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# Urban crime prevention and the logics of public security policies in Brazil – a relational perspective on the local fields of negotiation

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## Abstract

Public security is a highly contested issue in urban societies. It involves, stresses or excludes a wide spectrum of actors, policies and spaces on different scales and time lapse. Meanwhile, public security possesses a central position in the recent transcontextual discussion of area-based urban security studies. Therein, both questions of social change and the spatial, political and economical reflection of (in)security issues are increasingly concerning the current transforming logic of public security policies. To capture this transformation from a theoretical as well as empirical perspective, this paper looks at the local security governance field in the municipality of São Paulo. It argues that the political field of local crime prevention councils (CONSEG), hosted on the district level once a month, is suited to understand the conceptual shift of the crime control paradigm in general and its spatial translation into discourses, programs, instruments and measures of local security provision in particular.

## Zusammenfassung

Öffentliche Sicherheit ist in städtischen Gesellschaften höchst umkämpft. Sie beinhaltet, beansprucht und exkludiert ein weites Spektrum an Akteuren, Politiken und Räumen unterschiedlicher Ebenen und Zeitspannen. Gleichzeitig kommt der öffentlichen Sicherheit eine zentrale Bedeutung in der derzeitigen, kontextübergreifenden Diskussion raumorientierter Stadtforschung zu. Darin wird die gegenwärtige Veränderung der Logik der öffentlichen Sicherheitspolitik entlang der Fragen des sozialen Wandels oder entlang der räumlichen, politischen und wirtschaftlichen Dimensionen von (Un-)Sicherheiten verstärkt thematisiert. Um der Betrachtung dieses Wandels aus einer theoretischen und zugleich empirischen Perspektive gerecht zu werden, nimmt der Artikel das lokale Feld der *security governance* in der Kommune São Paulo in Augenschein. Es wird argumentiert, dass sich das politische Feld der monatlich auf Bezirksebene veranstalteten lokalen Kriminalpräventionsräte (CONSEG) dazu eignet, den konzeptionellen Paradigmenumbau der Kriminalitätskontrolle im Allgemeinen zu verstehen, und dessen räumliche Übersetzung in Diskurse, Programme, Instrumente und Maßnahmen einer lokalen Sicherheitsfürsorge im Besonderen nachzuzeichnen.

**Keywords** Urban security governance, community policing, crime prevention councils, São Paulo, Brazil

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## 1. Introduction

The establishment of crime prevention councils (Conselho Comunitário de Segurança – CONSEG) can be seen as part of a worldwide development towards communalisation, pluralisation and deregulation of security and criminal policy (e.g. Crawford 2003; Evans 2011). By describing exemplarily and as a sort of introduction an assembly of the local crime prevention council from an ethnographical standpoint (cf. *Textbox 1*), several key aspects of these shifting policies come to light. They refer directly to different spatial levels, e.g. certain houses, streets, neighbourhoods or even the whole district of the council, and express a quantitative as well as a qualitative change of crime control. The paper argues that different logics of crime control are embedded in the field of public security governance by activating citizens and integrating them into the process of security production at the local level through the concept of community policing (cf. Wurtzbacher 2008; Tilley 2007).

After framing the current development in Brazilian security and criminal policies as well as the historical context of the police reform towards the current Brazilian community policing concept, the paper will demonstrate that mutual ordering mechanisms of negotiation characterise the interaction of different actors that host, constitute or participate in local crime prevention councils. From a governance perspective, the local security debate between actors of public security provision and those of the local population is characterised, firstly, by a substantial extension of topics that include issues of ordering public space and, secondly, by conflic-

tive relationships between different actors which produce and negotiate the political field of the CONSEGs.

In this ordering process of interdependent positions, rules and interests the basis for finding consensus between the opposing lines of negotiation is formed by a discourse that is simultaneously harmony-oriented and problem-oriented and, at the same time, defines specific modes for tackling crime and order issues on a local scale. This means that the mechanisms of negotiation lead to different forms of local crime control. They are characterised by adaptive strategies (e.g. crime prevention policies) as well as by punitive segregation (e.g. repressive policing; Garland 2001). In this theoretical perspective the shift of crime control can be seen as part of the changing security and criminal policies. They are constantly being reproduced on a local scale in the form of local crime prevention councils which have to be conceptualised as a public forum within the local field of urban security governance and thus a political field in the sense of Bourdieu (2001).

Based on the localisation of social-political changes of crime control in general, and on the empirical observation of local crime prevention councils in the municipality of São Paulo in particular, this paper aims at investigating the local as the site of negotiation of public security. Are adaptive and repressive logics inherent to current changes in security policies? How does the postulated ambivalence of changing crime control reproduce itself in the discursive process of negotiation at local prevention councils as a political field? In a relational perspective, how and with which consequences is

### **Textbox 1: The narratives of a crime prevention council in São Paulo**

The evening assembly of the local crime prevention council in the district of Casa Verde (São Paulo) on 4 December 2012 began by taking time to remember a military policewoman who was murdered at the end of 2011 in conflicts between the criminal organisation PCC and the police during the “Crisis of Public Security” (see Section 3). After a moment of silence the military and civil police present were thanked for putting their lives at risk day by day in the service of society. A few minutes later the same police officials found themselves under critical crossfire as a longstanding participant of the council demanded that they finally attended to the problem of public unrest that had resulted from the recent revival of baile funks (spontaneous parties in public space) and robbed the entire

neighbourhood of sleep from Thursday to Sunday. On the same evening a profuse statement by the locally renowned watchman *Luzinho* provided the chairman of the prevention council with an opportunity to reflect with local residents on the community sense of the council. The council was said to be a “real family”. Then followed the premature departure of an employee of the Banco do Brasil who felt unsafe crossing the city in the evening, a feeling that was met with great understanding by those present. Apparently less appropriate were comments by a longstanding participant suggesting that the local crime prevention council should change and serve rather as a forum, instead of celebrating harmony aiming to establish a public dialogue about a “culture of peace”.

the local scale embedded and interlinked within other area-based security policies? And what is the role of currently promoted “activating state policies” in Brazilian urban security concepts in a geographical perspective, from street and neighbourhood to district and metropolitan levels? To answer these questions 23 evening assemblies of 12 different CONSEGs in the municipality of São Paulo were observed between 2011 and 2013. The non-participatory observations were supplemented by interviews and informal talks with 24 chairpersons of CONSEGs and representatives of public security institutions and local and state police forces.

## 2. Changing crime control and the logics of the political “field”

Since the 1990s, area-based urban and security studies have paid attention both to a shifting state culture in general and a transforming security architecture and governance in particular in order to frame current tendencies of criminal and security policy (see *Eick et al. 2007; Glasze et al. 2005*). Within the scope of the transition from welfarism to neoliberal “other rationalities” (see *Michel 2005*), on the one hand, the debate sheds light on the relationship of an “activating state” and an “active citizenship” (see *Lessenich 2003*). Not merely the state becomes the performing actor of adaptive social and welfare policies, but rather the “network of social society’s institutions” (*Michel 2005: 70*) localised in urban districts, quarters and communities is assigned to be the keystone to activate the local urban population.

Considering the social-political restructuring in the 20th century, on the other hand, the debate focuses on the transforming regime of crime control in public security and criminal policies world-wide (*Garland 2001; Simon 2000*). According to *Garland (2001)* this change in the culture of control is linked to the strong increase in crime observed between the 1960s and 1990s as one of the most important characteristics of the present societies of the USA and Great Britain which *Garland (2007)* terms “high crime societies”. According to this argument, the rapid increase in criminality forms one of the nuclei for the change in social-political reactions to crime rates.

The shifting crime control regime is characterised by two different, but simultaneously implemented forms of crime control policy: the rational management of the risk of crime (adaptive strategies) and the penal segregation of criminals (punitive segregation; see *Garland 2001*). These ambivalent logics of security

and criminal policy are ideologically (and practically) supported by a tremendous growth of the security industry, the privatisation of security and prison systems, the extension of local control orders, the rise of prevention-oriented security and order discourses, and the implementation of new policing techniques (e.g. *Trotha 1995; Newburn 2003; Glasze et al. 2005*). Communalisation, deregulation and pluralisation are becoming its primary characteristics (e.g. *Crawford 2003; Evans 2011*). At the local level (municipalities, city quarters, neighbourhoods, streets) this can be observed in the localisation of public security, the establishment of various forms of citizen participation for the provision of security, as well as in the involvement of different public and private actors in crime policy concepts (*Pütz et al. 2009*).

The local as the site of community-based crime prevention and control (*Schreiber 2012*) forms part of a neo-liberal understanding of area-based urban politics (*Eick et al. 2007*) that emphasises the scale of the neighbourhood and seeks to activate the local community in tackling crime (*Kreissl 2004*). In Anglo-Saxon space (especially in the USA), adaptive strategies have been implemented in the form of community policing as a public security reform programme since the 1960s (e.g. *Skogan and Hartnett 1997; Miller and Hess 2004*). The communalisation of criminal policy is ideologically legitimated by or – depending on the perspective taken – conceptually based on the notions of broken windows (*Kelling and Wilson 1982*) and defensible space (*Newman 1972*). The “spatially fetishistic core” (*Belina 2006*) of such concepts considers the socio-spatial condition of a neighbourhood and its local community as the context that produces criminal offence and social feelings of insecurity. Crime prevention and control measures are divided into a “spatially situated strategy” related to the coming together in space and time of a perpetrator and the opportunity for crime (*Belina 2009*), and a “strategy of activating the self-regulation of the local community” (*Schreiber 2012*).

When compared cross-context, community policing programmes are characterised by a great diversity in terms of institutions, substance and regulatory structure. In a comparison of community-based crime prevention concepts in the USA (e.g. *Graham and Bennett 1997, Newburn 2002, Skogan 2004*), Great Britain (e.g. *Ekblom 1995, Crawford 1997*), Germany (e.g. *Wurtzbacher 2008, Birenheide 2009, Schreiber 2011*) and Latin America (e.g. *Müller 2010; Frühling 2012*), especially Brazil (e.g. *Brito and Dantas 2009, Ferragi 2010*),

differences are found particularly in terms of the intensity, form and structure of the involvement and the activation of citizens as elements of community crime prevention. In addition to neighbourhood associations (for instance, in connection to security issues) and civil society-public forms of policing cooperation (e.g. auxiliary police), varied forms of local crime prevention councils “as locally based risk management” (Schreiber 2012: 230) are becoming increasingly prominent.

Despite its heterogeneity the widespread concept of community policing subsumes a shared common criminal policy approach that involves the interaction and cooperation between representatives and groups of different social fields under the banner of local crime prevention councils. Analysing the significance of the discursive interaction in the monthly assemblies of the CONSEG both theoretically and empirically, it has to be stressed that the site of negotiation is always characterised by a strong interdependency of positions, rules and interests. *Bourdieu's* field theory (Bourdieu 2001) enables to capture this interdependency and to conceptualise local crime prevention councils as a political field. The field is understood as a social space within a differentiated social sphere of crime control in general and the transforming public security policies in particular, whereby boundaries of fields are fluent and their spheres of influence depend on the fields' characteristics. *Bourdieu's* playing field is theoretically conceptualised as a historical and practice-based spatial product of political articulation that is structured by its specific logic (game rules) and its relational texture of the actors' positions and interests. Meanwhile, the political field constitutes the social space where the dominant discourse takes root and becomes the key playing field to define the power of interpretation (Bourdieu 2001).

Thus, the field's logic represents a game about resources and symbolic power, performed by hierarchically structured agents with interdependent positions and interests. To operationalise *Bourdieu's* game in the field of local crime prevention empirically, the paper makes use of the analytic perspective of local governance processes that understands social order as routinely patterns of negotiated interdependencies between different social actors (Benz 2004). By adjusting discursive practices of participating actors, interdependency in form of controversies, dissents or even conflicts in the political field are being overcome. From a governance perspective, the adjustment of interdependent positions and interests – theoretically conceived as the

logic of the political field – can be studied through the analysis of the process of negotiation. However, considering the heterogeneity of a local security governance field, the negotiation process in a crime prevention council cannot be seen as a sequence of shifting attitudes that participating actors possess only (Holzinger 2004). Rather, it requires to link both the circular negotiation model of position, compromise and agreement suggested by Benz (1994) and the analytic connection of communication modes observed in discursive practices, particularly with recourse to Elster's (1986) conceptual distinction of bargaining and arguing.

### 3. Current developments of Brazilian criminal and security policies

In the summer of 2012 a “new” wave of violence and crime shook the state of São Paulo and especially the peripheral urban districts of the state capital (Folha de São Paulo, 24/11/2012). The roots of the violence were found in a political conflict between the federal state police bodies and members of the organised criminal association Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC). This led to a pronounced increase in the number of civilians killed by the police (July to December 2012: double the number of victims in the municipality of São Paulo compared to the preceding quarter) and to a rise in attempted murders, as reflected by the number of murders reported to the police (in the last two quarters of 2012: increase in the number of murders by 18 % from July to September and by 60 % from October to December compared to the averages for those periods in the years 2010-2012; SSP 2012). The number of victims in São Paulo approached the level of 2006, when violence between both sides had previously broken out (Salla 2006). This more recent crisis in public security in the state of São Paulo led to far-reaching personnel and conceptual changes in the Ministry for Public Security responsible (R7, 21/11/2012). The crisis was furthermore viewed in the context of the debate on urban (in)security as a general problem of Latin-American urban policy since the mid-1980s (e.g. Davis 2006; Sérgio de Lima and de Paula 2008).

Following two decades of rapidly rising violent crime (Feiguin and Lima 1995; Zaluar 1999), since the 2000s homicide rates in Brazil had stabilised at a clearly lower level, even though regional differences were apparent (e.g. Ceccato et al. 2007; Waiselfisz 2012; Souza et al. 2012). Despite this stabilisation after the epidemic increases in crime of the 1980s and 1990s, the

decreases witnessed since the 2000s and a qualitative shift in crime rates in terms of different categories of offence such as muggings or thefts, it is nonetheless true that the threat and presence of daily violence continues to be seen as one of the most pressing issues confronting Brazilian (urban) society today (e.g. Adorno and Lamin 2008; Caldeira 2010; Kahn 2010). Violence and criminality provide topics for mass media, are the commercial products of the security industry, and represent explosive power to the political system – the three pillars of the “industry of fear” (Souza 2012) that find their expression in the public and political space of a “phobopolis” (Souza 2008).

In Brazil, the 1990s – i.e. when crime rates throughout the country were rapidly increasing – saw an end to the tradition of the federal states bearing autonomous responsibility for the provision of security through police bodies (Polícia Militar and Polícia Civil). For the first time discussions were held on the question of cooperation between the various levels of federal government in the field of public security. This led to

the establishment of a (national state) department of public security (SENASP; 1995) and the introduction of a security policy action plan that institutionalised both the political fight against criminality and impunity more effectively and the drive for an enhanced sense of security for citizens (Plano de Segurança Pública; 2000). The action guidelines of the plan considered repressive measures but also, for the first time, measures of preventative and adaptive character. The implementation of the guidelines has been enabled by the establishment of the national security fund (FNSP), which finances public security projects and measures on various administrative levels (see Soares 2007). To further the establishment of uniform public security provision countrywide, in 2003 the national government adopted the programme SUSP (Sistemas Único de Segurança Pública) and its elaboration PRONASCI (from 2007), in which federal, state and municipal policies of public security are integrated and citizens placed at the centre of institutional activities. In this current interpretation of public security policies, articulated by the federal’s and states’

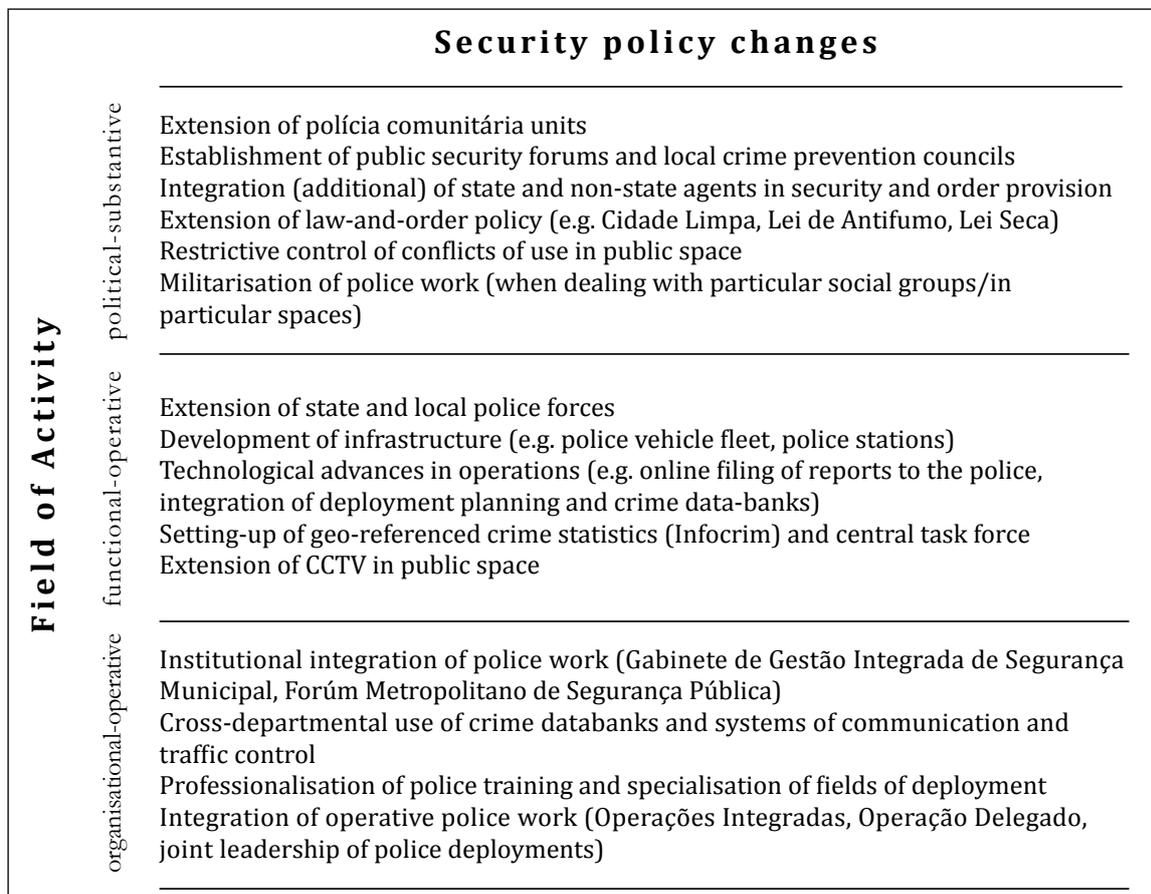


Fig. 1 Area-based security policy changes in Brazil since 2000 source: own elaboration

policymakers, the ultimate aim is declared to be the development and improvement of a peaceful relationship and productive interaction between citizens and agents of public security provision, whereas citizens are considered to be the recipients of public security services (see *Mesquita Neto* 2011).

These structural transformations are part of a nationally coordinated security policy that aims at integrating the different spatial administrative levels and their respective institutions. In this context recent quantitative and qualitative changes can be differentiated according to political-substantive, functional-operative and organisational-operative fields of activity that belong to the responsibility of both the federal and the local levels (*Fig. 1*).

The overview shows that all three fields of activity are based on concepts and instruments that indicate the ambivalent development of current security policies. Alongside the extension of technical, financial, personnel and organisational measures to control crime and pursue criminal justice, some elements of the transformation are of increasing importance: the integration of state and non-state agents into the provision of security and order, the cooperation between different police departments, and also the activation of citizens in order to establish an interaction between public agents and the resident population. In this process of transformation, the local is emphasised as a (new) level of access for crime prevention and control. Thus not only spatial-situative strategies of exercising control but also strategies for activating the local community have become new pillars of recent security and criminal policy.

#### 4. Local crime prevention councils in São Paulo

##### 4.1 Conselho Comunitário de Segurança – an old model revisited

In the context of the political liberalisation process and the transition to democracy *Galdeano* (2009) argues that two main political thrusts can be recognised in the federal state of São Paulo during *Montoro's* legislative period (1983-1987). Firstly, the creation of a “New Police” (see the discussion on the “Nova Polícia” in *Caldeira* 2000) and the associated great change in public security provision were intended to pave the way to a state governed by the rule of law. In the light of the development of the homicide and crime rates

discussed above and the poor reputation of the police in the wake of the military dictatorship, the policing reform found expression in the creation of a *polícia comunitária*, the reform of internal control processes and the materialisation of participative democratic mechanisms in the field of public security. Secondly, connected to new societal debates on gender roles, race, age, disability and violence, the creation of civil-society representative councils and commissions could be observed. Both progress in the establishment of a general culture of participation and the new policing philosophy have created a basis for the political goal of bringing the police closer to the population, as, for instance, seen on the operational level of the local crime prevention councils. These latter were established throughout the state of São Paulo for the first time in 1985. In line with the vision of the then Governor *Montoro*, the CONSEGs were intended to promote and (re)establish the relationship between the population, the Polícia Militar, the Polícia Civil and the local administration, thus contributing towards an interaction between state and civil society on the local level.

At the same time, since their establishment the local crime prevention councils have been subject to greatly differing political concepts of public security provision. The terms of office of *Montoro* (1985) and later *Covas* (1995-2001) saw open dialogue between civil society and academia, the institutionalisation of a *polícia comunitária* in the policing system, strong internal and external control of police bodies, increasing alignment of (more transparent) police work with CONSEG's focuses, a successive extension in the constitutive participation of representatives of public institutions in CONSEG, and a reorientation of the CONSEG statute in light of the continued institutional consolidation of local crime prevention councils. However, the public security policy of a number of state governments (*Quérreia* 1987-1991, *Fleury* 1991-1995, and *Alckmin* 2001-2006 and from 2011) was characterised by an in parts ambivalent orientation (*Mesquita Neto* 2011). On the one hand, a focus on an operative public security policy was seen, as evidenced by investment in equipment, weapons and general police infrastructure, and by the centralisation and/or privatisation of the prison system (in particular during the terms of office of *Fleury* and *Alckmin*). On the other hand, (at times in different departments of the same government apparatus) the process of democratising public security provision was strengthened by the wholesale promotion of community policing and professions. In particular more



Photo 1 A CONSEG meeting in São Paulo: negotiation process of local security and order provision (Photo: D. Haubrich)

recent transformations of public security policy reveal, on the level of the federal states, a general development of pluralisation and deregulation – seen in the extension and integration of agents of security provision – and of the communalisation of security provision – seen in the strengthening of local jurisdiction and the increased transfer of responsibilities to the local level. Therefore, different logics of crime control can be identified in each of these three developments.

#### 4.2 CONSEG: The narratives of the local security governance field

In accordance with the current statute of the CONSEG in São Paulo (Resolução SSP 45) from 18/03/1999 (with its legislative amendments from 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2011), the monthly meetings of the local crime prevention council are hosted by a civil agent of the local community as the chairperson of the CON-

Core negotiation issue	Participants' line of negotiation	Members'/Guests' line of negotiation	Result of negotiations
Criminality	Demand, Complaint Suggestion, Acknowledgement	Response, Representation Criticism, Rebutting	Adaptive strategies Punitive segregation
Feelings of insecurity	Demand, Complaint	Commentary Call for Action	Adaptive strategies
Public security provision (policiamiento)	Demand, Complaint Suggestion, Acknowledgement	Response, Representation Call for Action	Adaptive strategies Punitive segregation
Public order	Demand, Complaint	Criticism, Rebutting	Adaptive strategies
Drug dealing and use	Demand, Complaint Suggestion, Acknowledgement	Response, Representation Call for Action	Adaptive strategies Punitive segregation
Baile funk	Demand, Complaint	Response, Commentary Call for Action	Adaptive strategies
Traffic & waste management	Demand, Complaint	Commentary	-
Homeless & informal street trading	Demand, Complaint	Response, Representation Call for Action	Adaptive strategies Punitive segregation

Fig. 2 The local security and order debate; source: own elaboration

SEG (analytically labelled as “host”), coordinated by representatives of the local police forces (“members”) and administrative institutions of the local authority (“guests”) as well as attended by the local population and businessmen (“participants”)<sup>1</sup>. Discussion at the meetings concerns topical issues of local security and order policy as follows<sup>2</sup> (*Photo 1*):

Firstly, participants regularly complain, for instance, about attacks by motorcyclists or about an increasing frequency of muggings and petty crime in residential areas, but also discuss fear and anxiety when staying in public space (core negotiation issue: criminality, feelings of insecurity). The discourse usually includes demands for increased and more effective policing (e.g. the deployment of CCTV in public space, police pacification units – UPP) and for additional responsibility in the area of public security and order provision to be assumed by other agents such as the Guarda Civil Metropolitana (GCM, guest). The intention of a part of participants to become more involved in local public security provision is also emphasised regularly (core negotiation issue: *policimento*). Furthermore, the residents occasionally thank the police officers for their contribution to public security or for specific help provided in connection with a particular offence or infringement (core negotiation issue: *policimento*) (*Fig. 2*).

Secondly, public actors (members) emphasise the (usually positively presented) developments of several offence categories in local police crime statistics, discuss successful police activities in tackling motorcycle crime, break-ins, drug dealing etc., and explain the underlying policing programme like *operação delegado* or community policing (core negotiation issue: criminality, *policimento*). Here citizens’ demands for more policing are often ignored or rebutted by police agents that refer to overlapping jurisdiction in designated police districts. Participants are also regularly called upon to get involved in local security provision and to support the security and order forces with information and reports (core negotiation issue: *policimento*). Thus, complaints by local residents about deficits in public security provision and their demands for a restrictive *policimento* are met by responses and explanations both of members and guests that the local police and order bodies work for the benefit of the civil population as much as possible. Rather, the help of residents is crucial – as stated in calls by public agents for participants’ involvement –, since the fight against crime can only be successful if all work together.

Thirdly, at many of the assemblies the issues of the constant presence of crime and the *policimento* have recently been joined by increased debates about drug use and dealing, informal street trading, problems of street traffic regulation and waste management. Additionally, participants’ complaints about issues such as homelessness in the neighbourhood and youths meeting in public space at night (including baile funk) are becoming particularly central to the local security discourse thus extends to include aspects of public order (different core negotiation issue). However, residents’ or participating businessmen’s regular demand for a restrictive police approach and police action in the fight against local crime and thus disorder in order to tackle these physical and social incivilities, frequently come to nothing. This often leads to a general state of participants’ dissatisfaction and annoyance with the situation of public order and its guarantee by the state. The demands are either ignored or rejected by public agents referring to the limitations of the constitutionally defined scope for action afforded by their institutions. Instead, the debate about the responsibilities and jurisdictions of the different public actors are accompanied again by members’ calls for the local population to assume preventative responsibility and to act on their own initiative to benefit the neighbourhood (core negotiation issue: drug dealing and use, *policimento*, public order; *Fig. 2*).

### 4.3 CONSEG: Political field of a negotiated local security and order policies

To conceptualise our empirical observations, attention now turns to the analysis of the playing field of local security governance. As the description of various CONSEG assemblies illustrates, the interaction between members/guests and local participants concerning current issues of local security and order policy is characterised not only by the differing of the topics under consideration, but also by the diverging interests and positions of the actors involved. This is of central significance as both important groups (members/guest and participants) negotiate local public security and order issues in several thematic areas (core negotiation issues) by use of verifying discourse elements (lines of negotiation). Meanwhile, due to the disproportional structure of organising, constituting and (only) attending actors, the negotiation within the political field of the local crime prevention council does not proceed equitably, but rather forms a conflictive discourse process that

is performed by the mutual communication modes of bargaining and arguing.

As a result, three points are important to be discussed. Firstly, the local preventative council is characterised by a hierarchical – and thus unequal – structure. With reference to the groups involved in the CONSEG, the CONSEG statute differentiates between host, members, guests and participants. The structure is thus, on the one hand, of an institutional character. Particularly during conflictive debates about specific core negotiation issues, the superior position of members and the host (and/or guests) compared to that of the participants is regularly emphasised. On the other hand, the unequal, hierarchical structure of the actor-field configuration of the CONSEG is expressed in the course of the interaction between the groups. This differs across the introduction, comments and résumés of CONSEG chairpersons, the presentations of information, comments, responses and calls for action by representatives of public security actors and administrative bodies, and the demands, complaints, suggestions and acknowledgements made by the local population. It is important that discourse elements in the shape of varying communication modes are associated with the different positions of the actors involved. Dependent on the topicality and importance of the core negotiation issue concerned, the discourse takes on an open structure with all actors actively participating or a closed structure involving the exclusion of specific discourse elements of individual groups, particularly of the local population.

Secondly, the local preventative bodies demonstrate a thematic and substantive extension of the security debate to include issues of order. Elements of the debate between members and participants are not limited to the core negotiation issues of criminality, insecurity and the *policimentos*, but also especially include issues referring to public order, drug trading and use, and baile funk. As not only security concern but also problems related to order are increasingly determining the actor-field configuration of urban security governance (Wehrhahn and Haubrich 2012), the agents of public security provision are not just inclined to change the reporting behaviour of the local population, they are rather actually dependent upon the provision of information about risk factors for local security and order. However, there is another perspective on the gathering of information and the tackling of crime and order offences. The local population particularly emphasise their concern about the general deficit of public security provision, and indeed condemn it, but

their willingness to voluntarily participate in the local arrangement of public security and order is rooted in this same context. In this variety of discourse strategies the public actors thus see themselves confronted with a security policy mismatch consisting of adaptive strategies and punitive segregation. The members are accordingly not only regularly concerned to establish their legitimacy through reports of police deployments, but also strive to propose problem-oriented solutions and to extend the discourse about responsibility to include the participants, who should take part in local security governance.

Thirdly, when the disproportional structure of the actor-field configuration is considered in detail, a heterogeneous negotiation process comes to the fore. These negotiations (“discourse strategies”) display different communication modes depending on dissimilar positions and interests of the actors. On the one hand, an integrative arguing like profuse statements on the shared identity of the neighbourhood by the host, repeated acknowledgements by participants for the former policing and administrative work, and also the persistent emphasis by members that they are serving the population “in a joint fight against crime”, constitute a harmony- and community-oriented discourse to be identified. However, on the other hand, the monthly assemblies of the preventative councils are characterised by regular suggestions and proposals by the participants that they should become autonomously involved in security provision. These suggestions are accompanied by factual accounts of successfully implemented preventative and repressive policing and administrative activities and measures related to public security and order provision. In connection with the response and planning of various activities to increase the security and quality of life in the neighbourhood, a bargaining with problem- and solution-oriented character can thus be recognised on the local level.

Finally, reference should be made to the central position of the chairpersons of the crime prevention councils. In the conflictive negotiation between the two groups (members/participants), the chairperson assumes a moderating and mediating role. The often contrary discourse elements are thus integrated in certain nexuses of core negotiating issues and lines of negotiation to create either a harmony- and community-oriented discourse or a solution- and problem-oriented one, spanning the local political space of crime prevention. The disproportional structure of actors and their interdependent posi-

tions and interests are thereby ultimately overlain by both negotiation modes mutually performed that lead to a “consensus”. Whereas the consensus is to grasp conceptually as the dominant discourse in the political field, it encompasses analytically different views of the relevance of specific security and order problems and also of the significance of specific modes of risk minimisation and crime control (adaptive strategies and punitive segregation), presenting the ambivalent nature of the result of negotiations concerning local security and order provision.

### 5. Conclusions

Within the framework of an ongoing transformation of national security and criminal policies, in Brazil an increasing focus is being accorded to the concept of community policing (e.g. Brito and Dantas 2009) as the new policing paradigm. The approach places citizens at the centre of security policy action planning and considers them to be recipients of public security services. This process is manifested in both the administrative restructuring of public security and also in quantitative and qualitative transformations of the political-substantive, functional-operative and organisational action fields of public security provision. In the context of a strategy to activate the local community’s self-regulation, the local community becomes the strategic address of policing programmes. Alongside neighbourhood associations and cooperations between civil society and police, the local crime prevention councils gain increasing significance as a form of “locally rooted risk management” (see Schreiber 2012).

From a historical perspective, the Brazilian local crime prevention councils exemplarily represent the shift towards a culture of participation and a progressive policing philosophy that has been developed in the course of the political liberalisation process during the transition time after the military government. Since their establishment in the federal state of São Paulo in 1985, however, the local crime prevention councils have been subject to changing concepts of public security provision policy.

On the one hand, this changing policy encompasses the institutionalisation of a *polícia comunitária* and stronger internal and external control of police bodies, and is associated with the successive integration of actors involved in the order and security discourse. On the other hand, it reveals a focus on an operative

public security policy characterised by the extension of technical, financial, personnel and organisational measures to control crime and pursue criminal justice. The recent transformations in public security provision discussed in Brazil are related to a more general development of pluralisation, deregulation and communalisation of security and criminal policy that indicates a shifting culture of control. This shift is, after all, based on an ambivalent logic of adaptive prevention and punitive segregation in the tackling of crime (e.g. Garland 2001).

To analyse the ambivalent logic in a shifting culture of control, our conceptual view was directed towards the heterogeneous field of urban security governance. Therein, the public forum of local crime prevention councils, in regulatory terms, can be categorised as a preventative, cooperative and participative security policy approach. Owing to their constitutionally based interaction between representatives of public security provision and civil society, councils also represent a “privileged” site (Galdeano 2009) where the interdependent agency, positions and interests of currently transforming logics of public security policies are negotiated and spatialised.

One significant result of the empirical findings is the central role played by the issues of local security and order policy surrounding the conflictive debate in the course of CONSEG’s assemblies. They range from complaints about the intolerable deficits in public security to denouncements about disturbances of public peace and order, to the factual reporting of offenders and offences and the passing on of information about problems of public order. According to the ideal form of the principle of community crime prevention, the local population should on the one hand become the eyes and ears of an increasingly problem-oriented police force and GCM who work as closely as possible with the people.

On the other hand, the public security actors find themselves confronted with a long list of unsolved order and security problems, which is regularly the subject of complaints from residents. Given this tense relationship, the mutual process of negotiation becomes the central element of the interaction between the chairpersons of the local crime prevention councils (hosts), local police forces (members), representatives of urban administrative bodies (guests) and the local population (participants).

Along the central core negotiation issue – the actuality of the problem field of manifestations of vio-

lence and crime and its extension to include questions of order and organisation on the local level – it is possible to identify two disproportional structures of the actor-field configuration which conflict and confront one another (*Fig. 1*). On the one hand, both the institutional organisation of the various groups at CONSEGs as anchored in the CONSEG statute (higher/lower positions) and the different discussion practices (open/closed) structure the political field in an unequal fashion, that is to say, the population depends on the police. On the other hand, the specific member-participant interaction is structured by an unequal distribution of local knowledge concerning crime and order (knowledge on the local/district scale) and disproportional responsibilities (voluntary/by law). This leads to the partial dependency of the police on the population.

To overcome the dialectical dependency of positions and interests of actors, different strategies for resolving the tension, particularly performed by their chairpersons with their mediating function have been identified in various CONSEGs. These take the form of a harmony- and community-oriented or a pragmatic problem-oriented discourse. The reaching of a consensus by members/invited guests and participants about the substantively diverging, both repressive and preventative programme of police activities thus establishes the negotiated determination of local security and order issues.

In summary, it can be stated that *Bourdieu's* playing field of local crime prevention councils is being constituted as a historical and practice-based spatial product of political articulation. However, the politically charged articulation of how to deal with the social and political crime problem is not only localised on a structural scale of security and criminal politics that have prompted policies of communalisation and that have been translated into adaptive strategies like community policing. Rather, by turning the analytical focus to the agency scale, different forms of crime control and risk minimisation come to light that contribute to establish a unified, and thus dominant discourse of how to police and administrate the public. Ultimately, by considering a relational perspective on the dominant discourse, we try to extend the geographical approach on negotiation processes of public security and order that lead the definition of an ambivalent logic of public security and criminal policies which is reproduced in the political space of local crime prevention councils.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> According to CONSEG's statute adopted by the state department of the interior, the local crime prevention council both arranges and allows the participation of the following groups. Firstly, by law the representatives of both police bodies (Polícia Militar, Polícia Civil) of the designated police precinct, as the constitutive members (*membros natos*), are obliged to coordinate the monthly meetings of the crime prevention council. Secondly, after the amendments of 2002, the statute provides the integration of representatives of public administration institutions that are invited to support the council's board (*poder executivo*). Thirdly, a civil agent (*presidente*), elected every two years by the local community, is responsible to host the monthly assembly. Finally, the local community is invited to participate in the local crime prevention council meeting (*população participando*) in order to contribute to the common wealth on a local level.

<sup>2</sup> The following discussion summarises the non-participatory observations (2011-2013) of a total of 23 evening assemblies of 12 different CONSEGs in the municipality of São Paulo. The non-participatory observations were supplemented by talks with 24 different chairpersons of CONSEGs and representatives of public security provision and local and federal state security policy. Not least owing to the broad agreement between the observations, statements and comments made, individual references to observations and discussions have been omitted, thus improving the readability of the paper.

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