What does community-policing mean for Brazil? Can the police in this country overcome strong social inequalities – poverty, income distribution, unemployment, among others – through the adoption of community-policing programs? Since 2005 an institutional response by the São Paulo state Military Police (or PMESP – Policia Militar do Estado de São Paulo) has been the adoption of community policing practices from the Japanese koban system (neighborhood police-based system), as an approach to respond to urgent social demands. But to what extent has the adoption of the koban model – a small piece along the institutionalization process of community policing – influenced the PMESP as a whole? If well inserted and articulated, can small pieces influence the big ones? Such development is explored in this photo essay, capturing scenes, portrays and images of daily community police work made during 2009-10. Moreover, this photo project focuses on how community policing (and the koban) affected the ways in which police officers perceive their roles in Brazil. This is important because one underlying problem, since the first practices started, has been the definition and scope of policing activities, especially at the operational levels, as expressed by a sergeant in São Paulo: "Sometimes I feel that the police assume [way] too many responsibilities. At the police post it is common for our team to start a policing task and end up performing a social service, such as driving a pregnant woman to a hospital" (J. Silva, personal communication, January 10, 2009). His words indicate an abiding problem: for many police forces, not only in Brazil but also in other Latin American countries, community policing means tackling deeper social inequality issues, often stemming from entrenched poverty.
A journey to the other side of the world
Community police work in São Paulo

"Brazilian Koban" at the suburbs of São Paulo. In 2010 São Paulo counted 54 Kobans (urban police posts) and 29 chuzaishos (rural police posts), as an attempt to bring closer the relationship between police and community. One of the first locations to receive Japanese assistance, this police post is said to have diminished the crime rates around its area.

サンパウロ市郊外にあるブラジル版“交番”。初めて日本の支援を受け設置された駐在所の一つ。設置により周辺地域の犯罪率が下がったと言われている。

Corporal Lóra comments that one of the biggest problems in the community he works is the lack of spaces for leisure or practice of sports. He already won three awards given by Sou da Paz Institute for his outstanding projects on rebuilding public squares.

管轄するコミュニティが抱える問題について話すローラ巡査長。公共空間の再構築のための優れたプロジェクトを提案し、ソウ・ダ・パズ・インスティテュートから三度表彰されている。
“Prevention rather than Medication.” Foot patrols and visits to residences and commerce are an innovation that the police forces in São Paulo have been adopting from the Japanese Koban system, since 2004. Police officers usually work for 3 years in the same area. However, institutional inertia and resistance to change represent some of the strongest obstacles to the consolidation process of community policing in São Paulo. Middle-rank officials usually feel disconnected from its principals, considering it a minor activity.

A hole in the wall. Drug trafficking gangs, and interpersonal conflicts combined with high levels of small guns, projected Jardim Ângela as one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world. In late 1990s murderer rates in this area reached 123 per 100.000 inhabitants, attributing to it the title of “the most dangerous neighborhood” in the world, by the United Nations.
The Japanese model proposes changes in the routine of police work. The traditional police work in Brazil is based on responses to crime. Under the Koban system, officers work directly with citizens to understand their demands and prevent the action of criminals.

Sergeant Lacerda, responsible for a police post at Jardim Ângela. Police officers are encouraged to perform "social work" activities and develop policing strategies that respond to local peculiarities.
Community police work in São Paulo

In Japan, 35% of police officers work in community policing (地域課). In São Paulo, in late 2010s only 3% were performing such activities, while a third of the police staff were still focused on responding to crime occurrences.

Police officers in front of Padre Agnaldo Sebastião Vieira Public School, where they started showing videos about crack-cocaine addiction to students.

パドレ・アギナルド・セバスチャン・ヴィエイラ公立学校前。彼らがクラック・コカイン中毒に関するビデオを初めて見せたのは、この学校の生徒たちだ。
Community police work in São Paulo

Police officers and students watch together a documentary about crack-cocaine addiction. Teachers are usually scared at this public school, where some students have been spelled for holding small guns, using drugs and behaving aggressively.

High School students from low-income families are an easy target to the drug trafficking business and are particularly vulnerable to crack-cocaine addiction.

低所得家庭の高校生は麻薬密売産業にとって格好の標的。特にクラック・コカイン中毒に陥りやすい。
Community police work in São Paulo

Padre Agnaldo Sebastião Vieira Public School, in the periphery of São Paulo, receives students living in a nearly large slum. The levels of absence and school withdrawal are high among teenagers in this school.

サンパウロ市の周縁部に位置するパドレ・アギナルド・セバスチャン・ヴィエイラ公立学校。近隣の大規模なスラムから生徒を受け入れている。同校に通う10代の生徒の欠席率、退学率は高い。

Corporal Raúl, teaching music to mentally disabled children. He created a band that performs annually, combining children from four public schools located in areas of social vulnerability. Besides being a police officer, he also holds a degree in music.

知的障害の子どもたちに音楽を教えるラウル巡査長。音楽の学位を持つ彼は、社会的に脆弱な地域の人気の公立学校から生徒を集め、楽団を編成。年に一度公演を行なっている。
Community police work in São Paulo

Police hat and drums. Not guns, but music instruments are part of the daily routine of police work.

Car patrol around the Tamarutaka slum. Police officers are required to wear bulletproof vests, due to possible attacks against patrolling cars by drug traffickers.
Community police work in São Paulo

Corporal Andrea Marchezelli is a mother of 2 children, and has to drive 1 hour daily to arrive at her work. In this photo she holds the camera with which she shot and interviewed drug addicts.

Sergeant Carvalho and Corporal Marchezelli in front of Tamarutaka slum, in the periphery of São Paulo. Instead of using force, they decided to make a mini-documentary to tackle the problem of crack-cocaine addiction in this area.
Community police work in São Paulo

Details of the Tamarutaka slum, in the periphery of São Paulo. This area is dominated by the drug trafficking industry, and police officers hardly have the means (and resources) to penetrate it.

サンパウロ市周縁部のマルタカスラムの一部。麻薬密売の温床となっている地域だが、取り締まるための方法（や情報源）はほとんどない。

Colors at the Favela. The murder rates in Brazil are considered high for international standards – in late 2010s it was 22 per 100,000. In 2018, the rate was even higher, counting 28 per 100,000, if compared with Japan (0.1) and in USA (5 per 100,000), according to UNODC.
But in the case of young, poor, male, afro-descendent in Brazilian big cities, the rate reaches up to 230 per 100,000, which accounts for genocide (Ramos et al., 2004).

In São Paulo the implications associated with crack use constitute an important public security and public health problem. Intervention programs and public policies associated with police work need to be developed to control it.

写真18, 19, 20:色付けしたファヴェーラ（ポルトガル語でスラムの意）。ブラジルの大都市における、貧困層のアフリカ系若年男性の殺害率は10万人中230人で、この割合は大量虐殺のそれに相当する(Ramos et al., 2004)
Cláudia, mother of three kids, crack-cocaine user, 37 years old. The sensation of urgent need for crack stimulates users to undertake illegal activities, intensifying the process of social marginalization and the risks to the individual’s liberty and physical, psychological and moral integrity. After falling into drug addiction, she lost her family and job, and currently works as a prostitute in downtown São Paulo.

Crack-cocaine users, living under a bridge in São Paulo. Single young men of low socioeconomic class and low schooling level, without formal employment ties compose the predominating profile of users. The pattern of use most frequently observed is compulsive, characterized by multiple drug use and carrying out illegal activities in exchange for crack cocaine or money (Oliveira & Nappo, 2008).
The term “Community Policing” is still undefined in Brazil, where any kind of “local policing” has been classified as “community policing”. There is confusion between “social work” activities and the responsibilities officers should undergo. One of the biggest challenges to the success of community policing in São Paulo is considered to be institutional resistance to change and the poor training of police agents.

References


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