., 2023).

In this article, we join this critical arena by discussing how urban planning sustains authoritarian practices in seemingly democratic and progressive contexts, as well as how race plays a central role in sustaining this process. While engaging with critical race scholarship, we also bridge debates of critical urban planning, critical race studies, and racial capitalism. We employed qualitative research synthesis to analyse empirical studies published between 2016–2024 that addressed an investment policy within the Growth Acceleration Programme (PAC) called "Urbanização de Assentamentos Precários" (Urbanisation of Precarious Settlements) and here forth referred to as PAC-UAP. PAC was implemented during the progressive Workers' Party (PT, Partido dos Trabalhadores) government in Brazil that ranged from 2003 to 2016. PAC-UAP (2007–2016) specifically involved different levels of government and the private sector to provide large-scale infrastructure (including sanitation, housing, transport, energy, and water resources) to favelas or precarious urban settlements. As statistics show, those territories are mostly home to Black communities.

Qualitative research synthesis offers an interpretivist approach to reflect on the social and theoretical context of research, thus opening up data for further findings (Noblit & Hare, 1988, as cited in Major & Savin-Baden, 2012). In this case, this methodology is essential since, as expected, race did not feature as an analytical category in most of the papers, and the available racial data was also unexplored. By synthesising this body of work, we systematise the different mechanisms that further authoritarian patterns of intervention in these geographies, as observed in the original papers' empirical work. We also produce conceptual interpretations that, under a racial capitalism lens, help unveil the mechanisms through which racialisation serves capital accumulation. By doing so, we discuss the relevance of race and racism as analytical categories to critique interventions such as PAC-UAP, arguing that colourblindness hinders the progressive agenda of urban planning in Brazil and beyond.

The PT government foregrounded a series of advances in urbanisation management with, for example, the creation of the Ministry of Cities (in 2003). This ministry was responsible for implementing progressive urban policies, ranging from housing to mobility, sanitation, and participatory planning. PAC-UAP was enthusiastically received by housing activists, academics, and social movements because it was the first national policy to allocate substantial amounts of investment to historically disinvested areas (Denaldi & Cardoso, 2021). However, several problems in the PAC-UAP implementation have been criticised by urban scholars, including flawed participatory processes and non-democratic practices (Ferreira & Pereira, 2020; Moreira et al., 2020; Ximenes et al., 2023).

Our previous work (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022) has scrutinised PT's urban agenda, identifying colourblindness as a weak feature of urban planning initiatives that address spatial inequalities under progressive

governments. We delved into the history of the country and the myth of a racial democracy—the denial of racism—in the landscape of policy implementation. The multiple institutional levels and actors involved in enforcing federal policy programmes complicate the achievement of social justice goals. Local and regional institutions, responsible for implementing them, remain blind to race and racial inequalities. By synthesising and re-interpreting existing studies on PAC-UAP, we underscore "the relationship between ideology and planning policy and practice" (Shepherd, 2018, p. 494).

If investment in urban policy during PT's mandate highlighted the co-constitutive nature of planning and democracy to "counter entrenched social inequalities" (Caldeira & Holston, 2015, p. 2001), one must consider the sharp contrasts between this period and the one that followed President Dilma Rousseff's impeachment and Jair Bolsonaro's 2018 election. Bolsonaro's far-right government largely impacted urban policies and politics in the country. His government brought to light the traditionalist, racist, and elitist character of city-making, lurking in the small social gains provided in the first decades of the 2000s. Among many of the measures curbing social investment, the government extinguished the Ministry of Cities and reduced investment in programmes such as PAC. In other words, under Bolsonaro, we witnessed the use of morality to pursue policy deregulation and dismantling to satisfy international and national capitalist interests. Claiming to defend the interest of "the people," social policy beneficiaries, depicted as draining public resources, had their benefits slashed; historical rights of minority groups and Indigenous populations were reviewed; military and police spending increased with no matching investments in preventive measures (e.g., Milhorance, 2022). Urban policy shifted towards strengthening security forces, particularly in the territories where urban planning had previously been employed in response to social inequality. As Alves and Vargas (2020) discuss, Brazil's turn to the far-right is connected to its inherent anti-Blackness.

This turn is to be understood as a multiscalar process, pushing researchers to engage more deeply with "ideologically motivated planning reforms," given the close relationship between institutional changes in urban planning and national political ideologies (Davoudi et al., 2020, p. 31; see also Coşkun et al., 2024; Fearn & Davoudi, 2022; Shepherd, 2018; Swyngedouw, 2024). Several studies analyse how planning is used by autocratic regimes as an arm of the state to streamline swift development plans (Crot, 2013), implement master-planned urban megaprojects (Almqvist, 2024), or enforce labour control through spatial ordering (Nathan, 2023). However, within the putative democratic states, planning decisions have seldom been discussed under such a framework. In fact, planning has been regarded as a professional activity that "produces a public good of one kind or another" by safeguarding unequivocal social values (Yiftachel, 1998, p. 395). Therefore, urban planning has been at the centre stage in protecting democracy itself (Davoudi et al., 2020). Most cases of identified authoritarian practices have been seen as "states of exception" to otherwise democratic practices, rather than constitutive of them (Fearn & Davoudi, 2022).

If we concede that authoritarianism should not be confined to geographical and political representations of the state, then we must also closely consider how democratic governments and individuals may employ authoritarian practices and for what purposes (Koch, 2022; Luger, 2020). This feat requires us to overcome "an overly narrow definition of authoritarian practices (executive power grabs, direct police collusion, and limited political competition)" (Weaver & Prowse, 2020, p. 1177). Thus, we must also include "mundane state–society relations, operations and encounters" which produce spatialities and practices riddled with power (Luger, 2020, p. 3). This definition renders planning, as a "politics of place" (Fearn & Davoudi, 2022), with a central role in shaping such spatialities and enabling such practices, despite its recurrent attempts to

distance itself from the "messiness of the political" (Fearn & Davoudi, 2022, p. 351). Moreover, urban planning furthers the interests of elites throughout the whole autocratic-democratic spectrum. And regarding the production of space and the power relations it entails, race is central in defining "political subjects," "rights subjects," and what/who moves the political set to fulfil legitimated interests.

This article is organised as follows. In the next section, we discuss how racial capitalism has shaped postcolonial spaces and the consequences for furthering undemocratic processes, despite the implementation of democratic governments in the 2000s, with a closer look at the Brazilian case. We then present our use of qualitative research synthesis to identify four central mechanisms for understanding how racial capitalism underpins urban planning's authoritarian character, which is further discussed. Lastly, we conclude by discussing the importance of an urban research agenda that centres race as an essential analytical and policy category to address the racial reality of postcolonial cities.

2. Authoritarianism in the Production of Postcolonies: The Inherently Undemocratic Urban Formation Under Racial Capitalism

Race is often absent in the formulation of what is considered urban problems. When contemplated, it tends to be done from "one side of the color line," suggesting Black poverty, unemployment, or crime; thus leading, for example, to "public policy for *blacks*" (Brown et al., 2003, as cited in Goetz et al., 2020, p. 146, emphasis in original). Even more detached, urban inequality is portrayed as the "underclass problem," erasing race altogether, or at best, treating race as "experiences rather than central components shaping it [urban inequality]" (Dantzler, 2021, p. 113). In Latin America, the denial of racial segregation or the racialisation of urban processes is perpetuated by mestizo ideologies, which assume that racial mixing has erased societal divisions based on race (R. J. D. Oliveira, 2020; Torino, 2024). Nonetheless, the varying life experiences under democratic (racial) regimes have gained different spatial analogies, such as the colour-line by Du Bois (1994), zones of non-being by Fanon (2002), and necropolis or territories of death by Alves (2020). They all indicate that in racial regimes, democracy is a fallacious idea, given that these liberal regimes are sustained by racial oppression.

Such a critique gains special contours when discussing the Americas. Black and Indigenous scholars have long argued that liberal hegemony in these geographies meant equality among Whites (cf. Bertúlio, 2019; Dorries et al., 2022). Most of the countries on the continent *were made* independent by liberal revolutions that maintained racial slavery regimes and Indigenous peoples' servitude, while declaring equality for White male property owners (Wynter, 2003). In Latin America, even when the legacies of colonialism are recognised in producing space, such recognition fails to consider the undergirding racial logic in urbanisation (e.g., Mitchell-Walthour et al., 2022; Pereira, 2016). Furthermore, engaging with racism remains off-limits, often seen as unpatriotic, out of place (Torino, 2024), or secondary to socioeconomic aspects (Ruiz-Tagle & Aguilera, 2021). Lacking critical engagement with the entwinement of coloniality, democracy, and the legacies of colonialism, hegemonic models cannot address inequality and the colonial difference in these geographies to support a "democratic post-colonial perspective" (Ballestrin, 2015, p. 210; see also Banerjee, 2022). In these contexts, space retains an essential element to understand authoritarianism, for the uneven access to space is directly connected to the colonial past (Paolinelli et al., 2022) and racial regimes (Coelho, 2021). Indeed, emerging literature points to the racialised logics governing urban planning and its entanglement with the advancement of capitalism in the subcontinent (Gardella & Pinzón, 2023; McDonald, 2021).

Focusing on Brazil, authoritarian practices have been updated and are "naturalized in the country's social and political landscape" throughout different historical moments (Paolinelli et al., 2022, p. 282). The authoritarian continuity from the dictatorship to civil government was facilitated by the persistence of what Pinheiro calls "social(ly implemented) authoritarianism" (Alvarez et al., 2021, p. 312). In such case, the author argues, forms of violence, coercion, and exceptionalism are entrenched and continue beyond authoritarian periods, revealing an unresolved military past. The persistence of social(ly implemented) authoritarianism is affected by the intrinsic contradiction of the state, even when reproduced in the everyday and made visible through social relations. Three mechanisms sustain social(ly implemented) authoritarianism: racism, inequality, and state violence. Such authoritarianism is visible through, for example, unequal access to urbanisation in contiguous territories of large cities through both the action and inaction of the state (Alvarez et al. 2021).

In fact, looking at Brazil's urban planning history, what remains a constant is the reproduction of racially-segregated spaces (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022); protection and investment in White property (Paterniani, 2022); formation of White-segregated spaces that Jaime Amparo Alves calls "brancopia" (Alves, 2020); envisionment of a city that is "pure" and "clean" from unwanted inhabitants (Costa & Ribeiro, 2004; McDonald, 2021); and valorisation of exclusively White territories in the determination of the city quality (Brito et al., 2023). Both state and private actors actively benefit from the production of White space to increase land value:

> As an essential action for property development, spaces of Black sociability, which are in the path of the expansion of territories of white exclusivity, are destroyed and emptied, preparing the ground for territories and property products aligned with the urban norm, i.e., the ideal of the white city. (Brito et al., 2023, p. 36, our translation)

White segregation in Brazil guarantees "location vantages" for whiteness, i.e., the best location of work and housing (Brito et al., 2023). The devaluation of land and racialised processes producing land value are central to understanding racial capitalism's functioning (Dantzler, 2021).

Calling attention to the functioning of the racial regime and logics of racial capitalism in territorial control presupposes exposing what Harris (1993) defines as "whiteness as property." The author's theorisation underscores the shortcomings of the rule of law and equality, predicated by liberal regimes, in anti-Black and anti-Indigenous societies. In liberal hegemony, as she discusses, property is defined for the functioning of the racial regime and logics of racial capitalism, identifiable in territorial control (e.g., planning practices). Harris explains how "possession," the basis for rights to property, was defined to only consider cultural practices of Whites: "This definition [of possession] laid the foundation for the idea that whiteness—*that which whites alone possess*—is valuable and is property" (Harris, 1993, p. 1721, emphasis in the original).

Possession in this racialised definition becomes quite evident in the different value given to peoples and places through urban planning choices and practices in Brazil. The racialised regime is masked by modernity as an ideology at work in urban planning. This ideology blurs the political nature of how social problems are construed, often in tandem with broader civilisational projects that support progress (Escobar, 1997). Modernity is here understood within the decolonial tradition as a universal paradigm produced by "Eurocentered capitalist colonial power" restructuring power in capitalist and urban social relations (Quijano, 2007, p. 171), by allowing specific discursive and rule strategies to legitimise the colonial project (Boatcă,

2016). For decolonial scholars, modernity can only be understood as co-constitutive to coloniality, which simply put, relates to how power dynamics and social hierarchies (established during colonial times) continue to shape modern societies (Grosfoguel, 2008; Quijano, 2000). The historical invisibility of modernity's role in producing (post)colonial cities also exempts planning from its pivotal place in reproducing colonial relationships by means of "appropriation—of land, resources, culture, and ideas" (Cordova, 1994, p. 242). Thus, modernity as an ideological apparatus continues to legitimise the operation of planning, for it is based on "notions of private property and representative democracy" (Escobar, 2010, p. 5; see also Ballestrin, 2015; Koch, 2022; Paolinelli et al., 2022). By equating modernity to progress and development, throughout different historical periods and with various mechanisms, "planning innocence" remains seen as racially neutral and thus scrutinised from a class perspective (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022).

In the case of Brazil, as Villaça (1999) argued, progressive urbanists successfully politicised urban planning during the 1980s and 1990s, particularly by using master plans to highlight the competing interests and disputes among various societal sectors. However, this return to the master plan led to naturalising urban problems as a lack of planning, excusing political and economic sectors from their responsibility (Villaça, 1999). The City Statute (2001), a progressive law mandating participation in urban planning and recognising tenure rights for low-income informal land occupants, intensified urban tensions around the master plan. While designed to foster inclusion, its focus on participation failed to address the deeply rooted racial inequalities in access to urban resources. This failure inadvertently reinforced historically entrenched racialised regimes of democracy. The limit of progressive urbanism was its colourblindness. The implementation of the PAC-UAP in racialised territories illustrates the limit of intervention choices and the dangers of colourblind approaches to urban inequality in Brazil.

3. Research Design and Methodology

The research derives from two main enquiries. First, to understand what the analysis of a progressive policy implementation reveals regarding the inherent non-democratic tradition of planning in Brazil. Second, to investigate the relevance of using racial capitalism as a lens to understand the causes of the structural violence that remains in urban interventions implemented in precarious settlements. We resorted to qualitative research synthesis, a growing methodology in social sciences that enables conceptualisations and theories to be further developed through an interpretivist approach to prior studies (Drisko, 2020). This methodology allows for such "cross-studies interpretations" from the sampled material (Ulloa & Schwerer, 2024) to be produced from a different conceptual space. Analysing the large empirical work on the PAC-UAP implementation through racial capitalism as a theoretical lens revealed the racial silence in scholarly work. This discovery indicates the need for further studies to adopt race as an analytical category.

As our object of study, PAC-UAP offers a window to understand the premises of this research, since the programme provided the institutional and financial framework for rolling out the progressive agenda kickstarted by the City Statute. Importantly, it represented a change in the longstanding legacy of disinvestment in precarious settlements that contrasted with massive public investment in already consolidated residential areas. For the programme, precarious settlements were defined according to irregular land usage, poor infrastructure, occupation of environmentally risky areas, insufficient public services in general, and unsafe or unhealthy environments (Secretaria Nacional de Habitação, 2010). Within a broad framework, projects could seek national funding for a single or multiple aspects simultaneously.

When approved, the projects were implemented in coordination with various institutions but led by the local and state governments (Cardoso & Denaldi, 2018, p. 11). Furthermore, the programme guidelines required residents' participation from design to implementation to minimise evictions, as well as a focus on environmental and health improvements (including water, sanitation, and garbage collection; Secretaria Nacional de Habitação, 2010). The scale of interventions required a coordinated effort and solid municipal institutionality to guarantee completion. Up to 2017, PAC-UAP invested 29.6 billion BRL (5.3 billion USD) in 1,072 different cities across all federal states (Cardoso & Denaldi, 2018, p. 25). However, broad studies on implementation throughout the country reveal patterns of violence in connection with urban planning (Moreira et al., 2020).

The case selection encompassed papers published between 2016–2024. The timeframe delimited the sample size considering (a) the growing general interest in critical scholarship using race as an analytical tool over the last decade; (b) the increasing adoption of scholarly debates on Southern urbanism, decolonial planning, and settler colonialism in planning; and (c) a temporal distance from the initial launch of the programme to investigate concluded projects, offering a more consolidated analysis of the process. A systematic search was conducted with a combination of words in both Portuguese and English (including "PAC," "PAC-UAP," "favela upgrading," "urbanisation") in Brazilian databases (CAPES Periódicos and SciELO, with 13 results) and international databases (Scopus, Proquest, and Web of Science, with 8 results). To expand the results, a manual search was conducted on the highest-ranked Brazilian urban studies journals, leading to 13 new papers. To make sure we had achieved saturation—or a desired diversity and range of body of data (Strübing et al., 2018, as cited in Ulloa & Schwerer, 2024)—a final search was conducted in Google Scholar for both Portuguese and English. Of the 900 and 76 results (for Portuguese and English respectively), only the first 200 were considered. Initial results ranged from subjects such as education to health, social services, and urban violence. Furthermore, in most papers, PAC was mentioned only as a descriptive context and, therefore, excluded. The selection criteria in the first round included: case studies that specifically focused on PAC-UAP, the production of empirical data, and a focus on planning. This process yielded an initial selection of 47 papers.

In the second stage, we produced fact sheets of the papers, containing objectives, case city and macro-region, theoretical framework, whether race was a considered category, and the main aspects of PAC-UAP analysed (cf. Ulloa & Schwerer, 2024). Only one paper per author was considered to avoid inflating one's approach or positionality. Papers producing macro analysis of the programme's implementation in a region were excluded to privilege specific projects as case studies, with one exception: papers discussing cities in under-researched macro-regions of the country. Our initial goal to analyse papers representing all the five macro-regions in the country (North, North-East, South-East, South, and Centre-West) was not fulfilled, as no paper discussing the Centre-West region fit the exclusion criteria. Thirteen papers were selected at the final selection round. The final selection also showed an overrepresentation of cases in Rio de Janeiro (RJ; five in total) reflecting the large body of research and the scope of investment in the city.

The research followed a three-step process (as suggested in Major & Savin-Baden, 2012; Table 1 in the current article). Initially, eight overarching themes were identified as relevant to most of the papers (column 1). In the second stage, themes were synthesised into second-order themes through the analysis and comparison of the papers (column 2). These themes, individually, largely confirm an overall critique of precarious settlement upgrading projects. Finally, four third-order themes were defined after an

interpretative comparison and inductive analysis, using a racial capitalism analytical lens (column 3), which we further develop in the next section. Among the concerns of deploying this methodology are the flattening, decontextualisation, and oversimplification of data to achieve generalisations (Drisko, 2020; Major & Savin-Baden, 2012). In addition to creating factsheets that allowed researchers to access similar information, we also weighed the benefits of producing a systematic, in-depth analysis through the cases to avoid sweeping generalisations (as suggested by Ulloa & Schwerer, 2024).

The absence of racial data in the research, when contrasted with the large set of racial composition offered by the census, provides a strong base for discussion. The Black population living in favelas in 2022 within the analysed cities are (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2022): RJ (70.7%; papers 1, 2, 6, 8, and 10); Belém (78.49%; papers 3 and 12); Fortaleza (76.22%; paper 4); Belo Horizonte (78.53%; paper 5; Salvador (91.54%; paper 11); Curitiba (41.81%; paper 9); Florianópolis (53.52%; paper 13); Porto Alegre

Table 1. Cross-study analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of themes.

Overarching themes	Analytical and comparative themes	Conceptual interpretations
Participation (papers 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11)	Elusive, flawed, or absent; Silencing of population; Selective participation	Racialised regimes of citizenship undermining democracy
Stakeholder interests (papers 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13)	Tourism; Increase in land value; Entrepreneurial governance	Racialised urban politics
Role of the state (papers 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13)	State as a facilitator of private interests; Faulty implementation and post-implementation maintenance; Violent state presence through police and the judiciary apparatus	
Modes of living and identity (papers 1, 2, 3, 5, 10)	Loss of community ties; Homogenisation of livelihoods; Disregard of cultural and economic specificities; Precarious settlements as "places of absence"	Modernity as a planning ideology at the service of racial capitalism
Project decisions vs. population needs (papers 2, 3, 4, 5, 8)	Inadequate typologies; Neglect of community's desires and needs; Intervention vs. material reality; Privilege of mobility infrastructure	
Technical discourse (papers 2, 3, 6, 9, 12)	Lack of collaboration as argument for delays; Technical jargon as argument for interventions; No democratisation of technical knowledge	
Evictions (papers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12)	Evictions justified by technical arguments; Questionable eviction decisions; Violent approach to evictions	Dispossession as racial capitalism's modus operandi
Formalisation (papers 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11)	Violent relocation processes; Maintenance of precarious conditions; Abandonment of projects during or after completion; Economic repercussions	

Note: Papers analysed are (1) Vasconcelos and Duarte (2017); (2) Blasi Cunha (2018); (3) Castro and Lobato (2023); (4) Freitas (2016); (5) Libânio (2016); (6) Martins and Saavedra Farias (2019); (7) Menezes et al. (2017); (8) Sørbøe (2021); (9) Prestes and Zuquim (2023); (10) Rekow (2016); (11) A. A. A. Oliveira and Teixeira (2023); (12) Tavares and Cardoso (2023); and (13) Soares and Moraes (2019).

(47.07%; paper 7). These last three cities are in the South macro-region, where the population is predominantly White, thus, the over-representation of Blacks remains significant relative to their share of the total Black population (which is 23% on average). In Brazil, racial data are collected in five categories: White, Black, "Pardo," Yellow, and Indigenous. The "Pardo" category has historically been associated with Blackness, often referring to light-skinned Black individuals during the racial enslavement regime (Bertúlio, 1994). However, people with Indigenous ancestry, who do not meet the criteria for Indigenous identification (e.g., ties to Indigenous lands or languages), have often self-identified as "Pardo" (Silva, 2013). This propels the need for a regionalised, often localised, understanding of racialised spaces or communities. The Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) uses the Statute of Racial Equality definition of Black (*negro*) as the combined total of those who self-identify as either Black (*preto*) or "Pardo." In 2022, "Pardos" represent most of the population (45.3%), followed by Whites (43.5%), Blacks (*pretos*; 10.2%), Indigenous (0.8%), and Yellow (0.4%).

4. Using Racial Capitalism as an Analytical Lens (in the Absence of Racial Data)

The need to bring racial capitalism into the analysis of Brazilian urbanisation in general, and PAC-UAP in particular, is twofold. First, there is a continuum that compels us to look at the historical roots of state violence and authoritarian practices towards Black and Indigenous spatialities. Second, we cannot move forward without truly unpacking the logics behind the uneven ways that infrastructural projects, including PAC-UAP, have unfolded in racialised territorialities. One of our first assumptions about the systematic literature review was that race would be used as data, but not as an analytical category, which has been the tradition of urban studies in Brazil (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022; Paterniani, 2022). What came out of our analysis was much more dire: only three out of 47 papers initially selected mentioned the racial component of the territories under state intervention. Moreover, only one argued that racism was partly responsible for the violence and silencing of residents' voices (A. A. A. Oliveira & Teixeira, 2023), but without exploring the interrelation of race, capital, and urbanisation.

Most of the case studies focused on the concrete aspects of intervention and the impact of PAC-UAP on people's lives. A more comprehensive analysis of the programme must reflect on the underlying causes and structural processes that produce this uneven landscape. Considering the potential of qualitative research synthesis to reflect on how research is framed socially and conceptually for producing new findings (Noblit & Hare, 1988, as cited in Major & Savin-Baden, 2012), we briefly present the theoretical landscape used in the papers. With a few exceptions, most of the articles in the final analysis provided a descriptive approach. This approach privileged the concrete problems identified over an in-depth engagement with the conceptual framework presented.

The papers drew on two main scholarly productions. The first group includes established research projects evaluating PAC from a policy perspective, suggesting policy improvements and exploring best implementation practices at the local level, such as the work of Cardoso and Denaldi (2018; see also Denaldi & Cardoso, 2021). While policy-oriented frameworks provide a detailed understanding of specific interventions, they may limit the broader theoretical scope for a deeper exploration of urban processes. Expanding beyond this focus allows for a critical analysis of these urban processes, offering valuable insights into the larger context of urban planning and the conceptualisation of the city.

The second group includes work by progressive Brazilian urban scholars critical of capitalist and neoliberal urbanisation (e.g., Arantes et al., 2002; Bonduki, 2014; Rolnik, 2015; Vainer, 2003). Ermínia Maricato's work was the most cited reference. Not only is she a progressive and critical urbanist but was also the executive secretary of the Ministry of Cities during President Lula da Silva's first mandate. Recently, the author critiqued PT's shift towards a more market-oriented approach to urban policy (Maricato, 2017; Maricato & Cunha, 2022). The selection of these authors to develop a conceptual framework may partly explain the absence of a racial analysis in these studies. Most of this critical scholarship remains class-oriented, describing the root causes of authoritarian practices towards "the poor" as the inherent logics of capitalism. Even if this argument is correct, it remains incomplete. The colourblindness of the idea of the "poor" hinders analysis of the racial production of space. Paterniani (2022), for example, critiques narratives constructed by the political economy of urbanisation in Brazil that equalise "the worker" while concealing layers of racist formation of peoples and spaces.

Among international scholars, Harvey's work on the logics of urbanisation in relation to capitalism and the investment of surplus capital in the built environment was extensively used. This work includes a focus on spatial fixes, as a mechanism to recreate the need for urban redevelopment, as part of rational spatial organisation (Harvey, 2001). Questioning Harvey's colourblind approach, Dantzler invites urban scholars to reflect on "*who* may enact their individual and collective interests to generate surplus value" and "how such spatial fixes are predicated upon the (de)valuation of people and places" (Dantzler, 2021, p. 117, emphasis in original). These questions help us situate PAC-UAP design and implementation decisions in each city, while reflecting more broadly on the dynamics of racial capitalism in the urban space.

In Section 4, we focus on the conceptual interpretations resulting from the cross-study. Specifically, we discuss the possible implications of the absence of race, as both data and an analytical category, in PAC-UAP impact investigations. Thereby, we expose four of the mechanisms of racial capitalism at work in PAC-UAP: (a) the fallacy of democratic participation under racialised regimes of citizenship and its impact on racialised populations; (b) how urban politics further the interest of a White elite ready to fend for the maintenance of privilege through public investments and private property; (c) the persistence of modernity as an urban planning ideology to advance racial capitalism; and (d) dispossession as a central modus operandi of racial capitalism.

4.1. Participation in Racialised Regimes of Citizenship

Participation was an overarching theme across many of the papers. This was expected, given Brazil's leading position in participatory urban planning (e.g., Sintomer et al., 2008), the institutionalised demand of participation by the City Statute, and participation being a criterion for project approval within the PAC-UAP framework. Participatory planning practices are complex and require, according to Caldeira and Holston (2015), the joint effort and democratic inventiveness of different urban actors, including the justice system, different levels of government, and citizens.

The analysis of flawed (Blasi Cunha, 2018; Libânio, 2016; Vasconcelos & Duarte, 2017), decreasing (Martins & Saavedra Farias, 2019; Sørbøe, 2021), or inexistent (A. A. A. Oliveira & Teixeira, 2023; Rekow, 2016) participatory processes was central to the critique of PAC-UAP's implementation throughout. For example, Rekow's (2016) analysis of the intervention in Rocinha, RJ, focused on the elusive nature of participation as a concept. The author exposed that, while residents participated in the project design, they were not

consulted about decisions regarding eviction and the definition of risk areas. Interviews conducted by Blasi Cunha in Favela do Cantagalo, RJ, show inhabitants' frustration with the top-down approach to the design. As exposed by one of the interviewees: "The project came ready and now it's complicated for us to integrate into these committees and participate in this because the community will be really critical of the project, but it's already ready!" (Blasi Cunha, 2018, p. 132, our translation). The lack of participation was also evidenced in the silencing of the population during the "participatory forum," as they could not ask questions due to "time constraints." Similarly, Martins and Saavedra Farias (2019) detected the declining level of engagement with the population as the project advanced towards the urbanisation of 4th Street in Rocinha, the largest Favela in RJ.

These critiques align with scholarly work on the limits of participation in Brazil under growing neoliberal governance (Dagnino, 2004). Caldeira and Holston (2015) further the argument by pinpointing that participation is central to a new rationality that institutionalises democratic procedures in planning. However, under neoliberalism, participatory urban planning also institutionalises practices that ultimately hinder the implementation of social justice. Democracy plays a key role in "racial capitalist processes of spatial and social differentiation that truncate relationality for capital accumulation" (Melamed, 2015, p. 79), where the racial line determines who can be active political subjects in the participation processes of city planning.

Vargas and Alves (2010) demonstrate how Black people "experience state-sanctioned violence" in "racialised regimes of citizenship." For the authors, Blacks are excluded from substantive citizenship, and thus, unable to fully enjoy civil, political, and cultural rights, leading to "social and spatial confinement" (Vargas & Alves, 2010, p. 613). We understand the denial of being fully recognised as political subjects and rights subjects in participatory processes affecting their own communities as an example of racialised regimes of citizenship in action. Furthermore, the forced planning and implementation decisions, disguised as biased participation processes, reflect the persistence of racialised forms of urban politics at work for racial capitalism.

As Melamed (2015, p. 79) argues, racial capitalism relies on ideologies of democracy, nationalism, and multiculturalism to deactivate a "collectivity that might nurture greater social wholeness," for capital accumulation and state management. However, such lingering politics can only be evidenced when race becomes an analytical concept and racism is understood as foundational, rather than correlational, to urbanisation. Even though participation is demanded by the City Statute and PAC-UAP guidelines, they are mobilised to enable the prevalence of what we discuss below as racialised urban politics. Local and regional institutions are not yet designed to listen to all citizens equally. Forms of classed and racialised participation determine who is recognised as political, with the right to steer project goals and outcomes affecting their lives.

4.2. Racialised Urban Politics

The limited forms of community participation in the different stages of the projects also unveil the complex relations between the multi-layer of public and private actors. Looking at PAC's implementation in Rocinha, RJ, Sørbøe described how different interests and actors impacted the outputs of the intervention, not in the interest of the community. Being executed mostly by the state and private developers, "interventions were tweaked to also accommodate (a) the clientelist-opportunistic interests of powerful politicians, (b) the urban branding interests of the local governments, and (c) the profit-maximizing interests of the construction

companies" (Sørbøe, 2021, p. 140). Urban politics became evident in the papers discussing projects in RJ, given that PAC-UAP's implementation overlapped with the city's preparation for hosting two mega-events. The 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games complexified the city's general landscape of infrastructural work, while also subjecting favelas to larger interests connected to the events. In RJ, great emphasis was given to highly visible mobility infrastructure. For instance, the cable car (currently out of service) in Morro do Alemão was an investment of millions that caused massive evictions while the implementation of Units of Pacification Police (UPPs) served as a postcard for tourists and politicians (Blasi Cunha, 2018; Vasconcelos & Duarte, 2017). The events were used by the real estate industry as a window of opportunity to increase property value around the communities (Rekow, 2016). In other cases, such as in Maranguapinho, Fortaleza, mobility projects were also used to increase real estate value through both the provision of infrastructure for private car owners with a high number of evictions (Freitas, 2016).

The use of PAC-UAP for infrastructural investments that benefited actors outside the community unveils a specific kind of urban politics, which can be scrutinised under a racial capitalism lens. If, on the one hand, we observe broader racialised political economies that selectively remake the city, on the other, we observe a selective disrepair that disproportionately affects racialised communities. In Brazil, the experience of Black communities is marked by state violence through constant processes of intervention (redevelopment, evictions, clearance) and constant surveillance by violent policing with deadly results (Alves, 2020). A class-based perspective alone cannot uncover how policies are mobilised by elite groups, invested in protecting White property owners, and how public investment is used to increase their profit and property value.

This form of racialised urban politics evinces how, despite bringing much-needed investment, PAC-UAP has not dismantled the structures of racial capitalism. Instead, cyclical violence against Black people has manifested through urbanisation processes. Firstly, the legacy of colonialism and racial slavery in urbanisation processes (access to the city and property) has not been challenged or changed by progressive legislation (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022). Here, we must engage with and nuance Shepherd's (2018) remark that ideology is deeply implicated in policy and practice. The City Statute promotes a social justice-driven agenda aligned with PT's political agenda, which represented a great advancement in the country's urban policy. However, a progressive urban policy framework fails to dismantle the historical processes of racialisation that have shaped Brazilian planning practices and urbanisation. Local and regional institutions persist in perpetuating authoritarian planning practices. These practices have been normalised under the ideologies of capitalism, racism, and modernity, thus enabling powerful actors to continue operating as usual.

Caldeira and Holston (2015) discuss the ambiguity engrained in the City Statute that gave institutional legitimacy to different authoritarian forms of space production, mediating the state and ultra-neoliberal market (Franzoni, 2018). Flexible planning regulations in urban redevelopment and the institutionalisation of public–private partnerships allow continued processes of accumulation through dispossession (Rolnik, 2015), which as we discuss below, is racial capitalism's modus operandi. Such politics are made possible because racism still works to produce and naturalise dehumanisation, therefore impacting on the role of different actors in the racialisation of space. In Brazil, the lifestyle of Whites has been secured by containing Blacks in territories of death (Alves, 2020). This model has been sustained by the prevalence of modernity as the urban planning ideology. In order to disrupt the racist patterns of intervention, "a disruption of the racial ontologies of the human" is required (Ranganathan & Bonds, 2022, p. 203).

4.3. Modernity as the Urban Planning Ideology at Work for Racial Capitalism

The research synthesis also revealed an underlying disregard for the modes of living, as well as the kinds of sociability and collectivity of affected communities. Thus, the improvement of (material) living conditions was the main argument for intervention. The implementation of the elevator connecting the "favela and the asphalt" in Cantagalo, RJ, was depicted as a way to "unbreak" the city (Blasi Cunha, 2018), with underlying derogative tones. In Belém, in the Amazon region, research showed how the reallocation of communities, evicted by PAC's implementation, struggled to incorporate existing cultural and economic practices. Imposing apartment buildings with a monotonous typology negatively affected economic livelihoods and social relationships (Castro & Lobato, 2023).

The patterns of subjectification observed in the case studies are multifold, normalising state violence and the denial of autonomy through processes of homogenisation (Blasi Cunha, 2018; Vasconcelos & Duarte, 2017), while disregarding local needs in the name of technical expertise (Castro & Lobato, 2023; Prestes & Zuquim, 2023; Tavares & Cardoso, 2023). In Salvador, Oliveira and Teixeira (2023, p. 469, our translation) evidenced how the state treated those territories as places of absence, concluding that "the absence of both listening and participation is a determining factor in the inefficiency of certain actions developed by the State." Blasi Cunha (2018) identified conflicting perceptions between the state and residents regarding how space should be conceived and treated. For example, the state showed gross ignorance of the marked distinctions among communities constituting the Pavão–Pavãozinho–Cantagalo complex. The dreams of formalisation as a sign of progress are met by the residents with the difficult reality that the houses offered are unfit. As expressed by a resident in Taboquinha, Belém:

> People proudly say they live in an apartment….It is one on top of the other….If you ask me how many times the water tank was filled, I will say two or three times in eight years…how can I work like that? There is no water. (Castro & Lobato, 2023, p. 5957)

However, as already argued, privileging a class analysis shies away from the lingering political, juridical, and institutional structures of modernity on racialised groups. Modernity continues as a hegemonic planning ideology in Brazil (R. J. D. Oliveira, 2020), framing "unplanned" city growth as an urban problem that can be fixed with technical solutions. In a previous study, we discussed how planning in the postcolony furthers Black and Indigenous dispossession for White privilege by rendering political decisions technical, which we termed "planning innocence" (Melgaço & Coelho, 2022). Furthermore, we argued that this logic is perpetuated even in progressive governments' policies, which have inscribed social and spatial justice into their goals. Planning innocence perpetuates racialised spaces as spaces for intervention, using both technical and colourblind planning discourses. Moreover, the country has never faced spatial reparation processes regarding unequal access to the city.

As an ideology, modernity normalises privilege and inequality, underpinning both the perpetuation of White privilege and the broader process of Westernisation. Furthermore, modernity transforms socially constructed hierarchies into seemingly inherent and unchangeable realities. These realities emplace racial difference (Melamed, 2015; Melgaço & Coelho, 2022), thus updating and naturalising geographies of racism (Brito et al., 2023). Naturalisation coalesces in (a) urban planning curricula heavily interwoven with ideas of modernity; (b) the field's infatuation with the idea of civilisational progress; and (c) the implementation of

urban regulation that sustains the unique connection to enslavement as the economic foundation of the country, thus separating the "good" and the "evil" in urban space (da Cruz, 2022). This process enables racially conceived spaces by shaping perceptions and subjectivities, while marginalising Indigenous and colonised populations. These populations are positioned as outside history, thus devoid of cultural practices, thought patterns, and economic organisation (Bhandar, 2018). In planning, this process aligns with Bonnett's (2002) concept of "white urbanism," a phenomenon embedded in the fabric of cities that is enabled by the association of whiteness, modernity, and urbanism.

4.4. Dispossession as Modus Operandi

Discriminatory forms of "dispossession" operationalise (a) flawed processes of participation during evictions; (b) political investments in massive infrastructure that often fail to serve the communities and increase the eviction area; (c) disregard of the community's autonomy and livelihoods in resettlement projects; and (d) flawed recognition of tenure rights. Blasi Cunha (2018) observed how the discourse of development (which is one of the tenets of modernity) normalises dispossession. This is visible in the speech of the Subsecretary of Urbanism of the Construction Work Secretary, in RJ: "You don't make an omelette without breaking eggs. There is a need to open avenues, preserve water basin margins, and combat risk areas. This will lead to the demolition of houses" (Blasi Cunha, 2018, p. 128, our translation). In the metropolitan area of Curitiba, expropriation was even incentivised when not needed, given the availability of land for relocation in the area (Prestes & Zuquim, 2023).

The study of Belo Horizonte (Libânio, 2016) concluded that the city's policy was actually about slum clearance (*desfavelamento*), having chosen a massive mobility infrastructure with high numbers of evictions. The heavy use of the state apparatus to carry out evictions was also deemed as "legally dubious manoeuvres with operational teams that cut electricity, remove residents, and bulldoze neighbourhoods, sometimes with little to no warning," as a "tactic to validate evictions through the elimination of risk areas [and the] resettlement of residents" (Rekow, 2016, p. 11). In Belém, through a decree, the state government managed to extend the eviction zone proposed in the urban plan to include two other blocks for construction site support. Furthermore, the judicialisation of evictions was, as Tavares and Cardoso (2023) show, a way to guarantee the absolute defence of private property, while further stigmatising families occupying this property.

Displacement through the devaluation of racialised peoples and places, one of the key features of racial capitalism, proved to be a readily applied mechanism despite current urban legislation that requires minimum evictions. In theory, low-income people who have been living in informal areas for more than five years can claim ownership by acquisitive prescription (Article 9 of the City Statute). However, as the studies show, land or property titles are hardly ever granted (Libânio, 2016; Soares & Moraes, 2019). Additionally, property rights are not considered in the assessment of the value of people's homes for compensation or resettlement (Blasi Cunha, 2018; Rekow, 2016; Tavares & Cardoso, 2023). Furthermore, the heavy hand of the state in dispossessing, faltered in guaranteeing that service facilities were delivered on time and met communities' needs, as discussed in several of the texts.

Dispossession does not always mean removing people from their homes. It also encompasses actions that "involve the extraction of value (e.g., ghettoisation, movement of jobs and resources, devaluation of housing, neighbourhood disinvestment)" (Dantzler, 2021, p. 122). Several of the analysed papers have shown the

impact of PAC-UAP on (a) people's inability to maintain their sources of income or jobs (Tavares & Cardoso, 2023); (b) devaluing their homes due to the long duration and incomplete projects (Menezes et al., 2017); (c) deliberately abandoning demolition debris as a method of avoiding new occupants (A. A. A. Oliveira & Teixeira, 2023); (d) disinvesting after the completion of projects, including the disrepair of infrastructure, such as parks, libraries, or public service offices (Prestes & Zuquim, 2023; Sørbøe, 2021); and (e) making livelihoods unaffordable through regularisation and increased utility costs (Rekow, 2016).

We link dispossession as a modus operandi to debates on racialised regimes of property (Ranganathan & Bonds, 2022). A central feature raised by PAC-UAP implementation analysis is the disregard for people's sovereignty over their own homes. Specifically, this sovereignty includes the choice of where to live in cases of relocation, proper compensation for damage or relocation, and autonomy over their livelihoods. Vis-à-vis external decisions about local investments, there is little or no input from the community. The prevalence of capital interests, made visible by decisions that would benefit surrounding neighbourhoods or real estate agents (as in the case of the Units of Pacification Police), is an example of how racial capitalism has been at work to extract value from Black dispossession. Furthermore, this process can be historically traced to racial enslavement, with Black people depicted as "conceptually unable to legitimately create space, thereby leaving locations associated with Blackness open to the presumably 'rational' agendas of dominant spatial actors" (Bledsoe & Wright, 2019, p. 5). Black populations, then, serve as the "guarantor of capitalism's need to constantly find new spaces of accumulation" (Bledsoe & Wright, 2019, p. 12). Failing to engage with critical race theory or racial capitalism literature, along with the absence of racial data, has concealed these aspects of state violent intervention in racialised territories, which ultimately is the cause of the persistence of social injustices.

5. Conclusion

Motivated by this thematic issue, this article addresses the persistence of authoritarian planning practices under progressive policy programmes. At the same time, it discusses the challenges faced by critical planning scholarship to address such practices, given the historical privileging of a class perspective. This analysis responds to the growing need to understand the role of urban planning in furthering authoritarian practices (cf. Fearn & Davoudi, 2022). In this article, we propose that such interest must be accompanied with an awareness of racial capitalism's role in current subjugations and dispossessions of racialised populations and, therefore, the different forms of white urbanism.

Using qualitative research synthesis, we provided a snapshot of the research landscape on favela upgrading projects in Brazilian cities. By using racial capitalism as a lens, we underscored the centrality of race in the patterns of both authoritarianism and violence on Black territories. These processes evidence how putative democratic structures enable unending cycles of dispossession and displacement, being an "inherent feature of racial capitalism," which "rest[s] upon a detachment of people from place and resources" (Dantzler, 2021, p. 122). Through the methodology, we further elaborated on the four conceptual interpretations that mark the entwinement of planning and racial capitalism: participation in racialised regimes of citizenship; racialised urban politics; modernity as constitutive of racialised planning; and dispossession as racial capitalism's modus operandi. In conclusion, we highlight how such mechanisms are co-dependent on one another, providing the context, tools, and justification for the persistence of racial lines in urban planning, even in progressive policy landscapes.

In Brazil, local and regional institutions continue to reproduce authoritarian planning practices, normalised under ideologies of capitalism, racism, and modernity. If citizenship is not full in racialised regimes, participation acts as a legitimator of violent dispossession processes. The interventions disregard Black people's spatialities and sparsely recognise the legitimacy of possession. This trend validates Harris' (1993) thesis that possession only becomes property in the presence of "white customs." While we believe that we could clearly position how PAC-UAP reinforces authoritarian practices under a racial capitalism framework, we are not able to extrapolate the extent of the White benefit from the apparatus in place. We must advance research in a direction that allows us to overcome formulating (urban) problems from "one side of the color line" (Brown et al., 2003, as cited in Goetz et al., 2020).

PAC-UAP was just a small part of the investment pack under PAC. From a total of 1,761.4 trillion BRL (Nunes, 2018, p. 386) for different areas of infrastructure provision, PAC-UAP represented only 1.51% of the total investment. Therefore, using racial capitalism as a lens requires a relational analysis of the programs' impact in different areas of the city. Future analysis could encompass (a) Black and White territories; (b) the forms of participation implemented; (c) the association between the different urban actors; (d) the ideologies shaping both discourse and practice in formulating the issues at hand; and (e) how the solutions provided affect local people's livelihoods. Such an encompassing approach can illuminate the differential and unequal processes of how certain groups mobilise public investment to produce surplus value. Spatialised cross-territorial studies may provide a more accurate overview of how investment and disinvestment is being planned. Rather than solely focusing on marginalised communities, these studies could produce a more nuanced understanding of urban processes under racial capitalism.

Such an approach requires novel research questions in fields such as segregation, urban planning, and participatory planning research, while shedding light on racialised forms of property rights regimes. Scholars drawing on racism and race as an analytical category point to the limits of recognition of diversity (Williams & Steil, 2023), procedural reforms (Weaver & Prowse, 2020), and colourblind approaches to urban renewal (Brito et al., 2023). Keenly observed, effective democratic engagement can only be implemented when marginalised communities are at the centre of reparative practices that tackle racial and economic injustices (Stahl, 2023). Unequal access to urban resources (e.g., urban land), resulting from racial property regimes, continues to be a great challenge for urban planning under racial capitalism. The lesson that the Brazilian progressive urbanism experience provides is that colourblindness in such a context is harmful, and state interventions must face racially produced spatial inequalities.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the three reviewers for their insightful review which we believe greatly improved this final manuscript. All revisions are our sole responsibility.

Funding

This article is an outcome of work carried out at the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, with the support of the Foundation for Science and Technology, under the Multiannual Financing of R&D Units (UIDP/50012/2020). Publication of this article in open access was made possible through the institutional membership agreement between Lund University and Cogitatio Press.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

Almqvist, A. (2024). Rethinking Egypt's 'failed' desert cities: Autocracy, urban planning, and class politics in Sadat's new town programme. *Mediterranean Politics*, *29*(1), 26–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2022.2043998

Alvarez, M. C., Benett, P. R., Higa, G. L., Novello, R. H., & Funari, G. (2021). Revisitando a noção de autoritarismo socialmente implantado. *Tempo Social*, *33*(3), 301–332.

Alves, J. A. (2020). Biopólis, necrópolis, 'blackpolis': Notas para un nuevo léxico político en los análisis socio-espaciales del racismo. *Geopauta*, *4*(1), 5–33. https://doi.org/10.22481/rg.v4i1.6161

Alves, J. A., & Vargas, J. C. (2020). The spectre of Haiti: Structural antiblackness, the far-right backlash and the fear of a black majority in Brazil. *Third World Quarterly*, *41*(4), 645–662. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1695116

Arantes, O., Vainer, C., & Maricato, E. (2002). *A cidade do pensamento único: Desmanchando consensos*. Editora Vozes.

Ballestrin, L. (2015). Coloniality and democracy. *Revista de Estudos Políticos*, *5*(9), 210–228.

Banerjee, S. B. (2022). Decolonizing deliberative democracy: Perspectives from below. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *181*(2), 283–299. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04971-5

Bates, L. K., Towne, S. A., Jordan, C. P., Lelliott, K. L., Bates, L. K., Towne, S. A., Jordan, C. P., Lelliott, K. L., Johnson, M. S., Wilson, B., Winkler, T., Livia Brand, A., Corbin, C. N. E., Jordan Miller, M., Koh, A., Freitas, K., & Roberts, A. R. (2018). Race and spatial imaginary: Planning otherwise/Introduction: What shakes loose when we imagine otherwise/She made the vision true: A journey toward recognition and belonging/Isha Black or Isha White? Racial identity and spatial development in Warren County, NC/Colonial city design lives here: Questioning planning education's dominant imaginaries/Say its name—Planning is the white spatial imaginary, or reading McKittrick and Woods as planning text/Wakanda! Take the wheel! Visions of a Black green city/If I built the world, imagine that: Reflecting on world building practices in Black Los Angeles/Is Honolulu a Hawaiian place? Decolonizing cities and the redefinition of spatial legitimacy/Interpretations & imaginaries: Toward an instrumental Black planning history. *Planning Theory & Practice*, *19*(2), 254–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2018.1456816

Bertúlio, D. L. (1994). *Racismo, violência e direitos humanos: Considerações sobre a discriminação de raça e gênero na sociedade brasileira*. Unpublished manuscript. https://www.academia.edu/40610396/RACISMO_VIOL%C3%8ANCIA_E_DIREITOS_HUMANOS_Considera%C3%A7%C3%B5es_sobre_a_Discrimina%C3%A7%C3%A3o_de_Ra%C3%A7a_e_G%C3%AAnero_na_sociedade_Brasileira_Dora_Lucia_de_Lima_Bert%C3%BAlio

Bertúlio, D. L. (2019). *Direito e relações raciais: Uma introdução crítica ao racismo*. Lumen Juris.

Bhandar, B. (2018). *Colonial lives of property: Law, land, and racial regimes of ownership*. Duke University Press.

Blasi Cunha, J. (2018). "O projeto já chegou até nós pronto e não podemos mudar muita coisa!": A metodologia participativa do PAC e a atuação das lideranças comunitárias no projeto de (re)urbanização de uma favela do Rio de Janeiro. *Horizontes Antropológicos*, *24*(50), 117–144. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832018000100005

Bledsoe, A., & Wright, W. J. (2019). The anti-Blackness of global capital. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *37*(1), 8–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818805102

Boatcă, M. (2016). *Global inequalities beyond occidentalism*. Routledge.

Bonduki, N. (2014). *Os pioneiros da habitação social* (Vol. 1). UNESP.

Bonnett, A. (2002). The metropolis and white modernity. *Ethnicities*, *2*(3), 349–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796802002003040 1

Brito, G., Mendonça, P. R., & Rolnik, R. (2023). Territórios de exclusividade branca: Segregação, negação e enfrentamento do racismo no planejamento urbano da cidade de São Paulo. *Revista Brasileira de Direito Urbanístico*, *9*(17), 35–59.

Caldeira, T., & Holston, J. (2015). Participatory urban planning in Brazil. *Urban Studies*, *52*(11), 2001–2017.

Cardoso, A. L., & Denaldi, R. (Eds.). (2018). *Urbanização de favelas no Brasil: Um balanço preliminar do PAC*. Letra Capital.

Castro, M. D., & Lobato, F. T. (2023). Urbanização de assentamentos precários e (in)sustentabilidade urbana. *Revista Observatório de la Economía Latinoamericana*, *21*(7), 5940–5961. https://doi.org/10.55905/oelv21n7-008

Coelho, L. X. P. (2021). Law and race in Latin America: Brazil and Peru in an echo of two stories. *Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements*, *13*(2), 51–75. https://www.interfacejournal.net/interface-volume-13-issue-2

Cordova, T. (1994). Refusing to appropriate: The emerging discourse on planning and race. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *60*(2), 242–243.

Coşkun, G., İnal-Çekiç, T., & Tombuş, E. (Eds.). (2024). *Reclaiming democracy in cities* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003404736

Costa, C. S. R. d., & Ribeiro, L. C. d. Q. (2004). Cor, status e segregação residencial em Belo Horizonte: Notas exploratórias. In *Anais Do XI Seminário sobre a Economia Mineira*. Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais.

Crot, L. (2013). Planning for sustainability in non-democratic polities: The case of Masdar City. *Urban Studies*, *50*(13), 2809–2825. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098012474697

da Cruz, M. K. (2022). Ditadura dos "bem-nascidos": Necro-política urbana, eugenia e autoritarismo no Brasil. *Revista Baru – Revista Brasileira de Assuntos Regionais e Urbanos*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.18224/baru.v8i1.9217

Dagnino, E. (2004). Construção democrática, neoliberalismo e participação: Os dilemas da confluência perversa. *Política & Sociedade*, *3*(5), 139–164.

Dantzler, P. A. (2021). The urban process under racial capitalism: Race, anti-Blackness, and capital accumulation. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and the City*, *2*(2), 113–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/26884674.2021.1934201

Davoudi, S., Galland, D., & Stead, D. (2020). Reinventing planning and planners: Ideological decontestations and rhetorical appeals. *Planning Theory*, *19*(1), 17–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095219869386

Denaldi, R., & Cardoso, A. L. (2021). Slum upgrading beyond incubation: Exploring the dilemmas of nation-wide large scale policy interventions in Brazil's growth acceleration programme (PAC). *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*, *13*(3), 530–545. https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2021.1958336

Dorries, H., & Harjo, L. (2020). Beyond safety: Refusing colonial violence through Indigenous feminist planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *40*(2), 210–219. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X19894382

Dorries, H., Hugill, D., & Tomiak, J. (2022). Racial capitalism and the production of settler colonial cities. *Geoforum*, *132*, 263–270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.07.016

Drisko, J. W. (2020). Qualitative research synthesis: An appreciative and critical introduction. *Qualitative Social Work*, *19*(4), 736–753. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325019848808

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1994). *The souls of Black folk*. Dover.

Escobar, A. (1997). Planning. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *The development dictionary* (pp. 145–160). Zed Books.

Escobar, A. (2010). Latin America at a crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development? *Cultural Studies*, *24*(1), 1–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380903424208

Fanon, F. (2002). *The wretched of the earth*. Grove Press.

Fearn, G., & Davoudi, S. (2022). From post-political to authoritarian planning in England, a crisis of legitimacy. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *47*(2), 347–362. https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12501

Ferreira, G. D., & Pereira, E. C. R. (2020). Urbanização de favelas em foco. *Revista Brasileira de Políticas Públicas e Internacionais*, *5*(2), 192–218. https://doi.org/10.22478/ufpb.2525-5584.2020v5n2.52564

Franzoni, J. A. (2018). *O direito e o direito: Estórias da Izidora contadas por uma fabulação jurídico-espacial* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais.

Freitas, C. F. S. (2016, November 23–26). *Entre o direito à cidade institucionalizado e as insurgências dos moradores de assentamentos informais em Fortaleza* [Paper presentation]. II Urbfavelas: Seminário Nacional de Urbanização de Favelas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Gardella, N. B., & Pinzón, L. R. P. (2023). Racial segregation and urban planning in Latin America: A historiographical study of contemporary Cartagena, Colombia. *Historia (Santiago)*, *56*(1), 321–354. https://doi.org/10.4067/s0717-71942023000100321

Goetz, E. G., Williams, R. A., & Damiano, A. (2020). Whiteness and urban planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *86*(2), 142–156. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2019.1693907

Grosfoguel, R. (2008). Para descolonizar os estudos de economia política e os estudos pós-coloniais: Transmodernidade, pensamento de fronteira e colonialidade global. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, *80*, 115–147. https://doi.org/10.4000/rccs.697

Harris, C. I. (1993). Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review*, *106*(8), 1707–1791. https://doi.org/10.2307/1341787

Harvey, D. (2001). Globalization and the 'spatial fix.' *Geographische Revue*, *3*(2), 23–30.

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. (2022). *Cidades e estados: Nova Lima*. https://www.ibge.gov.br/cidades-e-estados/mg/nova-lima.html

Koch, N. (2022). Introduction: Spatializing authoritarianism. In N. Koch (Ed.), *Spatializing authoritarianism* (pp. 1–21). Syracuse University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2djhg8q.5

Libânio, C. D. A. (2016). O fim das favelas? Planejamento, participação e remoção de famílias em Belo Horizonte. *Cadernos Metrópole*, *18*(37), 765–784. https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-9996.2016-3707

Luger, J. (2020). Questioning planetary illiberal geographies: Territory, space and power. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, *8*(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2019.1673806

Major, C. H., & Savin-Baden, M. (2012). *An introduction to qualitative research synthesis* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203497555

Maricato, E. (2017). The future of global peripheral cities. *Latin American Perspectives*, *44*(2), 18–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X16685174

Maricato, E., & Cunha, T. F. S. (2022). *Planejamento urbano no Brasil: A distância entre a retórica e a prática*. Cadernos Jurídicos da Escola Paulista da Magistratura, *23*(62), 85–99. https://bdjur.stj.jus.br/jspui/handle/2011/171825

Martins, A., & Saavedra Farias, J. (2019). Inclusive sustainability within favela upgrading and incremental housing: The case of Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro. *Sustainable Development*, *27*(2), 205–213. https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1879

McDonald, D. L. (2021). The origins of informality in a Brazilian planned city: Belo Horizonte, 1889–1900. *Journal of Urban History*, *47*(1), 29–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144219861930

Melamed, J. (2015). Racial capitalism. *Critical Ethnic Studies*, *1*(1), 76–85.

Melgaço, L., & Coelho, L. X. P. (2022). Race and space in the postcolony: A relational study on urban planning under racial capitalism in Brazil and South Africa. *City & Community*, *21*(3), 214–237. https://doi.org/10.1177/15356841221087195

Menezes, D. B., Augustin, A. C., & Souza, V. (2017). Dificuldades nos projetos compartilhados: O caso do PAC Urbanização de Assentamentos Precários na Região Metropolitana de Porto Alegre. *Indicadores Econômicos FEE*, *44*(4), 65–80.

Milhorance, C. (2022). Policy dismantling and democratic regression in Brazil under Bolsonaro: Coalition politics, ideas, and underlying discourses. *Review of Policy Research*, *39*(6), 752–770. https://doi.org/10.1111/ropr.12502

Mitchell-Walthour, G., Cotito, M. N., & Hernández, T. K. (2022). Race, gender, class and public policies in Latin America and Andean countries. In J. M. González-Pérez, C. Irazábal, & R. C. Lois-González (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of urban studies in Latin America and the Caribbean* (1st ed., pp. 561–578). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003132622-27

Moreira, F. A., Rolnik, R., & Santoro, P. F. (Eds.). (2020). *Cartografias da produção, transitoriedade e despossessão dos territórios populares* (1st ed.). Raquel Rolnik.

Nathan, N. (2023). *Explaining urban order: The autocratic origins of Africa's city street networks*. OSF Preprints. https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/y4upa

Nunes, M. (2018). O Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento e as fronteiras. In B. Pêgo & R. Moura (Eds.), *Fronteiras do Brasil: Uma avaliação de política pública* (Vol. 1, pp. 381–411). Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. https://portalantigo.ipea.gov.br/agencia/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34441

Oliveira, A. A. A., & Teixeira, A. N. (2023). A "cidade de ausências" e as políticas públicas de urbanização: Análise da implantação do PAC/UAP em comunidades do subúrbio ferroviário (Salvador/BA). *Cadernos do CEAS: Revista Crítica de Humanidades*, *48*(260), 463–490.

Oliveira, R. J. D. (2020). A segregação racial e o pensamento urbanístico no Brasil: Racial segregation and urban thinking in Brazil. *Revista Políticas Públicas & Cidades*, *9*(1), 26–39. https://doi.org/10.23900/2359-1552v9n1-3-3-2020

Paolinelli, M., Canettieri, T., & Velloso, R. (2022). Housing authoritarianism in Brazil: A view from the urban periphery of Belo Horizonte. In N. Koch (Ed.), *Spatializing authoritarianism* (pp. 279–296). Syracuse University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2djhg8q.18

Paterniani, S. Z. (2022). Ocupações, práxis espacial negra e brancopia: Para uma crítica da branquidade nos estudos urbanos paulistas. *Revista de Antropologia*, *65*(2), Article e197978. https://doi.org/10.11606/1678-9857.ra.2022.197978

Pereira, P. (2016). Processos e problemas na urbanizado da América Latina: Teoria e história. *Territorios*, *34*, 35–58. https://doi.org/10.12804/territ34.2016.02

Prestes, M. F., & Zuquim, M. D. L. (2023). Experiências do PAC no tratamento urbanístico de APP na metrópole de Curitiba. *Cadernos Metrópole*, *25*(58), 969–991. https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-9996.2023-5809

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America. *Neplanta: Views from South*, *1*(3), 533–580.

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and modernity/rationality. *Cultural Studies*, *21*(2/3), 168–178.

Ranganathan, M., & Bonds, A. (2022). Racial regimes of property: Introduction to the special issue. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *40*(2), 197–207. https://doi.org/10.1177/02637758221084101

Rekow, L. (2016). Pacification & mega-events in Rio de Janeiro: Urbanization, public security & accumulation by dispossession. *Journal of Human Security*, *12*(1), 4–34. https://doi.org/10.12924/johs2016.12010004

Rolnik, R. (2015). *Guerra dos lugares: A colonização da terra e da moradia na era das finanças* (1st ed.). Boitempo.

Ruiz-Tagle, J., & Aguilera, C. (2021). Colonial ideologies, narratives, and popular perceptions of ethno-racial otherness in the dynamics of urban exclusion: Debates and evidence from Mexico, Colombia, Chile, and Argentina. *Latin American Perspectives*, *48*(6), 48–66. https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X211029593

Sadighian, D. B. (2023). The business of Beaux-Arts: Architecture, racial capitalism, and branqueamento in Belle Époque Brazil. *Architectural Histories*, *13*(1). https://doi.org/10.16995/ah.8598

Secretaria Nacional de Habitação. (2010). *Urbanização de favelas: A experiência do PAC—Ministério das Cidades*. Ministério das Cidades.

Shepherd, E. (2018). Continuity and change in the institution of town and country planning: Modelling the role of ideology. *Planning Theory*, *17*(4), 494–513. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095217737587

Silva, C. T. d. (2013). O índio, o pardo e o invisível: Primeiras impressões sobre a criminalização e o aprisionamento de indígenas no Brasil. *Antropolítica*, *34*, 137–158.

Sintomer, Y., Herzberg, C., & Röcke, A. (2008). From Porto Alegre to Europe: Potentials and limitations of participatory budgeting. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *32*(1), 164–178.

Soares, S. R., & Moraes, S. T. (2019). Mismatches in the urbanization process of informal settlements in Morro da Cruz – Florianopolis, SC. *urbe. Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana*, *11*, Article e20170199. https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-3369.011.e20170199

Sørbøe, C. M. (2021). Politics of urban transformation in pre-Olympic Rio de Janeiro: Contentions and confluences between citizen- and market-centred agendas. *Forum for Development Studies*, *48*(1), 129–152. https://doi.org/10.1080/08039410.2020.1832569

Stahl, V. E. (2023). Housing publics: Situated resistance to public housing redevelopment in New York City under racial capitalism. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, *43*(2), 248–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/23996544231184057

Swyngedouw, E. (2024). The dialectic of urban democracy. In G. Coşkun, T. İnal-Çekiç, & E. Tombuş (Eds.), *Reclaiming democracy in cities* (1st ed., pp. 15–29). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003404736-3

Tavares, A. C. M., & Cardoso, A. C. D. (2023). Ciclos de remoções em Belém (PA): A Bacia do Tucunduba e a reprodução da precariedade. *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Urbanos e Regionais*, *25*(1). https://doi.org/10.22296/2317-1529.rbeur.202305pt

Tavolari, B. (2023). Segregação urbana em São Paulo: 25 anos depois de "Enclaves Fortificados," de Teresa Caldeira. *Novos Estudos CEBRAP*, *42*(3), 407–423. https://doi.org/10.25091/S01013300202300030003

Torino, G. (2024). Mestizo urbanism: Enduring racial intersections in Latin American cities. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *56*(1), 37–62. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022216X24000063

Ulloa, I. C., & Schwerer, J. (2024). Qualitative meta-analysis. In A. Henrich, S. Marguin, A. Million, & J. Stollmann (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative and visual methods in spatial research* (1st ed., pp. 325–336). Transcript. https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839467343

Vainer, C. (2003). Utopias urbanas e o desafio democrático. *Revista Paranaense de Desenvolvimento*, *5*, 25–31.

Vargas, J. C., & Alves, J. A. (2010). Geographies of death: An intersectional analysis of police lethality and the racialized regimes of citizenship in São Paulo. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *33*(4), 611–636. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870903325636

Vasconcelos, L. B. d., & Duarte, C. F. (2017, May 22–26). *Intervenções do PAC no Morro do Adeus e suas (não) apropriações* [Paper presentation]. XVII Enanpur, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

Villaça, F. (1999). Uma contribuição para a história do planejamento urbano no Brasil. In C. Deák & S. R. Schiffer (Eds.), *O processo de urbanização no Brasil* (pp. 169–244). Edusp.

Weaver, V. M., & Prowse, G. (2020). Racial authoritarianism in U.S. democracy. *Science*, *369*(6508), 1176–1178. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abd7669

Williams, R., & Steil, J. (2023). "The past we step into and how we repair it": A normative framework for reparative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *89*(4), 580–591. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2022.2154247

Wynter, S. (2003). Unsettling the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation—An argument. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, *3*(3), 257–337. https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015

Ximenes, L. A., Cardoso, A. L., & Luft, R. M. (2023). Política de urbanização de favelas no Rio de Janeiro: Dimensões institucionais e normativas. *Cadernos Metrópole*, *25*(58), 993–1015. https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-9996.2023-5810

Yiftachel, O. (1998). Planning and social control: Exploring the dark side. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *12*(4), 395–406. https://doi.org/10.1177/088541229801200401

About the Authors

Luana Xavier Pinto Coelho is a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra. Her research interests include racial capitalism and urbanisation; the relation between law, race, and space; urban law and human rights; and critical race theory.

Lorena Melgaço is an urban scholar interested in the micropolitics of socio-spatial and technological peripheralization in the postcolony; the intersections of technological dependency, capitalist production of space, and the socio-environmental crisis; racial capitalism; underground geographies; and the challenges of planning education and practice from a decolonial perspective.