

Organized Urban Violence:
**An Examination of the Threat of Organized Armed Groups
to Urban Environments**

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List of Abbreviations

AVPP – Armed Violence Prevention Programme
DFAIT – Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
IANSA – International Action Network on Small Arms
ISS – Institute for Security Studies
OAG – Organized Armed Group
OAS – Organisation of American States
OECD-DAC – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
OUV – Organized Urban Violence
PAGAD – People Against Gangsterism and Drugs
PSCs - Private Security Companies
SAP – South African Police
SAPS – South African Police Services
UN-HABITAT – United Nations Commission on Human Settlements
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
WHO – World Health Organization
WOLA – Washington Office on Latin America

Abstract

Urban security is a pressing concern not only to cities experiencing outbreaks of violence, but also to researchers, organizations and institutions concerned with such issues as human security, armed violence, conflict and human rights. The prevalence and spread of urban violence is seen as one of the most ominous threats to local, national and international development and there is a growing body of literature which seeks to understand and categorize it in order to assist in the design and implementation of effective interventions.

This research contributes to the assessment of urban violence by developing a category of urban violence, namely organized urban violence (OUV), defined as that which is generated by urban non-state organized armed groups (OAGs) who exert territorial and social control in urban areas. Through detailed examination of academic and policy literature, this thesis explores the types of non-state OAGs involved in urban violence – such as private security companies (PSCs), vigilantes, gangs, and organized crime groups – their characteristics and their impacts on urban environments. The category of OUV is further developed through two case studies: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Cape Town, South Africa – cities which have a proliferation of urban non-state OAGs and high levels of urban violence.

Urban non-state OAGs typically achieve social and territorial control in areas of the city that have been marginalized or neglected by the state. While their control of urban territory is often related to illicit economic goals (such as controlling drug markets), they use social control to establish themselves as authorities within the community, such as by enforcing codes of behavior and limiting the mobility of residents. They also restrict access by state services (such as police) so as to maintain their position and protect their activities. Both territorial and social control are enforced through violence and the threat of violence, such as physical punishments for violations of behavioural codes and armed defence of territory from the threat of rival groups and the state. The impacts of these groups extend beyond the territories which they control. Their presence and control contributes to territorial and social divisions of urban space, to high levels of crime and homicide, the normalization of violence and widespread fear. Their impact is particularly severe on young males who are disproportionately the actors in, and victims of, urban violence.

Despite international recognition of the increasing severity of urban violence, especially that which is generated by OAGs, there is a lack of focused analysis on the type of violence they generate. This thesis speaks to this need by presenting a focused look at the threat of urban non-

state OAGs in generating urban violence, case studies examining their impacts in two cities, literature maps of relevant literature and recommendations for policy and research development.

Introduction

As of 2007, for the first time in history over 50 percent of the world's population lives in urban centres (Garland, Massoumi and Ruble 2007; United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) 2007; Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009). The rapid urbanization of the 20th and 21st centuries is changing people's habits, opportunities and quality of life. While the majority of the world's cities are relatively peaceful, some of the largest cities in the world have become known for high levels of violence, homicide and criminal activity. Johannesburg, Managua, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, for instance, are infamous for gang violence and spatial segregation.

Although Stanely (2003) and Esser (2004, 32) suggest that "the urban realm is not generally recognized as a distinct spatial category in theories of violence", how violence manifests in urban environments is a topic of increasing importance not only to researchers and academics (e.g. Gaviria and Pagés 2002; Covery 2003; Vigil 2003; Esser 2004; Moser 2004; Moser and McIlwaine 2004; Winton 2004a; Briceño-León 2005; Arias 2006a; Moser and McIlwaine 2006; Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009) but also to municipalities, states and international organizations (e.g. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Health Organization (WHO) 2005; Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) 2007; Gie and Haskins 2007; Small Arms Survey 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007; Amnesty International 2008).

The WHO (2002, 5) defines violence as

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

Yet while the WHO focuses on physical force, Terriff et al. (1999, 72) note that violence does not only mean direct physical assault, but can also be psychological and structural; in other words, actions and policies which "deliberately or knowingly result in the deaths or suffering of others". This is important to my understanding of urban violence since actions of individuals and groups involved in urban violence can include such things as intimidation, extortion and social control (Manitzas 1991; Goldstein 2003; Moser and McIlwaine 2006). Additionally, Moser's understanding of violence (2004, 4) as "the exercise of power that is invariably used to legitimize the use of force for specific gains" takes into account the variety of ways with which individuals

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or groups can harmfully exercise power against others. The concept of power is essentially “concerned with any form of asymmetry in human relations” and can manifest in such things as the structural capacity of the state or coded in aspects of everyday life such as language and bureaucratic cultures (Moser and Norton 2001, 16).¹ I also believe that while violence is not always exercised deliberately or knowingly (Galtung 1969), it can be employed for a variety of goals, be they economic (i.e. robbery, extortion), social (i.e. domestic and sexual violence), and/or political (i.e. assassinations and paramilitary activities) (Moser 2004). Throughout this thesis the use of the term violence is intended to represent this broad range of methods, goals and manifestations.

In an urban environment violence can include “theft, mugging, and burglary, crimes associated with alcohol and drug misuse, gang violence and prostitution, and common intra-family abuse” (Moser and McIlwaine 2006, 90). It can encompass structural violence through deprivation of and lack of access to basic social services (Winton 2004a; Rodgers 2009). It can also include “common crime and drug trafficking or emotional conflicts in which hatred and pain culminates in the use of firearms” (Briceño-León 2005, 1631). The Small Arms Survey (2007, 161) posits that urban violence “is linked to factors such as the drug trade, the availability of weapons, and forms of social organization (gangs, militias)”. Additionally, it can encompass acts of terrorism in urban environments (Brennan-Galvin 2002) such as the Tokyo subway attack in 1995, the 9/11 attacks in New York, or the bombing of the London public transport system in 2005. These explanations illustrate that urban violence is a multi-layered, complex phenomenon influenced by a number of physical, economic, social, and institutional conditions (Vigil 2003; Moser 2004; Moser and McIlwaine 2004; Winton 2004a; UN-HABITAT 2007; Small Arms Survey 2007).

The prevalence, severity and spread of urban violence is seen as “one of the most portentous threats to development on a local, national and international scale” (Winton 2004a, 165). For example, in São Paulo, Brazil, a city with many armed groups such as gangs, drug traffickers and private security companies (Caldeira 2002; Covery 2003) there were 69,700 homicides between 1984 and 1996 – over 10,000 deaths more than known American casualties during 20 years (1955-1975) of the war waged by the Americans and allies in Vietnam (Huggins 2000b, 113). It

¹ Moser and Norton note that their perspective on power is strongly derived from the work of Michel Foucault. 1980. *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-7*. New York: Panteheon Books.

should be noted that the situation in São Paulo has improved since 1996. Homicide rates dropped by half between 1999 (35.7 per 100,000) and 2006 (15.1) (Goertzel and Kahn 2007) which has been attributed to factors such as a disarmament campaign, police crackdowns – shown in a leap in imprisonments from 18,602 in the first quarter of 1996 to 30,831 in the first quarter of 2001, and installment of community policing stations, as well as the implementation of social programs and engagement with civil society (Souza and Sá 2005; Goertzel and Kahn 2007).

GENESIS & INTENT OF RESEARCH

I began researching urban violence when hired as a Research Intern for DFAIT (November 2007 – March 2008) in their Human Security and Cities program to contribute to a proposed follow-up publication to the 2007 document *Human Security for an Urban Century: Local Challenges, Global Perspectives* (DFAIT 2007). I have subsequently received two other contracts to continue on as an editor/researcher (April – June 2008, January 2010 – present). With the first contract I was tasked with researching urban violence “marked by high levels of violence and crime, the control of territory and resources by organized armed groups, regressive police actions, and highly negative human security outcomes” (Grace and Moore 2007, 2). Research and discussion continued to focus on the role of non-state organized armed groups (OAGs) in generating urban violence,² approaching the issue from a policy perspective, with emphasis on building conflict resilience and informing government and international policy. In the fall of 2010 it was determined that DFAIT would no longer publish this research. However, my interest had already been piqued and for several months I had been conducting my own parallel research to the work I did for DFAIT, consulting academic journals to see how urban violence is defined, characterized and categorized.

Research revealed the lack of comprehensive analysis on the types of urban violence generated by urban non-state OAGs, by which I mean actors who are part of non-state organizational structures (such as private security companies, vigilante groups, gangs or organized crime groups) and who exert territorial and social control in urban areas. As Moser (2004, 3) points out, while “we seek to comprehend the complex, multi-layered nature of violence, the phenomenon itself is not static...[and] the face of urban violence itself is also

² DFAIT employed a variety of evolving terms (endemic community violence – endemic urban violence – organized urban violence (OUV)) to describe the type of urban violence associated with non-state OAGs.

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rapidly, dramatically changing”. Because this subject is so complex, I believe it is important to assess what knowledge we have accumulated so far and to draw attention to areas which deserve further attention, which in this case are the organized groups of actors generating violence in urban areas. Again, to cite Moser (2004, 4), there is a need to categorize the phenomenon of urban violence in order to “design interventions to prevent or reduce it”. Therefore my intent is to develop, as an academic, a category of the urban violence generated by urban non-state OAGs who exert territorial and social control in urban areas, for which I will use the term organized urban violence (OUV). The term OUV was originally developed by DFAIT staff over the course of my work with them to reflect that organized armed groups are instrumental in generating certain types of urban violence, but not that the violence itself is organized. While it is not being endorsed by DFAIT or currently used in academic or policy literature, it serves the purpose here of framing my topic and will be developed through comparative analysis of, and positioning within, relevant academic literature.

I believe it is beneficial to develop this category for several reasons. First, as I have said, it originates in work done with DFAIT and as such is an opportunity for academic work to build upon discussions generated during government policy development. Secondly, the impact of urban non-state OAGs on their cities is especially virulent (as will be described in the following chapters) and comprehensive analysis of these actors could assist those who work to address it – for as Burton (1997, xv) says, it is in seeking to explain violence that we can find ways to address sources of conflict and promote positive, peaceful relationships. In other words, the development of the category of OUV is a useful tool to understand and address a contemporary lethal phenomenon.

The virulence of OUV not only poses grave concerns for municipalities and states, it also has policy implications for international organizations such as the International Red Cross and for governments such as our own who must consider how their policies and mandates regarding intra- and inter-state armed conflict should be applied in urban environments. For example, can disarmament, demobilization and reintegration policies and programs be used in urban areas? Can Protocol II of the Geneva Convention (1977) which prohibits the use of children as combatants in armed conflict be applied to children in gangs? While these questions are beyond the scope of this thesis, they demonstrate some of the complexity of urban violence as generated

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by urban non-state OAGs. Additionally, these questions demonstrate the need for a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon – to which this research intends to contribute.

It is my hope that the development of a categorization of the phenomenon of OUV, and the demonstration of how this categorization can be applied to understand specific manifestations of violence in urban environments, will benefit students, researchers and policy planners who are interested in a deeper understanding of contemporary urban violence.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Can a category of urban violence – namely organized urban violence (OUV) – be developed through an analysis of research on urban violence which identifies the impact and characteristics of urban non-state organized armed groups (OAGs) who generate violence and exert territorial and social control in urban areas?

Sub-questions:

What types of non-state OAGs are involved in urban violence?

What are the characteristics of these groups?

What types of violence are they most likely to engage in and why?

How do they exert territorial and social control?

What are the impacts of their activities on their urban environments?

When conducting research on violence generated by urban non-state OAGs, I found that examination of urban violence is usually tangled in discussion of several types of violence such as anomic crime, political violence or open armed conflict (e.g. Brennan-Galvin 2002; Moser and McIlwaine 2004; UN-HABITAT 2007; DFAIT 2007) or else parcelled off in analysis of specific types of actors, such as gangs (Vigil 2003, Manwaring 2005; Rodgers 2006; International Crisis Group 2007; Jensen 2008), police (Marenin 1996; Caldeira 2002), or vigilantes (Harnischfeger 2003; Bangstad 2005). Reflecting these various approaches, there are multiple terms associated with urban violence, such as ‘urban gang violence’ (Vigil 2003), ‘everyday violence’ (Scheper-Hughes 1992; Moser and McIlwaine 2004 and Koonings 1999), or endemic violence (Arias 2004). The Small Arms Survey (2007) focuses on ‘urban armed

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violence’, while UN-HABITAT (2007) uses the term ‘urban crime and violence’. Dowdney (2002; 2003 & 2004) uses the term ‘organized armed violence’ to describe a situation where “there are elements of a command structure and power over territory, local population and/or resources, in non-war situations” (Dowdney 2003, 256). This term and definition is adopted by the organizations such as the Instituto de Estudos da Religião; the International Action Network on Small Arms and the United Nations Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children (see Dowdney 2004) and by Pinheiro (2008) in her master’s thesis examining children and youth involved in organized armed violence in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Medellín, Colombia. The term “organized armed violence” informs my own understanding and category of OUV since both address situations in which armed groups have an organizational structure and exert power over territories and communities, although OUV is focused exclusively on urban environments.

Given that manifestations of violence can be so diverse and complex, nuances about urban violence can be lost or overshadowed by a myriad of different factors, actors and situations. For this reason, it is beneficial to propose categories of violence and develop these categories through a focused analysis of characteristics and actors. Since I believe that to focus solely on the context and not on the actors would deny the agency of human beings and severely limit our understanding of OUV, as previously stated, the following research develops the category of OUV through a focused analysis on the characteristics and impacts of urban non-state OAGs who exert territorial and social control in urban environments. It draws upon an extensive body of work regarding urban violence and identifies situations marked by the activities of non-state OAGs – who are in turn identified as groups of armed actors in urban settings which have an established organizational structure and which exert territorial and social control (such as gangs, vigilantes, organized crime groups and private security companies). Through a critical review of literature I assess the characteristics of these urban non-state OAGs and the impacts on their environment, a process by which I develop the category of OUV.

Research relevant to OUV is presented in Chapter 2 through a literature map (Creswell 2003; Gray and Malins 2004) which provides a visual summary of my research and the existing literature on this topic. Creswell (2003) notes that literature maps are typically presented as a figure (i.e. Mathisen 2006³). Gray and Malins (2004) suggest that maps can be constructed to

³ Mathisen (2006, 2) uses a literature map to “visually define the key concepts and ideas as well as to show the relationship between the concepts of this review”. I will be using the literature map for this purpose as well,

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represent the relationships between things and arranged thematically, allowing the author to draw connections between research areas. My literature map presents the literature set of 96 studies,⁴ illustrating the relationships between the key concepts which inform form the development of the category of OUV. Additionally, for each of my two case studies I will present a literature map with the same thematic structure as the one in Chapter 2, demonstrating the available literature which pertains directly to this subject in each city. A comparison of these three maps will be presented in the concluding chapter.

Urban non-state OAGs typically control territory in slums or urban peripheries by such measures as limiting access to exclude rivals such as police or competing gangs (Dowdney 2002; Winton 2004a; Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers 2009). In addition to controlling territorial access, these groups have often “institutionally organized and regulated local collective life” (Rodgers 2009, 964) by enforcing certain behaviours and prohibiting others (Huggins 1991; Manitzas 1991; Dowdney 2002; Goldstein 2003; Winton 2004a; Arias 2006a). As Arias (2006a, 1) expresses it, they “oppose the rule of law and act as judge, jury, and executioner”. Yet while OAGs such as gangs can control territory “through the imposition of localized regimes of terror based on fear, threats and widespread acts of arbitrary violence” (Rodgers 2009, 969), OAGs can also assume a somewhat beneficial role by providing services (security, financial assistance, employment, etc.) within their communities. Such activities complicate the nature of their relationships with communities, the municipality and the state (Koonings 1999; Winton 2004a; Arias 2006a) and will be explored in further depth in the following chapters.

Building upon my literature evaluation, I further develop an understanding of the category of OUV by examining how it manifests in two cities: Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town, South Africa. Both cities have been identified by international organizations as having significantly high levels of violence (Small Arms Survey 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007) and comparable annual homicide levels⁵ of over 40 per 100,000 people (UN-HABITAT 2007; Gie and Haskins 2007). Both cities also have a proliferation of institutionalized, organized armed groups such as gangs, vigilantes,

although in addition to providing a visual display of key concepts as Mathisen does, I also provide a legend for the map, linking these key concepts to related literature.

⁴ These studies have been selected because they make direct mention of urban non-state OAGs or the characteristics and impacts of OUV which have been identified in this study. The process of developing this literature map was ongoing since the sources cited by one article would lead to another. However, the selected literature is limited by the same parameters which shape my research.

⁵ While homicide levels are not an accurate comprehensive measure of OUV, they give an indication of the extent of lethal violence in these cities.

paramilitaries, and both state and private security companies who control areas of their cities (Dowdney 2003; Dowdney 2004; Hagedorn 2006).

THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND METHOD

I am writing this thesis as a student of Conflict Studies. Contributors to this field, Galtung (1996) and Burton (1997), view conflict as arising out of deprivation and repression of certain human needs. Similarly, Winton (2004a, 166) notes that in an urban context, “deprivation as *inequality*” is most significantly related to endemic violence.⁶ In such an approach, most conflict and associated violence is viewed as “reactive against an identifiable cause [such as deprivation], rather than rooted in ‘evil’ or the ‘primeval’” (Richmond 2003, 293). This understanding of conflict and associated violence is essential to my research since in identifying urban non-state OAGs as principle actors in OUV I am not suggesting that they are ‘evil perpetrators’ of violence, but rather that they are social actors responding to, and shaping, their physical, social, economic and political environment. It follows that assessments of these groups would not be complete without noting the deprivation and repression of human needs found in the urban areas where they are able to gain and maintain control. This is not to legitimize their violence, but rather to recognize the context in which they act and to emphasize the need for radical (meaning root-focused) analysis in developing and understanding this category of violence.

Bush and Keyman (1997, 312) promote a concept of security which depends on addressing “complex political, economic, social, environmental, and even epidemiological problems”. I also believe that both security and violence are multi-faceted phenomena deserving of layered and nuanced understanding of the interconnections between issues such as race, class, age and gender which constitute the multi-layered nature of social reality (Carroll 2004; Neuman 2004).⁷ My work is therefore informed by critical theory and postpositive, radical analysis. Guba and Lincoln (2008) suggest that critical theory and postpositivism are incompatible as research

⁶ For discussion on relative deprivation and urban crime/violence see literature such as Kawachi, Kennedy and Wilkinson (1999), Baron (2006) and Stolzenberg, Eitle and D’Alessio (2006).

⁷ I have chosen radical analysis because I feel it corresponds with the needs of my research and with my personal philosophy regarding the interconnected nature of human phenomena. However, I have not been able to find examples of other researchers on urban violence who explicitly use radical analysis since most of the researchers I am referring to do not spell out their theoretical methodology – with the exception of those who use participatory analysis – and so while many of these articles do address the interconnections which interest me, they do not explicitly state that they are using radical analysis.

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methodologies. However, as I outline my understanding of these methodologies below, I believe they are compatible in a research situation such as mine which relies on secondary data – as opposed to research involving field work for which I would likely situate myself more within critical and participatory methodologies.

Critical theory approaches to research emphasize “the multilayered nature of social reality” (Neuman 2004, 44) shaped by “social, political, cultural, economic, ethic, and gender values” (Guba and Lincoln 2008, 257) and are thus fitting for analysis of a complex phenomenon such as urban violence. Additionally, critical theory approaches to research seek to generate historical insights, building knowledge through “generalization through similarity” (Guba and Lincoln 2008, 258). My literature review and case studies are rooted in this approach as I seek to offer insight into contemporary manifestations of urban violence by assessing similarities in situations of urban violence marked by the activities of urban non-state OAGs.

There is a growing body of literature addressing urban violence which originates from a wide range of disciplines such as anthropology, criminology, sociology, and urban planning. In a postpositive research approach, emphasis is placed on using both quantitative and qualitative methods and collecting more than one type of data (Illing 2010). This can be seen in my research since I draw from research informed by these various disciplines and from both quantitative studies (such as UN-HABITAT 2007, Small Arms Survey 2007) and qualitative studies (such as Oliveria 1996; Pino 1997; Slater 2000; Zaluvar 2000; Riley, Fiori and Ramirez 2001; Zaluvar 2001b; Oldfield 2002; Monaghan 2004; Rodgers 2006; Jensen 2008; Sneed 2008; Samara 2010a), as well as other sources of information such as news agencies, policy documents and websites.

Informed by these theoretical perspectives, my research methods reflect my belief that “devoting more effort to understanding the contexts in which challenges to urban safety and security occur [is] a significant first step towards improving evidence” (UN-HABITAT 2007, 21). As such, in this thesis I develop the category of OUV through a systematic, radical analysis of literature on urban violence and urban non-state OAGs, including academic literature from leading peer-reviewed journals,⁸ as well as papers from Canadian and international agencies

⁸ To limit the scope of my literature review I have selected four leading and widely-cited peer-reviewed journals which focus on urban issues: *Environment and Urbanization*, *Review of Urban and Regional Development Studies*, *Urban Affairs Review* and *Urban Studies*. These four journals have been searched for articles on urban violence by a) a keyword search for each of the following terms: violence, conflict, security, insecurity, gang(s), and vigilante(s);

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(such as DFAIT, UN-HABITAT, the Geneva Declaration, the Armed Violence Prevention Programme (AVPP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) and the Small Arms Survey)⁹ published in English¹⁰ after 1990¹¹ which directly address urban violence and insecurity and urban non-state OAGs. The category developed through this analysis is then applied to two case studies: Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town – cities which have a proliferation of urban non-state OAGs and high levels of urban violence (Hagedorn 2006; Gie and Haskins 2007; Small Arms Survey 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007).

DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Delimitations

The primary focus of this study is OUV, as defined above. I am looking at situations where urban non-state OAGs exert territorial and social control in urban areas such that the state has little or no access to these controlled territories. For this reason my research does not deal with gang activity in North America and Europe where OAGs have urban 'turf', territory which is marked by graffiti and whose boundaries are protected by the gang from intrusion by rival gangs (Decker 1996; Winton 2004b; Moser and McIlwaine 2006; Willman and Marcelin 2010), but

and b) a review of every article title published since 1990. Articles identified through this search have been examined for references to OAGs. In addition to these journal articles, I have drawn upon the work of Caroline Moser, a researcher of violence whose work is often cited by other researchers (Turshen 2001; Brennan-Galvin 2002; Winton 2004) and organizations (UNDP & WHO 2005; UN-HABITAT 2007; DFAIT 2007). Additional literature addressing urban violence was acquired through the use of library electronic search processes (E-Journals @ Scholars Portal) and through consulting the bibliographies of selected articles.

⁹ I do not claim to conduct an exhaustive review of all these sources but rather will use them to supplement information and research found in academic journals.

¹⁰ I acknowledge that my research would be enhanced by inclusion of Portuguese, Spanish and French sources, but while I draw on some sources in these languages (for example websites and reports) to build my knowledge of the two case studies or of urban violence in Latin America, I cannot claim to have adequately addressed all the literature published in these other languages since a) I am not sufficiently proficient in Spanish and Portuguese, and b) to include all French literature would have created a body of material much larger than I could adequately address in a Master's thesis. This being said, I will make note in my thesis of references in other languages which address the issues being raised, as far as I am aware of them. Additionally, it is important to note that some sources which I read in English were originally published in another language, demonstrating that there is overlap within the literature; for example Solís and Aravena (2009) was originally published in Spanish. Also, one of the selected journals (*Environment and Urbanization*) promotes the work of French, Spanish and Portuguese-speaking authors by translating their work into English for publication. The majority of its authors come from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

¹¹ I chose this cut-off point in recognition that the vast majority of research on this topic was published in the last two decades, but also simply to create some boundaries around the scope of my research in order to keep a critical evaluation feasible.

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where the state still has relative authority and access. I recognize that gangs and urban OAGs exist in Europe and North America, but in these places gangs do not have the same degree of territorial control as seen in South and Central America and Africa where they control their turf not just from entry by rival gangs, but also from entry by the state and police. Additionally, by focusing on urban non-state organizations I am excluding non-state organizations such as the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) or the Nepali Maoists who, though at times active in urban centres, are armed political organizations whose social and territorial control extends beyond distinct urban areas. The types of urban non-state OAGs examined in this thesis do not intend to usurp or overthrow the state, but rather seek to secure urban territory in order to protect their social and economic interests.

Additionally, since I am focusing on the characteristics of urban violence as relates to the activities of urban non-state OAGs, it is beyond the scope of this research to examine how municipal, national and international bodies have responded to these perpetrators of urban violence. While it can be argued that aggressive, hard-handed approaches by state security to gangs have fueled violence and contributed to urban insecurity (Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers 2009), due to limitations of space and time, I can only acknowledge this aspect of the phenomenon but not explore it in detail. However, in my conclusion I intend to sketch out and reflect upon some of the approaches by international organizations which are addressing the issue of OUV (such as the Geneva Declaration, UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities programme, and the World Health Organization's Armed Violence Prevention Programme).

Limitations

There are well-known difficulties in obtaining reliable data on violence and crime in urban environments due to a number of factors:

- Differences in understandings of crime and violence since “definitions of events vary because they reflect different cultural and contextual perceptions of events and behaviours in different locations” (UN-HABITAT 2007, 20);
- Homicide rates, “the most commonly used indicator of crime” do not acknowledge non-fatal violence and generally include both intentional and unintentional violent deaths, such as car accidents (Moser 2004, 7);

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- Different methods of getting information about crime and violence, e.g. differences in recording, counting and classifying crime, making cross-comparison difficult (Smaoun 2000; Moser 2004);
- Inadequate or inaccurate official crime data, especially from police (Moser 2004; Moser and McIlwaine 2006; UN-HABITAT 2007; Rodgers 2009);
- Differences in propensities to report crime, especially sexual crimes – for example, in some societies it is almost impossible for women to report rape (Moser 2004; UN-HABITAT 2007; Seedat et al. 2009);
- Distrust of police and variability of access to police stations, telephones etc.;
- The “clandestine nature of criminal behaviour ‘masks’ much of the important data about motivations and dynamics of crime” (UN-HABITAT 2007, 21; and Standing 2006; Jensen 2008);
- Additionally, since many of the indirect costs and consequences of violence are intangible, reliance on the available data regarding violence “neglects the insidious and intangible effects of violence on people’s lives such as insecurity, fear, terror, and a deteriorating quality of life” (Moser and McIlwaine 2006, 98).

In recognition of these difficulties in obtaining data on urban violence, I will note where data appears to be insufficient, what criticisms have been made of existing data, its collection and its analysis, and how available data could be substantiated by further research. Additionally, since I am drawing from a variety of sources, I cannot guarantee the same type, quality or quantity of information across both of my case studies.

Since it could be argued that people have a thorough understanding of a city or region only after extensive first-hand experience, my analysis may also be limited by the fact that I have not been to either Cape Town or Rio. While acknowledging that my research would be significantly enriched by first-hand field research, my intent is to develop the category of OUV through an analysis of existing literature, and through my case studies to apply and develop this category. Given the intent and research question of this thesis, secondary literature will provide enough information for this purpose.

As Moser (2004, 6) notes, “any categorization is, by definition, too static to represent a dynamic and holistic phenomenon.” With this in mind, the category of OUV developed in this

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thesis is intended as an analytic tool to provide a point from which to understand and address urban insecurity. While I propose a list of characteristics of OUV, this is not to be read as a checklist but rather as a tool to understand the actors involved in urban violence and types of violence manifesting in certain cities.

Again, to cite Moser (2004, 6) I do not assume that “violence is manifested and experienced in the same way in different cities”. However, this does not invalidate the usefulness of analysis which draws attention to similar characteristics experienced in different cities. The drawing of connections between contexts is useful not only as an academic exercise, but also for the development of policies and programs aimed at countering violence. For example, the measures undertaken in Bogotá, Columbia to address urban violence have been studied by other municipalities such as Medellín, Colombia (Sanín et al. 2009) and Rio de Janeiro (Arruda 2006) in order to see how the successes in the Colombian capital can be applied in other urban contexts.

SIGNIFICANCE

At the 2009 G8 Summit in Rome, the ministerial meeting of Justice and Home Affairs concluded that urban security is a new “global security issue” which “affects especially the most vulnerable brackets of society” and made a call for further investigation into the dynamics of urban insecurity (G8 Ministerial Meeting of Justice and Home Affairs 2009, 1, 9). Indeed, urban violence is “one of the major preoccupations of policymakers, planners, and development practitioners in cities and municipalities around the world” (Jütersonke et al. 2009, 373). Yet despite international recognition of the increasing severity of urban violence, especially that which is generated by organized armed groups, there is a lack of focused analysis on this type of violence. This thesis speaks to this need, presenting a focused look at the role of urban non-state OAGs in generating urban violence and providing three literature maps which illustrate the key concepts related to this issue.

THESIS ORGANIZATION

In the following chapter, I present my literature review, beginning with an overview of literature on urban violence, then focusing on four categories of urban non-state OAGs: private security companies (PSCs), vigilantes, gangs and organized criminal groups. Through critical analysis of research on these groups I identify their characteristics, the types of violence in which they engage, the ways in which they exert territorial and social control and the impact which they have on their urban environment. The literature referenced in this analysis will be illustrated with a literature map, a tool which can assist other researchers interested in the phenomenon of OUV. Through this analysis I will develop the category of OUV and conclude the chapter with its proposed definition and characteristics.

In the third and fourth chapters I develop two case studies, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town, which further explore the types and characteristics of violence generated by urban non-state OAGs. My intent is to test the proposed categorization OUV and see if the expectations I developed in my literature review are born out in an analysis of the dynamics of violence experienced in Rio and Cape Town.

In my concluding chapter I revisit my research questions to assess how knowledge gained through the case studies informs the development of the category of OUV. I present recommendations for further study and mention current initiatives by international organizations which are addressing urban violence and urban non-state OAGs.

Urban Violence Literature Review

This chapter is divided in four sections. The first provides an overview of literature addressing urban violence which has been selected for this thesis research, illustrated with a literature map. The second section maps out the general characteristics of urban violence, emphasizing the significance of the urban environment and exploring how factors associated with the outbreak of urban violence can also be used to understand its on-going characteristics. The subsequent section traces the characteristics, actions and impacts on their environment of urban non-state organized armed groups (OAGs). The fourth section presents the proposed category of organized urban violence (OUV) in response to the research question generating this research, namely ‘Can the category of OUV be developed through an analysis of research on urban violence which identifies the impact and characteristics of urban non-state OAGs who generate violence and exert territorial and social control in urban areas?’.

ADDRESSING LITERATURE ON URBAN VIOLENCE

As mentioned in the previous section, the genesis of this thesis was research on urban violence undertaken for DFAIT. Literature examined for this research included policy documents, websites, academic journals, books and reports. As such, my thesis and my understanding of urban violence have been informed by a wide variety of sources. However, to frame my thesis research, I dedicated focused research to four leading, peer-reviewed journals on urban affairs:¹² *Environment and Urbanization*,¹³ *Journal of Urban Affairs*,¹⁴ *Urban Affairs Review*¹⁵ and *Urban Studies*.¹⁶ These journals have been searched for articles on urban violence

¹² Originally I had planned to include the *Review of Urban and Regional Development Studies* in my literary survey. However, after completing my article search as specified in my research methods, I did not uncover any articles directly relevant to my research and therefore removed this journal from my list of selected literature, replacing it with *Urban Studies*.

¹³ 14 articles were selected from this journal for inclusion in this thesis based upon the method described.

¹⁴ In the *Journal of Urban Affairs* I found surprisingly little about urban violence, and found it to primarily focused on the American context. From a keyword and title search I could identify only one article which addressed urban violence, and it was with regard to the impact of gang violence on caregiving and work in Chicago (Puntenney 1997). I also found one article on public space in Rio (Freeman 2008).

¹⁵ The vast majority of articles in the *Urban Affairs Review* which address urban violence are focused on the American context, such as the several which discuss terrorism and the American urban context post Sept 11 (Swanstrom, 2002; Eisinger 2004; West, 2005), an article about gangs and homicide in the context of Chicago (Hagedorn and Rauch 2007), and a study of crime and drug activity in Miami (Martínez, Rosenfeld and Mares

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by a) a keyword search for each of the following terms: violence, conflict, security, insecurity, gang(s), and vigilante(s); and b) a review of every article title published since 1990. Through this search I found 24 articles which were further examined for references to urban non-state OAGs. Of the 24 selected articles, 5 were published between 1990 and 1999, 19 between 2000 and 2010, suggesting that issues of urban violence are of greater concern in the past decade than in the previous one. However, that there was not a greater number of articles which spoke directly to urban violence in these four leading journals suggests that this issue is not yet getting the depth of scholarly attention afforded to other urban issues such as urban development and municipal governance.

In addition to these journal articles, I have drawn upon other sources such as books and academic papers which were identified through references in articles read and searches in scholar databases for papers on urban violence. (See Appendix A for a list of the 58 articles from 23 peer-reviewed journals included in this literature review). These articles were selected because they addressed aspects of urban non-state OAGs or particular characteristics and drivers of urban violence, such as normalization of violence, in cities experiencing a proliferation of non-state OAGs (i.e. Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, Lagos, Nigeria, Guatemala City, Guatemala). Additionally, my work is informed by papers from Canadian, American and international agencies (such as DFAIT, the Geneva Declaration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), UNDP-WHO, UN-HABITAT, the Small Arms Survey, and the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)).

My research and understanding of urban violence has been significantly informed by the work of Caroline Moser, a researcher of violence whose work is often cited by other researchers (Turshen 2001; Brennan-Galvin 2002; Winton 2004a) and organizations (UNDP-WHO 2005; UN-HABITAT 2007; DFAIT 2007). Moser is a social anthropologist and social policy specialist who has published extensively on urban and political violence, urban poverty, human rights and gender and development, especially in the context of Colombia and Guatemala (see

2008). I did however find one article on private security in Cape Town which was used in my case study literature review (Bénit-Gbaffou, Didier and Morange 2008).

¹⁶ In *Urban Studies* I found several article on Cape Town, but most of these were focused on issues of urban planning and land development and thus were not directly relevant to the subject of OUV. However, there were 8 articles which were selected for inclusion in my reviewed literature.

Bibliography). She has worked with the World Bank and is currently a Professor of Urban Development at the University of Manchester and a Research Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

Moser (2006, 2) posits that to effectively address urban violence one requires a holistic framework which

positions violence in terms of three interrelated components; first, the social, economic, political, and institutional categories of violent manifestations; second the underlying causal factors, not only structural factors but also individual identity and agency; and third, the costs of violence in terms of its impacts.

In response to this stated need for a framework, Moser and her colleague Cathy McIlwaine developed a ‘continuum of violence’ (Moser and McIlwaine 1999). In this continuum, the authors propose a three-fold categorization of political, economic and social violence “identified in terms of the primary motivating factor, either conscious or unconscious, for gaining or maintaining political, economic or social power through force or violence” (Moser and McIlwaine 1999, 205). The definitions and categories within this continuum are broadly drawn and are not mutually exclusive. Actors or groups are not restricted to any single categorization; for example a guerrilla group might abduct an official for political reasons and kidnap a wealthy landowner for economic ones (Moser and McIlwaine 1999, 205). This framework highlights the dynamics of urban violence, the overlapping risks which shape its onset, and “the heterogeneous nature of the ‘agents’ that instigate and contain it” (Muggah and Jütersonke 2008, 1).

Moser continues to refer to this continuum of violence in her writing on urban violence and poverty, illustrating how these categories can be used to understand violence and violent events in different urban settings. The category of institutional violence¹⁷ is added in 2002, co-developed with Ailsa Winton – see Moser and Winton (2002) and referred to in 2004, but not consistently cited in later publications. In 2006, Moser supplements the three-fold categorization of violence (social, economic and political) by positioning it alongside underlying causal factors, which include structural factors, individual identity and agency. She further develops the continuum by including impact assessments regarding the costs of violence (Moser 2006, 2). Thus, while there is general continuity within Moser’s approach to providing a framework of

¹⁷ Moser and McIlwaine (2006, 108) note that the fourfold categorization of violence is “not entirely logically consistent” since it is based on motivation, the character of the perpetrator and the means of violence. However, they argue that this “inconsistency is outweighed by the importance of drawing attention to frequently invisibilized state violence”.

violence, it appears that categories are flexible to the context being analyzed. Such adaptability is necessary when examining complex phenomenon in different contexts.

Moser is not without critics. Hintjens (2002, 170) criticizes her for suggesting that perverse social capital – that which benefits the relevant organization but injures the wider community – is “overwhelmingly the domain of men”. However, in the referenced passage, Moser cites Putnam (1993) and Smutt and Miranda (1998) to support her observation that historically organizations such as gangs and mafias which generate perverse social capital “have tended to be hierarchical and male-dominated in structure” (Moser 2001, 44). In my opinion, Hintjens misunderstood Moser’s intent and did not recognize that pointing out the roles played by men and women in situations of urban violence is not done to assign blame, but rather to describe the situation.

Cornwall (2000) criticizes Moser’s early work for restricting its focus to “women in relation to men” (Moser 1993, 3) instead of inviting a parallel attention to masculine identities, role and relations. Yet as we can see in later work, Moser (2001) states that gendered perspectives require looking at both women and men as social actors with different roles, relations and identities. Similarly, in her research with McIlwaine (2004) on violence in Latin America, Moser applies her perspective to such issues as the construction of masculinities in relation to social violence and OAGs.

Given that one can see development in Moser’s perspective on urban violence, that her work has been drawn upon by other researchers, and that it addresses the same contexts I intend to study, it seems appropriate to draw upon her work in forming the category of OUV.

Approaches to studying urban violence

There are several ways in which academic and policy literature approaches the subject of urban violence. Many researchers focus on causal or risk analysis, identifying drivers or underlying factors which contribute to violence (for examples see Vanderschueren 1996; Renner 1998; Brennan-Galvin 2002; Esser 2004; Briceño-León 2005; Small Arms Survey 2007). For instance, Briceño-León (2005) proposes a sociological analysis along three levels: macro-social, meso-social and micro-social, suggesting these levels have factors which respectively originate, foment and facilitate violence. In this causal analysis, distinctions are often made between structural factors, which refer to “a social process of a macro nature and with a genesis and persistence over a longer period of time” (Briceño-León 2005, 1633) and trigger or proximate

risk factors, which “relate to situational circumstances that can exacerbate the likelihood of violence occurring” (Moser 2004, 8; see also Brown 1997; Moser and McIlwaine 2004, Winton 2004a, Small Arms Survey 2007). Proximate risks are less commonly addressed in literature partly because they are context specific (Muggah and Jütersonke 2008). An example of a combined approach to structural and proximate risks can be found in Muggah and Jütersonke (2008, 2) who suggest that “access to and use of alcohol and narcotics, unregulated arms availability, weak security deterrents, possibilities for narco-trafficking rents, and reactive policing—when combined with structural factors—may contribute to increasing the likelihood and severity of outbreaks of organised urban violence”. Interestingly, it is often proximate risks that are addressed in successful violence prevention initiatives, such as through firearms-carrying restrictions and alcohol prohibitions (see Acero 2006; Muggah 2009).¹⁸ This suggests proximate risks make significant contributions to levels of violence and that further research is warranted regarding their impact on the scope and severity of urban violence.

Other researchers of urban violence focus either on certain contexts (Esser 2004; Rodgers 2004; Sanín and Jaramillo 2004; Rodgers 2006; Jütersonke et al. 2009), or on specific actors, especially gangs (Vigil 2003; Manwaring 2005; Small Arms Survey 2006). These context-specific narratives can be vital to understanding how urban violence manifests in different cities and regions. For example, Jütersonke et al. (2009, 374-375) focus on Central America, home to some of the highest rates of homicide and criminal violence in the world and the most dramatic temporal escalation of armed violence since 1999. They note regional-specific factors affecting violence, such as 80 percent of America’s cocaine supply passing through Central American states from Andean production centres (2009, 376). Although not exclusive to Latin America, drug networking is a particularly salient factor in South and Central America. The prospects of high earnings, coupled with a limited risk of being arrested and punished, make drug trafficking an enticing alternative to many people and foment a great deal of violence. For example, a study on homicides in Cali, Colombia, 1995-1996 showed that 46 percent of the city’s homicides were connected to drug trafficking (Briceño-León 2005, 1641).

¹⁸ Bogotá, Colombia is an example of city which successfully reduced its homicide rate by 70% between 1994 (80 per 100,000 or 4,352 homicides) and 2004 (22.6 per 100,000 or 1,582 homicides) with a combination of initiatives including several which addressed proximate risks such as controlling alcohol consumption by closing bars at 1 a.m. and restricting possession of weapons. Other initiatives included urban upgrading and community policing (Acero 2006).

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One of the primary challenges faced by researchers addressing urban violence is the sensitivity of the topic. Researchers mention the ‘code of silence’ imposed by gangs and organized crime groups and enforced through harsh punishment which makes residents unwilling to talk to police or outsiders (McIlwaine and Moser 2001; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Jensen 2008). Philippe Bourgois, who conducted extensive ethnographic research in New York City’s Spanish Harlem, expresses the dilemma which researchers face when trying to investigate sensitive subjects such as drug use/trafficking and criminal involvement and which illustrates some of the difficulties in addressing and categorizing urban violence.

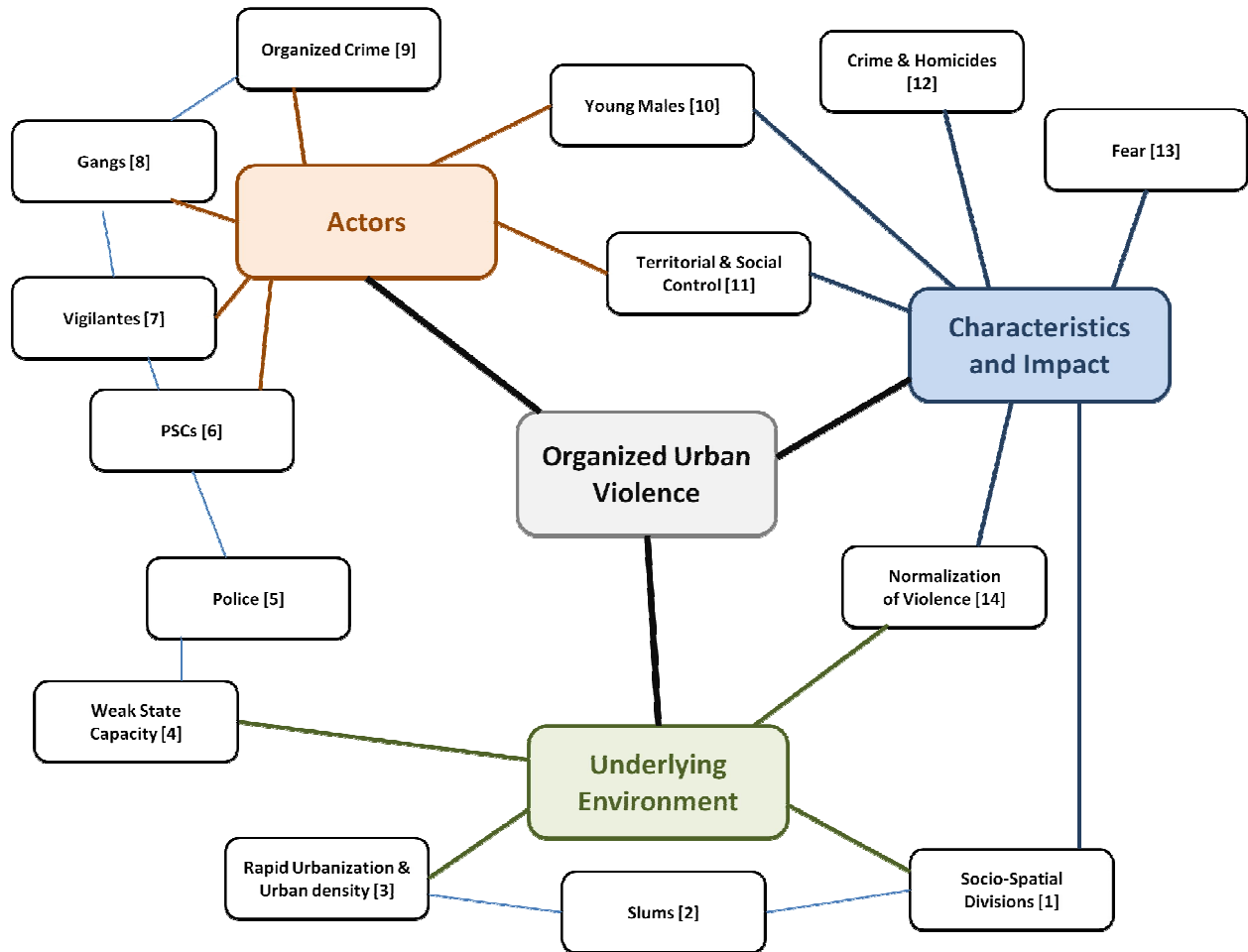
Traditional social science research techniques... cannot access with any degree of accuracy the people who survive in the underground economy... By definition, individuals who have been marginalized socially, economically, and culturally have had negative long-term relationships with mainstream society. Most drug users and drug dealers distrust representatives of mainstream society and will not reveal their intimate experiences of substance abuse or criminal enterprise to a stranger on a survey instrument, no matter how sensitive or friendly the interviewer may be. Consequently, most of the criminologists and sociologists who painstakingly undertake epidemiological surveys on crime and substance abuse collect fabrications. (Bourgois 2003, 12).

The literature studied in the process of this research often acknowledges these difficulties in accessing, describing and comparing aspects of urban violence (i.e. Standing 2006; Jensen 2008; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Because of such difficulties it is incumbent on the researcher to verify information through multiple sources. As can be seen in the extensive bibliography of this thesis, I have drawn from an extensive body of literature which is informed by a variety of research methods.

The multiple approaches to studying urban violence which inform this thesis research include ethnographies (i.e. Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2006a; Jensen 2008), qualitative and participatory analysis (i.e. Moser and McIlwaine 1999; Caldeira 2002; Hume 2004; Winton 2004b; Rodgers 2006) and quantitative studies (i.e. Szwarcwald et al. 1999; Gie and Haskins 2007). This variety of methods builds triangulation through the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Patton 2002) and recognizes engaging “multiple methods... will lead to more valid, reliable and diverse constructions of realities” (Golafshani 2003, 604). In other words, this diversity in researchers and research methods enriches my research through the presentation of multiple perspectives of the subject of urban violence. The

97 studies which inform this study of OUV are thematically represented in literature map in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Organized Urban Violence Literature Map



Literature Map Legend

Socio-spatial Divisions [1]

Vanderschueren (1996)
Caldeira (2000)
Coy and Pöhler (2002)
Dosh (2003)
Briceño-León (2005)
UN-HABITAT (2007)
Jütersonke et al. (2009)

Slums [2]

Vanderschueren (1996)
Werlin (1999)
Moser & Winton (2002)
Esser (2004)
Neuwirth (2004)
UN-HABITAT (2007)

Rapid Urbanization & Urban Density [3]

van Dijk (1998)
Brennan-Galvin (2002)
Gaviria and Pages (2002)
Esser (2004)
Moser (2004)
Briceño-León (2005)
Naudé, Prinsloo & Ladikos (2006)
Small Arms Survey (2007)
Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams (2009)

Weak State Capacity [4]

Esser (2004)
Moser (2004)
UN-HABITAT (2007)
Jütersonke et al. (2009)

Police [5]

Huggins (2000b)
Winton (2004a)
Abrahamsen & Williams (2006)
Macaulay (2007)
Huguet and de Carvalho (2008)
Kimani (2009)

PSCs [6]

Huggins (2000b)
Baker (2002)
Wakefield (2003)
Sanín & Jaramillo (2004)
Samara (2005; 2010a)
Abrahamsen & Williams (2006 & 2007)
DFAIT (2007)
Bénit-Gbaffou, Didier & Morange (2008)
Muggah & Jütersonke (2008)

Vigilantes [7]

Bruce & Komane (1990)
Benevides & Ferreira (1991)
Manitzas (1991)
Huggins (1991; 2000a)
Bruce & Komane (1999)
Dixon & Johns (2001)
Anderson (2002)
Dowdney (2002; 2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Harnischfeger (2003)
Meth (2004)
Monaghan (2004)
Winton (2004a)
Bangstad (2005)
Kagwanja (2006)
Small Arms Survey (2007)

Gangs [8]

Decker (1996)
Puntenney (1997)
Dixon & Johns (2001)
Dowdney (2002; 2003; 2004)
Coverly (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Vigil (2003)
Winton (2004b)
Manwaring (2005)
Hagedorn (2006; 2007)
Small Arms Survey (2006; 2007)
Rodgers (2006; 2009)
Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers (2009)

Organized Crime [9]

Vanderschueren (1996)
Carneiro (2000)
Zaluar (2000 & 2001b)
Brennan-Galvin (2002)
Dowdney (2002; 2003)
Armao (2003)
Arias (2004)
Esser (2004)
Winton (2004a)
Briceño-León (2005)
Arias (2006a)
Arias & Rodrigues (2006)
McLennan et al. (2008)
Bagley (2009)
Manaut & Sánchez (2009)
Solís & Aravena (2009)

Young Males [10]

Benevides and Ferreira (1991)
Huntington (1996)
Vanderschueren (1996)
van Dijk (1998)
Moser & van Bronkhorst (1999)
Huggins (2000b)
Goldstone (2001)
Rolnik (2001)
Brennan-Galvin (2002)

Caldeira (2002)
Dowdney (2004)
Urdal (2004)
Winton (2004a)
Briceño-León (2005)
Hagedorn (2006)
Kagwanja (2006)
Rodgers (2006)
Small Arms Survey (2006 & 2007)
Urdal (2006)
McLennan et al. (2008)
Pinheiro (2008)
Ismail (2009)
Jütersonke et al. (2009)
Willman & Marcelin (2010)

Territorial & Social Control [11]

Arias (2004; 2006a; 2006b; 2006c)
Winton (2004a)
Briceño-León (2005)
Ismail (2009)

Crime & Homicides [12]

Huggins (2000b)
McIlwaine & Moser (2001)
Gaviria & Pagés (2002)
Guerrero & Concha-Eastman (2002)
Hume (2004)
Winton (2004a)
Briceño-León (2005)
Small Arms Survey (2007)
Geneva Declaration Secretariat (2008)
McLennan et al. (2008)

Fear [13]

Bannister and Fyfe (2001)
Pain (2001)
Savitch & Ardashev (2001)
Balán (2002)
Rotker (2002)
Brennan-Galvin (2002)

Moser and McIlwaine
(2004)
Meyer (2007)

Normalization of Violence [14]

Scheper-Hughes (1992)
Koonings and Kruijt (1999)

Brennan-Galvin (2002)
Moser and Winton (2002)
Vigil (2003)
Esser (2004)
Moser & McIlwaine (2004)
Winton (2004a)
Jütersonke et al. (2009)

CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN VIOLENCE

As mentioned above, many researchers on urban violence focus on structural drivers and risk factors associated with outbreaks of urban violence. Yet many factors and characteristics associated with triggering violence can also be read as descriptions of actual manifestations of urban violence. Indeed, it may be difficult or impossible to determine when a driver becomes a characteristic, or indeed if it is simply one or the other. For example, the prevalence of small arms is seen as a risk factor for urban violence (Moser and Winton 2002; Small Arms Survey 2007), yet the diffusion of small arms and high calibre weapons can be exploited in an environment of urban violence to increase the scale and scope of violence, making the prevalence of small arms also a characteristic of urban violence (Jütersonke et al. 2009). As a case in point, it is estimated that there are over two million unregistered small arms in Central America (Jütersonke et al. 2009, 379). Such a statistic can be interpreted both as a driver of violence and as a characteristic of an environment in which firearms are prevalent as tools of defence, intimidation and status.

Given then that drivers and risk factors associated with urban violence can also describe its current characteristics, in the following I will draw upon descriptions of drivers, risk factors and characteristics to build an understanding of the characteristics of OUV. It should be noted that majority of cities possess at least one of the characteristics discussed below, and yet the majority of cities do not experience significant levels of urban violence or the phenomenon of OUV. At the same time, characteristics of urban violence are mutually-catalytic – the more there are, the greater the scope and scale of urban violence.

A commonly cited driver of urban violence is a history of armed violence or recent militarized conflict (Koonings and Kruijt 1999; Moser and Winton 2002; Vigil 2003; Esser 2004, Winton 2004a; Moser and McIlwaine 2004; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Moser and McIlwaine

(2004, 4) note that countries emerging from political conflict, such as Guatemala, often see a “proliferation of street gangs made up of former guerrilla or military members, a growing drugs industry with networks established during times of conflict, as well as an increase in domestic violence”. Additionally, Hume (2004, 63) describes the context of El Salvador where even after the war ended, the situation remains one of “terror as usual” which exhibits itself “through a sharp rise in street crime, a growing gang culture and high levels of violence in the private realm”.

As seen in these examples, a violent past often leads to a “normalization of violence” which creates “a system of norms, values or attitudes which allow, or even stimulate, the use of violence to resolve any conflict or relation with another person” (Winton 2004a, 167).¹⁹ Such normalization of violence is a good example of a driver which is also a characteristic, since in situations of urban violence, violence becomes “routinized” into “the functional reality of daily life” (Moser 2004, 6). McLennan et al. (2008) reflect on how exposure to violence can both lead to and result from youth involvement in risky behaviour such as drug trafficking. Brennan-Galvin (2002, 133) note that epidemiological studies and police statistics demonstrate the urban violence is often clustered in areas with high concentrations of “prostitution, street crime, and drug dealing, low-income housing, unemployment, single-parent families and school desertion”, factors which “create a cultural climate in which violence and delinquency are normative and become self-perpetuating”. Vigil (2003, 228) similarly points to the ‘subculture’ of violence which surrounds gang culture and whose norms “support, encourage, and condone violence”.

A commonly cited driver *cum* characteristics of urban violence which is the so-called ‘youth bulge’ which associates high proportions of youth between the ages of 15 and 24 living in environments of poor economic performance with increased risk of involvement with gangs and other armed or criminal groups (Huntington 1996; van Dijk 1998; Goldstone 2001; Brennan-Galvin 2002; Dowdney 2004; Urdal 2004).²⁰ Briceño-León (2005, 1640) also suggests that the “culture of masculinity that favors violent actions and exposure to the risk of violence” is of particular salience in Latin America. Certainly young males are most often the victims and

¹⁹ Koonings and Kruijt (1999) present a comprehensive exploration of the normalization and legacy of violence in Latin America in their book *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror in Latin America*.

²⁰ The International Labour Organization (ILO) notes that compared to adults, youth worldwide are almost three times as likely to be unemployed (ILO nd). Similarly, Briceño-León (2005) notes that in Latin America and the Caribbean the average income of youth aged 15-19 is one-third that of adults and most likely to be in the informal sector.

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perpetrators of urban violence (Benevides and Ferreira 1991; Vanderschueren 1996; Huggins 2000b; Brennan-Galvin 2002; Caldeira 2002; Winton 2004a; Hagedorn 2006; Rodgers 2006; Jütersonke et al. 2009). If this is due to their heightened proportions (relevant to the total adult population) or a culture of violent masculinity is difficult if not impossible to determine. However, that young men are the most visible actors and victims in urban violence is one of the most prominent aspects of OUV. Even outside of the urban context, violence is “overwhelmingly associated with young people, and with young men in particular” (Willman and Marcelin 2010).

Another commonly cited driver *cum* characteristic of urban violence is weak state capacity (Moser 2004; UN-HABITAT 2007). In the context of Karachi and Kabul, Esser (2004, 31) describes “the loss of control by public bodies, and the resulting victimization of urban residents in both public and private space”. Additionally, as mentioned above, the diffusion of small arms and high calibre weapons is associated with the virulence of urban violence (Brennan-Galvin 2002; Moser and Winton 2002; Small Arms Survey 2007; McLennan et al. 2008; Jütersonke et al. 2009). As Briceño-León (2005, 1642) notes, while “the existence of firearms in a society is not necessarily a direct efficient indicator of violence, it is true that the existence of firearms in the population facilitates lethal violence”.

The response of municipal and state security forces to manifestations of violence also shapes the characteristic and further development of urban violence. In other words, violent police response to gangs and illicit organized armed groups often fuels insecurity, such as through shoot-outs between police and gangs or police employment of military-style tactics of occupation. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this research to do more than acknowledge how the response of municipal, national and international bodies contributes to the phenomenon of urban violence, especially that which is marked by urban non-state OAGs. For more information on this aspect of urban violence see the discussion Jütersonke et al. (2009) on security interventions in Central America.

Although urban violence may occur in an environment of normalized or routine violence, it continues to engender fear in local populations, creating a sense of insecurity and vulnerability which can be as debilitating as actual incidences of violence (Moser and McIlwaine 2004). Perceptions of insecurity are not always borne out by statistical evidence (Moser and McIlwaine 2004) yet can lead to changes in the urban landscape as wealthy residents barricade themselves in gated communities and change patterns of daily life such as in the reduction of the use of

public transit or the retreat from public spaces and streets (Brennan-Galvin 2002). As a case in point, extreme rates of homicide and kidnapping in São Paulo spurred the retreat of the elite into gated communities such as Alphaville, a walled city surrounded by electric fences and patrolled by a private army of 1,100 guards (Brennan-Galvin 2002, 136). Feelings of insecurity are associated with the failure of public security to protect the population and thus associated with the proliferation of private security companies, vigilantism and gated communities which will be explored in greater detail below.

Significance of urban environment

When looking at urban violence it is important to consider the significance of the urban environment in shaping the scope of violence since the ways in which the physical spaces of cities are designed, maintained and controlled influence the types and severity of manifestations of violence. Many researchers have identified a link between rapid urbanization and high urban density with the risk of violence and urban insecurity (Brennan-Galvin 2002; Esser 2004; Moser 2004; Briceño-León 2005). Rapid urbanization creates an imbalance between population increase and the economic and physical infrastructure capacity of a city, presenting challenges in terms of governance and the ability of a city to provide effective public security (van Dijk 1998; Gaviria and Pages 2002; Esser 2004; Small Arms Survey 2007). High levels of urban density mean greater concentrations of people are competing for limited resources, thereby increasing the potential for conflict (Brennan-Galvin 2002; Naudé et al. 2006).²¹ Urban density is also viewed as intensifying antisocial behaviour and facilitating “anonymity and imitation of violent acts” (Brennan-Galvin 2002, 131).

The Small Arms Survey (2007, 167) suggests four factors which render “large cities more vulnerable to armed violence”: 1) the social dislocation and anonymity of large cities; 2) the opportunities for criminal gain; 3) the relatively low risk of being caught; and 4) the effects of social interaction, especially on vulnerable groups. People in Latin America are not only living more in cities (80 percent of them), but in increasingly larger cities (Briceño-León 2005, 1630). Most of the violence in Latin America is located in the 50 cities with a million or more inhabitants (Briceño-León 2005, 1630). For example, a household living in a Latin American city of one million people is 71 percent more likely to be victimized by crime than a household

²¹ In urban slums around the world, “shared water is one of the greatest sources of violence” (Brennan-Galvin 2002, 134).

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living in a city between 50,000 and 100,000 inhabitants (Gaviria and Pagés 2002, 190).

Additionally, “cities such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Mexico City, Lima and Caracas account for more than half the total of their national homicides” (Moser 2004, 6).

Rapid urbanization and urban density are often physically visible in the growth and marginalization of informal settlements or slums areas of urban poverty that experience most manifestations of urban violence (Vanderschueren 1996; Moser and Winton 2002; Esser 2004; UN-HABITAT 2007). Even though there is no proven causal or direct link between poverty/inequality and violence (Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009), marginalized communities are fertile ground for illicit organizations to grow and develop underground economies and people living in these communities often experience extensive violence on a daily basis (Savitch and Ardashev 2001; Winton 2004a; Hagedorn 2007; Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009).

As mentioned above, cities plagued by violence are also plagued by fear. Urban violence both results from and transforms spatial organization as the city is transformed to “adapt reactively to insecurity” (Briceño-León 2005, 1644). In response to fear, people try to protect themselves – often through physical segregation such as gated communities and the privatization of public spaces. Wealthy communities barricade themselves behind security walls; public space is fragmented into zones controlled by state and non-state actors. This fragmentation of urban space can weaken community cohesion and emphasize class and race inequalities (Vanderschueren 1996; Caldeira 2000; UN-HABITAT 2007; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Caldeira (2000) argues that spatial segregation is changing the quality and meaning of public space and community life.

As a side note, there is an issue related to urban violence that is already garnering attention in scholarly literature, and which will likely continue to do so, yet is beyond the scope of this research. This is the increasing prevalence of terrorism enacted in urban centres, such as the Tokyo subway attack in 1995, the 9/11 attacks in New York, the Madrid train bombing in 2004, the bombing of the London public transport system in 2005 or the Mumbai hotel attacks in 2008.²² Obviously, urban terrorism contributes to urban insecurity and is a form of violence, although one could also argue that any form of violence terrorizes the respective community (Koonings and Kruijt 1999). However, in order to narrow the scope of this research I am

²² For information on urban terrorism see for example Brennan-Galvin (2002).

focusing on urban violence which is generated by actors who are visible and active within their communities, as opposed to the clandestine nature of most terrorist activities.

It is also important to note that some studies of urban violence discuss manifestations of violence which I do not address here. For example, Moser and McIlwaine (2006) use the term ‘everyday violence’ to include such manifestations as intimate-partner violence inside the home and neglect by state institutions in the provision of health services and education. While it could be argued that urban non-state OAGs are involved in these and other types of violence, my focus is on the types of violence with which they are primarily and directly associated.

NON-STATE ORGANIZED ARMED GROUPS

When cities are weakened through such things as rapid urbanization, high urban density and weak municipal capacity, urban non-state OAGs can make up for “the comparatively weak presence of the state and concomitant governance deficits” (Jütersonke et al. 2009, 379). Indeed, urban violence can be understood as “being intricately linked to the structural dynamics of urban agglomeration, as well as to the competing interests of – and power relationships between – social groups” (Small Arms Survey 2007, 164). Thus, the following section focuses on social actors involved in urban violence, such as private security companies, vigilantes, gangs and organized crime groups.

Illicit OAGs employ violence with a variety of motivations and with a variety of impacts. In situations of endemic or pervasive urban violence, violence is not limited to the powerful, but is “an option for a multitude of actors in pursuit of all kinds of goals” (Koonings and Kruijtit 1999, 11). For example, Pecaüt (1997, 1999) differentiates between ‘organized violence’ and ‘disorganized violence’ with regards to the actors generating violence in Colombia. Also in reference to Colombia, Moser and McIlwaine (2004) categorize armed groups into three dominant types of violence: mainly political (such as guerrillas, paramilitaries and popular militias), mainly economic (such as drug cartels and organized crime groups), and mainly social (such as *pandillas* and gangs). Brown (1997, 6) points out that when states are weak, “individual groups within these states feel compelled to provide for their own defense”. Such an observation applies equally to cities as to states and evidence of its verity can be seen in the proliferation of private security companies in urban spaces. For example, in developed countries the ratio of

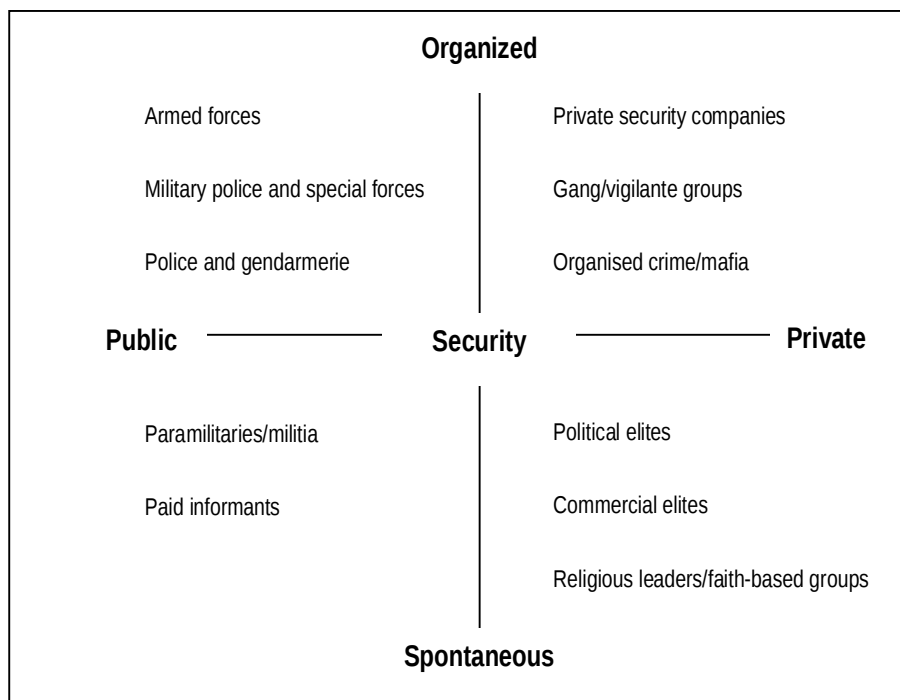
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private security guards to police is approximately 3:1,²³ yet in developing countries the ratio may be as high as 10:1 (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006, 2). Huggins (2000, 123) estimates that Brazil has at least one million people working in the private security sector with a ratio of private to formal police at just over four to one.

Muggah and Jütersonke (2008) offer a useful illustration of the main actors in urban public and private security (see Figure 2.1). Similar to Moser's suggestion (2004) that categories of violence are fluid and inter-related, Muggah and Jütersonke position actors along a continuum and suggest that many of them have ambiguous roles, at times promoting violence and at other times mediating or discouraging it.

Figure 2.2: Actors in urban public and private security

Source: Muggah and Jütersonke 2008



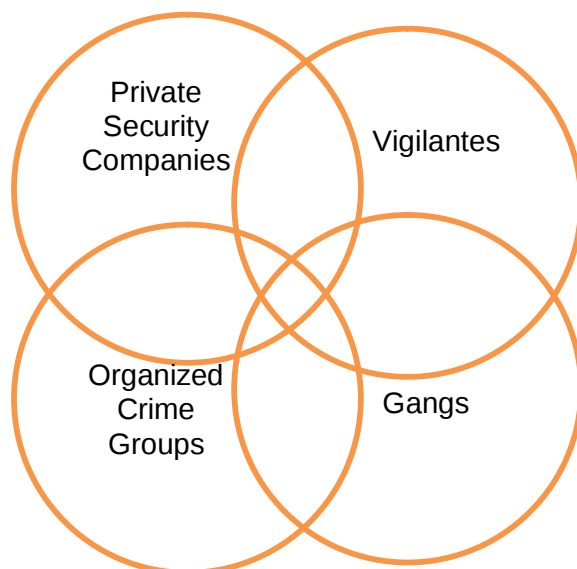
The focus of this research is on the upper, right quadrant of Figure 2.2 – actors who are organized and non-state/private – gangs, vigilante groups, organized crime/mafia,²⁴ and private

²³ In Canada the ratio of security guards to police officers rose from 1.2:1 in the early 1990s to a relative constant of 1.5:1 since 2003 (Service Canada 2009).

²⁴ I do not address the Italian/Sicilian mafia in this paper since they do not exert the type of territorial and social control which my research is focused on.

security companies. It should be noted however that categorization is often difficult since, as Huggins (2000b, 119) describes in the context in Brazil “social control cannot be neatly divided between formal policing and informal citizen vigilantism”. Similarly, there is “an increased blurring of the lines between different types of violence and, accordingly, between actors involved in its perpetration” (Winton 2004a, 166). And McLennan et al. (2008, 819) found that São Paulo youth involved in drug trafficking were statistically more significantly likely to be involved with a gang.²⁵ They also suggest that trafficking may be a “core purpose” of a gang (2008, 822). Therefore, in the following sections which map out commonly identified characteristics of urban non-state OAGs in urban environments the reader ought to understand these categories as overlapping and porous, such as represented in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Overlap between urban non-state OAG categories



Private Security Companies (PSCs)

When police and state security forces fail to provide adequate protection for citizens, or become themselves a source of insecurity, people turn to private initiatives and popular militias for their security needs (Huggins 2000b; Abrahamsen and Williams 2006). Private security provision has become a lucrative market for urban, national and transnational companies and the

²⁵ Youth involved in drug trafficking were also more likely to be not attending school, not engaged in licit employment, have slept on the street, have a family member involved in crime, have witnessed and experienced community violence and have greater access to illicit items such as drugs and guns (McLennan et al. 2008, 819-820). These factors correspond to several characteristics of urban violence previously discussed.

private sector is a key provider of security for large sections of society (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006). Abrahamsen and Williams (2007) suggest that there is no clear-cut distinction between PSCs and private military companies (PMCs) as many companies will take on contracts in both military and commercial/private sectors. However, the focus of this research is on PSC activities which “consist of the day-to-day provision of security” in an urban context as opposed to involvement in military operations (Abrahamsen and Williams 2007, 239). It can include such things as guarding private and commercial properties, the surveillance of public areas such as shopping malls and airports, or the patrolling of gated communities (Huggins 2000b; Abrahamsen and Williams 2006).

Huggins (2000b, 118) describes private security in Brazil as a phenomenon which has emerged “to protect an increasingly segmented, isolated, and socially ‘gated’ population of ‘true citizens’ from those marginalized and delegitimized as ‘dangerous criminals’, a designation which reinforces the latter’s status as ‘noncitizens’”. Members of private security forces are typically male (Huggins 2000a; Huggins 2000b).²⁶ Abrahamsen and Williams (2006, 5) describe the prevalence of private security as “a striking feature of urban life in contemporary Africa, with the uniformed guards of private security companies a ubiquitous presence outside banks, commercial properties, hotels, public offices, and private residences”. Private security often fills gaps created by understaffed, under-resourced police forces (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006; Kimani 2009). For example, although the United Nations recommends one police officer for every 450 citizens, Kenya only has one for every 1,150 citizens (Kimani 2009).²⁷ Not surprisingly, Kenyans are increasingly relying on PSCs such that there are an estimated 2000 companies in Kenya (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006).

Yet while the use of private security by elites can improve security in the enclaves they occupy, it leads to a balkanization of urban space and a deterioration of security in spaces that remain public (Huggins 2000b; Standing 2006; DFAIT 2007). In describing urban fragmentation, Bauman (2001, 117) notes that inhabitants of enclosed, gated communities “find to their dismay, that the safer they feel inside the enclosure, the less familiar and more

²⁶ Huggins (2000, 122) notes that São Paulo’s ‘rent-a-cop’ privatized security service requires that registered members be 21 years of age, have at least an elementary school education and have taken a 120-hour training course.

²⁷ By comparison, in 2009 Canada had over 67,000 active police officers (including the RCMP) with a ratio of 199 officers per 100,000 population, which is approximately 1 per 500 residents (Statistics Canada 2009b, 5).

threatening appears the wilderness outside”. Walls may make people temporarily feel safer, but the threat they imagine on the other side of the barrier does not go away simply because they no longer see it. If anything, it becomes larger and more threatening in their imagination and their fear is easily fuelled by sensationalist media.

Huggins (2000b, 119) suggests that social control in Brazil is best understood along a continuum “with on-duty policing at the most formal pole and lone-wolf citizen vigilantes and lynch mobs at the most informal pole” and the middle-range including “various private/public social control arrangements”. It is also important to note that just as the line between PSCs and vigilantes may be hard to draw, boundaries between public and private security are also equally porous. In many cities, retired army and police personnel operate private security companies while active public officers moonlight in private companies (Huggins 2000b; Abrahamsen and Williams 2006). Additionally, in some cities there are forms of ‘hybrid’ policing in which private and public forces operate co-operatively (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006; Kimani 2009). There are various concerns associated with the growth of PSCs. Abrahamsen and Williams (2006, 20) point to uncertainties “in terms of the maintenance of law and order, in terms of who has access to security, and in terms of social and political legitimacy”. This is related to the lack of regulation around the industry. For example, Abrahamsen and Williams (2006, 15) suggest that in Kenya “it is as easy to start a security company as it is to open an ice cream kiosk” due to lack of specific legislation or regulation. Without regulation or oversight, there are no provisions for penalties or sanctions for companies that engage in arbitrary, unlawful or unprofessional activities, an aspect of privatized security which “obscures political and moral concern over violent social control” (Huggins 2000b, 119).

Another concern with the growth of PSCs is that while some neighbourhoods may be made safer, underlying problems leading to violence and crime are not addressed, simply displaced. As Abrahamsen and Williams (2006, 19) note, “as the wealthy barricade themselves behind security walls and advanced alarm systems, crime moves to the poorer neighbourhoods where the ‘pickings’ may be less enriching, but more accessible”. In the context of Cape Town, Samara (2005) notes that clean-up campaigns move street youth out of the downtown core and push them back to the poor peripheries and townships.

While we have noted here that PSCs and popular militias often pose threats to marginalized and ‘deviant’ populations, it is important to acknowledge the significant risk for those involved

in private security operations. For example, in Kenya private security guards are equipped with only a whistle and a baton, while criminals often carry firearms or other weapons. Violence towards security guards is common, with an estimated five to ten security guards killed every month in the greater urban area of Nairobi and Mombasa (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006, 16). Similarly, in the context of São Paulo, Brazil, Caldeira (2002, 247) notes that police who moonlight as private security guards are much more likely to die on these jobs than while on-duty as police officers – for example, 637, or 88 percent of the 725 policemen killed in the state of São Paulo, were killed in off-duty periods, mostly while working as private guards.

Private security is part of non-state policing which can be viewed on a spectrum ranging from vigilante groups to semi-official community guards and patrols to commercial security firms (Baker 2002). This speaks to the overlap between private security and vigilantism discussed below. Baker (2002, 30) suggests that these types of non-state security may “have significant differences in their organisational structure, legality and how they define social deviance and the type of ‘order’ they wish to establish” but still maintain many common features as both are “forces of coercion engaged by groups of society to preserve social order” and have “minimal accountability to the public”.

Vigilantes & Popular Militias

Private security is not limited to the wealthy, but there are differences in quality and sophistication in what citizens of different socio-economic classes can afford in attempts to secure their property and lifestyles. While middle- and upper-class urban residents may be able to afford the PSCs described above, private security for less wealthy residents includes vigilante groups, popular militias, community policing and neighbourhood watch groups (Abrahamsen and Williams 2006). For example, in the context of Lagos, Nigeria, Ismail (2009) describes how youth have developed a “secure-commerce” by offering physical protection for individuals and businesses. While each of the various types of security have an impact on manifestations and perceptions of urban violence, this section will focus on vigilante groups, groups of private citizens who enforce informal justice through violence (Huggins 1991; Dowdney 2003; Winton 2004a).

Vigilante violence “involves citizens’ action against another citizen presumed to have committed a crime or violated some social norm” (Huggins 1991, 4). Violence is typically

“justified in terms of the ‘crime-fighting’ motivation” (Meth 2004, 160).²⁸ A typical manifestation of such violence is lynching, which may result in death or may be limited to corporeal punishment such as beatings or head shaving (Huggins 1991; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Meth 2004).²⁹ Vigilante violence can also include curfew establishment, aggression, assault and house burning (Manitzas 1991). Vigilante groups are “a powerful presence in many low-income urban communities [who] both feed off and contribute to fear within the community” (Winton 2004a, 172). They directly or indirectly represent “citizen demands for more personal security and/or accountable law and order” and are essentially “conservative and reactionary” (Huggins 1991, 6).

Death squads are the most dramatic form of vigilantism in Latin America. Death squads summarily execute people, often with complete impunity (Cock 1990; Huggins 1991; Manitzas 1991; Small Arms Survey 2007). They can be made up of police, military, civilians or drug traffickers (Manitzas 1991; Huggins 2000b). They typically target people considered dangerous, whether politically (subversives) or socially (criminals and ‘deviants’) (Huggins 1991). For example, the Bakassi Boys, an armed vigilante group in Aba, Nigeria, summarily executes alleged criminals, often with tacit support from the community or even state security forces (Cock 1990; Small Arms Survey 2007). Vigilantes also tend to target marginalized people, such as street youth, beggars, and the poor (Huggins 2000b). Benevides and Ferreira (1991, 37) note that the majority of lynch victims in Brazil – victims of vigilante justice – were impoverished and between the ages of eleven and fifteen.

Vigilante violence can involve a range of actors, either actively participating or offering tacit support (Huggins 1991; Bruce and Komane 1999). The line between police and vigilante groups is often blurred and Huggins (1991) suggests that vigilante acts exist on a theoretical continuum with variation in degree of spontaneity, organization and state involvement. An example of state sanction can be seen in 2001 in Haiti where the president verbally condoned the

²⁸ Meth (2004) conducted research using solicited diaries from women in Durban, South Africa, as well as focus group discussions. Her research shows the group complicity which characterizes vigilantism in comments such as “we beat up the less dangerous criminals and refer those that we are afraid of to the police” (p. 160) and in an account of a youth caught trying to abduct young girls where in the community “called on everyone in the area to catch the thug. He was caught and beaten... He asked for mercy, but nothing of the sort could be obtained from the angry community... He cried until he died” (p. 161).

²⁹ Benevides and Ferreira (1991) distinguish between anonymous lynch action – spontaneously carried out by people who are strangers to each other, and communal lynching which involves participation by a large population and degrees of leadership, coordination and planning.

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use of vigilante justice – which police forces interpreted as authorization to ignore due process and to commit extrajudicial killings (Winton 2004a). Additionally, Winton (2004a, 173) notes, police officers in Venezuela have been suspected of having ties to the vigilante group “Grupo Exterminio” which was accused of up to 100 killings from mid-2000 to September 2001 in the cities of Acarigua and Araure. In Brazil, vigilantes known as *justiceiros* may be quasi-official off-duty police officers, military or civilians, and in some cases may be paid for their services (Huggins 1991; Huggins 2000b). Huggins (2000b) also notes the presence of ‘free-lance’ hitters or death squads in Brazil who can be hired for targeted killings. In Caracas, Venezuela, pro-government quasi-organized popular militias (*Círculos Bolivarianos*) wage armed urban warfare with opposition groups (Small Arms Survey 2007).

Huggins (1991, 12) suggests that vigilante violence in Latin America directly and indirectly reflects the economic and political constraints *vis à vis* foreign loans and capital.

The fiscal crisis of many Latin American states makes it impossible for them to fully address their populations’ security needs, even if the government wants to provide such security for poor and marginalized people. Thus, even reluctant Latin American states have been forced to transfer some of their formal monopoly over force to informal “law and order” groups under only indirect state control.

Meanwhile, vigilante violence in Nairobi has been associated with struggles for political control since vigilante groups are deployed to protect the interests of political clients (Anderson 2002). For example, the youthful Mungiki sect, which generated lethal violence around the elections of 2002, is used as a tool of one of Kenya’s political parties (Anderson 2002; Kagwanja 2006). Politicians allegedly provided cash and weapons to Mungiki members in attacks on a rival political party (Kagwanja 2006).³⁰

Although the role of police in urban violence is beyond the scope of this research, it is important to note that police can be involved in forms of vigilantism such as social cleansing (targeting suspected gang members, street children or homosexuals) and extrajudicial killings (Winton 2004a). For example, in 1999 on-duty police killed 498 citizens in São Paulo and 430

³⁰ The Mungiki has a rival vigilante group in Nairobi - the Taliban, a group which was formed in 2001 to protect businesses and residents in the violent slums of the city’s Kariobangi district. Made up of multiple ethnic groups, the Taliban is primarily concerned with protecting local residences and businesses. In contrast, the roots of the Mungiki sect date back to 1987, it is dominated by the one ethnic group (Gikuyu) and has political goals (Anderson 2002).

citizens in Rio (Huggins 2000b, 116).³¹ Extra-judicial killings, torture and violations of citizen rights by police generally receives complete impunity, which may be attributed in part to the so-called ‘war on crime’ which has fostered an ideology justifying repression and police violence (Huggins 1991; 2000b).

Vigilantes and popular militias gain and maintain legitimacy within the community by providing security and enforcing social norms. In Medellín, Colombia, popular militias “vigorously headed cleanliness campaigns in the *barrios*” marked by positive aspects such as cultural activities and encouragement for children and youth to “use their free time constructively” but also included “killing or threatening ‘deviants’, i.e. drug consumers, small-time rascals” and in some cases homosexuals and bullies (Sanín and Jaramillo 2004, 25).

Gangs

Gangs are perhaps the group of actors most commonly associated with urban violence; they are certainly one of the most visible (Winton 2004a; Rodgers 2006; Small Arms Survey 2007; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Rodgers (2009, 954) describes the perception of youth gangs as “paradigmatic forms of urban violence in societies around the world”. For example, in El Salvador, when there is high concentration of urban gangs, gang-on-gang violence accounts for almost two-thirds of armed violence in the capital city (Small Arms Survey 2007, 171). Gangs can be defined as “social actors whose identities are formed by ethnic, racial, and/or religious oppression, participation in the underground economy, and constructions of both masculinity and femininity” (Hagedorn 2007, 6). Similarly, Jensen (2008, 72) suggests that what “sets gangs apart from other sub-cultural groups is their propensity for violence and their participation in different forms of criminal activity”. Youth gangs often engage in criminal armed groups and illicit activities, such as drug dealing, theft and petty crime (Winton 2004b; Hagedorn 2006; Jütersonke et al. 2009).³²

Gangs can be found in cities all over the world, but the vast majority of gangs and gang members are from Latin America, Africa and Asia – areas which have experienced astronomical

³¹ Huggins (2000b) acknowledges that sources on police homicides can often be unreliable due to cover-ups and lack of recordings, however she draws her analysis of police violence from police statistics, forensic evidence and examination of homicide records.

³² Pantino and Velasco (2004, 7) note that in the Phillipines gangs are involved in electoral violence since securing public office “allows warlord politicians to profit from or protect their interests in unlawful activities such as illegal gambling, drug trading, logging, smuggling, etc.” This is an example of the diversity of types of violence with which gangs are associated, and their connection to various illegal activities.

rates of urbanization in the last half-century (Hagedorn 2006). In some cities, gangs become “institutionalized” in that they persist over decades despite changes in leadership, have complex organizational structures which allot roles for various members, fulfil certain community needs (employment, security, services) and develop distinct subcultures (Hagedorn 2006, 190). It is these types of institutionalized gangs which are of particular interest to this research on OUV.

While gangs are undeniably a modern presence, they are not a modern phenomenon. Hagedorn (2006, 2007) points out that various manifestations of gangs have existed around the world as early as the eighteenth and nineteenth century, such as Triads in China or the mafia in Sicily. And while *maras* (transnational gangs) in Central America are a modern phenomenon which followed the deportation of gang members and convicts from the United States, *pandillas* (localized gangs) have historically been a feature of Central American societies and often formed as vigilante-style neighbourhood self-defence groups (Jütersonke et al. 2009; Rodgers 2009).³³

Yet while gangs may not be a modern phenomenon, they are generally an urban one – something which is attributed to the idea that a critical demographic mass of youth is essential for their emergence (Rodgers 2006; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Gangs are most likely to be active in poor urban areas (WHO 2002; Dowdney 2004; Jütersonke et al. 2009; Rodgers 2009; Samara 2010a) and evidence suggests that anywhere from three to 15 percent of youths within gang-affected communities will join up (Vigil 2003; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Those who join gangs are typically youth between the ages of 13 and 25,³⁴ poor, unemployed and not in school (Vigil 2003; Rodgers 2006; Jütersonke et al. 2009). The vast majority of gang members are male, although there are females who join male-dominated gangs and even some all-female gangs (McIlwaine and Moser 2001; WHO 2002; Vigil 2003; Hume 2004; Jütersonke et al. 2009; Rodgers 2009). Young women usually become involved in gangs as girlfriends or in supportive functions such as carrying drugs or weapons (McIlwaine and Moser 2001; Dowdney 2003).

³³The report, *Maras ye pandillas: comunidad y policía en Centroamérica* is a detailed research publication on gangs in Central America, drawing on research conducted through quantitative questionnaires and interviews with over 3,400 current and former gang members, youth at risk and community members. As a non-English publication the document is outside of my scope of research but I still would like to acknowledge it as a valuable resource for researchers interested in gangs in Central America.

³⁴ Age ranges identified with gangs vary among researchers. For example, the WHO (2002, 36) suggests that gang members range in age from 7 to 35 but are typically in their teens or early twenties. Vigil (2003, 227) suggests that most aggressive gang behaviour is committed by male youths between the ages of 14 and 18. Jütersonke et al. (2009, 378) note the age range of Guatemalan and Honduran gang members is 12-30. Rodgers (2009, 954) notes that in Nicaragua gangs generally consist of “variably sized groups of generally male youths between seven and twenty-two years old”.

Dowdney (2004, 84) reports that a female gang member in Jamaica told researchers “being in a gang offered security”. However, Hume (2004) reports on horrific, sexualized initiation rites for female gang members in El Salvador which include such things as gang rape by 13 gang members. Descriptions of such brutality indicate that gang involvement for women is both attractive (women are willing to submit to brutal initiation rites in order to gain admittance) and victimizing, which suggests that for many young women joining a gang is an act of desperation.

Certain structural or broad factors are associated with the formation of gangs. Winton (2004a, 175) notes that gangs are prevalent in contexts where violence is normalized and culturally acceptable. Youth gangs are also commonly viewed in relation to social exclusion and inequality – or what Vigil (2003) calls multiple marginality - such that gangs provide prospects of economic and social mobility when other alternatives are lacking (WHO 2002; Vigil 2003; Winton 2004a; Jütersonke et al. 2009). Jütersonke et al. (2009) also identify the pervasive *machismo* (macho) culture in Latin America as a contributing factor in the prevalence of gangs. Although some research identifies factors such as lack of family cohesion as a factor motivating youth to join gangs (Winton 2004a), other researchers suggest that this, as with “domestic abuse or psychological constitution” are not consistently significant (Jütersonke et al. 2009, 378).

Gangs exert territorial control through the use of violence by engaging, for instance, in fights with members of rival gangs and preventing access to their turf by these rivals (Winton 2004b; Rodgers 2006; Jensen 2008; Rodgers 2009). Winton (2004b, 86) notes that in the context of Guatemala, “it is territorial conflict that has the widest ramification in terms of the personal safety and mobility of both gang and non-gang members”. In referring to Nicaragua, Rodgers (2009, 963) notes that *pandillas* are “anarchically transforming large swathes of cities into quasi-war zones”. He describes how gang warfare was somewhat ritualized in that it had a sequence of escalation in violence – from use of fists to knives and broken bottles to mortars, guns and AK-47s. This ritualization served as a “mechanism for restraining both the intensity and scope of violence” (2009, 963). Such inter-gang violence leads to cycles of revenge killings which isolate communities from each other, fuel distrust and entrench spatial boundaries (Winton 2004a). It has also been found to spill over into domestic and interpersonal violence (Moser and Bronkhorst 1999).

Gangs will not only claim and control territory, they also exert forms of social control, both within their membership and in their communities (Winton 2004b; Rodgers 2006; Rodgers

2009). Winton (2004b, 86) notes that violence is used to “establish and enforce solidarity within the gang” such as through violent initiation rituals and threats of violence against members who wish to leave. Arias (2004, 1) notes that highly organized drug gangs “enforce order, provide social services, and adjudicate disputes” in Rio’s *favelas*. Dowdney (2004) gives an example of social control extending beyond gang membership in Kingston, Jamaica where local gangs will determine and execute punishment of community members accused of crimes such as rape and robbery. Gang rules are not usually written down or formalized, but are tacitly known within membership and in the broader community – such as the seemingly universal ban on talking to police or state authorities about gang activities (Dowdney 2004; Sanín and Jaramillo 2005). During field research in 1996-97 and 2002-03 in Managua, Nicaragua Rodgers (2009, 964) observed that gangs were embedded in their communities through the provision of “micro-regimes of order as well as communal forms of belonging to definite, albeit bounded, collective entities, in a wider context of chronic insecurity and exclusion”. It is important to note that the various types of social control are almost uniformly imposed through violence or the threat of violence (Goldstein 2003; Dowdney 2004; Winton 2004b; Rodgers 2006).

Paradoxically, while gangs erode social capital through their violence and social/territorial control, they can also provide community services – services which the absent state is failing to provide. It is through the provision of these services that gangs win support or at least tolerance from the local population. Dowdney (2004) gives examples of community support by gang members such as the construction of a small park in Kingston, Jamaica and financial support of youth sports teams in Cape Town. Similarly, Winton (2004a, 171) describes the activities of drug gangs in urban Brazil, whose presence

is made legitimate through a complex and, to some degree, mutually beneficial relationship: the drug faction is given anonymity and freedom to conduct business, and the community in return receives internal security and often a range of services such as money to pay for medical treatment, soup kitchens and day-care centres.

Similarly, Sanín and Jaramillo (2005, 25) describe how gangs in Medellín gained community support by conducting “illegal activities at night, social work by day”. However, Rodgers (2009, 969) notes that the socially-embedded nature of neighbourhood gangs changed with the infiltration of organized crime and drug-dealing. Following a field trip in 2007, he found that gangs no longer worked to protect or assist their communities but rather to secure the interests of

the local drug economies “through the imposition of localized regimes of terror based on fear, threats and widespread acts of arbitrary violence” (Rodgers 2009, 969).

Gangs are increasingly involved in localized drug trafficking and dealing, although they are seldom involved in the large-scale, transnational movement of narcotics which is generally the domain of drug cartels (Winton 2004a; Jütersonke et al. 2009). However, UN-HABITAT (2007, 64) argues that youth gangs tend to evolve as expressions of “resistance identities” against the forces which marginalize them, as opposed to organized crime groups which are primarily profit driven. Nevertheless, due to the involvement of gangs in illicit activities, there is significant overlap in the characteristics of gangs and those of the organized crime groups discussed below.

Organized crime

The term ‘organized crime’ was coined during American Prohibition (1920 – 1933) and in 2000 the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime adopted the definition of ‘organized criminal group’ as “a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences... in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2004, Article 2a). Armao (2003, 28) argues that organized crime, like other illicit non-state organizations studied in this research, should be understood as existing along a continuum from a group of individuals acting together to commit crimes like robberies, to crime syndicates with hierarchical roles, to the mafia which also uses politics to further their territorial and economic aims. Drug and human trafficking may provide economic opportunities for illegal actors and urban armed groups, leading to the strengthening of organized crime and the acceleration of the scale and scope of urban violence (Vanderschueren 1996; Esser 2004; Winton 2004a; Briceño-León 2005).

Several researchers have identified globalization as a facilitating factor in the growth of organized crime (i.e. Brennan-Galvin 2002; Dowdney 2004; Esser 2004; Aravena 2009; Manaut and Sánchez 2009). Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams (2009, 364) note that cities “are no longer simply municipal jurisdictions, but are nodes within global networks”, which facilitates the spread of international trafficking. Similarly, Brennan-Galvin (2002, 128) notes that organized crime in cities is characterized by such things as the trafficking of illegal contraband or produce, money laundering or illicit financial transactions, activities which extend beyond the urban boundaries and are often part of international networks. Within cities, organized crime is

often connected to other profitable illegal activities such as gambling, prostitution and extortion rackets.

While men and male youth are generally associated with organized crime and drug trafficking, McLennan et al. (2008) in research regarding drug trafficking in São Paulo found that girls had a similar rate of involvement as boys.³⁵ Criminal OAGs vary in structure and composition. Nigerian criminal OAGs tend to be “loosely structured, highly fluid and ever-changing” although many of the Lagos-based “crime barons” are “members of the elite or are government officials” who operate in “old-fashioned pyramid-based, hierarchical structure” (Brennan-Galvin 2002, 141). Winton (2004a) notes that demobilized ex-combatants in South Africa and Latin America have in some cases formed armed bands that become key actors in organized crime. The growth of the illegal drug trade is associated with growth in homicide rates in a given city since “the illegal drug trade is usually accompanied by violent disputes for market share among different networks of producers and distributors” (Brennan-Galvin 2002, 128). For example, in Ciudad Juarez, a Mexican city of 1.5 million on the American border, two of Mexico’s most powerful drug cartels are battling for control of the drug market and cross-border distribution. In 2008 and 2009 more than 4,200 people were killed in drug-related violence in 2008 and 2009 (Corcahdo 2010).³⁶

CONCLUSION – THE CATEGORY OF OUV

This preliminary study of literature on urban violence demonstrates the importance of a critical analysis of the urban violence generated by urban non-state OAGs. The above analysis considers the overlapping and complex structural factors, as well as the dynamics of individual identity and human agency. Given the complexity and highly heterogeneous nature of urban violence, as well as diverse geographic and socio-economic situations, cross-city or cross-regional generalizations about urban violence are difficult to make (Small Arms Survey 2007). Thus there is a “lack of understanding on the nature of the problem, and more particularly the characteristics and manifestations of armed violence, its causes and impacts on individual and collective well being, as well as human security” (UNDP-WHO 2005, 1). However, drawing

³⁵ McLennan et al. (2008) could not claim statistically significant statistics on girls (aged 12-17) involved in drug trafficking due to the small sample size, but their observations are still interesting and relevant to this research.

³⁶ In 2009, Ciudad Juarez had 173 drug-related killings for every 100,000 residents (Corchado 2010).

from the research identified above regarding urban violence and urban non-state OAGs, certain common characteristics and impacts can be identified, which together inform the category of OUV.

Regarding the characteristics

a) OUV is primarily characterized by the activities of urban non-state OAGs.

As detailed above, there are several over-lapping types of urban non-state OAGs which contribute to an environment of OUV in compounding ways. Their activities can be illicit (i.e. drug trafficking, crime, extortion, lynching) yet can also involve community support (i.e. social services, protection), but are generally marked by violence or the threat of violence. Their membership is typically aligned in a hierarchical organizational structural which has been institutionalized over time.

b) Non-state OAGs exert territorial and social control through the use and threat of violence.

Urban non-state OAGs exert social and territorial control, fostering divided cities and creating areas impenetrable to the state. Territorial control is often related to economic goals, such as controlling markets and illicit resources. Territorial disputes are typically violent, manifest in gang warfare and armed confrontations with police. The territories controlled by non-state OAGs are primarily poor and marginalized, such as *favelas*, slums and townships, with the exception of private security companies who are more active in elite areas.

Social control involves the enforcement of rules and norms which are typically tacit, partially enforced and unquestionable. In other words, communities under the control of non-state OAGs must obey a set of rules that are imposed upon them and for which there is no recourse or appeal. One of the most commonly enforced rules in controlled communities is the code of silence which prohibits residents from talking about the OAGs or their activities with outsiders and especially with police or other law enforcement bodies.

The use, scope and threat of violence used in territorial and social control is augmented by the proliferation of firearms.

c) Those primarily involved in urban non-state OAGs are young males.

As seen in the above analysis of the four categories of urban non-state OAGs, young men are not only the majority of victims and perpetrators in urban violence, they are also the most visible actors. One of the important and often mentioned characteristics of urban violence is its toll on male youths (Vanderschueren 1996; Huggins 2000b; Rolnik 2001; Caldeira 2002; Winton 2004a; Briceño-León 2005; McLennan et al. 2008; Jütersonke et al. 2009). For example, young males aged 15-34 are the primary actors and victims of urban violence (Vanderschueren 1996; Jütersonke et al. 2009); close to 30 percent of all homicide victims in Latin America are youth 10 to 19 years of age (Briceño-León 2005, 1636); and in Brazil, McLennan et al. (2008, 822) note that homicide is the most common cause of death of children one-month to 19-years of age, and caused by firearms in 93.2 percent of cases. Data from El Salvador indicates that a young man is ten times more likely to be murdered than a young woman (Winton 2004a) and in São Paulo, Brazil, the majority of homicide victims are young (70 percent between the ages of 18 and 25), male (97 percent) and black (62 percent) (Winton 2004a).

Regarding the impacts

a) Normalization of violence

In situations of OUV, violence tends to be normalized both within the membership of non-state OAGs and in the broader community. This can be seen in the propensity to use violence as a means to such things as resolving disputes, defining territory, upholding rules and maintaining social norms, as well as in the widespread perception that this use of violence is acceptable and justifiable. The normalization of violence is also fuelled by repressive and militaristic tactics of police and state security forces and increases the use of armed violence in conflicts between non-state OAGs and state forces.

Youth are especially susceptible to this normalization of violence and research has found that suffering direct acts of violence is a key motivator for youth joining armed groups – for protection and for revenge (Dowdney 2004).

b) High levels of crime and homicide

As previously noted, the most commonly cited indicators of urban violence are rates of homicide and crime. This research has shown that cities with proliferations of non-state OAGs have heightened levels of homicide. For example, cities with proliferations of gangs and other

non-state OAGS have very high homicide rates, such as Medellín, Colombia: 170 per 100,000; San Salvador, El Salvador: 139 per 100,000; Caracas, Venezuela: 133 per 100,000; Cape Town, South Africa: 60 per 100,000; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: 50 per 100,000 (Dowdney 2004; Briceño-León 2005; Small Arms Survey 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007).³⁷

In addition to homicide, OUV is manifest in high levels of crime such as assault, theft, extortion, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and also contributes to negative conditions for women, such as teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, prostitution, dependency and sexual violence (Moser and Bronkhorst 1999, 3).

c) Widespread fear

Fear is pervasive in communities facing high levels of crime and violence (Moser and Bronkhorst 1999; McIlwaine and Moser 2001; Bannister and Fyfe 2001; Muggah 2009). Violent Latin American cities have become “labyrinths of fear” according to Martín-Barbero (2002). Bannister and Fyfe (2001) note that fear of crime is more widespread than crime itself.³⁸ People are scared to leave their homes or stray from familiar territory. Rotker (2002, 13) suggests fear changes “the ways in which people relate to urban space, to other human beings, to the state, and to the very concept of citizenship”. Fear erodes social fabrics and community networks, “reducing the desire and willingness to participate in social encounters” (Bannister and Fyfe 2001, 808; see also Jütersonke et al. 2009). Fear is also “aggravated by impunity” when perpetrators of violence go unpunished – such as in Mexico where 97 percent of reported crimes go unpunished (Rotker 2002, 7).

Young women are especially affected by violence and fear of public spaces, making it difficult for them to leave home after dark, whether to attend education, employment or social events (Moser and Bronkhorst 1999; Amnesty International 2008). Interestingly, in surveys and studies, young men, the demographic most at risk of victimization, typically report being relatively fearless in comparison with older women who report being fearful, yet are actually less

³⁷ This list of homicide levels should not be read as a direct comparison since they are taken from different sources and at different dates within the last 10 years. However, they do provide an indication of the levels of homicide which are found in cities which experience a proliferation of non-state OAGs.

³⁸ *Urban Studies* produced an issue (2001 38.5-6) dedicated to urban fear. While I mention this publication as related to my thesis topic, it was not explored in depth since its articles focused on North American and European cities which are outside the scope of this study. However, it would likely be of value to readers interested in exploring the impacts of fear on such things as urban design, community relations and municipal politics.

II - Literature Review

likely to be victimized (Bannister and Fyfe 2001; Pain 2001). This illustrates that when considering the impacts of urban violence it is important to look beyond the statistics for homicide and crime since impacts such as fear extend far beyond those who have been directly victimized.

These characteristics and impacts together represent my understanding of the category of OUV. In the following two case studies I will examine two cities which have been identified as having high levels of violence and a proliferation of urban non-state OAGs. The intent is to see if the characteristics and impacts identified in this chapter will be found in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town.

Case study: Rio de Janeiro

Rio de Janeiro, the former capital of Brazil and the country's second largest metropolis, is a city renowned for its culture, music and festivals – especially the annual *Carnival* which attracts around 500,000 foreign visitors each year.³⁹ Yet it is also a city infamous for its high levels of armed violence and powerful networks of drug trafficking. Rio is a city of contrasts: abject poverty alongside extravagant wealth, and high levels of violence in a country which prides itself on cultural harmony and the promotion of human rights (Lovell 2000; Goldstein 2003; Neuwirth 2004; Sneed 2008; Amar 2009).

Rio has been selected as a case study for this research since there is a proliferation of urban non-state OAGs and high levels of violence (Koonings 1999; Arias 2004; Moser and McIlwaine 2004; DFAIT 2007; Small Arms Survey 2007).⁴⁰ Since the intent of my research is to develop the category of OUV through a focused analysis on its actors – namely non-state OAGs who exert territorial and social control in urban environments – this case study will focus on the actors, their characteristics and their impacts on urban environments. Through this analysis I will test the category of OUV, looking to see if the expectations developed in my literature review are born out in an analysis of the dynamics of the violence experienced in Rio.

This case study will begin with an overview of the background and context in which violence erupts in Rio, focusing in particular on *favelas*. These marginalized neighbourhoods disproportionately experience violence and are often controlled by non-state organized armed groups – namely by gangs of drug traffickers who act the roles of vigilantes, gangs and organized criminals. I will also touch upon the role of the police – even though they are a state institution – since they are very instrumental in generating Rio's urban violence and generally viewed with distrust by *favela* residents due to their violent, dangerous and abusive actions and their corrupt behaviour (Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Costa Vargas 2006).

³⁹ The Rio Carnival Guide. <http://www.rio-carnival.net/>

⁴⁰ My case-study research on Rio has focused on English-language peer-reviewed journal articles and books published after 1990. Other sources, such as French language publications, research papers and organization publications have been used where necessary to fill in knowledge gaps, but I do not claim to have conducted an exhaustive study on all material written about Rio, *favelas*, or drug trafficking.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Many of characteristics associated with urban violence in the previous literature review can be found in Rio. These include high income and social inequality, high class divisions, urban density, weak municipal service capacity, privatized space and small arms availability. Each of these factors, which can be seen as both drivers of instability and as characteristics of current manifestations of violence, could be explored in great depth yet can only be touched upon here. Much of the existing literature on Rio provides admirable detail about several of these issues (e.g. Pino 1997; Zaluar 2001b; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2004, 2006a) and it is not necessary to duplicate these studies here. That said, a brief description of the background and context of Rio's violence is necessary to situate this research.

Until 1960, Brazil was essentially a rural society with an economy based on agricultural exports (Lovell 2000). In the 1970s, "unprecedented levels of economic growth led to rapid industrialization, urbanization, rural-to-urban migration, and increased formal-sector employment" (Lovell 2000, 90). At the beginning of the 21st century, there were over 5,000 municipalities in Brazil (Riley et al. 2005). Each city has political, administrative and financial autonomy from the federal government and is responsible for local services including water, sanitation, urban cleaning, primary health, education, poverty alleviation, consumer rights, housing development and public lighting.⁴¹

Brazil, like many Latin American countries, has alternated between democratic and military rule. It was governed by a military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985, during which opposition movements were forcibly silenced. National security forces carried out widespread acts of repression including brutality, torture, murder and disappearances, including the execution of about 6,000 individuals (Huggins 2000b; Amar 2009). In the transition from military rule to democracy, Brazilian social activists, including women's groups and Afro-Brazilians, mobilized around issues such as racial and gender equality. In 1988 many of their demands were written into "one of the most advanced and sophisticated constitutions of world" (Goldstein 2003, 55). Yet while the constitution declares fundamental rights to include no subjection to torture as well as gender equality, everyday practice lags far behind the law (Lovell 2000; Goldstein 2003). For

⁴¹ "Among the three spheres of government (municipal, state and federal) in Brazil, municipalities have the most constitutional obligations and direct responsibilities for local matters, especially those concerning the supply of essential services and infrastructure" (Riley et al. 2005, 86).

example, in the first two decades of democratization (1985-2005), police in Brazil killed 40,000 people each year (Amar 2009, 515).⁴² Although there is a long-standing belief in Brazil that the country is a ‘racial democracy’ free from race-based violence and discrimination (Lovell 2000), much of the research on Rio documents racial and gender inequality, prejudice and discrimination (e.g. Lovell 2000; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2006a; Costa Vargas 2006).

Brazil’s transition from military to democratic rule was not marked by any significant amount of violence. Indeed, it is interesting that with regards to risk factors associated with urban violence, Brazil does not have a history of regional violence comparable to Colombia, Nicaragua or South Africa. However, Rio does have a history of drug trafficking which has always been associated with violence to some degree. Indeed, drug trafficking plays a tremendous role in the rates of crime and violence in Rio (Zaluar 2001b), meaning that analysis of local violence cannot be done without paying significant attention to drug gangs. Dowdney (2003) has identified several factors which contributed to an increase in the violence associated with drug trafficking, including increased violent and repressive policing during the dictatorship and the proliferation of small arms, both factors which have been more generally identified as being linked to outbreaks of urban violence (Moser and Winton 2002; Small Arms Survey 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007).

Da Silva (2000, 123) describes Rio as one of the most divided cities in the world and Mafra (2008, 70) as “a single city with two parts, one privileged and the other invisible and living in misery”.⁴³ Not only is the city divided on a north/south axis, with the southern zone being more affluent and the northern more marked by low income communities and polluting industries (Balán 2002), Coy and Pöhler (2002) attribute the increasing socio-spatial divisions Rio with the growing trend of gated communities (*condomínios fechados*) for middle- and upper-class residents. These “artificial islands” are designed to “block out the chaos of the metropolis” (Coy and Pöhler 2002, 360) and include not only residential units, but shopping malls, office complexes, schools, restaurants and recreational facilities, essentially allowing residents to almost completely isolate themselves from the rest of the city. Interestingly, the high demand of

⁴² This claim regarding the police killings is based upon statements from the former Brazilian national security secretary, Luiz Eduardo Soares in 2008.

⁴³ The notion of Rio as a divided city was widely disseminated in a book by Brazilian journalist Zuenir Ventura, *A Cidade Partida* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994). Due to a lack of proficiency in Portuguese I could not review it here, but it is worth noting as a significant reference.

gated residents for domestic servants, gardeners, cleaning personnel, etc. has led to the development of new *favelas* in the vicinity of gated communities, emphasizing not only the contrast of rich and poor, but also of their symbiotic relationship.⁴⁴ Caldeira (2000) argues that such segregation of wealthy and poor enclaves in Brazilian cities contributes to violence and intolerance. This is consistent with what was found in the previous literature review where high class and group divisions have been identified as risk factors for urban violence (Esser 2004; DFAIT 2007; UN-HABITAT 2007).

Although Koonings (1999, 227) argues that violence in Rio has “assumed the proportions of collective psychosis”, it is important to understand that violence is unequally distributed throughout the city. As demonstrated below, most violence takes place in the poorest neighbourhoods and *favelas*. Therefore, a key factor in assessments of urban violence in Rio is the characteristics and history of the *favelas*, many of which are controlled by drug trafficking organizations.

Rio’s *favelas*

Brazilian informal and illegal housing communities are known as *favelas*, translated sometimes as shantytowns (Goldstein 2003; Arias 2004; Rose 2005; Mafra 2008) or squatter settlements (Riley, Wakely and Lopes 2005; Neuwirth 2004). These communities, developed over generations through land invasions, are sites of intense violence and insecurity but also of vibrant expressions of arts, music, poetry and politics (Costa Vargas 2006; Sneed 2008). Due to characteristics such as precipitous topography⁴⁵ and high population densities as well as the active control of the drug trade, *favelas* are generally seen as dangerous and inhospitable.⁴⁶ This perception exacerbates the isolation and marginalization of *favelados* – *favela* residents. Indeed, *favelados* experience multiple forms of oppression and marginalization, such as civil and human

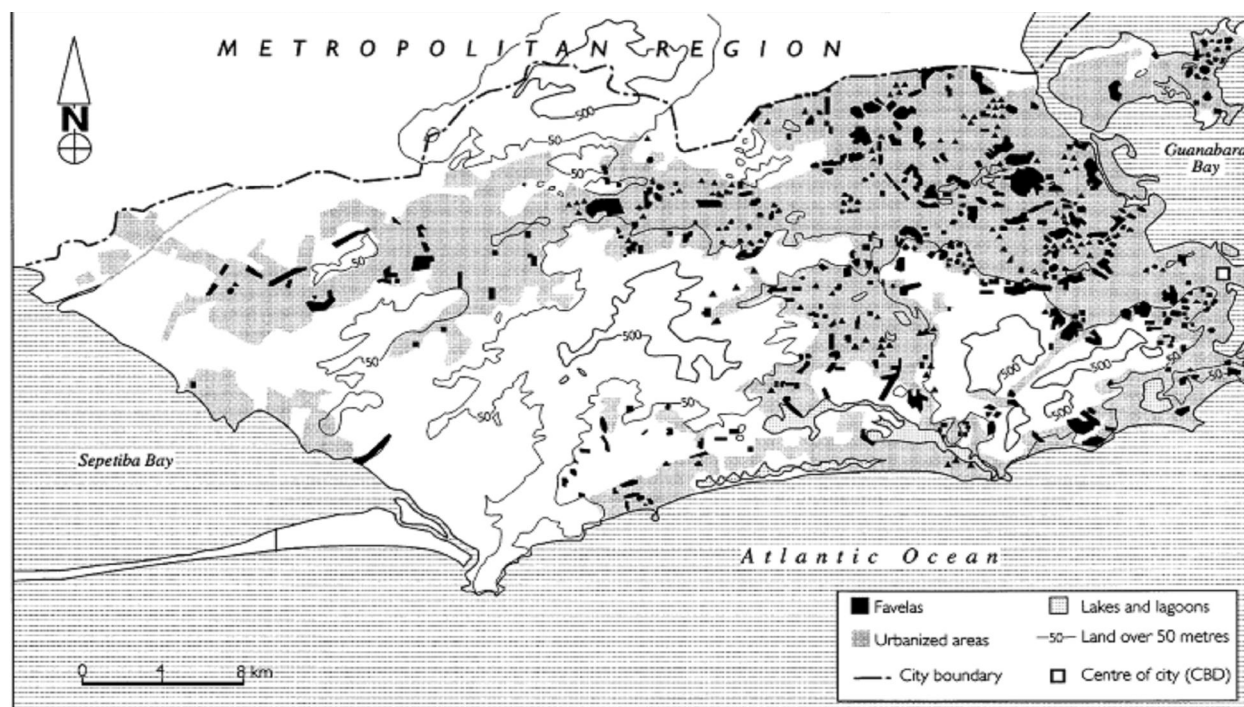
⁴⁴ Goldstein (2003) describes how apartments in upper-class neighbourhoods are designed for the circulation of two separate classes – masters and servants – with separate entrances and quarters for each class.

⁴⁵ Many *favelas* in Rio are built on the steep hills that jut up in and around the city – hills that had been considered “too steep, rocky or densely forested to be developed” (Neuwirth 2005, 31). It is this topography of Rio which allows the rich and poor to live in such close proximity, with poor *favelas* interspersed throughout the city.

⁴⁶ The study of *favelas* in Brazil, and particularly in Rio, has generated a significant body of literature (recent examples include Fernandes 1993, 1999; Oliveria 1996; Pino 1997; da Silva 2000; Zaluar 2000, 2001; Barke, Escasany and O’Hare 2001; O’Hare 2001; Riley et al. 2001; Goldstein 2003; Neuwirth 2005; Arias 2004, 2006), of which only a fraction can be addressed here.

Figure 3.1: The urbanized area of Rio showing location of *favelas*.

Source: Barke, Escasany and O'Hare 2001.



rights abuse from both police and drug gangs and a narrowing of public space accessible to them (Arias 2004; Penglase 2007).

The presence of *favelas* within and around the formal city of Rio dates back to the 1880s when migrants, former slaves and homeless veterans built informal communities on the steep hills rising up within Rio.⁴⁷ In 2003 there were 618 recognized *favelas* in the metropolitan region of Rio (Riley et al. 2005).⁴⁸ As can be seen in Figure 1.1, *favelas* are scattered throughout the city, mostly built on steep hills to the west and north of the city's wealthy commercial hub that is nestled against the eastern beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. They range in size from groupings of a

⁴⁷ Growth in Rio's *favelas* has often been related to the economy. Upturns such as the industrialization of the 1940s brought thousands of migrants to the city, and economic downturns in the 1980s drove many of the lower-middle class to seek tax-free shelter in the informal *favelas*. For more on the history of Rio *favelas*, see Pino 1997; Barke, Escasany and O'Hare 2001; Arias 2004; Arias 2006a; Costa Vargas 2006, Freire-Medeiros 2009. Saunders (2010) describes Rio's *favelas* as part of the "arrival city" phenomenon – places populated by people born in rural areas who are struggling to integrate in the formal city. He argues that Brazil's urban migration is largely complete but that the *favelados'* integration has been stalled due to the decades (1970s to 1990s) during which the government tried ignoring, isolating and removing the *favelas*, as well as to the arrival and growth of narco-trafficking.

⁴⁸ It is difficult to find consensus on the percentage of the Rio population living in *favelas*. Riley et al. (2005) suggest that in 2003, 20% of the city's population lived in *favelas*. Similarly, Dowdney (2003, 70) cites the Mayor's Office Municipal Institute of Planning in his calculation that there are between 750 and 800 *favelas*, containing 20% of the city's population. But Costa Vargas (2006) suggests that in 2000 the percentage of urban population living in *favelas* was 40.

few dozen people to communities of over 100,000. Though they often exist in close proximity to middle- and upper-class neighbourhoods, they have vastly inferior levels of access to municipal services such as water, sewage, waste disposal and public transit.

For much of the 20th century, official approaches to *favelas* were generally punitive. Governments repeatedly tried to demolish *favelas* and relocate *favelados* to public housing, often on the peripheries of the formal city (da Silva 2000; Barke, Escasany and O'Hare 2001; Costa Vargas 2006).⁴⁹ However, since the 1990s, official policy has turned toward the preservation and upgrading of *favelas* – and even promoting *favelas* as tourist destinations.⁵⁰ Some *favelas*, especially those close to the formal city and with terrain amenable to upgrades, have become increasingly integrated with the formal city, giving residents access to municipal services such as water, electricity, sewage and public transit. Others however, such as those constrained by inhospitable terrain, remain marginalized and poorly serviced. The result is that *favelas* have become much more socially and economically varied, to the extent that they no longer constitute a generic settlement form (Barke et al. 2001; Freire-Medeiros 2009). Unlike the early decades when *favelas* were predominantly populated by blacks and mulattos,⁵¹ today's communities tend to be heterogeneous, consisting of immigrants from various Brazilian states, descendents of slaves and long-time Rio residents. Status divisions tend to be around income and between property owners and renters (Riley et al., 2005).

However, despite official change in approaches to *favelas*, lack of trust characterizes relations between *favelados* and the government, due both to the constraints and control of drug trafficking groups and repeated repression and broken promises from the government (Riley et al, 2005). The state remains only marginally present in *favelas*, whether through the limited provision of social programs (schools, health centres, etc.), some infrastructure upgrading projects, or through the understaffed police posts and sporadic patrols (Dowdney 2003).

Arias (2006, 4) suggests that violent conflicts in Rio do not occur “because *favelas* are cut off from the state but, rather, because of the way the state is present in those communities and the

⁴⁹ Barke, Escasany and O'Hare (2001) estimate that during the 1970s, over 175,700 people from 62 *favelas* were forcibly moved to various types of public housing. For further details about *favela* removals, see Costa Vargas (2006).

⁵⁰ Rocinha, one of Rio's largest *favelas*, attracts an average of 3000 tourists each month. For further information and a discussion on *favela* tourism see Freire-Medeiros 2009.

⁵¹ Goldstein (2003) and Costa Vargas (2006) argue that urban design and patterns of settlement, especially the growth of *favelas*, is inextricably tied to race.

relationships state actors maintain with criminals who operate in them”. Many *favelas*, due to their hilly topography and narrow, nonlinear streets constitute territories easily controlled by drug gangs and protected from rivals and the police (Dowdney 2003; Costa Vargas 2006). Because of the activities of drug gangs in *favelas*, they are the primary sites of many manifestations of urban violence.

LITERATURE ON URBAN VIOLENCE IN RIO

This case study is based upon a body of literature made up of academic articles published in journals and books. The literature map below outlines the distribution of resources and groups articles into the thematic categories developed in Chapter Two. In this section I discuss the quality and types of research which my study has drawn from, identifying where there are gaps and weaknesses.

With reference to geographic distribution of research, it is important to note that comparison and assessment is particularly difficult. Some of the research addressing *favelas* is drawn from city-wide statistics or from unspecified sampling of *favelas* or *favela* informants (e.g. da Silva 2000; Riley et al. 2001; Zaluar 2001b), thus making it difficult to determine how many communities were studied to inform the literature informing this case study. In literature where a particular *favela* is researched

Figure 3.2 List of *favelas* identified as sites of research in reviewed literature

Baixada Fluminense (Leu 2004)
Barreira do Vasco (Leu 2004)
Cantagalo/ Pavão-Pavãozinho
(Oosterbaan 2005; Freeman 2008;
Mafra 2008)
Jacarezinho (Costa Vargas 2006)
Rocinha (Leeds, 1996; Freire-
Medeiros 2001; Leu 2004)
Vidigal (Freeman 2008)
Vigário Geral (Arias 2004; Leu 2004;
Arias 2006a; Arias 2006c; Freeman
2008)

through methods such as participant observation or interviews, names and locations of research are typically omitted or even intentionally distorted in order to protect informants (i.e. Arias 2004; Goldstein 2003; Penglase 2005; Arias 2006; Amnesty International 2008; Penglase 2008). As a case in point, Amnesty International (2008, 2) notes that women interviewed were “terrified of speaking out, only doing so on the understanding that the names of their community would not be made public”. Figure 3.1 notes which *favelas* are identified by their actual names, but this list should not be read as comprehensive of all *favelas* studied in the collective literature but rather as an indication of which *favelas* have been publicized through the media. For example, in two cases the authors analyzed *favelas* which had already come into public attention through the

promotion of the *favela* as tourist destinations (Freire-Medeiros 2001) or through a well-publicized attempt by *favela* residents to build their own ‘gated community’ (Costa Vargas 2006). In other cases *favelas* are mentioned by name in reference to particular, publicized acts of violence (i.e. Leeds 1996; Leu 2004; Penglase 2007; Freeman 2008).

Several researchers whose work has been drawn upon here conducted extensive ethnographic and participant observation research (Acioly 2001; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2004; Penglase 2005; Arias 2006a; Freeman 2008; Penglase 2008). Acioly (2001) reports on *favela* development projects from the perspective of one who was involved in the Favela Bairro program. He uses participant observation to reflect upon the characteristics and successes of urban development initiatives. Goldstein (2003) immersed herself in Rio’s *favelas* for several years in the 1990s. She offers a fascinating reflection on humour as resistance for *favela* residents struggling to survive an environment of oppressive, pervasive violence. Her work is credited with demonstrating “the links between the structural violence of an exploitative global and domestic economy and the intimate brutalities of family life, child rearing, and domestic rape (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2003, xv) and described as “an incredibly rich and well-researched ethnography that brings to life the suffering and hardship of a population” (Gay 2006, 239).

Arias (2004 and 2006a) draws upon over two years of participant observation and interviews (spread over different periods from 1996 to 2005) in Rio’s *favelas* to assess democracy, power and social networks among *favela* residents. He looks at how three different *favelas* have responded to violence and the domineering presence of drug gangs. However, of the three *favelas* he studied, he provides only the name of one – Vigário Geral but offers pseudonyms for the other two to protect informants’ confidentiality. Similarly, while presenting information gathered during extensive interviews, all names used in his paper are pseudonyms with the exception of one public figure.

Mafra (2008) reports on fieldwork and research conducted by a team of researchers from Rio’s state university who spent a year following day-to-day activities of the residents of two of Rio’s slums. While reporting on interviews conducted with *favela* residents, Mafra notes that researchers did not monitor the projects and programs which residents described or referred to, but simply reported what they were told. This admission illustrates the importance of developing

triangulation in a case study through an assessment of multiple sources and information compiled through various sources.

An example of a report which draws from a variety of sources is Dowdney's (2003) rich, detailed portrait of youth in Rio's drug gangs, informed by a variety of qualitative and quantitative sources. For example, he conducted semi-structured interviews with young members of drug gangs⁵² in three different (unidentified) *favela* communities, with youth in correctional facilities, with ex-drug gang members, with detainees, agents and social workers in the youth juvenile system, and with senior police officers. He also draws data from group interviews conducted with a total of 120 adult *favela* residents from 10 (unidentified) *favelas*, from 100 questionnaires conducted by youth trained through Viva Rio's educational programme and from a group interview held with a hospital surgical team regarding the types of firearm-related injuries and the age of patients treated. Quantitative statistics are drawn from the Brazilian Ministry of Health mortality, the Public Security Secretariat and Civil Police incidence reports. His book has been described as one of "the best examples of the local impacts of drug groups" on Brazil (Winton 2004a, 171) and is often cited in research on Rio and drug gangs (i.e. Penglase 2005; Arias 2006b; Arias and Rodrigues 2006; Small Arms Survey 2006; Penglase 2007).

Other types of research methods which inform this case study include research conducted by Szwarcwald et al. (1999) who gathered information on population, income and literacy rates from the state of Rio's 1991 census to assess income inequality and compared this data with homicide statistics obtained through the Brazilian Ministry of Health's Mortality Information System to assess the associations between income inequality indicators and homicide indicators. In reporting on police violence in Rio, Huggins (2000b) cites research drawn from autopsy reports. Zaluar (2001a) studied 364 drug-related trials in Rio in 1991 and conducted surveys with residents of both *favelas* and formal areas of the city in his article exploring Rio's violence and corruption. Leu (2004), Costa Vargas (2006) and Penglase (2007) examine media accounts of violence related to drug gangs in Rio. Costa Vargas supplements his examination with information gathered through ethnographic research. Leu and Penglase illustrate their papers with images taken from local newspapers and reflect on how the media contribute to the

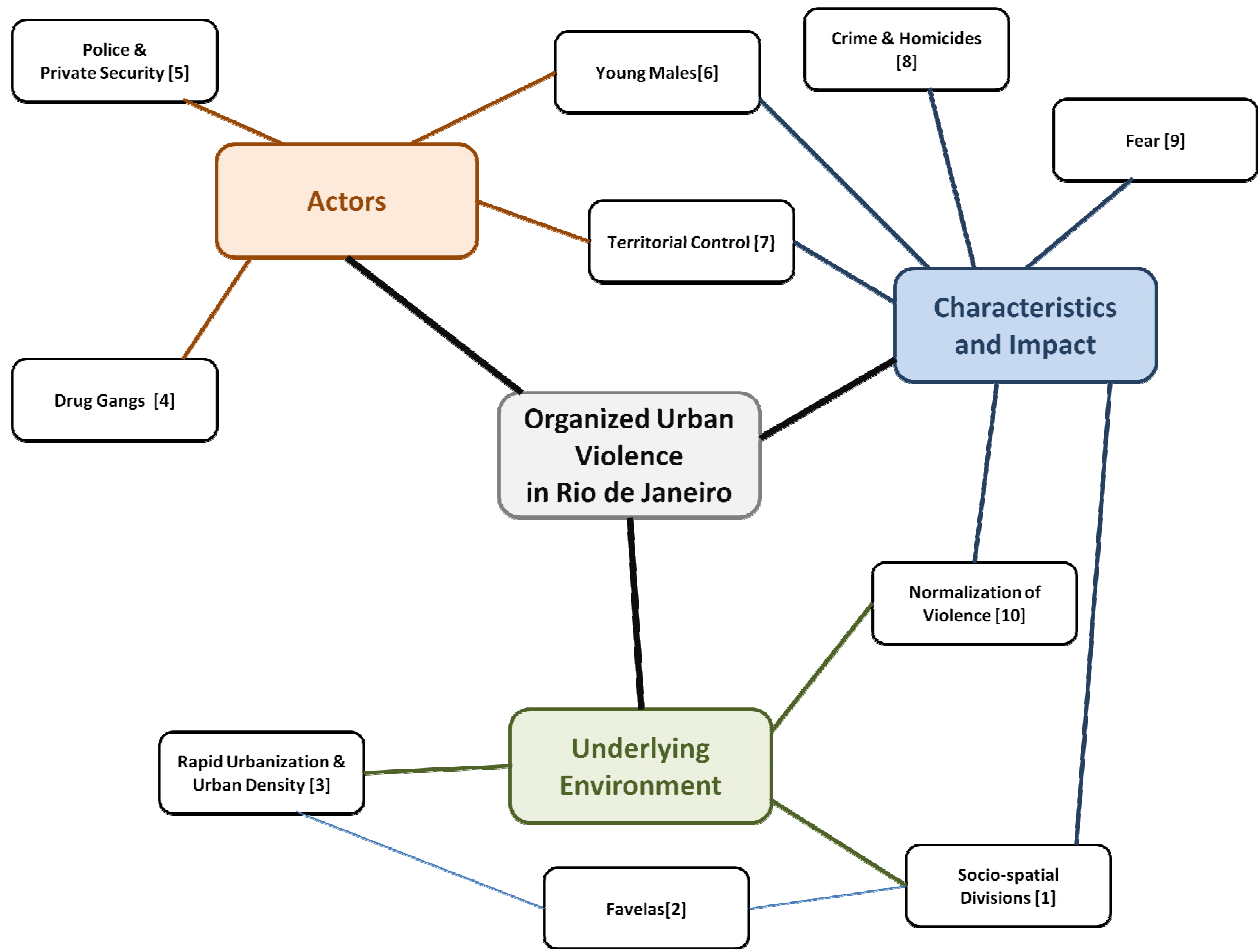
⁵² Dowdney (2003, 17) provides significant details on his interview subjects, such as the age range (12-23), average age (16 years and 5 months), race (55% black, 40% mixed race, 5% white) and the average age at which interviewees entered the drug trade (13 years and 1 month).

widespread fear in the city. Similarly, Oosterbaan (2005) offers an illustrated examination of the way the neo-Pentecostal Church Igreja Universal uses mass media (television and broadcast networks, radio, and print) to generate fear and promote representations of a divided, embattled city. Amnesty International (2008) conducted interviews with women in focus groups and in one-on-one settings.

This overview of the literature on Rio shows the depth and variety of methods which inform this case study of OUV. One of the weaknesses, mentioned above, is the difficulty knowing which *favelas* have been researched and which have been overlooked. In Figure 3.2, Rocinha is the one most studied, which is not surprising given that it is Rio's largest *favela* and that it is located right beside some of the city's most elite neighbourhoods (Freire-Medeiros 2001).⁵³ Not surprisingly, then, outbreaks of violence in Rocinha generate media attention and scholarly interest. Another weakness, also previously discussed, is the sensitivity of subjects such as homicide, drug trafficking and police violence, subjects made even harder to discuss given the very real imposition of the 'code of silence' by drug traffickers on *favela* residents. Yet despite these weaknesses, there is a significant body of research (illustrated below in Figure 3.3) which paints a detailed portrait of the characteristics and impacts of OUV in Rio.

⁵³ In the geographic map of Rio, Figure 3.1, Rochina is the largest *favela* (indicated by black) on the south shore.

Figure 3.3 Literature Map – OUV in Rio de Janeiro



Literature Map Legend

Socio-spatial Divisions [1]

Caldeira (2000)
da Silva (2000)
Coy & Pöhler (2002)

Favelas [2]

Fernandes (1993)
Arias (2004)
Oliveria (1996)
Pino (1997)
Fernandes (1999)
da Silva (2000)
Zaluar (2000)
Barke, Escasany and O'Hare (2001)
O'Hare (2001)

Rapid Urbanization & Urban Density [3]

Riley et al. (2001)
Zaluar (2001a & 2001b)
Dowdney (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Arias (2004)
Neuwirth (2005)
Rose (2005)
Riley et al. (2005)
Arias (2006a, 2006b, 2006c)
Costa Vargas (2006)

Rapid Urbanization & Urban Density [3]

Zaluar (2001a)
Coy & Pöhler (2002)

Drug Gangs [4]

Koonings (1999)
Zaluar (2001a & 2001b)
Dowdney (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Arias (2004)
Neuwirth (2005)
Penglase (2005)
Arias (2006a, 2006b, 2006c)
Arias & Rodrigues (2006)
Costa Vargas (2006)
Sneed (2007)
Amnesty International (2008)
Penglase (2008)

Police & Private Security [5]

Benevides & Ferreira (1991)
Huggins (1991)
Koonings (1999)
Huggins (2000b)
Zaluar (2000)
Caldeira (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Neuwirth (2005)
Macaulay (2007)
Rose (2005)
Amar (2009)

Young Males [6]

Szwarcwald et al. (1999)
Huggins (2000b)
Dowdney (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Costa Vargas (2006)
Small Arms Survey (2006)
UN-HABITAT (2007)
Amnesty International (2008)
Mafra (2008)

Territorial Control [7]

Dowdney (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Arias (2006c)
Penglase (2008)

Crime & Homicides [8]

Carneiro (2000)
Huggins (2000b)
Zaluar (2001b)
Dowdney (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Winton (2004a)
Penglase (2005)
Arias (2006a)
Costa Vargas (2006)
Small Arms Survey (2006)
UN-HABITAT (2007)
Amnesty International (2008)

Fear [9]

Caldeira & Holston (1999)
Koonings (1999)
Caldeira (2000)
Caldeira (2002)
Leu (2004)
Oosterbaan (2005)
Penglase (2005)
Arias (2006a)
Penglase (2007)
Amnesty International (2008)

Normalization of Violence [10]

Koonings (1999)
Dowdney (2002)
Dowdney (2003)
Goldstein (2003)
Arias (2006a)

ACTORS INVOLVED IN RIO'S URBAN VIOLENCE

As with the literature review, my analysis of the actors involved in urban violence in Rio focuses on organized, non-state groups – with additional discussion of the role of police in generating and perpetuating urban insecurity. As noted in the literature review, categories of non-state actors should be understood as overlapping and porous. This is especially true in Rio with regard to gangs and organized crime. The literature on violence, *favelas*, and drug trafficking in Rio uses a number of different terms to describe groups involved in the sale of drugs – including ‘drug gangs’ (Koonings 1999; Zaluar 2001b; Neuwirth 2005; Arias 2006a), ‘drug factions’ (Dowdney 2002; Dowdney 2003; Costa Vargas 2006), ‘criminal gangs’ (Amnesty International 2008) and ‘criminal factions’ (Sneed 2007). Goldstein (2003) refers to them as ‘gangs’, ‘bandits’ and ‘criminals’. I will be using the term ‘drug gangs’ in reference to the combined characteristics of organized criminals and gangs. Drug gangs in Rio also play the role of vigilantes, enforcing a ‘code’ of behaviour on the territories which they control, an

important aspect of their characteristics which will be discussed in more detail below (Dowdney 2003; Penglase 2005; Arias and Rodrigues 2006).

Another prominent overlap in types of actors involved in Rio's violence is that of private security companies and the police. There is a complex, clandestine security network in Rio which often overlaps with public security since many of those involved are off-duty or ex-policemen (Caldeira 2002; Goldstein 2003; Neuwirth 2005; Amar 2009).⁵⁴ For example, Koonings (1999, 228) alleges that "numerous members of the civil and military police force have been involved in criminal activities such as assassinations, kidnapping and drug trafficking". Indeed, there appears to be little distinction in the literature surveyed between the activities of police on-duty and off-duty, thus making it difficult if not impossible to construct a clear category of private security actors. Because of this overlap between public and private security, for the purposes of this analysis I will combine the analysis of private security and police activities.

While the previous literature review began the discussion of non-state actors with private security companies, I will begin this actor analysis with drug gangs since discussion of these groups dominates literature on Rio's violence and informs the bulk of this case study.

Drug Gangs

Drug trafficking in Rio dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, but the arrival of cocaine at the end of the 1970s dramatically changed Rio's drug trade from a loosely-structured, clandestine operation of mostly marijuana sales to a highly organized network of drug gangs with territorial, social and quasi-political control (Koonings 1999; Dowdney 2003; Arias 2004; Arias 2006a; Costa Vargas 2006; Penglase 2008). Drug gangs also became increasingly militarized in that they employ military-grade weaponry with which they engage in armed conflict, have military-style hierarchical roles, such as soldiers, foot patrollers, look-outs, and use technological surveillance devices for defence purposes, (Dowdney 2003; Costa Vargas 2006; Huguet 2008; Pinheiro 2008).⁵⁵ They "submit the city's urban *favela* communities to their political and economic interests via territorial and paramilitary domination" (Dowdney 2003, 26)

⁵⁴ The use of lethal force extends to private security forces. In 2001, in the state of São Paulo, of the 703 civilians killed by policemen, about 70% were killed by policemen on duty while the other 30% were killed by off-duty police, which suggests that they were working as private guards (Caldeira 2002, 246).

⁵⁵ Dowdney (2002 and 2003) describes the various positions within the hierarchy of Rio's drug trade.

and “enforce order, provide social services and adjudicate disputes” (Arias 2004, 1).⁵⁶ Thus despite their oppressive presence, in the absence of a reliable state presence, drug gangs are “tolerated and sometimes even venerated” by *favelados* who turn to them for protection from other hostile forces (such as rival groups and police), regulation of conflict and economic assistance (Goldstein 2003, 200). This paradox of violence and protection, fear and veneration is explored below.

Primary actors

In keeping with the characteristics of OUV assessed in the literature review, research on Rio shows that the majority of the people involved in Rio’s drug trade are “impoverished, poorly educated, nonwhite adolescents and young men” from Rio’s marginalized *favelas* (Arias 2006a, 1), usually between the ages of 10 and 25 (Costa Vargas 2006). Dowdney (2003, 51) estimates that between 5,000 and 6,000 drug workers in Rio are under the age of 18 – the vast majority of whom are armed. Some are as young as five (Amnesty International 2008). Since the establishment of organized, militarized drug gangs in Rio, the nature of children and adolescent involvement has changed. For many youth, drug trafficking seems to “offer an alternative to backbreaking manual labor, at the same time promising a decent wage and offering instant economic improvement” (Goldstein 2003, 145). Although youth have always been involved in trafficking, now these youth are armed, receive wages and assume positions formerly held by older traffickers – sometimes due to imprisonment or death of adult members (Dowdney 2003). Children growing up in *favelas* are constantly exposed to drug trafficking and may begin to hang around with traffickers and take on small tasks such as running errands from as early as the age of eight (Dowdney 2003).⁵⁷

While young males dominate the actors involved in Rio’s drug gangs, field research conducted by Zaluar (2001b) showed that dealers can also be women (e.g. manicurists,

⁵⁶ Dowdney (2003) describes the system through which drug factions control *favelas* as one of forced reciprocity using the double tactic of supportive coercion and repressive, punitive violence. This is accepted by the community due to lack of viable alternatives.

⁵⁷ Goldstein (2003) notes that despite their young age, children are not exempt from the violent punishments meted out by local factions. She gives an example of a group of boys who were shot in the knuckles for stealing too close to the *favela*.

prostitutes, or shop attendants)⁵⁸ and adults working in the service sector (e.g. street vendors, taxi drivers, doormen, tradesmen or shopkeepers). Women may be used to transport drugs or weapons since they cannot be legally searched by male police and “are also viewed as disposable” (Amnesty International 2008, 32). They may also get involved in the drug trade in order to be able to work from home and look after their children.

There seems to be general agreement among researchers that drug factions do not forcibly recruit members (Zaluar 2001b; Dowdney 2003). However, the choices of those who do join should be seen within the context of limited options and of which drug gangs wield significant social and economic clout within the community. Goldstein (2003) points out that there are very few high-status males of black or mixed-race heritage in Brazil who have risen out of the lower classes to achieve success. Thus the only role model of ‘success’ for many poor *favela* youth is the drug lord. Drug factions offer a “place of belonging and a sense of identity that low-paying (and sometimes humiliating) service sector employment does not provide” (Goldstein 2003, 179). Additionally, many poor young men “have been in a state of vulnerability as a consequence of crisis within families, estrangement between adults and youths, an inefficient school system, a lack of professional training, and insufficient employment possibilities” (Zaluar 2001b, 369). The Small Arms Survey (2006) suggests additional motives for joining, such as the authority to acquire and openly display small arms, recognized symbols of power and a means to gain respect. Additionally, research with gang members cited by Dowdney (2003) and the Small Arms Survey (2006) notes the desire of young men to impress girls and women and get girlfriends. Obviously, youth (both males and females) in *favelas* are influenced by, and perpetrate, the gender norms which value violent, *machismo* attitudes. Zaluar (2001b, 373) notes a “masculinity ethos” which enforces concepts such as “warrior values, male pride and turf defence” and is connected to *baile funk*,⁵⁹ fighting and gang membership.

⁵⁸ The percentage of women incarcerated on drug-related charges has risen from 36 percent of detainees in 1988 to 56 percent in 2000 (Amnesty International 2008, 32). This may reflect not only increasing numbers of women involved in drug trafficking, but also judicial changes which no longer distinguish between carrying and trafficking drugs, meaning that women being used as ‘mules’ are given sentences comparable to drug traffickers. Amnesty International’s 2008 report documents the inhumane conditions under which these women are imprisoned. The source which Amnesty International cites for these prisons statistics is a Portuguese publication: *Prisioneiras: vida e violência atrás das grades* (2002) in which the actual numbers were not given, simply the percentages. The study cited by both these sources is a penitentiary census that I am not able to obtain.

⁵⁹ *Baile funk* is a party where funk music is played, usually held within a *favela*. Drug traffickers may sponsor a party as a means of stimulating drug sales (Dowdney 2002).

Zaluar (2001b) mentions that drug gangs recruit ‘soldiers’ from those who were trained in the Brazilian Army. Even if they don’t formally join the faction, these youth are ‘invited’ to help train new soldiers and confront enemies (police or rival factions) who invade the *favela*. Youth generally accept these ‘invitations’ “because they feel they should collaborate with the gang that controls the neighbourhood where they live” (Zaluar 2001b, 376). Additionally, a refusal can result in moral or physical problems, such as loss of respect, expulsion from the *favela* or even execution.

Social and territorial control

Favelas are ideal distribution bases for drug gangs due to their geographic, social and economic marginalization described above. They also typically contain long-established marijuana-oriented sales points (*bocas de fumo*), to which cocaine distribution was easily added. In the 1980s, drug gangs began organizing themselves in *favelas* and consolidating into what is now three large groups of drug traffickers (*traficantes*): the *Comando Vermelho*, *Terceiro Comando*, and *Amigos dos Amigos* (Dowdney 2003; Oosterbaan 2005; Arias 2006a). In order to secure their territory and drug markets, these drug gangs “threaten possible competitors, violently coerce debtors, make fragile agreements with the policemen who extort them, and intimidate witnesses” (Zaluar 2001b, 375). To varying degrees, they currently exert territorial and social control in most of Rio’s *favelas*, which accounts for more than 1 million people and 20 percent of the urban population (Dowdney 2003, 70).

Each drug gang marks its territory (turf) with graffiti, patrols it with open arms and uses weapons to defend it from police and from rival gangs. They also control the mobility of residents – for example, in a survey conducted with *favela* youth, Dowdney (2003, 178) found that over 90 percent of those surveyed said they were unable to visit ‘rival’ *favela* communities. Similarly, Amnesty International (2008, 58) found that women in Rio were unable to visit health centres located in neighbouring communities if these communities were controlled by rival drug gangs since “they would be killed [by rival gangs] if they were seen to go there”.

Since the 1990s there have been increased territorial disputes between drug gangs, typically characterized by increased militarization as seen in the use of war grade weapons⁶⁰ and technical

⁶⁰ Drug traffickers are increasingly using high-powered firearms, such as Kalashnikov AK-47s and hand grenades (Dowdney 2003).

surveillance devices such as surveillance cameras (Dowdney 2003). The growing power and violence of drug gangs has sparked violent and repressive policing strategies, amplifying the human security risks to Rio residents, particularly those living in *favelas*. Yet although the *favelas* are the loci of most of the drug activity and of confrontations with police, it should be remembered that the drug trade is dependent upon middle- and upper-class drug consumption, both within Brazil and abroad. Rio's drug gangs operate on a massive scale, moving an estimated \$15 million in drugs through the city each month (Neuwirth 2005) – only a small fraction of which remains in the *favela*.

Most of the drug gang members, especially the youth, are residents of the community in which they operate (Dowdney 2003).⁶¹ Drug gangs use their community roots and insider knowledge to build upon and/or supplant pre-existing structures of control used by political elite and local leaders (Dowdney 2003; Penglase 2005; Penglase 2008). Penglase (2005, 4) describes the three-pronged strategy by which drug gangs gained control of Rio's *favelas*: “the appropriation of pre-existing structures of patronage, their systematic repression of crime, and their imposition of a ‘code’ to govern relations between traffickers and the community”. Similarly, Riley et al. (2005,108) notes that drug gangs gain control of *favelas* by supplanting community leaders and by directly or indirectly controlling residents associations and other community based organizations, thereby undermining the ability of these organizations “to act as legitimate organizations that can campaign for the needs and rights of residents”. Dowdney (2003, 55-56) supports this by reporting that “between 1992 and 2001, 100 community leaders were assassinated by local drug traffickers and a further 100 were forcibly expelled from their *favelas*”.

In order to protect their criminal activities, drug gangs enforce the code or law of silence (*lei do silêncio*) within their communities – which essentially means that the community cannot publically discuss activities linked to drug gangs (Zaluar 2001a; Zaluar 2001b; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2006a; Arias and Rodrigues 2006).⁶² Residents are not allowed to talk to outsiders (especially the police) about activities of drug traffickers for fear of expulsion, violence

⁶¹ While most of the gang members are local, it should be noted that those at the highest levels of leadership, power and wealth are typically outside of the community, whether in the formal city or in prison (Dowdney 2003; Arias 2006b).

⁶² The ‘law of silence’ has made much research in *favelas* difficult to conduct, because of threats to the safety of researchers and of residents (e.g. Dowdney 2003; Arias 2006a). In literature on Rio's drug trade the majority of research informants are unnamed or fictionalized and research locations are disguised.

or death. Residents who are not involved in the drug trade are expected to keep their noses out of the business (Dowdney 2003). Since residents are not allowed to speak to the police, the code of silence protects traffickers from arrest and prosecution. At the same time, the code of silence also protects residents since there is a symbiotic relationship between drug gang members and non-involved residents – who may be family relations, intimate partners or neighbours of gang members.

Yet in addition to enforcing a code to protect their activities, drug gangs enforce strict behavioural codes in order to uphold a certain community order and to limit the need for police presence (Dowdney 2003; Penglase 2005; Arias and Rodrigues 2006).⁶³ For example, Goldstein (2003) notes that while drug gangs are known to commit robberies and assaults, there is usually harsh punishment for committing crimes in one's own community. Behavioural codes serve to legitimize the presence and authority of drug gangs since they are seen to mete out violence according to 'rules' as opposed to the seemingly arbitrary actions of police (Penglase 2005). Punishments, meted out at the discretion of the drug gang leadership can include expulsion, head shaving, beatings, being shot in the hand or foot, and death (Dowdney 2003). 'Crimes' deserving of punishment can include rape and domestic abuse, betrayal of a faction member, possessing a firearm without permission from the drug gang, an HIV-positive status,⁶⁴ conversation with a police officer or wearing the 'colours' of a rival gang (Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Amnesty International 2008). However, Arias and Rodrigues (2006, 54) insist that drug gangs do not uniformly enforce their behavioural codes; instead, they create a complex negotiation of order "with an eye to their political, social, and emotional relationships with residents", such that they are less likely to punish respected and politically connected residents. Similarly, Penglase (2005) notes that gang members will deliberately flout their own rules, such as by firing their guns at random or intimidating residents, to demonstrate their power to institute but remain above social norms. Through these strategies, drug gangs demonstrated their "ability to impose, or selectively withdraw, structures of 'order' and protection" (Penglase 2005, 4).

⁶³ Neuwirth (2005) interviews commercial business owners who claim it is safer to operate in *favelas* than in the formal city since drug factions strictly control crime.

⁶⁴ Health professionals face difficult decisions about whether to inform a person of their HIV status, knowing that such a diagnosis will likely mean exclusion from the community and possible violence or even murder (Amnesty International 2008).

Some research suggests that drug gangs, through enforced behavioural codes, discourage and punish violence against women (Dowdney 2003; Arias and Rodrigues 2006). Dowdney (2003) reports that drug traffickers enforce strict penalties for rape within their *favelas* – rapists are almost always executed and may also be tortured as a warning to others. Nonetheless, Amnesty International (2008) reports that drug traffickers perpetrate violence against women since their research found that drug traffickers are accused of raping, beating and abusing their wives and girlfriends.⁶⁵ Researchers were also told that drug gang members “use women as personal possessions” or “as a bargaining tool” (Amnesty International 2008, 28).⁶⁶ Similarly, Penglase (2005) notes that while drug gangs claim to respect local women, local girls and their families risk danger if they turn down the advances of local gang members. This demonstrates that, as with the other behavioural codes, drug gangs may enforce yet personally flout codes of conduct.

Goldstein (2003) discusses the double standard for fidelity common in *favelas*, especially in drug gangs. Women are expected to be monogamous (and can be violently punished for infidelity) while men are expected to have multiple, simultaneous relationships. Dowdney (2002, 133) agrees that the status of drug traffickers is linked to having “a number of beautiful girlfriends”. Dehumanized images of women are common in the funk music culture often associated with drug trafficking groups; for example there are songs with titles such as ‘A little slap won’t hurt you’ (Amnesty International 2008). Nevertheless, females can also gain social and economic power through their association with drug traffickers.⁶⁷ They can be symbols of status for their boyfriends or husbands. This suggests that a more nuanced understanding of female agency is necessary to reveal both how drug gangs undermine the position of women (through physical abuse or by treating them as possessions) yet how females can also sustain drug gang hegemony through their willingness to prop up male traffickers while gaining social and economic power for themselves.

⁶⁵ Amnesty International (2008) also found that drug traffickers who abuse women will not only threaten the women, but also health care workers who try to help them. Health care professionals are therefore often unwilling to get involved in cases of women abused by drug traffickers.

⁶⁶ Amnesty International (2008, 29) gives an example of the wife of a drug traffickers who was ‘given’ to a politician to pay off a debt.

⁶⁷ A 17-year-old girl told researchers, “Women love criminals... You become gorgeous, powerful... You have standing” (Amnesty International 2008, 29). Drug traffickers can give poor girls social and economic benefits.

Despite the various ways in which drug gangs gain and exert territorial and social control, Dowdney (2002 and 2003) and Arias (2006a) argue that they are primarily economically motivated and their activities generally revolve around the sale of drugs⁶⁸ and the protection of drug territory. Dowdney (2002, 8) asserts that despite their military organization structures and armed activities, and their territorial/quasi-political control of geographical areas, “drug factions have no interest in taking the place of the state”.⁶⁹ Arias (2006a) echoes this assessment, arguing that Rio’s organized criminals are well tied into the Brazilian state system and insisting that drug factions are not interested in forming a revolutionary government. However, Zaluvar (2001b, 369) notes that most crimes in poor neighbourhoods are “related to personal and commercial conflicts involving people who were connected to drug dealing gangs”, which suggests that actions of gang members may also have personal as well as economic motivations. I agree that drug gangs as a group may be primarily economically (as opposed to politically) motivated. However, research shows that the motivations for each individual member in joining and staying in the gang are more complex than simple economics (Zaluvar 2001b; Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; Small Arms Survey 2006). As discussed above, membership in a gang offers marginalized youth a group identity, status, and power – all of which are social motivators influenced by the local culture, as well as by concepts such as masculinity, power, normalized violence. Additionally, as previously noted, most gang members are also residents of the controlled territory and therefore it is within the interests of members and of their community to protect themselves and their territory.

Filling gaps

Favela communities accept the presence of drug gangs not only because of their violent means of enforcing control and their community roots, but also due to lack of alternatives (Dowdney 2003). Arias (2004, 1) notes that in *favelas* it is the drug gangs, not the police or formal judicial system, who “enforce order, provide social services, and adjudicate disputes”. *Donos* from drug gangs continue the tradition of providing social control (through violence or

⁶⁸ Prior to the arrival of cocaine and the increased militarization of the drug trade, trafficking was done secretly and with limited disturbance to the community. But in *favelas*, over the last two decades both the carrying of weapons and the selling of drugs have moved into the open.

⁶⁹ To Dowdney, this lack of direct attack on the state means that Rio cannot be classified in a traditional sense as a war zone. State representatives are generally only attacked as a defensive measure, such as to protect drug retail activities or to defend important traffickers.

the threat of violence) and offering services (electricity, water, leisure activities, social services, etc) which the state fails or is unable to provide (Dowdney 2003; Arias 2004). Dowdney (2003, 54) suggests that the control of drug gangs is a “forced reciprocity” that is “as much ‘forced’ by the government’s failure to provide a serious and non-violent alternative to the provision of social order and public services, as by the ever present guns of the drug traffickers”. Similarly, Penglase (2005) uses the term ‘asymmetrical reciprocity’ to describe the strategy drug gangs use to consolidate power. This refers to the drug gangs’ use of offers (social order, protection, economic stimulation, etc.) and demands (i.e. codes of silence and of behaviour) to consolidate their power.

Drug gangs claim that they are protecting the weak, impoverished, working-class from the corruption and exploitation of the elite and the government (Penglase 2005). Yet they are exploiting *favelados* for their own economic interests and are often partners with the elite powers they claim to oppose (Arias 2006a). Arias (2006a) argues that without network connections between drug traffickers and government, the mostly marginalized, undereducated, and impoverished drug gangs could not hold the positions of power they currently enjoy. His research compiles evidence of how “criminals operating in Rio’s *favelas* depend on connections to state and civic actors to fend off efforts by other criminals and some law-abiding state actors to arrest, kill, or displace them from the communities where they manage the drug trade” (Arias 2006a, 14).⁷⁰

This ambiguous relationship between the state and drug gangs is reflected in the relationship between drug gangs and their local community. The presence of drug gangs in *favelas* generates a “permanent state of fear” for residents who all too often are caught between rival gangs, traffickers and police. This same fear and insecurity provides drug gangs with opportunities to provide alternative structures of security and order (Koonings 1999, 228). As Penglase (2008, 121) explains, drug gangs “have deep connections to local and regional economies, and also to local understandings of authority, power, and social organization and identity.” Thus even if drug traffickers capitalize on fear and force to gain power within *favelas*, they maintain their position through networks developed with political powers within and without the *favela*. It is also in

⁷⁰ Arias (2006a) used participant observation and interview research in three Rio *favelas* over a nine-year period (1996 – 2005) to study the relationship between drug gangs and the state. His research is described as “exhaustive” and “painstaking” (McCann 2007).

their interest to respect the community's needs in order to ensure that residents will be more likely to hide traffickers from police and adhere to the 'code of silence' (Dowdney 2003). To foster this community support, drug gangs consciously provide benefits to their local communities. They provide presents such as cash, food, water services, financial assistance for funerals, transportation, etc. (Dowdney 2003; Arias and Rodrigues 2006). They sponsor *baile funks* (dance parties), soup kitchens, day care centres, and other community and cultural events (Winton 2004a; Sneed 2008) – valuable services in communities generally neglected by the state. Neuwirth (2005) reports that many *favela* residents claim to feel safer in areas controlled by drug traffickers than in the formal city. Part of the trust between *favelados* and traffickers is generated because traffickers are from the community, they and their families are familiar to residents and thus more likely to be trusted than unknown policemen. Since traffickers are residents, it is often in their personal and familial interests to secure food or services for their community. Additionally, trafficking offers thousands of jobs to otherwise unemployed people and injects a large amount of cash into the community – although certainly not the lion's share of the profits.⁷¹

To say that *favela* communities are detrimentally affected by the activities of drug traffickers would be an understatement. Yet it would also be misleading since in many ways drug traffickers have been more successful than the government at maintaining a social contract with *favela* communities (Dowdney 2003). This symbiotic ambiguity is likely the most complex yet important characteristic of the role of drug traffickers in Rio. To assume that these groups are either entirely negative or completely altruistic would be misguided and naïve. Drug gangs gain and maintain power through a complex web of police and judicial corruption, intimidation, and gender relations. Additionally, they are both threatened and strengthened by violent police pursuit, yet another complex duality that will be explored in greater depth below.

Police and Private Security

In a situation of rampant violence, such as that which exists in Rio, the state is perceived as failing to provide social order and security (Leeds 1996). In such an environment, residents are forced to rely on themselves or on whatever protection they can mobilize through community networks (i.e. volunteer community patrols) or economic resources (i.e. private security) to attempt to secure their homes, communities and lifestyles. Since social order in Brazil has

⁷¹ Dowdney (2003) estimates that 60 – 70% of drug trafficking profits leave the *favela* community and go to the *dono* – the drug gang leader – who typically lives outside of the *favela*.

typically been maintained through violence or the threat of violence (Scheper-Hughes 1992; Caldeira 2002; Dowdney 2003; Leu 2004; Rose 2005), there is significant support in Brazil for violent, extrajudicial responses to crime and anti-social behaviour. Dating back to the 1950s and 1960s, vigilantes in Rio would “guarantee social order and carry out judgement in times of internal community dispute” (Dowdney 2003, 53). Benevides and Ferreira (1991) note that in the 1980s there was widespread support for lynchings and extrajudicial justice since the courts were seen as being ineffective. In the past two decades, as described above, drug gangs have increasingly been acting as enforcers of social order in *favelas* – albeit an order which serves their own interests – with a degree of begrudging support from communities which cannot rely on state security services.

Yet not only is there widespread support for extrajudicial responses to crime and violence, there is general support – especially from the middle and upper classes – for aggressive police actions which blur the line between legitimate law enforcement and vigilante-style ‘street justice’ (Benevides and Ferreira 1991; da Silva 2000; Caldeira 2002; Arias 2006a; Costa Vargas 2006). To make matters more complex, most of those involved in private security (guards for hire) are policemen or ex-policemen, generally using police-issued or smuggled weapons (Caldeira 2002).⁷² For example, between 2003 and 2007, several working-class areas of the city were taken over by vigilante militias who called themselves *Autodefesas Comunitárias* (Community Self-Defenders) “made up of rogue active and retired police officers” (Amar 2009, 516).⁷³

The cross-over between police and private security, in combination with the use of extrajudicial aggression and corruption within police ranks, makes evaluating private security in Rio difficult if not impossible without also looking at the role and actions of police, both on-duty and off. While drug trafficking is certainly the cause of much violence in Rio, especially in *favelas*, most *favelados* are at least as fearful of the police than as of the local drug gangs

⁷² Police take on additional risk when moonlighting as private security officers they are more likely to be killed while working privately than while on-duty (Caldeira 2002).

⁷³ An article in the *New York Times* examines the control of a militia, which included off-duty policemen, in Rio’s *Batan favela*. Militias promise residents security in exchange for payments and control of illegal businesses such as the illegal supply of water and gas, gambling, pirating and the drug trade. There are an estimated 60 to 100 such militias operating in Rio, wielding authority based on ties to the city’s police and politicians and coerced compliance from *favela* residents. Barrionuevo (2008). An article in the *Washington Post* alleges that in 2007 militias have taken control of nearly 100 of Rio’s *favelas* including one *favela* – Rio das Pedras – where they have been active since the late 1980s (Reel 2007). These two articles both suggest that the control of Rio’s *favelas* is shifting from the hands of drug gangs to private militias, however I have not been able to find any scholarly journals which back up these assertions.

(Dowdney 2003; Goldstein 2003; c.f. Zaluar 2000). Costa Vargas (2006, 56) insists that police abuse of *favelados* is “part of an ongoing historical pattern” related to oppression and marginalization of poor and black people. Dramatic, violent clashes between police and drug factions are the norm in Rio’s *favelas* and actually serve to reinforce criminal legitimacy since residents suffer at the hands of police and lose faith in the state (Arias 2004). Dowdney (2003, 89) suggests that the behaviour of police in *favela* communities “stimulates equally violent behaviour” and creates a “feeling amongst *favela* residents of effective abandonment by the state”.

Amar (2009, 515) notes that police kill about 1,500 people in Rio each year. Police operations in *favela* communities are heavily militarized and typically follow a repressive policy of ‘invasion’ and ‘occupation’ (Dowdney 2003; Costa Vargas 2006; Penglase 2007; Amnesty International 2008).⁷⁴ Invasions are carried out as a military operation in which heavily armed police use conventional tools of war, such as armoured personnel carriers of the same type used in the war in Iraq, and machine guns to secure and occupy *favela* territory (Dowdney 2003). Similarly, Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams (2009, 363) note that the “use of military-style weaponry in the *favelas* is blurring the lines between crime and war”. Occupation of a *favela* community by police officers occurs if there is a civil disturbance within a community, or a particularly violent conflict between drug factions. An occupation may last a few hours or a few days, but will be followed by a complete withdrawal, leaving behind a ‘security vacuum’ that is filled by local drug gangs (DFAIT 2007). Such behaviour strengthens the power of drug gangs since it fuels distrust and undermines portrayals of police as legitimate protectors of social order. Distrust is also fueled by the control of drug gangs who forbid residents from speaking to police officers. Additionally, the majority of *favelas* have limited roads suitable for police patrol vehicles, further limiting the possibilities of police presence in most communities.

Rose (2005, 231) suggests that since colonial times, elite security in Brazil “was maintained through the selective use of overt violence” and traces arbitrary police violence back to the 1800s. Police violence and aggressive behaviour includes forced entry into homes, abuse, frame-ups for drug possession, as well as shooting, injuring and killing ‘innocent’ residents (Zaluar

⁷⁴ A recent example of police occupation of a *favela* occurred in November 2010 when as many as 800 military police invaded and occupied the Rio *favela* of Vila Cruzeiro, killing at least 25 people and injuring 3 police officers (CBC 2010).

2000; Dowdney 2003).⁷⁵ Indeed, one of the major complaints against the police force is their extrajudicial killings or killings with impunity. Although Brazilian law does not have a death penalty, people “have always known that informal, on-the-spot death sentencing and execution are constitutive aspects of the role of the police – aspects that are at least tacitly sanctioned by society at large” (Costa Vargas 2006, 68). Caldeira (2002, 236) insists that the most “dramatic indication of the failure to control police violence is the shockingly high number of civilians who continue to be killed by the Brazilian police”. For example, between January 1993 and July 1996, police killed 1,194 civilians in the city of Rio (Penglase 2008, 120). More recently, between January and August 2003, police in the city of Rio killed 900 people, 75 per cent of whom were in *favelas* (Costa Vargas 2006, 56). For their part, the police portray themselves as skilled professionals who must use violence to vanquish an enemy in the “militarized war against crime” (Huggins 2000b, 118). The citizen deaths which result from this war on crime are simply the “inevitable outcome of police self-defense against ‘dangerous criminals’” (Huggins 2000b, 118). However, research shows that 65 percent of 942 victims of police homicides were shot from behind (over half with four or more bullet wounds), suggesting they had been hit while fleeing (Huggins 2000b; Caldeira 2002; Rose 2005).⁷⁶ Additionally, most victims of police violence are in the *favelas* (six times more than in formal areas of the city) and yet in the non-slum areas one Rio police officer is killed for every 35 civilians killed by lethal police force, as opposed to one officer for every 75 civilian killings in the *favelas* (Huggins 2000b, 117).⁷⁷ Additionally, research by the Rio Institute for Religious Studies found that up to one-quarter of killings by police of civilians were “execution-style deaths: after immobilizing the victim, police killed the person at point-blank range” (Huggins 2000b, 117). Such data calls into question the threat which police claim their enemy poses, and their justification for lethal force.

Rose (2005) demonstrates how deeply entrenched police impunity is by giving multiple examples of police officers who are accused and even found guilty of extra-judicial killings, yet receive no or minimal sentences. One example is a police officer accused of killing some 200

⁷⁵ Amnesty International (2008) documents an occupation in 2006 by Military Police of a group of *favelas* in the north of Rio, reporting abuses such as assaults on residents, property damage and verbal and sexual abuse toward women.

⁷⁶ Rose (2005) offers an interesting analysis of extrajudicial killings done by police in Rio and São Paulo. His data is additionally valuable since it is disaggregated (where possible) by sex, race, age, occupation and alleged offenses.

⁷⁷ Huggins (2000b) is citing research compiled by Ignacio Cano, 1997, *The Use of Lethal Force by Police in Rio de Janeiro. Policing in Democratic Societies* 6.1. Cano conducted his research by studying autopsy reports in Rio in the mid-nineties. I could not access this original source.

suspects, who in November 1991 was elected to the post of state legislator for Rio de Janeiro with campaign posters of “Rio with Security” (Rose 2005, 250-251). Additionally, a growing trend is that police will not make arrests while on duty, but will return in their off hours in a death squad – a pointed illustration of the blurred line between police and vigilante action (Goldstein 2003). As another example of this blurred distinction, revenge killings – conducted by police in retaliation for the death of a fellow officer – are often carried out when police are off duty and even disguised (Goldstein 2003). One instance of revenge killing occurred in 1993 in a Rio *favela* when a death squad and police forces entered a *favela* and gunned down 21 residents in revenge for the death of four police officers (Koonings 1999; Rose 2005).

Another key complaint about the state security forces is corruption. Especially in *favelas*, police are viewed as corrupt and abusive (Dowdney 2002; Goldstein 2003, Penglase 2007). Caldeira (2002, 249) argues that “the two main characters of the universe of crime – the criminal and the policeman – are not on opposite sides, but rather share many characteristics”. Similarly, Koonings (1999, 227) suggests that

the most unsettling aspect of the problems of crime and insecurity is not just the apparent incapacity of the state to guarantee the safety of its citizens... but the active compliance of a large number of law-enforcement agents (maybe even entire units) with everyday wanton violence related to organized crime.

Yet despite a widespread recognition of the problem of police corruption, even at judicial and political levels, Penglase (2007) notes how officers are commonly described in the press as being ‘infected’ by drug trafficking, thus removing their agency and focusing the blame on drug gangs.

Police corruption includes bribery by drug traffickers, sales of drugs and firearms to drug traffickers and kidnapping of traffickers for ransom (Dowdney 2003).⁷⁸ Those in the lowest positions of drug trafficking, such as mules or petty dealers, are often unable to afford to pay the required bribes, so police will arrest these small dealers to dispel suspicion of corruption, even while extorting more senior (and wealthier) drug traffickers (Zaluar 2000). Zaluar (2000) gives examples in which a seizure of 1,860 kilos of cocaine was considered ‘possession and use’ while a seizure of 2 grams led to a ‘trafficking’ charge. Police corruption also thus results in small and modest dealers being sent to prison while high-level traffickers remain free. It is apparent that the

⁷⁸ Ransom for higher placed drug traffickers will usually come from the trafficker’s faction. However, police are also known to kidnap faction members and sell them to rival factions who torture them for information or kill them, a practice known as ‘head selling’ (Zaluar 2000; Dowdney 2003).

ability of drug gangs to pay large bribes and ransoms is hardly an incentive for police to eradicate the drug trade; corrupt police are able to make a lot of money from drug gangs. Amar (2009, 516) notes that vigilante militias of active and retired police officers either routed drug traffickers or joined forces with them “to establish absolute, extortive control over the areas”. Yet it should also be noted that there are limited police posts in *favelas* and those which exist tend to be under-resourced and isolated. Police officers stationed in these posts may be placed in the position of negotiating with drug gangs for their own safety (Dowdney 2003).

While police and judicial forces in Brazil may lack economic resources, resulting in their being underequipped, poorly paid and vulnerable to corruption (Dowdney 2003), they maintain a significant resource in the support from the upper-classes for their repressive tactics. The most common political response to violence in Rio is for a stronger and more-repressive police force (Arias 2006a). However, repression fails in part due to structural shortcomings in the justice system, such as the low number of magistrates and courts per inhabitants (Zaluar 2000). Caldeira (2002, 236) notes that “popular support for a police that kills is certainly one of the main elements associated with the continuation of police violence and a major obstacle in reforming it”. Goldstein (2003) echoes this in her discussion of street children and the growing perception among middle and upper-classes that these youth are ‘bandits’. The upper classes give their tacit or outright support to urban ‘death squads’ (often made up of off-duty police) who ‘clean up the streets’. Rose (2005) refers to an uncovered police strategy for dealing with beggars. The *Delegacia de Mendicancia* (Department of Mendicancy) had a standard policy of robbing beggars taken into custody then throwing them into death cells where they were tortured and/or killed. Later they would be driven to specific bridges in the city and tossed over the railing, often with feet and hands bound or with stones tied around their necks.

Much of what has been described above takes place in *favelas*. Indeed, police violence is minimal in the richest areas of Rio (Zaluar 2000). It is in the *favelas* that police corruption and abuse is most apparent. It is therefore not surprising that it is in the *favelas* that drug gangs have been able to establish and maintain their position as enforcers of social order and ‘protectors’ of the community. This also shows that the presence and activities of drug gangs cannot be fully understood without looking at the role of the state – in their passive neglect and in their active oppression through corrupt, abusive and violent police. As the above research shows, drug gangs

and police in Rio are intimately connected as antagonists and conspirators and it is the most vulnerable citizens who pay the price for this unholy alliance.

The entrenched corruption, impunity and violence within the police force and state officials is a huge challenge to those seeking to address urban violence in Rio. Both Zaluar (2000) and Arias (2006a) argue that key to understanding the characteristics of violence in Rio is a recognition of the involvement of police officers and political figures in mutually beneficial networks of crime. But despite official calls for reform and repression of crime, there is little motivation for police to change. They have the support of the upper-classes for their vigilante activities. They have also developed mutually beneficial relationships of extortion with drug traffickers. As long as they lack the willpower and resources to adequately address drug trafficking, the patterns of violence and corruption will likely continue.

In the literature surveyed for this case study, I could not find an analysis of those engaged as private security guards in the middle- and upper-class areas and gated communities of Rio. While there is reference to private security in these communities (Caldeira 2000; Coy and Pöhler 2002) there is no description of the characteristics of these private guards. This suggests a significant gap in English literature on violence and security in Rio. In my opinion, it also reflects the dominant perspective that the primary ‘culprits’ of Rio’s urban violence are the drug gangs and rogue police, and that violence is predominantly a problem of the poor and working class not of the middle and upper class residents who isolate themselves behind high walls and point their fingers at those on the other side. I believe it is incumbent on researchers to move beyond the dominant narratives and look at how people of all socio-economic classes – including the private security companies employed in elite communities – contribute to Rio’s insecurity and violence.

IMPACTS OF RIO'S OUV

The above research has looked at the actors and characteristics of the two groups which dominate Rio's landscape of insecurity. It has shown that many of the characteristics identified as related to situations of OUV can be found in Rio; for example, those primarily involved, both as perpetrators and victims, are young males. Research on the drug gangs show how they exert social and territorial control, fostering divisions within the city of Rio and creating areas where the state is unable to establish a consistent and effective security presence. As with other non-state actors in OUV, drug gangs are primarily active in poor and marginalized areas where they fill some of the community needs which the state does not.

The following section looks at the impacts of drug gangs and police aggression in Rio, illustrating how these impacts are similar to those identified with the category of OUV.

Normalization of violence

The dominance of drug traffickers, marked by extreme levels of armed conflict, socio-territorial domination and strictly enforced behavioural codes, has changed the culture of *favelas* (Dowdney 2003; Penglase 2008). *Favelados* have little faith in state judicial processes, but rather depend upon arbitration from drug gangs. Youth are particularly affected, especially since most have known only a world dominated by drug gangs. Although the vast majority of youth are not directly involved in trafficking, they identify with local gangs, respect territorial limits and view neither the state nor the police as legitimate upholders of law, order and justice (Dowdney 2003).

As an example of how normalized violence has become in *favelas*, Dowdney (2003, 176) cites research which found that 46 per cent of surveyed youth in 9 *favelas* did not consider their communities to be violent, even though over 70 percent of respondents directly knew or knew of someone killed by gunfire within their community and 75 percent commented on openly-armed people within their *favelas*.⁷⁹ In response to this survey, Dowdney (2003, 180) suggests that "armed violence within the community has become normal for a significant portion of young people in the *favelas*."

⁷⁹ This cited survey had as respondents 100 youth in six *favelas* and two separately held group interviews with 30 youth from an additional three *favelas* (Dowdney 2003, 174).

High levels of crime and homicide

One of the most commonly cited indicators of the excessive urban violence in Rio is the level of homicide and gun violence. The *New York Times* reported 4, 631 homicides in the city in 2008 (Barrionuevo 2009) and Rio's homicide rates average 50 per 100,000 inhabitants,⁸⁰ a figure which has tripled since the rapid urbanization of the 1970s (Arias 2006a; UN-HABITAT 2007). Between 1980 and 2000, the period in which drug trafficking evolved from loosely-organized marijuana sales to large-scale trafficking of cocaine, the homicide rate in metropolitan Rio increased from 35.5 per 100,000 to 53.6 per 100,000 (from 1,807 deaths to 3, 315 deaths) (Dowdney 2003, 90). Zaluar (2001b, 369) argues that "one cannot understand the tremendous increase in the rates of crimes, especially homicide, without linking it to drug trafficking at the local and transnational level".

Yet despite the dominant role of drug trafficking in the escalation of violence, Penglase (2008, 119) reminds us that the drug trade is not the sole culprit and points to violent policing, "the proliferation of handguns, the growth of petty crime, and highly unequal distribution of wealth and the legacies of authoritarianism". This reflects my position that the identification of drug gangs as dominant actors in Rio's urban violence is not meant to discount the broader context of socio-economic inequality in which they are able to gain and maintain authority.

It is also important to recall that violence in Rio is not evenly distributed. The homicide rate in *favelas* is several times higher than in the city's middle-class and tourist areas – cited as 177, 59, and 38 per 100,000 respectively in a 2002 report (Winton 2004a, 166). As Pengalase (2005, 4) notes, the homicide rate for men aged 15 to 34 in the wealthy neighbourhood of Leblon was 12.7 per 100,000, while in the working class Benfica it was 214 per 100,000.

The profile of most victims of homicide in Rio, and in the rest of Brazil, is consistent across various studies:

- Most victims of Rio's violence are young, underprivileged, Afro-Brazilian males, especially those who are members of drug gangs (Szwarcwald et al. 1999; Huggins 2000b;

⁸⁰ Homicide rates provide only a limited insight into levels of violence since they generally include non-intentional (i.e. car accidents) as well as intentional deaths and since they do not include deaths where victims' bodies are not recovered (Szwarcwald et al. 1999). Nevertheless, they do provide a rough point of comparison and give an indication of insecurity in the city. For example, European Union cities average a homicide rate of 2.28 per 100,000. In 2006 Ottawa had 1.8 per 100,000, its highest rate in over a decade (Fitzpatrick 2007).

Dowdney 2003; Costa Vargas 2006; Small Arms Survey 2006; UN-HABITAT 2007; Amnesty International 2008; Mafra 2008).

- Young, black males are the primary targets of the “all-too-common militarized police operations in *favelas*” (Costa Vargas 2006, 56).
- The Brazilian Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania estimates that in Rio over 3,200 youths between the ages of 12 and 19 will be victims of homicide between 2006 and 2012 (Ramos 2009).
- The rate of homicides for young males (aged 14 to 25) has risen from 30 per 100,000 in 1980 to 54.5 per 100,000 in 2002; older men’s rate of homicide remains relatively consistent at roughly 21 per 100,000 (UN-HABITAT 2007, 311).
- Although across Brazil only 10 percent or less of murder cases relate to women (UN-HABITAT 2007, 311), females are increasingly being killed in armed violence.⁸¹
- Between 1980 and 2000, the average number of women murdered in Brazil rose from 2.3 to 4.3 per 100,000 (Amnesty International 2008).
- Szwarcwald et al. (1999, 850) note that youths involved in drug trafficking rarely live to the age of 25.

Widespread fear

On September 30, 2002 the *Comando Vermelho* (CV) brought the city of Rio to a halt (Penglase 2005). Shops, restaurants, clinics, and banks in the city centre and wealthy southern zone closed their doors under the gang’s orders, fearful of the threatened violence if they did not comply (ibid). Over 230 schools sent their students home (ibid.). Four buses were set on fire and 2,000 never left the garage (ibid.). This attack, unprecedented in its territorial scope, followed an order, caught on police wire-tap, from one of Brazil’s most powerful drug traffickers, Fernandinho Beira-Mar who had just been transferred to a heightened security prison. His command to shut everything down in the southern zone was “to show them that we’ve got power that they don’t have” (Penglase 2005, 4).⁸² It was part of what Leu (2004, 344) describes as the

⁸¹ Amnesty International (2008, 22) cites a Portuguese study “Mortalidade Feminina por Causas Externas: Brasil e Macrorregiões (2001) to report that in “1979/1981, 9.6 per cent of women who died as a result of external factors (such as accidents or violence) were homicide victims. By 1997/1999 this figure had increased to 17.7 per cent; of these, half were killed with a gun”.

⁸² In 2006, one of the major organized drug/crime groups in São Paulo, the *Primeiro Comando da Capital* (PCC) orchestrated a similar attack on their city. In the span of a week the PCC carried out nearly 300 attacks on homes,

attempt by drug gangs to “demand increased space in the city and in the media” through coordinated attacks which have continued since 2002 and have brought the violence which was previously mostly contained within *favelas* into the formal city. While *favelados* have long been used to the control of drug gangs over *favela* businesses, this was the first time formal residents of the city were directly impacted on such a broad scale. The impact was widespread fear such as noted by Scheper-Hughes (1992, 220) who comments that attacks are “extraordinary” when “the violent tactics are turned against ‘respectable’ citizens, those usually shielded” from violence and terrorism.

The effects of such examples of urban violence are not limited to those who directly experience or witness violent acts. Several researchers suggest that the news media capitalize on stories of violence by representing the streets as a “violent, chaotic domain ruled by criminals and drug traffickers” (Oosterbaan 2005, 14). This focus on violence seeds “moral panic” (Leu 2004, 344), while feeding off and generating “a fearful and increasingly outraged audience” (Penglase 2007, 321). As stories of crime and violence are reported in the media and repeated in conversations and stories, feelings of fear spread through the city (Oosterbaan 2005; Penglase 2007). This fear “leads people to restrict their movements and exacerbates violence by encouraging illegal responses to perceived criminality” such as supporting death squads, violent policing and mass incarceration (Penglase 2007, 3; see also Caldeira 2000; Caldeira 2002; Arias 2006a). High levels of fear thus lead to profound social, political and physical changes, including the increased reliance on private security guards and walled communities.

Although security experts estimate that only one percent of *favela* residents are directly involved in the drug trade (Dowdney 2003, 51), the entire community is affected by drug trafficking. Koonings (1999, 228) likens the violence between drug gangs and the police to the “contours of a civil war”. Large scale operations by police, during which police units heavily armed with high-powered weapons invade *favelas*, greatly impact communities. Residents are routinely caught in the cross-fires of rival gang disputes or police invasions. Their lives, as well as those of traffickers and police, are placed at risk.⁸³ Property and infrastructure are often

banks, subway stations and bus garages, leaving 170 dead, massive property damage and temporary paralysis of business, transport and educational systems (Macaulay 2007).

⁸³ NGOs in Rio have complained that police often time their operations with children’s journeys to and from school, hoping that the presence of children will offer them some protection. Amnesty International (2008) gives an

damaged, increasing the number of homeless.⁸⁴ Businesses are shut down, non-involved residents may be shot, mobility of residents is restricted, and “curfew-like conditions prevent people from going to work and studying” (Amnesty International 2008, 39). Armed confrontations also impact the ability of local institutions and government organizations to function normally. Violence undermines community services such as healthcare, childcare and education, interrupting some, forcing out others or making access next to impossible. Financial, social and physical impacts remain long after the police units have withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Penglase (2007, 316) suggests that a “central icon of urban violence in Brazil has become the hooded dark-skinned youth, usually pictured against a favela alleyway, holding a high-powered automatic weapon” (see Figure 3.1). Similarly, much of the analysis of violence in Rio has focused on drug gangs and their members – predominantly ‘angry male youths’ who are characterized as significant threats to Rio’s urban security (Riley et al. 2005; Small Arms Survey 2006; DFAIT 2007). Yet, as the above research shows, the reality of urban violence in Rio is much more nuanced and complex. Understanding urban violence in Rio requires an assessment of structures of power and the variety of individuals and groups who influence different aspects of urban life (Zaluar 2000; Goldstein 2003; Arias 2006a).

Through my analysis of violence in Rio, I have realized that the ‘angry male youths’ who are the focus of much media attention and blame are typically poor, uneducated and marginalized, and are, as Arias (2006a, 1) describes, “one of the most disempowered, discriminated against, and heavily policed populations in Brazil”. How then are they able to control territory and resources in an economically-advanced, democratic country with an active police and military force? The only way to understand the power of organized armed groups in Rio is to look beyond the most visible actors and ask how communities, state organizations and social norms support and tolerate their presence. Unless the means by which organized armed

example from 2007 where a 12-year-old girl was killed by a stray bullet during a shoot-out between a drug gang and police while taking her younger sister to the crèche in their *favela*.

⁸⁴ Amnesty International (2008) touches upon the human security risks associated with housing problems in Brazil. However, they also argue that the impact of violence on housing, particularly the effects on women, needs to be better understood and addressed.

groups are able to hold power over urban communities is addressed, targeting individual actors or groups will never succeed in fully addressing the problem of OUV.

As much of the research cited in this case study shows, residents are stuck in a no-win situation, trapped between “fear of the police, fear of a criminal’s vengeance, and a belief that the justice system is unable to provide justice” (Caldeira 2002, 250). Forced to rely upon drug traffickers for protection, services and economic resources, their demon is also their saviour. At the same time, drug traffickers are dependent upon the support of *favela* residents (including their own family members) to carry out their operations. This destructive yet symbiotic relationship is key to understanding how OUV has emerged and is sustained in Rio. Breaking the power of drug trafficking in Rio will not be done by repressive policing tactics, especially as long as the forces remain as corrupt and abusive as I have described here. Instead, the state needs to examine the ways in which drug factions have gained legitimacy in *favela* communities – through protection, the provision of services and economic opportunities, role-model figures and status positions – and work to build its own legitimacy.

Case Study: Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town, South Africa's third largest metropolis, is a city of stunning beauty, nestled between the majestic Table Mountain and a coastline along which the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet. Yet Cape Town is a starkly divided city with spatial, racial and economic divisions that are rooted in the history of apartheid and perpetuated through fear and distrust (Wilkinson 2000; Lemanski 2004; Standing 2006). It is also a violent city, with one of the world's highest annual murder rates, especially in the poor districts (Gie and Haskins 2007).

Cape Town has been selected as the second case study for this research on OUV not only because it experiences significant levels of urban violence but also because there is a proliferation of non-state OAGs – gangs, vigilantes, organized crime groups, and private security – who are directly involved in generating and responding to this violence (Sanders and Chopra 2006; Gie and Haskins 2007; Bénit-Gbaffou, Didier and Morange, 2008)⁸⁵. In keeping with the intent of my research, this case study further develops the category of OUV through a focused analysis on the urban non-state OAGs who exert territorial and social control in Cape Town. I will begin with an overview of Cape Town's background, establishing the context in which urban non-state OAGs develop and act. Particular attention is given to the impact of the apartheid era on spatial development and race relations. The spatial impacts of apartheid are manifested most clearly in the Cape Flats townships – impoverished neighbourhoods comprised of residents who were formerly excluded from the city centre because of their race and who still struggle to overcome poverty, violence and marginalization. These townships disproportionately experience homicide, crime and violence (Lemanski 2004; Gie and Haskins 2007).

There are several non-state OAGs competing for social and territorial control in the Cape Flats townships. As noted in previous chapters, the categories which define these groups are fluid and overlapping. The characteristics and activities of these groups will be discussed below. Additionally, as with the case study of Rio, I find that I must include a brief discussion of the role of state police since their actions in the townships have been, and continue to be, characterized by violence (Brogden 1996; Desai and Pithouse 2004; Lemanski 2006a). This case

⁸⁵ My research on Cape Town has focused on English-language peer-reviewed journal articles and books published after 1990. Other sources, such as research papers, non-peer-reviewed journals and publications from state, international and private organizations have been used where necessary to fill in knowledge gaps, but I do not claim to have conducted an exhaustive study on all material written about Cape Town or the Cape Flats townships.

study will include analysis of the characteristics and impacts of OUV as manifest in Cape Town, as well as a presentation of literature addressing this subject.

Background & Context

Cape Town, located in South Africa's Western Cape is the country's oldest urban settlement and third largest city. According to the 2001 census, the Cape Metropolitan Area (CMA) has a population of 3.4 million people spread over roughly 2,460 square kilometres (Cape Town Strategic Information 2008). Atypical of South Africa, Coloured⁸⁶ citizens comprise almost half of the total population, Blacks⁸⁷ form the second majority and the White⁸⁸ population is a declining minority (Lemanski 2004).⁸⁹ The population is fairly youthful (65 per cent under the age of 35) and projections expect it to reach 3.9 million in 2015 (Wilkinson 2000; Turok 2001; Directorate of Strategic Information 2003).

Cape Town was founded in 1652 by the Dutch East India Company as a temporary refreshment station for ships trading with the Far East. Western (2002, 711) describes the colonial European impact on the Cape as "brutal, death-dealing, totally transformative, and irreversible" due to their seizure of land and peoples. During the 17th century, Cape Town grew to a population of over 3,000, of which 1,300 were slaves (Wilkinson 2000). After the British seized control of Cape Town in 1805, the English working class settled in and developed the

⁸⁶ The term 'Coloured' is a common, though contentious, label in South Africa referring to people of mixed race – descendants of African Indigenous groups and European settlers, as well as descendants of slaves brought from other countries such as Indonesia (Wilkinson 2000; Standing 2006). Standing (2006) argues that it is a crude and arbitrary distinction influenced by wealth, religion and status, implemented during the Apartheid era in order to enforce racial divisions.

⁸⁷ Indigenous African people are commonly referred to as 'Blacks' or 'Africans' in South Africa; the majority of whom are Bantu (Wilkinson 2000; Standing 2006).

⁸⁸ The term 'White' refers to descendants of European settlers or more recent immigrants of "European stock" (Wilkinson 2000, 197). Although the convention in *Webster's Dictionary* is to not capitalize designations based on colour, capitalization is used when referring to a specific group. The capitalization of racial categories in South Africa is not consistent in literature I have studied. For example, Wilkinson (2000), Western (2002), Lemanski (2007), Bénit-Gbaffou et al. (2008) and Jaglin (2008) used capitals for racial categories, while Saff (1998), de Swardt et al. (2005), and Standing (2006) do not. I use capitalization in this case study as it is the convention of the majority of the articles I have read and since it is in reference to a group of people, not simply to the colour of their skin.

⁸⁹ Normally Africans are the large majority, with Coloureds only a small minority (Wilkinson 2000). The Coloured Labour Preference Policy of 1955, intended to prevent an influx of African labour in the Western Cape, reserved low-skill jobs in and around Cape Town for Coloureds rather than Black Africans. This influx control, which was repealed in 1986, is seen as one of the main reasons why today Black Africans form a minority in the Western Cape (Slater 2000; Jensen 2004). However, Lemanski (2004) notes that this demographic trend is starting to shift as more Africans are moving to the Western Cape, many of whom are forced to live in slums and squatter settlements (Ndegwa, Horner and Esau 2006).

economy through small industries, agriculture, trade and fishing. By the 1865, the city's population was around 28,400, of which 15,100 (53 percent) was White and 12 400 classified as "Other" (44 percent) and the remaining 900 (3 percent) as "Hottentots" or "Kafirs" – terms used at the time for Blacks (Wilkinson 2000, 196). This demonstrates the extent to which Blacks were excluded from the growing city. The local economy grew with the discovery of diamonds, gold and the building of a railroad and in 1910, Cape Town was named the legislative capital of South Africa, with Pretoria the administrative capital.

Despite an official segregation policy initiated in 1901, in the early 1900s Cape Town enjoyed for a time a relatively liberal reputation. Many people lived in mixed-race residential areas throughout the city (Slater 2000; Wilkinson 2000) before accelerated urbanization created informal settlements or squatter camps in and around Cape Town. A growing White anxiety about their close proximity to the growing population of Blacks was fanned by an outbreak of the bubonic plague in 1901 and used to push for the removal of Blacks from the city centre (Slater 2000; Wilkinson 2000; Western 2002; Standing 2006).⁹⁰ The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 forced 'unwanted nuisance elements' from Cape Town and legislated that Blacks⁹¹ were allowed in urban areas only to work, not reside (Brogden and Shearing 1993; Slater 2000). Such 'influx control' measures prevented Blacks from becoming anything more than temporary labourers⁹² in the city, thereby pushing them to the under-developed, under-serviced urban peripheries while Whites secured large central urban areas furnished with modern amenities.⁹³

The desire to 'protect' White territory and White control of urban centres contributed to the election of the National Party in 1948 – the party which implemented a systematic "race" classification and the subsequent apartheid regime. Apartheid literally meant 'apart-ness' and

⁹⁰ At the same time, land seizures in rural areas meant more male Blacks were seeking work in the city, while women and children remained in rural areas, dependent on remittances from their husbands (Slater 2000).

⁹¹ The Native (Urban Areas) Act applied only to men since they formed the majority of labour migrants to Cape Town. Women were not included in pass laws until 1952, at which point those who had a permit were allowed to work and reside in Cape Town, but those without the permit were subject to forced removal (Slater 2000).

⁹² A survey in 1984 shows the degree of racial division in the work force. The unskilled labour force was 54% Black and 46% Coloured (no Whites); semi-skilled workers were 5% Black, 85% Coloured and 10% White; skilled workers were 8% Black, 60% Coloured and 32% White; the managerial force was 0.5% Black, 18% Coloured and 81% White (Standing 2006, 7).

⁹³ In an article in the peer-reviewed journal, *Economic Geography*, Fair and Shaffer (1964, 266) report that "[s]ince the advent of "influx control" initiated by the present government in 1948, the urban flow of Bantus has been strictly controlled through municipal Bantu Affairs departments, and the housing problem has been all but overcome". The housing problem referred to is the "flood" of Blacks and Coloureds in urban areas. Obviously, the overcoming of these problems is from a certain (White) perspective and disregards the impact of influx control on the excluded population.

South African cities developed under apartheid are characterized by entrenched race-based divisions, distorted settlement patterns and physical fragmentation (Turok 2001; Western 2002; Seekings 2003; Lemanski 2004; Standing 2006). Legislation during apartheid ensured the physical segregation of the four different racial groups (White, African, Indian⁹⁴ and Coloured) into enclaves within and around cities and led to massive displacement and separate development in divided spaces (Jensen 2004; Standing 2006).

Townships

Across South Africa, the areas where Blacks and Coloureds lived became known as townships. Under apartheid, townships were denied industrial, commercial and retail development. Laws prevented Blacks from owning property or starting businesses, thus depriving them of any kind of independent means of generating income. Constraints on land availability and housing construction in townships led to severe overcrowding. Township communities responded to their deprivation and sub-standard housing by mass boycotts of rent and large-scale land invasions. Such revolts led the government to brand townships ‘effectively ungovernable’ (despite brutal measures by the apartheid law enforcement groups) and effectively abandon their efforts to contain or develop them.⁹⁵ Additionally, townships were designed to limit the number of points of exit and entry to each township, meaning that policing largely meant cordoning off the perimeter while abandoning the interior (Standing 2006).

The racial classification and segregation of the 1950s led to the dislocation of well-established communities and the forced removal of an estimated 150,000-200,000 Black and Coloured people to townships built on the polluted, flood-prone sand plains on the Eastern periphery known as the Cape Flats (Wilkinson 2000; Turok 2001; Western 2002).⁹⁶ Built as dormitory suburbs to house the city’s male Black and Coloured labour force, Cape Flats housing is rudimentary and vastly insufficient for the population, resulting in overcrowding and

⁹⁴ Special racial distinction for Indian people was made during apartheid. However, in the literature I reviewed racial categories are typically limited to White, Coloured and Black, suggesting that Indians become part of the Coloured category.

⁹⁵ For more on Black settlement, dispossession and political struggle see Slater (2000); Wilkinson (2000); Desai and Pithouse (2004) and Jensen (2004).

⁹⁶ In 1950, the White population was 307, 000 (41%) of the total urban population of 742, 400; the Coloured population was 361,300 (49%); the “Bantu” (Black) population was 74,100 (10%) (Wilkinson 2000, 196).

overloaded sewage systems, schools and other public facilities (Turok 2001).⁹⁷ Today these townships, characterized by poverty and crime, are home to the much of the city's poor Coloured and Black communities (Standing 2006). Hardships such as gang proliferation, murder, sexual abuse, drug, alcohol and substance abuse, and HIV-AIDS⁹⁸ are daily experiences for people living and working there (Bility 1999; Monaghan 2004; Ross 2005; Minty 2006; Jensen 2008). A 2000 survey in the Cape Flats found that almost 70 percent of Blacks between 16 and 30 were unemployed (Samara 2005; Standing 2006). Residents also have much higher rates of communicable and noncommunicable disease mortality, infant mortality and other indicators of substandard health (Sanders and Chopra 2006).⁹⁹

Standing (2006, 23) describes Cape Town as one of the most divided cities in the world, “blatantly separated along racial lines”. The White urban areas are located around Cape Town's economic centre and coastal region, have smaller, less dense populations¹⁰⁰ with greater economic activity and well-developed infrastructures. Black and Coloured areas, both of which are discussed in this case study, are also separated from each other, with Coloureds enjoying a relatively higher standard of living.¹⁰¹ On almost every conventional indicator, such as education, income, and employment, “social conditions vary significantly and systematically between the population groups, with Whites clearly occupying the most favourable position ahead of Coloureds, and then Africans” (Wilkinson 2000, 201) – see for example the

⁹⁷ Cape Town authorities made explicit efforts to keep women and children out of urban areas, such as by enforcing men-only boarding houses and targeting women in raids on workplaces and boarding houses (Slater 2000). Women and families were often forced to live in rural areas around Cape Town, separated from their male family members who were working in the city and living in townships.

⁹⁸ HIV-AIDS: human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome. For some information on how HIV-AIDS is impacting Cape Town see Sanders and Chopra (2006) and Simbayi et al. (2007).

⁹⁹ For further analysis of the quality of health care and its inequalities in see Sanders and Chopra (2006).

¹⁰⁰ Residential densities range from as low as 2-4 units per hectare in the wealthiest suburbs to perhaps 90-100 units per hectare in the inner city, to 350-400 people per hectare in the Cape Flats. Plot areas in low-income (formerly Coloured) areas of the city are 60-80 square metres, compared to the 200-250 square metre norm initially employed in subsidized public housing (Wilkinson 2000).

¹⁰¹ According to the 2001 census, 51.6% of Blacks were living in informal housing, compared with only 5.6% of Coloureds and 0.5% of Whites (Directorate of Strategic Information 2003, 35).

Figure 4.1 A: The urban area of Cape Town showing the distribution of informal settlements and the first townships, with dates they were established and the size of the circle relative to the size of the population (actual figures not provided), 1901-1985.

Source Dierwechter 2004 – with addition of identification of CBD – Central Business District.

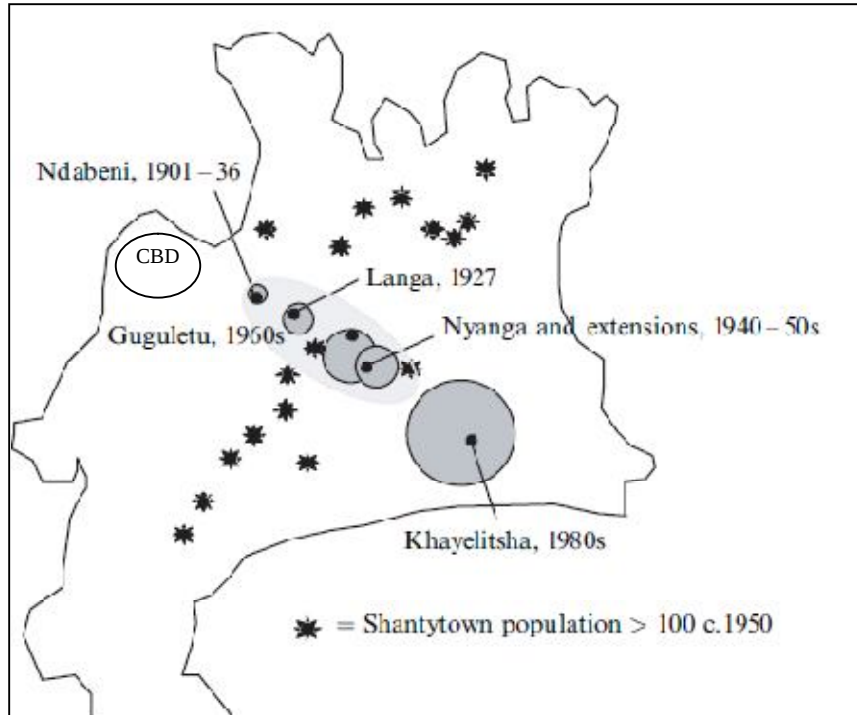
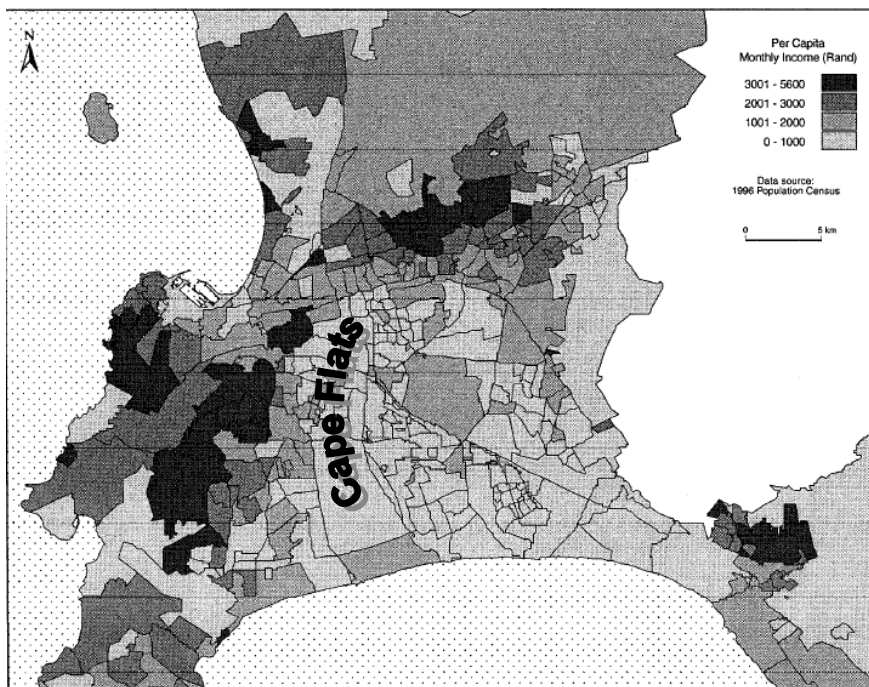


Figure 4.1 B: Cape Town's median per capita income, circa 1996.

Source Turok 2001 – with addition of identification of Cape Flats



juxtaposition of the two maps in Figures 4.1A and B. Standing (2006, 24) also notes the distinct topographic differences between classes – affluent suburbs are spread between the “spectacular Table Mountain and close to picturesque beaches”, while the Cape Flat townships are drab and dry.

After the fall of the apartheid regime, South Africa’s first democratic elections at the national level were held in 1994. The newly elected government of the African National Congress (ANC) put forth the National Urban Renewal Programme which was designed to address urban crime and social development (Monaghan 2004; Samara 2005). However, “economic and social forces that emerged under apartheid did not suddenly expire with the advent of democracy” (Turok 2001, 2350). Although basic public services are gradually being extended to historically neglected parts of Cape Town’s metropolitan region, the private sector has been reluctant to mobilize its resources for development and their investment and jobs continue to be concentrated in the affluent (White) north and west, while low-income subsidized housing is focused on the poorer (Black and Coloured) south-east (Turok 2001; Jensen 2004; Standing 2006). In this way, institutional practices and market forces tend to reinforce spatial divisions within the city, generally to the detriment of the poor majority of the population. The gulf between poor townships in the Cape Flats and affluent suburbs continues to widen as institutional practices and market forces reinforce spatial divisions.¹⁰² Indeed, several researchers point out that while racial segregation may no longer be politically enforced, economic divisions have maintained the same patterns of inequality (Turok 2001; Seekings 2003; Lemanski 2004; Lemanski 2006a; Standing 2006).

As in Rio, the poor in Cape Town have been, and continue to be, excluded from the affluent parts of the city. However, these two cities differ in where the excluded populations live. Due to the unique topography of Rio, poor *favelas* exist in close proximity to affluent, formal areas of the city since they are perched on the steep hills that jut up within and around Rio. In contrast, Cape Town offers few spaces within the city centre where the poor could establish themselves. Additionally, with the strict racial segregation of apartheid, Blacks and Coloureds were not allowed to live close to White settlements. As such, the majority of Coloured and Black residents

¹⁰² For more on how structural inequalities affect the urban landscape of Cape Town, see Wilkinson (2000), Turok (2001), Lemanski (2004) and (2006a).

of Cape Town live on the city's peripheries, where economics continues to reinforce racial divides.

Privatized spaces

As noted in the literature review, the segregation of urban spaces is both a risk factor and an indicator of urban violence (Caldeira 2000; Esser 2004; Briceño-León 2005; Jütersonke et al. 2009). While townships are perhaps the most vivid and tangible example of continued racial segregation, the other manifestation of racial and spatial segregation in Cape Town can be seen in the growing number of privatized spaces and gated communities (Turok 2001; Oldfield 2002; Seekings 2003; Lemanski 2004; Lemanski 2006a; Lemanski 2006b). Privatized spaces include fortified communities and illegally enclosed neighbourhoods where clusters of houses are surrounded by electric walls and protected by sophisticated alarms, controlled entrance gates, and around-the-clock armed private security (Lemanski 2004 & 2006). Such spaces restrict social interaction between diverse populations, fragment the urban landscape and fuel distrust between separated populations. Standing (2006, 28) describes the fortification of gated communities and business districts as one which fuels fear and social fragmentation “poses a profound threat to the social sustainability of the city and breeds fear of *the other* and a sense that safety can only be achieved in immediate and familiar settings”.

As in Brazil, in South Africa it is not simply residences that are being fortified into privatized spaces. Urban commercial and tourist districts are being defined as City Improvement Districts (CIDs)¹⁰³ and developed as controlled, privatized spaces. In these improvement districts, property owners pay a fee to supplement public services in order to enhance their physical, economic and social environment (Samara 2005; Lemanski 2006, Bénit-Gbaffou et al., 2008). Bénit-Gbaffou et al. (2008) note that in one Cape Town CID people were told that if they could not afford the levies they should move elsewhere. Thus CID development typically pushes the poor out while the CID is ‘secured’ for affluent patrons. Those forced out include people involved in drugs, gangs and prostitution, but also includes the poor who are victims of the same crime and degradation the improvement district is claiming to fight.

One of Cape Town's oldest improvement districts is the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD) – also known as the Central City Improvement District (CCID) (see Figure 4.1A)

¹⁰³ CIDs are also known as Community Improvement Districts (Bénit-Gbaffou et al., 2008).

which has been ‘revitalized’ due to substantial investment from the private sector¹⁰⁴ and the engagement of seven different law enforcement bodies, both public and private (Samara 2005).¹⁰⁵ The CBD claims to target ‘crime and grime’, yet critics argue the district has essentially enforced “the brutal eradication of those ‘unwanted’ / ‘bad’ elements” (Western Cape Provincial Development Council, as cited on Samara 2005, 220). The CBD initiative overlooks the fact that “the poor constitute the majority of the city and that the vagrants / street children / informal traders are surface manifestations of deep-seated problems; viz. poverty, unemployment and social breakdown in the underdeveloped areas” (ibid.). A number of youth workers in Cape Town observed that street children are “increasingly being harassed and beaten as a way to teach them to stay away from the downtown area” (Samara 2005, 225).¹⁰⁶ The critique from civil society and many community organizations is that “the CID concept turns what should be public space into literal or *de facto* private, heavily policed enclaves” (Samara 2005, 227).

The result of both gated communities and improvement districts is the displacement of crime to socio-economically weaker areas and the creation of “exclusionary spaces that exaggerate racial and class divisions in Cape Town” (Lemanski 2006, 796). Bénit-Gbaffou et al. (2008, 702) note that divided, privatized spaces like CIDs contribute to the “rise of a society of control, of social exclusion and fear of any contact with the unknown ‘Other’”. It also means that the focus is on protection rather than the problems (e.g. crime) and their causes. As Caldeira (2000) shows in her analysis of gated communities in Brazil, spatial segregation reinforces cycles of poverty and exclusion by concentrating disadvantaged social groups into spaces with minimal economic and political leverage. Democratic values of universality and equality are undermined by fortified spaces.

¹⁰⁴ Abrahamsen and Williams (2007, 246) report that the CCID collects about 15 million Rand (\$2.18 billion Cdn) annually from the 1200 ratepayers within the area – of which 50% is allocated to security, 25% to cleaning, 17% to marketing and 8% to social development.

¹⁰⁵ It is not clear which seven bodies are involved in the CBD security. The Cape Town CCID website states that security partnerships are “working with the Central City’s business community, the South African Police Services and other security organizations and stakeholders” to form “a tight security net in the Central City (Cape Town Partnership 2009). This lack of clarity is indicative of the clandestine nature of PSCs who, while known to their employers, may not be clearly identified to the broader community and especially to the marginalized people who are targeted.

¹⁰⁶ Already a growing number of youths and children are being held in detention; more children (under 19) are arrested in the province of Western Cape than anywhere else in the country – an estimated 2.5% of the province’s children (Samara 2005, 211). Children in the province represent 8.5% of the nation’s children, but almost 25% of those arrested (ibid.).

The racial segregation of privatized spaces is often masked behind language regarding fear of crime and economic concerns. For example, when informal settlements have emerged close to affluent areas, White property owners have fought for their removal, yet insisted race was not the issue, arguing instead that their motivations were based upon fear of crime, decreased property values, or environmental degradation (Saff 1998; Lemanski 2004). Saff (1998) provides an examination of the political and sociological climate which contributes to anxiety about informal settlements, but demonstrates that the establishment of informal settlements adjacent to upper-class residential areas caused no major devaluation of property. Lemanski (2004) argues that these reasons are simply a concealment of a racist fear of the 'other'. She also suggests that increased residential fortressing is an implicit rejection of the government's ability to protect its citizens and facilitate interaction between previously segregated groups.

Those who create fortified spatial areas are interested in keeping crime, and criminals, on the outside, have little interest in what takes place on the 'other side' of their fortifications. Samara (2010a) notes that in gang-ridden townships, police will set up roadblocks on township borders, but do little real patrolling of the interior streets. As a result, urban areas become increasingly segregated and unequal, and the remaining public spaces become increasingly dangerous as those who have the means to support security infrastructures have invested their resources into their own fortified enclosures. The excluded population is essentially abandoned by the elite. Yet as discussed in reference to Rio, the elite can also find themselves prisoners of their making as their movements become restricted to their designated 'safe' areas and they are shut off from the broader community.

According to their means, social groups in Cape Town attempt to secure their properties and lifestyles. Crime, especially violent personal attacks, remains concentrated in poor, Black and Coloured areas (Lemanski 2004; Gie and Haskins 2006; Bénit-Gbaffou et al. 2008).¹⁰⁷ Yet these residents often cannot afford to secure their homes and communities as do their White compatriots (Bénit-Gbaffou et al. 2008). As Bénit-Gbaffou et al. (2008, 700) point out, "access to security varies dramatically according to income". Blacks and Coloureds must generally rely on strategies such as guard dogs, fences and window grills to protect their property. As will be discussed below, they may also support vigilante activities which target criminals in their

¹⁰⁷ Poorer residents of Cape Town are more exposed to violent personal crime, whereas wealthier residents are more likely to experience property crimes (Bénit-Gbaffou et al. 2008).

community. In contrast, White areas host the majority of police stations as well as security infrastructure such as street lighting, surveillance equipment and controlled access areas. What is noteworthy here is that both rich and poor groups do not consider the state to meet their security needs. Lemanski (2004) finds that Whites see rising crime as indications of the Black government's inability to rule. Conversely, Blacks tend to view increased crime as related to unfinished democracy.

LITERATURE ON URBAN VIOLENCE IN CAPE TOWN

This case study is based upon a body of literature, the majority of which is academic articles published in journals. The literature map groups articles into the thematic categories developed in Chapter Two. In this section I discuss the quality and types of research which my study has drawn from, identifying gaps and weaknesses. While names and locations of research are often omitted or fictionalized in order to protect informants, Figure 4.2 notes which townships were identified in studies cited in this case study. For example, Jensen (2004) places his ethnographic research in a township given the fictional name of Valencia Park and Bangstad (2005) uses the fictive name of Mekaar. As found in the Rio case study, many of the research articles drawn upon here do not identify the community studied, making it impossible to accurately determine geographic overlap. See Figure 4.4 for a map of Cape Town's Police Districts. The townships of Atlantis, Elsies River, Khayelitsha, Manenberg, Mitchell's Plain, and Nyanga are located in the eponymous districts. The township of Die Bos is in the Strand District, Heideveld in Athlone, and Lavendar Hill in Grassy Park.

Several articles and books reviewed in this case study are built upon ethnographic research (Legget 2004; Jensen 2004; Bangstad 2005; Jensen 2008; Samara 2010a). Information on Cape Flats gangs in Legget (2004) is based upon a 1,300 household victim survey conducted in August 2003 in Manenberg (located near the township of Guguletu identified on the map in Figure 4.1A), as well as focus

Figure 4.2. List of townships identified as sites of research in reviewed literature

Atlantis (Standing 2006)
Die Bos (Ross 2005)
Elsies River (Oldfield 2002)
Heideveld (Jensen 2008)
Khayelitsha (Desai & Pithouse 2004 ;
de Swardt et al. 2005 ; Ndegwa,
Horner & Esau 2007 ; Shields et al.
2009)
Lavendar Hill (Shields et al. 2009)
Manenberg (Dowdney 2004 ; Shields
et al. 2009)
Mitchell's Plain (Ndegwa, Horner &
Esau 2007; Shields et al. 2009)
Nyanga (de Swardt et al. 2005 ;
Shields et al. 2009)

groups and questionnaires. Bangstad (2005) conducted ethnographic research in an (unidentified) Coloured township of the Cape Flats in 2000; Standing (2006) conducted semi-structured interviews and quantitative surveys in the Cape Flats (see section below on Organized Crime); Jensen (2008) conducted two years of ethnographic field work in the township of Heideveld between 1997 and 1999. His resulting book on Cape Flats gangs is described by Samara (2010b, 237) as a “nuanced and challenging account of how people in oppressive conditions construct and pursue dignity while struggling to survive.” Samara (2010a) conducted field work in the Cape Flats between 2001 and 2007, research which included interviews, media reports and reporting on police operations.

Other research is based on surveys and interviews. Bility (1999) used focus group interviews consisting of six to eight adolescents moderated by a young post-graduate student. An assessment by Abrahams and Jewkes (2005) of the effects on men’s use of violence of witnessing violence against their mothers during childhood was done with cross-sectional questionnaire surveys of 1368 randomly selected male municipal workers in Cape Town. The questionnaires were conducted in face-to-face interviews in the respondents’ language of choice by trained interviewers. De Swardt et al. (2005) base their research on a household livelihood survey conducted in impoverished townships. Ndegwa, Horner and Esau (2007) conducted surveys with a focus on labour market issues in the district of Mitchell’s Plain.

Several researchers examined the connections between children and violence. Flisher et al. (1993) used self-administered questionnaires for a cluster sampling of 7,340 students from 16 Cape Town schools to assess the prevalence of a wide-range of risk-taking behaviour, of which violence formed a part. Shields et al. (2008) studied the effects of community violence on children in Cape Town townships through face-to-face interviews with 185 children between the ages of 8 and 13, with an ethnic divide of 29.7 percent Black and 70.3 percent Coloured and a gender division of 49.7 percent boys and 50.3 percent girls. Interview questions were translated from English into Afrikaans and Xhosa and conducted by graduate students fluent in English and either of these languages. The researchers used structured scales to measure exposure to community violence and perceptions of safety. Since their research was conducted in townships known to have very high levels of community violence, their findings are likely not generalizable across the city into White upper- and middle-class neighbourhoods.

As researchers themselves acknowledge, there are limitations to any research method. For example, Standing (2006) acknowledges weaknesses in his research due to the sensitivity of the topic and to the fact that gaining access to drug dealers and senior members of organized crime groups is a challenge. He gathered contacts along the lines of the ‘snowball sampling method’, which he defended as an opportunistic way of finding sources which produced “in-depth and apparently reliable information” (2006, xii). Both Standing (2006) and Jensen (2008) credit the personal networks and contacts who introduced the researchers into township networks and vouched for their reliability.

In almost all research on urban non-state OAGs and urban violence, respondents are asked very personal questions, such as about violence they witnessed during childhood and violence or criminal activity which they themselves perpetrate. This raises concerns about the extent to which full disclosure is probable or possible. Standing (2006) attempted triangulation to verify his research findings, but admits that “one is left wondering whether several sources repeat the same myth or piece of misinformation” (2006, xiii). Another weakness in research can be seen in the sample population studied. For example, Abrahams and Jewkes (2005) only conducted their survey with heterosexual men who were employed by the municipality. While they do not discuss this, given the high rates of unemployment in townships, places which are disproportionately sites of personal violence, I am concerned that this study does not represent the experiences of the majority of township residents.

In addition to ethnographies, surveys and interviews, various other research methods have been drawn upon to study violence in Cape Town. For example, Lerer (1992) studies the Death Register, post mortem and blood alcohol records of all homicides and suicides over the age of 15 years for an 18-month period beginning on January 1, 1990. Similarly, Groenewald et al. (2008) collected quantitative information on mortality from local offices of the Department of Home Affairs and local mortuaries, and analyzed data by age, cause and gender.

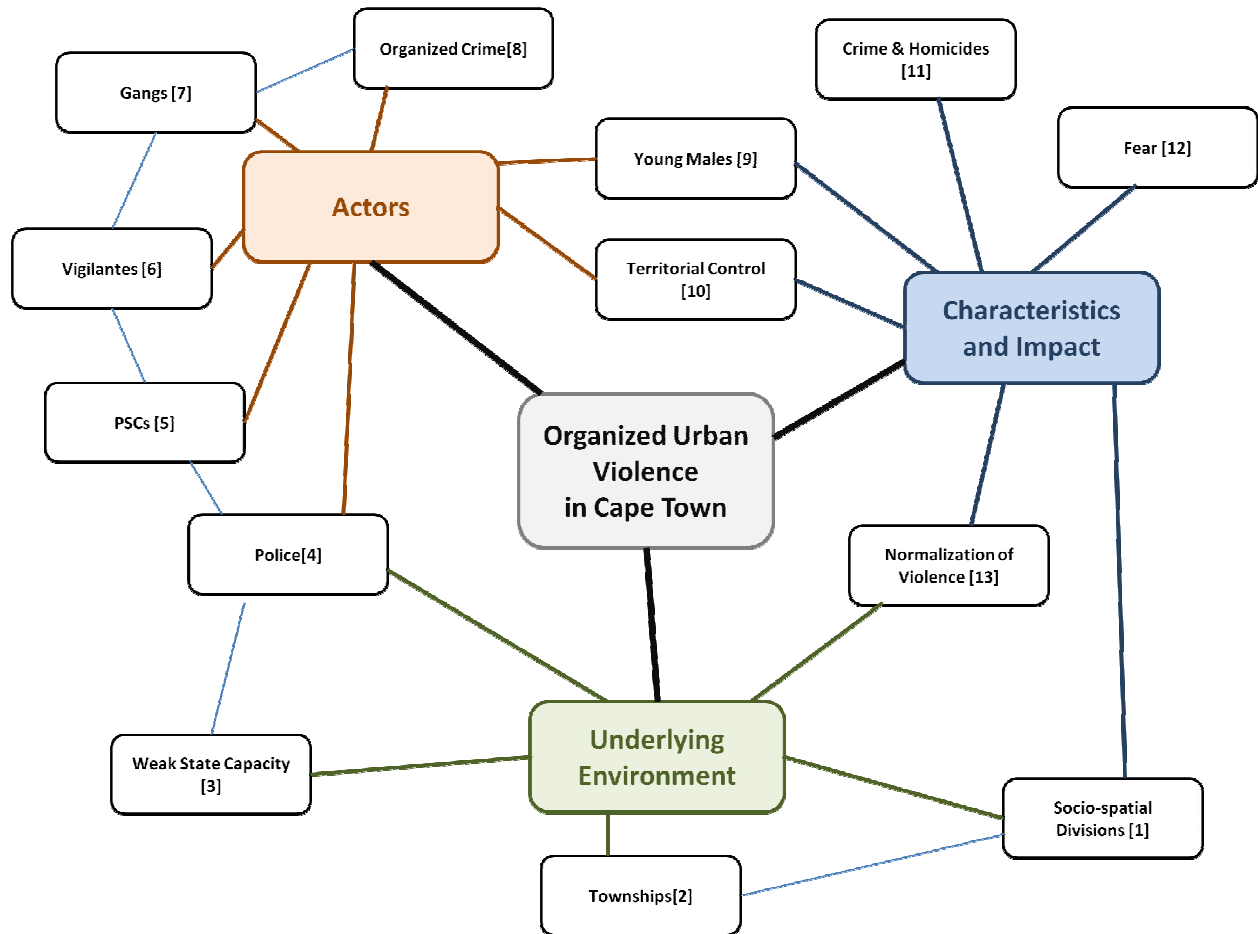
If I were to take any of the studies cited here on its own I do not think I could make reliable generalizations of OUV in Cape Town. However, what comes out clearly throughout this research, whether in reading ethnographies, reports on surveys and quantitative analyses, is the similar descriptions and analyses of the phenomenal impact which non-state OAGs have on their urban environment. That all these studies identify similar aspects and traits gives me confidence in drawing these characteristics together for this case study. In some cases, such as the analyses

of organized crime, I was not able to find a wide body of literature. However, the similarities between descriptions of organized crime groups and those of gangs and vigilantes – confirm my assessment that common traits can be found in non-state OAGs, informing an understanding of how their activities foster an environment of OUV.

One weakness I did find in the research is the dated nature of some studies which otherwise provide interesting information about certain aspects of OUV (e.g. Lerer 1992; Flisher et al. 1993). The lack of comparative, contemporary studies impedes analysis of how certain aspects of violence and insecurity have evolved over time. Additionally, although townships may not be identified in order to protect the identity of informants, the lack of identification weakens this research since it is difficult or even impossible to identify township or township areas that have been under studied. Additionally, the lack of identification makes it difficult to assess whether the researcher is talking about Black or Coloured townships. Nevertheless, taken as an aggregate, the various studies cited here produce a fairly complete picture of Cape Town violence. However, it would be beneficial for researchers to build upon previous studies, such as through a replication of methods, in order to offer a comparative analysis of violence in Cape Town over the past two decades.

The research that has informed this case study is presented on the following page in the Cape Town literature map. In comparison to Rio's literature map, I have provided thematic categories for the four groups of non-state OAGs as well as the Police; in Rio I compressed the four into two: Drug gangs and Police/Private Security. Due to the significant body of literature examining apartheid and its effects on urban areas and race relations, I was able to develop the category of 'weak state capacity' that was not presented in the Rio literature map. In other thematic categories, the research on both cities is quite comparable (with the obvious distinction between *favelas* in Rio and townships in Cape Town). This comparability, and the similarities in research on the two cities, supports the categorization of OUV developed in the first and second chapter of this thesis.

Figure 4.3 Literature Map – OUV in Cape Town



Literature Map Legend

Socio-spatial Divisions [1]

Brogden and Shearing (1993)
 Saff (1998)
 Slater (2000)
 Wilkinson (2000)
 Turok (2001)
 Oldfield (2002)
 Western (2002)
 Seekings (2003)
 Jensen (2004)
 Lemanski (2004)
 Lemanski (2006a)
 Lemanski (2006b)
 Standing (2006)
 Bénit-Gbaffou et al., (2008)

Townships [2]

Wilkinson (2000)
 Turok (2001)
 Western (2002)
 Desai and Pithouse (2004)
 Jensen (2004)
 Monaghan (2004)
 de Swardt et al. (2005)
 Samara (2005)
 Samara (2010)

Weak State Capacity [3]

Baker (2002)
 Monaghan (2004)
 Bénit-Gbaffou et al. (2008)

Police [4]

Cock (1990)
 Brogden and Shearing (1993)
 Brewer (1994)
 Mathews, Heymann and Mathews (1994)
 Brogden (1996)
 Bility (1999)
 Brogden (2002)
 Baker (2002)
 Desai and Pithouse (2004)
 Lemanski (2006)
 Samara (2010a)

PSCs [5]

Brogden (1996)
Shearing (1996)
Bruce and Komane (1999)
Baker (2002)
Kempa, Shearing &
Cartwright (2002)
Samara (2005)
Lemanski (2006)
Standing (2006)
Abrahamsen and Williams
(2007)
Wood and Shearing (2007)
Singh (2008)

Vigilantes [6]

Cock (1990)
Brogden (1996)
Bruce and Komane (1999)
Wilkinson (2000)
Boshoff, Botha and
Schönteich (2001)
Dixon and Johns (2001)
Baker (2002)
Monaghan (2004)
Bangstad (2005)
Samara (2010a)

Gangs [7]

Bility (1999)
Oldfield (2002)
Legget (2004)
Jensen (2004)
Monaghan (2004)
Bangstad (2005)
Standing (2006)
Jensen (2008)
Shields et al. (2008)
Samara (2010a)

Organized Crime [8]

Bangstad (2005)
Standing (2006)

Young Males [9]

Flisher et al. (1993)
Wilkinson (2000)
Legget (2004)
Gie and Haskins (2006)
Bangstad (2005)
Standing (2006)
Groenewald et al. (2008)

Territorial Control [10]

Baker (2002)
Monaghan (2004)
Bangstad (2005)
Singh (2008)

Crime & Homicides [11]

Lerer (1992)
Bility (1999)
Abrahams and Jewkes
(2005)
Samara (2005)
Standing (2006)
Gie and Haskins (2007)
Groenewald et al. (2008)
Shields et al. (2008)
Samara (2010)

Fear [12]

Lerer (1992)
Wilkinson (2000)
Lemanski (2004)
Bangstad (2005)
Sanders and Chopra (2006)
Standing (2006)
Maw (2007)
Meyer (2007)
Gie and Haskins (2007)
Jensen (2008)

**Normalization of violence
[13]**

Cock (1990)
McKendrick and Hoffmann
(1990)
Chidester (1991)
Abrahams and Jewkes
(2005)
Shields et al. (2008)

Figure 4.4 Cape Town Police Districts

Source: Gie and Haskins (2007)



ACTORS INVOLVED IN CAPE TOWN'S URBAN VIOLENCE

Numerous actors contribute to urban insecurity and violence. In Cape Town these actors operate within the temporal, spatial, economic and social context which has been outlined above. Yet as I argue throughout this thesis, to focus solely on the context and not on the actors would deny the agency of human beings and severely limit our understanding of OUV. Thus, the emphasis of this case study is on the actors generating violence in Cape Town. As noted by Muggah and Jütersonke (2008), actors in urban violence do not have static roles. At times some may promote violence, at other times they may mediate or discourage it. Their actions may be perceived as violence by some, as a legitimate use of force by others. This complexity and ambiguity suggests that there may be contradictions and disagreements in narratives of urban violence. It also suggests that it is important to consider not just the actors involved, but their association with urban communities, proximate groups and with the state.

In the previous case study, I found that I could not look at OUV in Rio without considering the role of police both in their response to and perpetration of violence. Similarly, in addressing urban violence in Cape Town, the role of police is too significant to not be included in this analysis. Thus, even though the focus of my research is on urban non-state OAGs, this section on actor analysis will begin with a brief discussion of the role of police, and then continue on with a look at private security companies, vigilantes, gangs and organized crime groups.

Police

For the majority of South Africa's population, the police force has long been more of an instrument of oppression than of security (Brogden and Shearing 1993; Brogden 1996; Desai and Pithouse 2004; Lemanski 2006). First the enforcers of colonialism, then of apartheid, the police have been an instrument of a minority power over the majority of the population.¹⁰⁸ Baker (2002, 46) notes that in August 2000, there were over 14,000 criminal cases before the courts or under investigation against members of the South African Police Services (SAPS). Lemanski (2006, 790) claims that in South Africa there is "a historic mistrust of a police force that previously served as brutal government enforcers rather than citizen protectors". And Samara (2010a, 207)

¹⁰⁸ There is an interesting connection between the colonial South African police force and Canada's colonial North Western Mounted Police (NWMP). A key figure in the creation of the South African Constabulary was Sam Steele, a NWMP captain who battled Métis in Battoche and assisted in the suppression of Canada's Indigenous peoples (Brogden 1996).

points out that research since 1998 has consistently shown police to be the least trusted institution in the country after political parties. They have lost much of their legitimacy in the eyes of South African people, not only of those who have been historically oppressed, but also by those who have been the elite.

Policing is typically designed to maintain order and, along with the military, generally considered to be the coercive instrument of state building (Marenin 1996). In most countries this maintenance of order involves access to, and use of, physical coercion or, in other words, the “delegated authority to use force” (Marenin 1996, 7). Certainly the police in South Africa have been used as a coercive force for the establishment of order. Numerous studies have noted the excessive force – what Brogden and Shearing (1993, 25) describe as “extreme and bizarre forms of terror-invoking violence” – which have characterized and continue to characterize police actions (Cock 1990; Brogden and Shearing 1993; Brewer 1994; Mathews, Heymann and Mathews 1994; Brogden 1996; Desai and Pithouse 2004; Lemanski 2006; Samara 2010).

Police violence escalated during apartheid as Blacks resisted their oppression and the force responded with brutal repression. Brogden and Shearing (1993) describe the norm of South African policing as one of “casual brutality” against Black people, played out on the streets and behind police station doors through torture and imprisonment without due process. They allege that police violence has been systemic, a mainstay of police culture and practice. Violence by the South African Police (SAP) was not the result of a few ‘bad apples’ in the force or lack of discipline. Rather it was fully facilitated and enabled through formal structures at legal, organizational and political levels which were designed to maintain White supremacy and prevent the political, social and economic mobilization of Coloured and Black populations (Brogden and Shearing 1993). The law was on the side of the police and supported their employment of violence. For example, police had the right to shoot and kill ‘suspects’ to ensure they do not escape and were allowed to use firearms to disperse an ‘unlawful gathering’. During the 1980s, Black and Coloured criminalization characterized South African legal and police practices such that “the definition of crime could be stretched to include any opposition to White rule” (Brogden and Shearing 1993, 66). Thus it could be argued that the police held a legitimate position of authority, at least in the eyes of the minority. In the eyes of the majority they were a force of unjust repression.

Although the South African police force has been predominantly White, there have been Blacks within the force, even as early as 1910 (Brogden 1996). However, they were used mainly as lesser-paid assistants and their authority was strictly limited (i.e. they had none over members of other racial groups) and only since the 1980s have Black police been allowed to wear the same uniforms as their White counterparts (Brogden and Shearing 1993; Brogden 1996). However, Brogden and Shearing (1993) note that in the apartheid era much of the oppressive, routine policing on urban streets was carried out by Black officers. In the early 1990s, roughly 60 per cent of the police force was ‘non-White’, although the majority of these Black and Coloured officers were of low rank. The government used Black patrol officers to claim legitimacy in township governance (Brogden and Shearing 1993). However, Black police officers were typically employed far from where they were recruited, thereby maintaining the system of ‘policing by strangers’ and reducing the likelihood that they would speak the same indigenous languages as the communities they patrolled in (Brogden and Shearing 1993).¹⁰⁹ They had also been trained into police culture which capitalized on the use of violence. Thus, even though the optics of having Black police patrol Black communities might have been good, these officers enjoyed little legitimacy and trust in the townships they patrolled.

At the end of the apartheid regime, the SAP force was dissolved and replaced with what was designed to be a de-militarized, more community-oriented, less politically involved force – the South African Police Service (SAPS). However, the old force was basically intact, albeit under a new name and a new government. Change has been slow and early optimism was soon dashed (Brogden 2002; Samara 2010a). Reform measures have been met with resistance, both from the force and by communities (Samara 2010a). For example, the practice of recruiting community members into the police force has been unpopular in townships since the arrest of gang members can lead to retaliation against family members of those police officers involved. There is also a widespread belief that the police force has been co-opted by gangs (Bility 1999). Brogden (2002, 171) also attributes the failure of community policing to “the political vacuum as old politics, structures and institutions were dismantled without new ones with adequate viability, effectiveness, and political legitimacy being constructed at adequate speed”. Samara (2010a,

¹⁰⁹ The African indigenous language in Cape Town in isiXhosa – which was the household language of 28.7% of Cape Town residents in 2001; Afrikaans was spoken in 41% of households and English in 28% (Directorate of Strategic Information 2003, 16).

200) argues that “the hard-edge approach by the security forces to the war against crime is reproducing older [apartheid-era] principles in a new form”.

It is generally perceived, by Black, Coloured and White populations, that the police and judicial system are unable to effectively deal with crime (Monaghan 2004). Violence and crime did not end with apartheid – instead crime rates rose (Gie and Haskins 2007). In the townships, distrust of the state police force has led to the development of the vigilantism as communities condone ad hoc policing actions in an effort to curb rampant crime and violence. The lack of policing has also enabled gangs to control territory and gain control over Coloured township populations. Even though police per capita ratio in middle and upper-class (White) communities is 1 to 600, as compared to 1 to 4,000 in Black and Coloured township areas (Samara 2005), Whites still consider the police to be unable to effectively address their security needs. As fear of crime and violence has replaced the White fear of anti-apartheid revolt, the upper-classes are turning to private security to secure their sectors of the urban landscape.

Private Security

As in many countries around the world, South Africa has experienced in recent years an exponential growth of private security companies (PSCs) and privatized, gated communities. Private security is a key performer in crime control and the private policing of both private and public domains, and in South Africa has increased by 150 per cent since 1997 over which time the number of police officers has declined by 2.2 per cent (UN-HABITAT 2007; Singh 2008).¹¹⁰ Research has attributed this to several factors, of which one of the most commonly cited is the failure of public agencies to adequately address the citizens’ security concerns (Baker 2002; Wakefield 2003; UN-HABITAT 2007; Bénit-Gbaffou et al. 2008).

It was only in the 1850s that public authorities assumed responsibilities for policing Cape Town (Baker 2002, 31). For this reason, citizens have historically taken responsibility for their security and policing. Indeed one could argue that all individuals have the right to protect themselves and their property, and to do so in a way that meets their needs without violating those of others. It is therefore not surprising that in 1990, the South African government

¹¹⁰ There are 3553 registered PSCs in South Africa, employing 265,000 active security officers; in contrast the SAPS had 98,000 active officers in 2004.

maintained that every citizen should “assume some responsibility for their own safety and for the protection of private property” (Hansard, Chamber of Parliament, as cited in Singh 2008, 5).

Large-scale growth of private security in South Africa began in the mid-1970s during a period of active political opposition to apartheid, and grew at an annual rate of roughly 18 percent over the next decade (Singh 2008). Growth steadied over the next decade, but spiked again as the apartheid regime was dismantled. In the decade that followed there were four to five times the number of persons employed in the private security sector compared to state police and private security, with an average annual income which increased 11 times between the late 1980s and 2000 (Standing 2006, 28).¹¹¹ In 2004, the private security industry had a total of 3553 registered companies and employed 265,000 active security officers while the SAPS had only 98,000 active police officers (Abrahamsen and Williams 2007, 244).

Private security forces are heavily involved in the security of commercial, industrial and domestic properties. In fact the greatest expansion in their services has been in domestic alarms and domestic patrols, with additional involvement in such things as “order maintenance, arrest, search, detection, surveillance, inspection, traffic control, crowd marshalling, risk management, the transportation of cash and personal escort/protection” (Baker 2002, 29; see also Singh 2008). Typically focused on monitoring criminal offenses and preventing crime – such as through deterrence mechanisms like gates, walls, closed circuit television systems – they are less likely to be involved in prosecuting offenders, leaving that to state police and legislative authorities. Private security companies concentrate most of their efforts in city centres and middle and upper-class suburbs. Their employers are overwhelmingly White; only two per cent of Blacks employ private security or own an armed response system (Singh 2008).

Whether, and to what extent, private security ‘punish’ offenders is difficult to determine due to definitional inconsistencies, unreliable record-keeping and lack of a consistent oversight body (Singh 2008). Some accusations and concerns about their activities will be sketched out below, but there are few studies which document their daily activities and their interactions with the public. Singh (2008) argues that coercion is routinely used by private security to regulate

¹¹¹ Abrahamsen and Williams (2007, 244) report that in 2004 the South African private security industry was valued at 14 billion Rand, (\$2 billion Cdn) an increase from 9 billion Rand (\$1.3 billion Cdn) in 1997.

conduct.¹¹² Their means of coercion include firearms, handcuffs, truncheons, riot dogs, pepper spray and tear gas (Baker 2002, 29, 32). In South Africa, private security companies do not legally have the same powers of police, but they possess those of any citizen which include the right to, and use of, a licensed gun or other coercive means such as pepper spray, “in self-defence or to effect a citizen’s arrest of someone suspected of a serious crime” (Baker 2002, 37).

Private security in South Africa has consistently presented itself as a partner and complement of state police services (Singh 2008). The two services are generally distinguished in terms of their ownership, but there are close and overlapping ties between them since membership of private security forces during the early years was largely restricted to those with police, intelligence or military backgrounds, often with colonial ties (Reiss 1987; Singh 2008). During the 1980s the state actively encouraged the growth of private security as a complement to their racially repressive aims and activities. Although the mandates of the state and of private companies were not identical, both coalesced around the notions of White property and privilege, and the protection of these against the ‘Black threat’ (Singh 2008). For example, in the late 1980s, landowners were compelled by law to evict squatters (Singh 2008). These evictions were generally performed by private security forces. While private security is theoretically about crime deterrence, it can also be an instrument of political agendas. Indeed, the state is increasingly partnering with private security companies for support services such as technical or logistical support, or even tactical and coercive assistance (Wood and Shearing 2007).

A highly visible example of the growing private security involvement in domestic properties can be found in the increased number of gated communities and segregated districts in and around Cape Town. Cape Town’s Observatory is a formerly segregated district which formed a non-profit company to hire police reservists for armed foot patrols (Baker 2002, 36). An example of a gated community is Western Cape’s ‘Heritage Park’, a new development surrounded by an electric fence and policed by 40 private guards who are assisted by sophisticated computer equipment (Johnston and Shearing 2003). Obvious parallels can be drawn between the urban division created by privatized spaces and the former, state controlled segregation of the apartheid era.

¹¹² Singh (2008) draws on advertisements, company publications and interviews to assess self-representations of private security in South Africa.

An example of the activities of private security which illustrates their relationship with SAPS can be seen in Cape Town's CBD improvement initiative (described above) which, during 2004, employed 160 security personnel who operated patrol cars, horse-mounted patrols, a 72-camera network, parking marshals, and a 24-hour operations centre and rapid response team (Samara 2005; Abrahamsen and Williams 2007). This network of security was managed by a former lieutenant with the South African Defence Force who had 18 years of military experience in intelligence gathering, counter-terrorism and hostage negotiations (Samara 2005). That a person with such a background should be chosen to lead an urban security program is certainly indicative of perceived seriousness of urban crime and the authority which private security forces command.

Mechanisms by which state governments seek to establish jurisdiction over private security include instruments such as licensing, registration, training requirements, employment laws and insurance regulations (Wood and Shearing 2007). Private police are also subject to criminal and civil liability. Additionally, because private policing is fundamentally a commercial enterprise, there is an assumption that they are governed by market accountability and the need to satisfy their customers. However, this creates a skewed system of accountability since private security is thereby not accountable to the general public, but rather to their client. Although theoretically bound by state jurisdictions, the security needs of non-clients are generally not of concern to private security and may indeed be violated for the sake of real or perceived client security needs.

If the poor are seen as a threat to security, such as through association with pick-pocketing, petty crime or violence, then the security needs of the paying customer will 'justify' actions which directly or indirectly violate security needs of the poor, such as forcible relocation, arrest, harassment and physical abuse. Security forces effectively remove and banish 'undesirable elements' from their patrolled areas, elements which include the poor, street children and street vendors (Samara 2005, Abrahamsen and Williams 2007; B  nit-Gbaffou et al. 2008). Crime-control measures used by private security forces "impact disproportionately on the poor, largely Black underclass" (Singh 2008, 3). Examples of this can be seen in the harassment of vagrants and poor in Cape Town's improvement districts, areas in which street children are beaten, harassed and chased by private security forces (Samara 2005; Abrahamsen and Williams 2007).

This aspect of private security has led to criticisms that the policing of improvement districts have become “little more than a form of social cleansing” (Samara 2005, 224).

Does the evolution and rise of private security signal a decline in, or an addition to, state authority? For some, the privatization of security is an ambiguous development, simply viewed as the “reinvolverment of the private sector in assisting the state in maintaining public order” (Shearing and Stenning 1987). Brogden (1996, 242) argues that private security is a legitimate expression of community preference and that communities “should have the right to choose the nature of their local police – state, private, or civil” with the caveat that chosen agencies “be subject to specific local measures of accountability in law”. Lemanski (2006, 789) points out that the increased privatization of security in South Africa is part of a global trend characterized by a shift “from state-dependence (e.g. the police) towards increasingly private and citizen-based security provision”. Similarly, Singh (2008) suggests that the liberal, democratic state is enabling its population by not only addressing crime through ‘command and control structures’ but also by “activating the self-governing capacities of individuals” by allowing individual choice and market forces to assume greater responsibility for security.

However, Shearing and Stenning (1987, 15) argue that the liberal promotion of the rights of individuals has legitimated the development of powerful private authorities “whose very existence, and activity, mock the liberal frame” and whose ordering practice is profit, not public interest. As Shearing (1996) and Baker (2002) point out, private centres and community groups are unequally capable of protecting themselves and as a result South Africa is faced with a growing inequality between those who have access to security, and those who do not. Where public security structures are insufficient to provide security for all sectors of the population, inequality in means results in significant discrepancies in the types of security, unless conscious policies are implemented to distribute power and resources more broadly.

Indeed, Shearing and Stenning (1987) suggest that to limit the question to whether private security assists the state in the maintenance of order is short-sighted. They ask instead what *kind* of order private security is supporting and suggest that

what we are witnessing through the growth of private policing is not merely a reshuffling of responsibility for policing public order but the emergence of privately defined orders, policed by privately employed agents, that are in some cases inconsistent with, or even in conflict with, the public order proclaimed by the state (Shearing and Stenning 1987, 13-14).

In the same vein, Shearing (1996, 292) argues that security is no longer conceived of in terms of justice, but rather “the provision of a customer defined product”. There is little, if any, incentive for private police to respond to the needs and concerns of those outside the client base.

Brown (1997, 6) points out, the problem with groups taking ownership of their own defense (such as is the case when groups hire PSCs) is that by “taking steps to defend themselves, groups often threaten the security of others”. And Kempa, Shearing and Cartwright (2002) suggest that private policing in South Africa has preserved and even extended apartheid by catering to the demands of an elite public which drives a security agenda characterized by the division of spaces into ‘fortified fragments’ which keep out the ‘undesirables’. In Cape Town, the already marginalized populations have become the ‘undesirables’ whose security is most threatened by the growth of PSCs (Bénit-Gbaffou et al. 2008). Arguably, social services are a responsibility of the state and not of private security companies, thus it may be unfair to criticize an organization for not doing something which is not in their mandate to do. However, the growth in strength and prevalence of policing organizations that lack social responsibility results the dominance of approaches to crime focused on coercion and deterrence, rather than one which address root problems such as social and structural inequality.

The fragmentation of urban space, the manifestation of socio-economic and racial inequality, and the ostracization of the poor are all exacerbated by the growth of private policing. This case study raises questions for future study regarding where the responsibility lies in such developments. Is it the employers – the residents of a gated community or the business owners in an improvement district – who should be accountable for the security measures they hire? Is it the government who should legislate and oversee private security so as to ensure alignment with public aims such as equal access to security and the freedom of movement? Or is it the private security forces themselves who should be not only accountable for the actions they take (i.e. coercive tactics) but also for the social and structural implications of their presence? The answers to these questions are as complex and multifaceted as the situation itself.

Vigilantes

In response to rising crime rates and violence, individuals and community groups attempt to fill in the gap left by an absent and mistrusted police force. While the White, affluent communities can afford to hire private security forces, poorer Black and Coloured communities

tend to rely on security measures such as grilled windows and guard dogs – measures which are more likely to be within their economic means. Additionally, these groups who have been neglected and marginalized by the state and conventional police forces turn to the “informal institutionalization of anti-crime vigilante groups” who enforce corporal and even capital punishment in their neighbourhoods (Wilkinson 2000, 201).

Vigilantes groups were widespread in townships during the apartheid era (Baker 2002) and since the 1970s, voluntary ‘police’ groups in South Africa have conducted a variety of functions, such as closing unruly drinking establishments, supporting battered women, apprehending young thieves, providing transportation, collecting garbage, and maintaining neighbourhood moral pressure (Brogden 1996; Bruce and Komane 1999). During the 1980s, vigilantes also emerged in White communities as organized and conservative groups violently retaliated against anti-apartheid forces (Cock 1990). In the 1990s, the growth in vigilante groups who explicitly use force, even lethal violence, to punish criminals, gang members or political dissidents was essentially confined to the townships.

Both Black and Coloured township communities may form voluntary Self Defence Units and Self Protection Units to act as a type of policing body and to provide some structure to ad-hoc vigilantism (Bruce and Komane 1999; Baker 2002). Most of these and other vigilante groups are small, loosely organized and sporadic, composed of a shifting membership which may or may not be armed (Baker 2002). Their activities involve non-violent protests such as public demonstrations and marches as well as violent actions such corporal punishment¹¹³ and drive-by shootings. They do not seem to control a specific territory, although they are typically associated with townships and concentrate their activities in certain township districts. Although the state deems many of their activities as illegal or even as acts of terrorism, vigilante groups appeal to community members for support by proposing to reverse ‘moral decline’ and uproot gang and criminal activity (Boshoff, Botha and Schönteich 2001; Dixon and Johns 2001). They claim to protect the interests of their communities by punishing ‘criminals’, especially in cases where someone is caught in the act of committing a crime such as robbery. Vigilante groups thus develop some legitimacy within communities due to the perception that they are filling a need

¹¹³ Although punishment by voluntary units is supposed to be meted by a people’s court, summary forms of punishment are common (Bruce and Komane 1999)

unmet by a government which is unwilling and unable to effectively address the crime and violence characterizing township life (Dixon and Johns 2001).

A telling example of Cape Town vigilantism is PAGAD (People Against Gangsterism and Drugs), one of the city's most well-known and violent vigilante groups which has received a degree of scholarly attention (e.g. Boshoff et al. 2001; Dixon and Johns 2001; Baker 2002; Monaghan 2004; Bangstad 2005). PAGAD was formed in the mid-nineties by a group of teachers and social workers from Coloured townships in the Cape Flats (such as Kensington, Salt River, Wynberg and Surrey Estate) who were concerned about local gang killings in the Cape Flats and frustrated with the failure of police to adequately address the issue (Baker 2002; Bangstad 2005). Its operations included public protests and marches as well as violent activities such as bomb attacks on leading drug dealers (Baker 2002). Within two years of their formation they executed 30 gang leaders and drug dealers, including their first murder – the widely publicized shooting of Rashaad Staggie, a gang boss/drug lord killed outside his home in Salt River (Baker 2002; Bangstad 2005). PAGAD members, who came from, and acted within, various Coloured Cape Flats communities including the ones listed above, were openly armed with Uzi submachine guns, Magnum revolvers and automatic weapons (Baker 2002, 51). In response to their powerful threat, gangs in the Cape Flats increased their organizational and weaponry capacities (Baker 2002). For example, a court case revealed that one gang stole military-type weapons from a police armoury in an effort to match the threat of PAGAD (Baker 2002, 51). Over time PAGAD's focus spread from gangs to police officers and businesses,¹¹⁴ with the aim of securing weapons or extracting 'donations' (Baker 2002). Although not proven, they are believed to be associated with the 18 bomb attacks between June 1998 and August 2000 in affluent and tourist areas of Cape Town, suggesting their attention had turned to capitalist or even anti-Western targets associated with a growing extreme Islamist ideology (Baker 2002, 36).¹¹⁵

The response of both community members and state authorities to vigilante groups is both inconstant and ambiguous. Bruce and Komane (1999) find that police both actively and tacitly

¹¹⁴ PAGAD has become fractured by disagreements over how to deal with gangsters – some advocate direct violence, even killing, while others seek to co-operate with police and reject militant strategies.

¹¹⁵ In 2001, 86% of the 281,507 Muslims in Cape Town were Coloured, with origins from India, Malaysia and Indonesia (Bangstad 2005, 193). PAGAD members were for the most part Muslim. Bangstad (2005) explores the role of Islamist discourse in support for and motivation of PAGAD membership and activities.

support vigilante activities.¹¹⁶ For example, police will sometimes deliberately neglect to intervene in incidents of community-inflicted punishment or would even hand over a person to be beaten by a crowd (Bruce and Komane 1999). In another instance, police would accompany PAGAD on their protests which targeted the homes of known drug dealers in the mid-1990s, even though some participants in these protests were illegally armed (Boshoff et al. 2001). Additionally, White vigilantes acting in support of the apartheid regime during the 1980s often enjoyed police sanction and support, whether tacit or active (Cock 1990). Yet despite some tacit support which PAGAD receives, Samara (2010, 201) argues that Coloured vigilante campaigns against gangs “marked, in the eyes of many officials from government and law enforcement, a triple threat to the state: it threatened state security, state legitimacy in the fragile new democracy and the state’s monopoly on violence”.

During their early years, PAGAD could mobilize between 2,000 and 5,000 supporters for protest marches and rallies; yet by the end of the decade, disapproval of PAGAD’s increasingly violent actions could be seen in diminished public support as marches attracted only a few hundred supporters (Boshoff et al. 2001; Dixon and Johns 2001). This perhaps demonstrates that there is a tipping point within communities at which support will decrease. Brogden (1996) argues that self-policing in the townships derives legitimacy from historical struggle and has an organic, grass-roots gestation. However, when a group such as PAGAD becomes particularly militant, they often lose their legitimacy in the eyes of their community and their actions are also less likely to be tolerated by state authorities (Dixon and Johns 2001). In essence, they can be perceived becoming more a part of the problem of township violence than as part of solution (Bruce and Komane 1999; Boshoff et al. 2001).

Gangs

The Cape Flats have a long history of gangsterism which is intricately tied up in apartheid segregation and racial control.¹¹⁷ Although gang activity in Coloured residential areas predates segregation’s forced removals (Bangstad 2005), the large scale displacement of Coloureds and

¹¹⁶ Bruce and Komane (1999) make an argument for identifying extra-judicial force by police officers as vigilante activities. However, in this section I am referring to vigilante activities carried out by non-police.

¹¹⁷ Although outside of the scope of my review due its publication in the 1980s, it is worth noting a book on gang formation in Cape Town which seems to be one of the first in-depth academic studies of this phenomenon – Don Pinnock, 1984, *The Brotherhoods: Street Gangs and State Control in Cape Town*, Cape Town: David Philip. Cited by Parnell 1997; Bangstad 2005; Standing 2006; Jensen 2008; Jensen 2010.

Blacks from the 1950s to 1970s is seen as having undermined the power of informal social control by parents and community leaders as families were dispersed – men separated from their wives and children – and communities were shattered (Flisher et al. 1993; Slater 2000; Standing 2006; Jensen 2008). Bility (1999) notes that the demise of apartheid created a social vacuum which youth gangs could fill. Another possible historical factor in the rise of gangs is the high levels of incarceration, both in prison and in reform schools, of Coloured men in the Western Cape (Standing 2006). Gangs are very active in prisons and prisoners will align themselves with a group in order to secure a modicum of protection. Standing (2006, 9) notes that in 1980, on any given day, there were 2,500 Coloured youths incarcerated. These incarcerated Coloureds were exposed to high levels of corporal punishment, including the death penalty (Standing 2006).¹¹⁸ Additionally, increased unemployment and the associated instability, tension and frustration resulted in large numbers of frustrated, unsupervised youths (Standing 2006).

It is very difficult to estimate the level of gang activity in Cape Town as there are no official records and gang composition and membership changes constantly (Shields, Nadasen and Pierce 2008). However, in 2001, there were an estimated 80,000-100,000 active gang members, constituting 5 percent of Cape Town's population.¹¹⁹ Gangs are predominantly Coloured – as opposed to White or Black – and are particularly active in the Coloured townships of the Cape Flats which are divided into areas of controlled territories of various gangs (Bility 1999; Legget 2004; Jensen 2004; Jensen 2008).¹²⁰ This division of townships between gangs contrasts distinctly with gang territorial control in Rio's *favelas*. In Rio, there are three main drug gangs, factions of which control entire *favelas*. In Cape Town there are an estimated 280 different gangs with such names as Asbestos Boys, The Americans, New Yorkers, Naughty Angels, Junky Funky Kids, Impossible Ones and Cat Pounds (WHO 2002; Jensen 2008; Samara 2010).¹²¹ While gangs may create affiliations and rivalries with other gangs, entire townships are not

¹¹⁸ The influence and activities of gangs in prison is a fascinating aspect of the gang phenomenon and has been written about by researchers such as Standing (2006). However, given that this study is focused on the social and territorial control in urban environments by non-state OAGs, it is beyond its scope to go into detail here.

¹¹⁹ This estimate of gang membership is based on information provided by the Provincial Safety and Security Minister (Allie 2001). A household victim survey conducted by the Institute of Security Studies suggests there are about 5,000 gang members in the township of Manenberg, made up of a shocking 30% of males between the ages of 10 and 30 (Legget 2004).

¹²⁰ Coloured communities in the Cape Flats have historically had more durable gangs as compared to the poor Black communities (Legget 2004; Bangstad 2005).

¹²¹ This estimate of 280 gangs is based on information provided by the Provincial Safety and Security Minister (Allie 2001).

controlled by the same gang as with the *favelas* in Rio. As such, turf battles between gangs occur within townships, as opposed to battles in Rio where gang battles are fought by gangs from different *favelas*. Standing (2006) describes gangs as being linked to each other through affiliations and Jensen (2008) notes that one gang may provide arms to another to assist them in a fight with a shared rival, or gangs may spread out and incorporate other groups. However, the control of one gang may extend for only a few township blocks and even in large gangs or gang alliances there is no central command (Standing 2006). Some gangs are short-lived – with members dying, being imprisoned or disbanding within a few years – while others survive despite the death, imprisonment or disbanding of leaders and members (Legget 2004; Jensen 2004; Jensen 2008). Larger gangs may have several dozen members,¹²² while small gangs are made up of a handful of local youths, typically socially marginalized males between 10 and 25 years of age (Bility 1999; Jensen 2008).

As in Rio, gang membership in Cape Town is predominantly made up of youth from the community in which the gang operates. For example, a secondary-school survey in the Coloured township of Manenberg found that 19% of boys reported that someone in their home was a gang member (Legget 2004). Although gang formation and crime rates are not inextricably linked, there is a commonly held association between the two held up by anecdotes, the media and conventional wisdom (Standing 2006). Additionally, nearly all gangs are involved with drugs (such as marijuana, mandrax and crack cocaine), though mostly in street-level drug-related activity which is not as lucrative as the larger-scale activities operated by drug lords (Legget 2004; Bangstad 2005). Many gangs also specialize in a certain area, such as selling stolen property, crime or prostitution.

Within gangs there is a hierarchical structure of authority and a reward system, although this is not as institutionalized or structured as with the drug gangs in Rio. Individual members will have specific tasks (such as selling drugs or acting as a hit man) and some may only be sporadically involved in gang activity. Authority is based on loyalty to the gang and its leader. When gang members are imprisoned, gang activity continues via formal and informal networks.

¹²² The largest known gang structure in Cape Town is the ‘Americans’, a gang which emerged in the 1980s and can be found in over 20 townships. The Americans are rumoured to have spread internationally, as far as the Namibian capital of Windhoek (Jensen 2004).

In fact, as in Brazil, South African Police allege that most gangs are run by members inside prisons (Bility 1999).

As found in Rio and in other studies of gangs around the world (see Dowdney 2003; Vigil 2003; Rodgers 2006; Small Arms Survey 2006), youth are attracted to gangs by “the glamour, money, and alternative route to mainstream social achievement” as well as by the promise of protection, security, recognition, social prestige and “a sense of belonging and power in a deprived and powerless community” (Bility 1999, 291-292). The 2003 secondary-school survey mentioned above found that 86 percent of youth polled said that girls are more attracted to gang members (Legget 2004, 302).¹²³ Legget (2004) also cites an interview with a youth from Manenberg who claimed to have joined a street gang in order to get a gun. Similarly, Jensen (2008, 71) notes that the gang offers “modes of identification that deferred the notion of the weak coloured man through the construct of the gang as a site for heroic identification and order”. Risky behaviours, such as drinking, smoking, self-mutilation and early sexual activity are combined with gang rituals to create a distinct identity and distance members from parents and social institutions. Due to such activities, teenage pregnancy and infection with HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases have also become associated with Cape Town gangs (Bility 1999).

Gangs exert territorial control through the use of violence, such as by engaging in fights with members of rival gangs and preventing access to their turf by these rivals (Bangstad 2005; Jensen 2008). Standing (2006, 27) reports that many Coloured working-class communities are considered “no-go zones for people living elsewhere”, both Whites and Black. Jensen (2008) notes how the increasing availability of small arms in the 1990s corresponded to increased violence in gang turf fights. Such inter-gang violence leads to cycles of revenge killings which isolate neighbourhoods and communities from each other, fuel distrust and entrench spatial boundaries. Between October 1994 and March 1995, police recorded 253 murders in the Cape Flats, half of which were deemed gang related (Monaghan 2004, 2). Similarly, in the first five months of 2001, gang wars resulted in 103 deaths in the Cape Flats (Jensen 2008, 77).

¹²³ The Institute for Security Studies administered a yes/no – true/false questionnaire to 200 students -72 males and 128 females between the ages of 16 and 19. This survey found that 88% of boys and 84% of girls reported that girls are attracted to gang members. However, in focus groups with gang members, the gang members did not mention attracting girls as a reason for joining the gang – which does not necessarily discount it, but does suggest that it may not play a prominent or publically-acknowledged role in the decision to join a gang.

Attempts by the police and vigilante groups to eliminate gangs can often backfire. For example, Samara (2010a) notes that aggressive police operations targeted at gang leaders can increase violence since the elimination of established leadership leads to violent clashes between younger members scrambling to fill the power vacuum. He also notes that gangs who are being threatened may form alliances with other gangs, thus growing stronger. The crackdown on established male leaders has also created opportunities for females to assume leadership roles that previously were not open to them (Samara 2010a).¹²⁴

Jensen (2004) notes that populations of one gang controlled territory will often perceive another territory as being more dangerous or crime-ridden. It is in the gang's interest to reinforce such perceptions as they will feed community isolation and support the gang's claim that they are protecting their own community. Additionally, communities experiencing high levels of violence are hampered in their relationships with religious institutions, community organizations and law enforcement groups, increasing their isolation and enforcing the control of the gangs.

The cost of gang territorial control is paid by both gang members and the proximate community. Gang members die or are wounded defending their 'turf'. Community members also face violence if they cross the invisible, yet very real, boundaries between their own and rival territories (Jensen 2004). Gangs will also retaliate against community members who report on their activities (Jensen 2008).¹²⁵ In research conducted in Cape Flats schools, Bility (1999) notes that gangsterism was identified by youth as their most important safety and health concern. Additionally, negotiating with gangs is a matter of survival for community leaders and politicians. Businesses, bus drivers and small traders operating in gang-infested neighbourhoods pay 'protection money' to gangs in order to secure safe operation of their activities (Bility 1999).

Despite the costs of living in gang-controlled territory, community members have ambiguous attitudes toward gangs. While they bring unwanted violence, gangs can also be the primary informal employers (Oldfield 2002). Many people in the townships have intimate relations with gangsters in one way or another, such as kin relations or neighbourhood ties

¹²⁴ The observation of an increase in female leadership comes from an interview by Samara (2010) with Gaynor Wasser, chair of the Western Cape Anti-crime forum in 2004, who stated that "the role that women are playing in the gangs is just unbelievable. Before they used to just carry guns and go to court and visit them [male members] ... [now they] have a more proactive role, they also make decisions" (Samara 2010a, 208). Unfortunately there I could find no data to back up this observation, suggesting that further research is required in this area.

¹²⁵ For example, in 2001 the BBC reported the murder of an 18-year-old girl from the township of Bonteheuwel who was gunned down on her way to school in what police believe a silencing assassination as she was due to testify in the High Court in a case against three gangsters accused of raping her the previous year.

(Jensen 2004). Many youth surveyed by Bility (1999, 290) suggested that gangs were “something they had to adapt to and learn to live with”. Nevertheless, Cape Town communities do not always passively tolerate the presence of gangs. This suggests that while gangs may be able to exert a certain authority over community members due to their use of force to control territorial access and certain community activities, they often fail to establish a sustained legitimacy within the community. Communities in Cape Town have mobilized to hold protests within their neighbourhoods and before municipal and regional governing institutions.¹²⁶ However, sometimes protests and anti-drug/crime marches are not seen to be enough, or do not achieve the desired results. Communities may then condone the activities of vigilante groups, discussed above, who promise a direct and forceful intervention against gangs. This illustrates the cyclical nature of non-state organized armed groups in urban violence as the actions of one group invite the growth and response of another.

Organized Crime

In this case study, my knowledge of organized crime is drawn predominantly from the research of Standing (2006) who conducted research on Coloured gangs and organized crime through semi-structured interviews and through quantitative surveys in the Cape Flats.¹²⁷ Unless noted otherwise, facts cited here are drawn from his work.¹²⁸ Another source of information on organized crime comes from Bangstad (2005) who conducted ethnographic research in an (unidentified) Cape Flats township in 2000. Due to the fact that both these sources do not disclose the location of their research, it is impossible to geographically situate the following examination of organized crime more specifically than in townships in the Cape Flats (see figure 4.1B).

As with any group, organized crime groups exist within a spatial and temporal context. Of particular significance to the context in Cape Town are the state regulations that created

¹²⁶ Cape Town’s first mass anti-drug march took place in 1990 under the leadership of a community organization named the Salt River Co-ordinating Council. This spawned similar protests and community initiatives over the next decade, some of which have been linked to Muslim fundamentalist movements (Boshoff et al. 2001).

¹²⁷ Standing does not provide the dates of his field research in his book, nor does he identify the townships in the Cape Flats in which he conducted his research.

¹²⁸ Standing interviewed people actively involved in crime in the Cape Flats, conducting meetings in prisons, detention centres and in the townships. He also spoke with community members such as school teachers, social workers, academics and business people, and organized seminars to discuss and debate his study and policies relating to organized crime.

opportunities for the development of illicit economies. For example, the apartheid government attempted to control alcohol consumption by non-Whites through the limited establishment of state-owned alcohol ‘outlets’ in the Cape Flats, stores which were not allowed to offer any form of entertainment such as music or dancing. This restriction on alcohol availability, combined with poor enforcement of bans, paved the way for a large, informal market of illegal alcohol production and sales. A similar opportunity was created with the prohibition of a popular sedative (and recreational drug) known as mandrax which had been cheaply available in pharmacies until a ban in 1977. This fostered the market development of illegal supplies of mandrax, a product whose popularity and un-regulated, inflated price quickly made it a lucrative illicit industry.

As with the arrival of cocaine into the drug market in Rio at the end of the 1970s, the development of a market for mandrax, and to a lesser extent for cocaine, heroin and Ecstasy, changed the nature and scope of illicit organizations in the Cape Flats. In the early 1980s, several rich drug merchants rose to prominence and power in the Cape Flats. These are local men¹²⁹ with shrewd business sense and with connections to gangs in Cape Town as well as drug merchants in Johannesburg and Durban, cities from which couriers bring drugs to Cape Town. Given that dealing in mandrax requires a significant financial investment, inter-city connections as well as gang affiliations, there are only a few suppliers who are able to become wealthy and powerful drug merchants.¹³⁰ Those who do are typically involved in other activities such as arms trade, protection rackets, diamond smuggling and prostitution and monopolize the distribution of drugs within specific boundaries. They also operate extensively on the use of credit, and violence, or threatened violence, is used to enforce contracts and ensure payment.

Organized crime requires complex networks and infrastructure, as well as collusion between gangs, drug merchants and corrupt police (Bangstad 2005; Standing 2006). Relationships are typically clandestine and ambiguous. Drug merchants may be part of a leading street gang or may operate as individual ‘businessmen’ who distance themselves from claims of gang membership. They are rivals one with another, yet may also at times cooperate or enter into

¹²⁹ Most drug merchants are Coloured men from townships with impoverished, working-class roots – for example, almost all of them are illiterate and yet they have amassed great wealth through the drug trade as well as other businesses such as taxi companies, shops and hotels (Standing 2006).

¹³⁰ The actual number of these drug merchants is difficult to determine, but Standing (2006, 97) suggests that there may be as few as 10 or 15 at any one time in Cape Town – suggesting that there are few who have the wealth and networks to rise to prominent positions in organized crime groups.

individual deals and trade. Their relationships with township communities are also ambiguous. Though they are seen as violent men, like the drug leaders in Rio, drug merchants in Cape Town often engage in philanthropic activities in their communities, such as investing in local churches, sponsoring sports teams and giving out cash during festivities.

Prior to the mid-1990s, organized crime was not identified as a serious threat to Cape Town or the country of South Africa. Yet by 2000, organized crime had expanded to the point where it became a matter of grave concern to the government and to city residents. In 1998 the South African government enacted the Prevention of Organised Crime Act which “permitted the courts to administer extremely harsh penalties for those found to be members of organised [sic] crime groups or criminal gangs” (Standing 2006, x). Standing (2006, x) notes that in popular depictions of organized crime, criminal groups are seen as parasitic, sinister “entities that exist outside mainstream society” and corrupt the local economy and politics. Such depictions serve to further vilify criminal, marginal groups while denying the agency and culpability of mainstream actors.

IMPACTS CAPE TOWN’S OUV

As with the case study of Rio, it is impossible to provide a complete list of the multiple and overlapping manifestations of violence generated by urban non-state OAGs. Additionally, it is difficult to extricate which manifestations of violence can be directly attributed to urban non-state OAGs, which to police or state authorities, and which to independent actors. However, with this in mind it is still possible to look at some of the descriptions of violence which can be considered under the category of OUV and thus contribute to our understanding of this category of urban violence.

Normalization of violence

Inequality has long been a catalyst for violence in South Africa as Blacks and Coloureds have resisted their oppression and state forces have violently repressed their revolts. The history of violence in South Africa dates from recent clashes between residents and immigrants, back through the apartheid regime to the colonial rule which saw White minorities exploiting South Africa’s resources and enslaving its population. South Africa’s history of violence contributes to its normalization (Cock 1990; McKendrick and Hoffmann 1990; Chidester 1991; Abrahams and Jewkes 2005). Flisher et al. (1993, 491) describe South Africa as having a ‘culture of violence’.

Abrahams and Jewkes (2005) note that the use of violence is widespread, from intimate partner violence to corporal punishment in schools, from violence in the workplace to violence between neighbours.

In research on the effects of violence in township children, Shields et al. (2008) discovered significant amounts of exposure to community violence, something which is seen as contributing to the normalization of violence (Moser 2004). Over 90 percent of the 185 children (ages 8 – 15) interviewed had seen someone hit, both at school and in their neighbourhood. Over 70 percent saw someone being badly beaten up, over 50 percent witnessed an attack with a sharp weapon or someone being shot at. Over a third of the children saw someone being killed (Shields et al. 2008, 593). Violence was reported as being particularly widespread in Coloured communities where gang membership is high (Shields et al. 2008, 598). Their research also found that exposure to various forms of violence was highly interrelated, suggesting that children tended to be exposed to multiple forms of violence (Shields et al. 2008, 599).

Indicative of the normalization of violence, Abrahams and Jewkes (2005, 1811) find that violence is a “widely accepted means of resolving conflict in South African society”. It can be “used as a form of punishment, an expression of anger, and a means of gaining and asserting power” in schools, workplaces, health care settings, households and on the streets (Abrahams and Jewkes 2005, 1811). While gender-based or intimate partner violence is outside of the scope of this focused study, the normalization of violence inside the home, as well as on the street, is indicative of the pervasive spread of violence. Seedat et al. (2009, 1011) note that 55,000 rapes of women and girls are reported to the police every year, a number which is estimated to be nine times lower than the actual number of rapes.

High levels of crime and homicide

As with Rio, one of the most commonly cited indicators of the excessive urban violence in is the level of homicide and gun violence. Statistics from various sources reinforce the portrayal of Cape Town as one of the most violent cities in the world. For example:

- The murder rate in Cape Town is 60 per 100,000 people (Cape Town Strategic Information 2008).¹³¹

¹³¹ Brogden and Shearing (1993) suggest Cape Town’s homicide rate was as high as 65 per 100,000.

- In the poorer districts of Cape Town, the homicide rate exceeds 100 per 100,000, a level that is among the highest in the world (Sanders and Chopra 2006).
- Although the incidence of murders in Cape Town has been decreasing over the past five years, the rate is still extremely high with a total of 1,797 murders in 2005/6, representing an average of five murders each day (Gie and Haskins 2007).
- Homicide levels vary widely between city areas – from relatively low levels (around 26 per 100,000) in the affluent Southern district of the city to over 110 per 100,000 in the Black township district of Khayelitsha (Groenewald et al. 2008, 24).¹³²
- Between January and June 1998, there were over 60 gang-related killings and as many as 667 acts of “urban terrorism” (Meyer 2007).
- Additionally, high levels of violent personal and residential crime, domestic violence, rape and child abuse, as well as an active drug trade, mark the townships and informal settlements of the Cape Flats (Wilkinson 2000; Lemanski 2004; Gie and Haskins 2007).

Urban violence especially impacts young men

As we have seen in Rio and in the literature review, urban crime and violence disproportionately affect young males (Flisher 1993; Gie and Haskins 2006; Bangstad 2005; Standing 2006; Groenewald et al. 2008). For example:

- Standing (2006, 26) reports that in Cape Town, more than five times as many men are murdered as women.
- Groenewald et al. (2008) note that homicide is the leading cause of premature mortality for males.
- Seedat et al. (2009, 1012) report that the highest homicide victimization rate in South Africa is seen in males aged 15 to 29 years (184 per 100,000).
- Groenewald et al. (2008) find a distinct peak in homicide rates in Cape Town for males in the 15 to 24 age group.
- In the Black township of Khayelitsha, the homicide rate for males is a shocking 204.8 per 100,000 (Groenewald et al. 2008, 26).

¹³² Khayelitsha and another township of Klipfontein are noted for high rates of gun violence and of homicide (Groenewald et al, 2008, 26).

- homicide rates in Cape Town are around 13 per 100,000 (ibid.). Indeed, at 17.6 per 100,000 South Africa has one of the world's highest rates of homicides of women ages 14 to 29 (Abrahams and Jewkes 2005, 1811). Somewhat comparatively, in Cape Town the homicide rate for females ages 15 to 34 was 20 per 100,000, 2001-2006 (Groenewald et al. 2008, 28). Lerer (1992) provides some interesting research in a detailed description of female homicide in Cape Town with relation to sex, race, age and blood alcohol concentration. For example, he found that Black and Coloured women were more likely to die a homicidal, as opposed to suicidal, violent death. Over 72 percent, or 23 out of 32, of the female suicides studied were White women (Lerer 1992, 95). Additionally, Coloured and Black victims of homicide were of a significantly younger median age – 29.5 compared to 59 – than their White counterparts (Lerer 1992, 96). While this study provides some interesting insights, it is limited in scope (one mortuary,¹³³ 248 female homicides) and time (January 1990 – July 1991). Additionally, given that it is dated by almost 20 years, I will not go into further detail on its findings. It is unfortunate that there has not been a more recent replication of this research in other mortuaries.¹³⁴

Widespread fear

From 1998-2000, there were 22 bomb explosions in Cape Town over a span of 24 months. Although seemingly indiscriminate, these blasts mostly occurred in affluent areas of the city, at restaurants, cafés and clubs, as well as police stations. The uncertainty about when and where the next blast would occur, combined with lack of knowledge of motives behind these attacks, sowed terror and uncertainty throughout the city (Maw 2007; Meyer 2007).¹³⁵ Although these blasts cannot be directly linked to non-state OAGs since the perpetrators have never been found, they certainly contribute to the widespread fear of violence that marks Cape Town.

Fear in Cape Town is often associated with the stereotypical image of the violent, Coloured, male youth (Jensen 2008, 2). This is similar to other situations of urban violence where coloured male youths are seen by the media and the broader public as the primary culprits in generating insecurity, crime and violence (Vanderschueren 1996; Jütersonke et al. 2009). As in other cities,

¹³³ Lerer notes that this mortuary processed 90% of non-natural deaths in Cape Town at the time of his study (1992, 94).

¹³⁴ Shanaaz Mathews (2010) did conduct a study of female homicide (femicide) by conducting a national mortuary-based study on all female homicides in 1999, but statistics from this study cannot be disaggregated for Cape Town.

¹³⁵ Meyer (2007) and Maw (2007) both offer insight into the experiences of survivors of these bombings and explore the context in which they occurred.

the media in Cape Town feeds this fear, promoting an “image of urban, ‘detribalised’, young black men” who are a menace to society and order (Samara 2005, 211). Such representations of the urban threat do not acknowledge the broader context of socio-economic inequality and racial prejudice in which these young men live and act. They also tend to prioritize the fears of the affluent, White community over that of the marginalized township populations who must negotiate with crime, rape and violence on a daily basis.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that characteristics of OUV identified in the literature review and in Rio, such as normalization of violence, high levels of crime and homicide and socio-spatial divide, are also found in Cape Town. It also shows that there are commonalities in the organizational structure and activities of urban non-state OAGs, such as male-dominated memberships which protect their territory and interests through violence and the threat of violence. Throughout this case study, my intent has not been to point fingers at these OAGs and accuse them of being the sole cause of OUV. Rather, I have sought to show the complexity and overlap of different urban OAGs and their environments, and to examine how their characteristics and actions both arise feed urban violence and insecurity.

A young, Coloured male in the townships may align himself with a local gang in order to secure even just a few blocks of his township where he is ‘safe’ to hang out with his friends – all the while knowing that this turf may need to be defended with his life. Members of the impoverished communities may seek security through the development or support of vigilante groups, yet recognize that this security is bought through violence and can serve to escalate tensions. In the name of security, the upper class will barricade themselves, their homes and their communities behind physical walls and barriers of private cops. Yet this security too comes at a price – the rich become prisoners by their own making, shrinking the territories in which they move, vilifying the ‘other’ and becoming captive to their fear. As these examples show, in situations of violence, notions of security become ambiguous and complex. It also raises questions about how security is to be maintained and whether individuals or communities have the right to establish their own security at the expense of another group.

The study of OUV also raises interesting questions of legitimacy. Chidester (1991, xii) notes that most states, including South Africa, will call their own violence ‘legitimate’ and the force of opponents ‘violence’. He goes on to argue that the definition of violence, or the debate between whether an act of force is legitimate or violent, is “relational, situational and contested”. What constitutes violence is always a social construction. Similarly, McKendrick and Hoffmann (1990, 4) argue that whether actions of force are interpreted as legitimate or as destructive violence “depends on the allegiances of the persons in conflict”. As I have illustrated in the above case study of Cape Town, concepts of violence are relative to the groups perpetrating the violence and the allegiances of persons in their proximate communities. As such, vigilantes tend to have greater legitimacy among township communities than among state police and officials, while PSCs have greater legitimacy among Whites in gated communities than among those living in Black and Coloured townships. However, we have also seen that legitimacy gained may be later lost. As illustrated with PAGAD, a group can gain legitimacy within a community only to lose it later. These issues of legitimacy and security provision are part of the broader theoretical discourse within which the category of OUV is situated.

Conclusion

This thesis, and the development of the category of OUV, contributes to the field of Conflict Studies and contemporary approaches to issues of security and conflict mitigation. In this concluding chapter I assess the knowledge gained through this research process by returning to the questions posed in my introductory chapter and using answers to these questions to further the development of the category of OUV. Although the term OUV is not currently used in academic or policy literature, various aspects of the issue – such as urban gangs, small arms, private security – are being addressed by organizations and governments around the world. An examination of these initiatives demonstrates how issues of urban security related to OUV are already being acknowledged. This leads to suggestions for further research, both to continue the development of the category of OUV and to address the threat which OUV poses to human and urban security.

Issues of urban security present new challenges to disciplines such as security studies and international relations “which have traditionally been focused at the level of interstate relations and whose intellectual roots are firmly in clear distinctions between politics ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the state, between crime and war, between the police and the military”(Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009, 364). Similarly for the field of Conflict Studies, urban security presents issues which may require adjustments to our frames of reference and frameworks of analysis. Such adjustments are vital since “urban (in)security seems on the verge of becoming one of the key issues on the contemporary political agenda” (Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams 2009, 364).

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF OUV

This study has sought to answer the question: *Can a category of urban violence – namely organized urban violence (OUV) – be developed through an analysis of research on urban violence which determines the impact and characteristics of urban non-state organized armed groups (OAGs) who generate violence and exert territorial and social control in urban areas?* Throughout this thesis my approach has been to focus on the agency of human beings, as opposed to simply describing the context or identified risk factors. As such, the answer to my research question lies in examining the knowledge gained through this approach, which can best be expressed by returning to the sub-questions proposed in the introductory chapter:

1) What types of non-state OAGs are involved in urban violence?

The literature reviewed in the thesis identifies several over-lapping types of groups which can be considered urban non-state OAGs – by which I mean armed urban groups which have an established organizational structure and which exert territorial and social control within a city. The primary types of such groups presented in this research are private security companies (PSCs), vigilantes, gangs, and organized crime groups – although it is important to reiterate that the lines between these groups are often blurred and the boundaries between these categories are best understood as porous and overlapping (see Figure 2.3).

Through the Rio and Cape Town case studies, it became clear to me that we cannot look at the activities of non-state OAGs without also considering the role of state OAGs such as police forces. In both cities, the police are described as violent and mistrusted – a mistrust most pronounced among the populations susceptible to the control of illicit OAGs. The normalization of violence in both cities is at least partially the result of repressive tactics of police, and the high levels of armed violence are at least partially the result of armed conflicts between non-state OAGs and state forces. In Rio, the police engage with drug gangs through heavily armed operations and invasions at great cost to the local population. They are also involved in vigilante and private security activities, indicative of the blurred line between state and non-state OAGs. In Cape Town, the police effectively abandon townships by neglecting to provide security and leaving populations vulnerable to the violence of gangs and vigilante groups. Although a full investigation of the activities, characteristics and impacts of police forces was beyond the scope of this thesis, it is clear to me that they can play a significant role in furthering urban insecurity.

As a recommendation for further research, I believe a focused investigation on the role of police and their relationship with non-state OAGs would be useful in generating a fuller understanding of OUV. Of particular interest would be an assessment of the armed capabilities of both state and non-state OAGs, since I suspect that increased arms on the part of one group (i.e. the police) spurs an increase in arms among illicit groups. This also suggests that it would be difficult to expect disarmament campaigns to be effective if communities and non-state OAGs view the police as armed opponents.

2) What are the characteristics of these groups?

To varying degrees, the urban non-state OAGs discussed in the literature reviewed for this study have certain common characteristics such as:

- a hierarchical structure which has been institutionalized and often militarized over time,
- involvement in activities such as drug trafficking, crime, extortion and behavioural control
- location in poor and marginalized areas, such as *favelas*, slums and townships (with the exception of private security companies who are more active in elite/commercial areas),
- a membership which is predominantly, but not exclusively, made up of young males who tend to be poor, undereducated, unemployed and who come from broken and/or violent homes, and
- a membership (with the exception of PSCs) which is primarily drawn from the community.

3) What types of violence are they most likely to engage in and why?

Drawing from the continuum of violence discussed in the introduction chapter (see also (Moser and McIlwaine 1999; Moser and Winton 2002; Moser 2004; Moser 2006), there are several overlapping types of violence – social, economic and institutional – manifest in urban environments and associated with urban non-state OAGs. Vigilantes and PSCs are typically associated with institutional/social violence which includes extra-judicial punishments and killings (such as lynching and social cleansing). Organized crime groups tend to be involved in various types of economic violence which can include theft, extortion, kidnapping, drug, small arms and prostitute trafficking, as well as assaults during the course of economic crimes. Gangs are often involved in types of economic/social violence which include territorial or identity-based ‘turf’ violence (most commonly manifest as gang warfare), robbery, extortion, assault, homicide and drug trafficking.

This continuum of violence is useful in describing the various types of violence which non-state OAGs generate and respond to in their urban environments. However, while Moser and McIlwaine (1999) categorize these types of violence according to their primary motivation(s) (i.e. economic, social), it should be understood that motivations may be multiple, complex, shifting, and even unexpressed or sub-conscious. Thus, my approach throughout this thesis has been to relay research on the types of violence generated by urban non-state OAGs, but not to assume an understanding of the motivation behind these actions.

In general, the scope, threat and impact of these various types of violence are augmented by the proliferation of firearms.

4) How do they exert territorial and social control?

As the research presented in this thesis has shown, the ways in which urban non-state OAGs exert territorial and social control are multifaceted. To fully understand how these groups are able to maintain their control of urban spaces and populations we have to consider, among other things, the role of the state and of the communities both directly and indirectly impacted. I have only been able to touch upon these aspects in this thesis, in particular the way in which the concept of legitimacy (or lack thereof) can be used to understand how OAGs can gain or lose authority in communities. Further research into the roles of the communities and the state, and the relationships between these bodies and non-state OAGs, is necessary for a deeper understanding of OUV. That said, my research on urban non-state OAGs has revealed some similarities in the way that these groups gain and maintain territorial and social control.

Urban non-state OAGs such as organized crime groups, gangs and vigilantes typically exert social and territorial control in areas of the city that have been marginalized or neglected by the state. In both Rio and Cape Town, certain areas of the city (*favelas* and townships respectively) do not receive the same services and support that the formal or elite areas do. Although the processes and history of this marginalization differ between the two cities, the non-state OAGs controlling these communities share several characteristics, including:

- They position themselves as the authority figures in these areas by establishing a certain social order and codes of behaviour, as well as by providing services that may be lacking in impoverished, under-serviced communities.

V - Conclusion

- The enforced rules and norms are typically tacit, inequitably enforced and unquestionable. In other words, communities under the control of non-state OAGs must obey a set of rules that are imposed upon them and for which there is no recourse or appeal.
- One of the most commonly enforced rules in controlled communities is the 'code of silence' which prohibits residents from talking about the OAGs or their activities with outsiders – especially with police or other law enforcement bodies.
- They restrict access by state services (such as police) so as to maintain their position and protect their activities.
- Their territorial control is often related to economic goals, such as controlling markets and illicit resources.
- Both territorial and social control are enforced through violence and the threat of violence, such as physical punishments for violations of behavioural codes, as well as armed defence of their territory from the threat of rival groups and the state.

Another type of urban non-state OAG, the PSCs, also exerts territorial and social control but typically in wealthy/commercial areas. Unlike gangs and organized crime groups, PSCs are usually invited (employed) in their urban territory and typically work alongside the state, not counter to it. However, the result is still that a non-state armed group is exerting social and territorial control through violence or the threat of violence. Additionally, it is important to point out that the groups targeted by these PSCs (vagrants, street vendors, street children, etc.) did not invite the group in and essentially have the authority of a non-state OAG imposed on them with little opportunity for recourse, which is similar to the control of other urban non-state OAGs in marginalized areas.

The relationship to the state is obviously different between PSCs (who might share resources, conduct tandem operations and even have overlaps in personnel with police forces) and organized crime groups or gangs (whose illegal activities bring them into direct conflict with state authorities). However, when we consider the impact of non-state OAGs on urban spaces, we can see that these various groups similarly divide the city into territories whose boundaries restrict the mobility of urban residents and whose imposed codes of behaviour are enforced through violence.

5) What are the impacts of their activities on their urban environments?

Divided cities. As described above in discussion of the territorial and social control, cities in which urban non-state OAGs control territory become divided into areas to which the state is and is not the authority enforcing social order and behavioural codes. For residents of territories strictly controlled by non-state OAGs such as gangs, their city becomes further divided as they are limited in which areas of the city they are and are not allowed to visit, making it difficult for them to access educational, health or employment services. Cities are also divided by physical barriers, such as those around gated communities and exclusive commercial districts. These barriers serve to imprison both the gated insiders and those who have been excluded. The barriers also entrench socio-economic divisions and fuel fears of ‘the other’. Additionally, cities are divided by PSCs who are employed to secure areas of the city for elite populations and keep out undesired populations.

High levels of crime and homicide. This research has shown that cities with proliferations of non-state OAGs have heightened levels of homicide. In cities experiencing OUV, homicide (mostly by firearms) is the most common cause of death for young males. In addition to homicide, OUV is manifest in high levels of crime such as assault, theft, extortion, kidnapping, and drug trafficking, which contributes to negative conditions for women, such as teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, prostitution, dependency and sexual violence.

Normalization of violence. In situations of OUV, violence tends to be normalized both within the membership of non-state OAGs and in the broader community. This can be seen in the propensity to use violence as a means to resolving disputes, defining territory, upholding rules and maintaining social norms, as well as in the widespread perception that this use of violence is expected, acceptable and justified.

Widespread fear. Fear is pervasive in communities facing high levels of crime and violence, changing the way people interact with each other and with their urban space. Fear erodes social fabrics and community networks, and extends far beyond those who have been directly victimized by acts of violence.

As a composite, the answers to the above questions presented the characteristics and impacts of OUV. The following section will further explore the category of OUV by looking at initiatives aimed at addressing its various aspects.

APPROACHES TO OUV

Urban security is becoming a pressing concern not only to cities experiencing extensive outbreaks of violence, but also to a variety of organizations and institutions concerned with human security, armed violence, conflict and human rights. Since OUV is not a category yet established within and outside of academia, there are obviously no policies and practices that explicitly target OUV *per se*. However, as will be demonstrated below, there are many existing approaches to urban security and armed violence which can be applied to OUV.

The Armed Violence Prevention Programme (AVPP) document asserts that there is “an emerging consensus that armed violence is not simply a law enforcement or public security issue to be addressed as a police or military matter, but that solutions must also be sought in poverty reduction, access to justice, education, non-violent dispute resolution, and through other means” (WHO 2005, 3). Similarly, approaches which implicitly relate to OUV are not focused simply on policing or law enforcement, but touch upon underlying drivers of urban insecurity and preventative measures. In this regard, there are four common approaches to issues related to OUV:

- 1) address socio-economic inequality and upgrade slums,
- 2) provide alternatives for youth,
- 3) restrict access to small arms, and
- 4) gather knowledge and research on urban security.

1) Address socio-economic inequality and upgrade slums

Since urban violence most commonly manifests itself in marginalized and impoverished areas of cities, efforts to improve these areas through physical upgrades and service provisions are often effective in reducing levels of violence. Target 7.D of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals is “to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers” by 2020 (UN 2008, 43). Realization of this goal could have a direct impact on levels of urban violence since urban violence is most often manifest in slums and other marginalized, impoverished urban areas where non-state OAGs exert territorial and social control. Evidence from slum upgrade projects in various countries has shown that slum dwellers not only receive health benefits (through such measures as sanitation upgrades), education and employment benefits (through schools, jobs, training) but also benefit from reductions in crime

and homicide levels. For example, a slum upgrading initiative in Guatemala City contributed to a 43 percent drop in the crime rate (World Bank 2001; Imparato and Ruster 2003, 84).¹³⁶ Upgrades and service provisions in the Alexandra township outside Johannesburg, South Africa saw a decrease of 31 percent in murder from 1998 to 2001 (from 159 to 110), a decrease in robberies between 1999 and 2001 of 10 percent (from 676 to 608), but a 123 percent increase in reports of common assault (from 298 in 1998 to 666 in 2001) (Roefs et al. 2003, 38).¹³⁷ An urban renewal and slum upgrading plan in Medellín, Colombia resulted in a dramatic decline in homicide rates, for example a decrease from 184 homicides per 100,000 in 2002 to 28.6 per 100,000 in 2007 (Human Rights Watch 2010, 52).¹³⁸ Since I cannot prove that these areas were controlled by non-state OAGs, these examples are meant to be illustrative rather than conclusive. However, they point to a correlation between slum upgrades and violence reduction and suggest that further research is warranted to investigate this relationship and to see how slum upgrades could mitigate the impact and growth of OUV and mitigate the impacts of non-state OAGs.

2) Provide alternatives for youth

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals Target 1.B is to “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” (UN 2008, 8). Since urban non-state OAGs draw their members almost exclusively from the ranks of impoverished, undereducated and marginalized young men, reducing these ranks has the potential to impede the growth of gangs and organized crime. For example, a study conducted by the Universidad de Centro America de El Salvador found that 84.8 percent of Salvadorian gang

¹³⁶ The 1993-1997 El Mezquital upgrades were based on community participation and organization and included new street lighting and paving, networks of footpaths, wastewater and sewage, and new housing and community facilities.

¹³⁷ The Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP) is a nine-year upgrading project launched in 2001 which aimed at improving housing, urban services, economic development, and social infrastructure (ARP 2006). Although the ARP placed an emphasis on physical structures (i.e. houses, roads, schools, parks and sporting facilities), they also implemented clinics, magistrates’ offices, police stations, and employment opportunities. Additionally, 822 volunteer community marshals were trained and began regular night patrols. Given the increased presence of police and volunteer security marshals I wonder how much the incidence levels of common assault is due to increased reporting and monitoring, or due to increased violence. I also do not know what relationship this increase in reported violence had with the upgrades and the presence of community marshals.

¹³⁸ Medellín’s slum upgrades were part of a comprehensive strategy which targeted the most conflict-ridden areas of the city and included physical upgrades, reforms to government services, including better police protection, and the provision of various socio-economic opportunities to the poor. A significant part of Medellín’s upgrade is the UNESCO-supported library initiative which has created five ‘library parks’ in depressed areas of the city which have become spaces of social inclusion, gathering, cultural activities and education, and are focal points for their communities. For more on the library initiative see Domínguez (2009).

member respondents reported that they would leave gang life in exchange for employment or education (Maddeleno, Concha-Eastman and Marques 2006, 130).

Providing positive alternatives to youth is key not only to improving their lives but also to strengthening communities and impeding the spread of gangs and gang violence. For example, part of a violence reduction project launched in 1992 in Cali, Colombia was a program called PARCES (Participación, Convivencia, Educación, Superación, or Participation, Coexistence, Education and Overcoming) which attracted over 1,400 youth with recreational activities, employment assistance, and psychological counsel.¹³⁹ In Rio a program called *Luta Pela Paz* (Fight for Peace) is designed to provide a safe environment for youth and develop self-discipline and self-respect through boxing and martial arts training, as well as education and personal development. The majority of participants surveyed in 2009 about the project reported that they felt safer in their neighbourhoods, were less likely to be a member of a gang, get involved in drug trafficking or carry a weapon (Fight for Peace 2009, 19). These two examples show that programs for youth can provide an alternative to gang membership, making a real change in the lives of each youth and hopefully contributing to a broader change in the community as local gangs are less able to bolster their ranks. Further research could explore how gang activity and membership is affected by the presence of successful youth programs.

3) Restrict access to small arms

Reduction in the number of small arms in circulation in urban areas can produce tangible results in reducing rates of homicide and violent crime. Cities and states have adopted various approaches to small arm reduction, such as Brazil's modification of gun laws in 2003 which raised the minimum age to legally buy a gun from 21 to 25 (IANSA 2005). In the three years following the implementation of this law, gun death rates in Brazil dropped from 22 to 18 per 100,000 people each year (IANSA 2007).¹⁴⁰

Gun buy-back and amnesty programs which rest on voluntary and remunerative principles have also been successful in reducing the number of small arms circulating in urban areas. There are also instruments which can be implemented and developed in urban contexts, such as the UN

¹³⁹ Rodrigo Guerrero, "Programa Desarrollo, Seguridad y Paz, DESEPAZ de la Ciudad de Cali, Programas Municipales para la prevención y atención de la violencia," Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo-Prefeitura do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 29-30 Julio 1999.

¹⁴⁰ These figures on Brazil's reduction in gun death rates are from a joint study by the Brazilian Ministers of Health and Justice. The total of gun deaths in 2003 is not provided, although in 2006 it is reported as 34,648.

Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Although city-specific data are hard to find, research shows that a Brazilian buy-back program in 2004 recovered over 248,000 guns in six months (IANSA 2005), while a South African six-month amnesty in 2005 amassed over 100,000 firearms (Kristen 2007). Reducing the number of civilian owned firearms is of particular importance in South Africa since civilians own an estimated 3.7 million firearms, while military and police jointly own only 567,000 (Kristen 2006, 107). In 2002, there was one registered firearm for every six South Africans over the age of 20, a rate that excludes the massive pool of unregistered arms (Dowdney 2004, 293). This high rate of firearm ownership contributes to the high rates of homicide and armed robbery. It follows that reducing the number of firearms in circulation can contribute to declines in crime and homicide rates. Media also plays a key role in the success of initiatives to restrict and control small arms since it not only provides information but also shapes public opinion (Kristen 2004; IANSA 2006).

4) Gather knowledge

There are several international initiatives which gather and share information about urban safety and whose research and knowledge is useful to furthering an understanding of OUV. For example, the AVPP has launched a series of initiatives to survey national and local violence prevention strategies and assess the causes, nature and impact of armed violence, as well as processes to share research and forums for discussion. The UN Safer Cities Programme has been accumulating and disseminating theoretical and practical knowledge on urban violence for over 15 years, with a focus on prevention and urban management – one of their initiatives is the Police Platform for Urban Development launched in November 2009.¹⁴¹

Since the mid-1990s, a network of research centres in Central America centred at El Salvador's Institute for the Study of Public Opinion, have published four volumes on *maras* and *pandillas* in Central America which report on survey research done with gang members as well as analysis of issues related to gang violence and membership (WOLA 2006). The Geneva

¹⁴¹ The Police Platform for Urban Development in Barcelona, Spain is a UN-HABITAT Safer Cities Programme initiative run in collaboration with institutions and organizations such as UNITAR, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the Swedish National Police and the Ministry of the Interior, Institutional Relations and Participation of Catalonia.

Declaration on Armed Violence and Development¹⁴² is a diplomatic initiative launched in 2006 aimed at strengthening efforts to reduce armed violence. The Geneva Declaration is also involved in developing evidence-based violence reduction programs and producing research such as the 2008 report, *The Global Burden of Armed Violence*. Additionally, the World Bank's Social Development Department contributes to and disseminates research on conflict, development and conflict prevention practices. Crime observatories which collect, map, analyze and publish data on crime are also emerging, especially in Latin America (Prince, Ferland and Bruneau 2009). These observatories can be urban, regional, national and international and are often conducted by partnerships between municipal governments, police, public health agencies, NGOs, and universities. The information they disseminate can be valuable to a variety of stakeholders including researchers, policy makers, and law enforcement bodies.

These agencies and organizations contribute to a vast pool of knowledge on armed conflict and urban issues. It would be beneficial for this pool of research to be assessed to determine what policy and programming overlap and which aspects of OUV are not being addressed by existing approaches.

FURTHER RESEARCH

In this thesis I have aimed to develop and test a category of OUV by demonstrating that cities in which urban non-state OAGs proliferate have certain common characteristics and impacts. As demonstrated through the three literature maps, there is a significant body of literature which addresses various aspects of this phenomenon, including its drivers, actors and characteristics. When analyzed as a composite, this research provides a detailed picture of OUV. However, there are certainly avenues for research which could further develop and test this category. For example, an additional and important step would be to compare situations of urban violence marked by a strong presence of non-state OAGs to those which do not have this presence. Are there differences in the types of violence? If/how does OUV differ from urban

¹⁴² The text of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development is available on-line at <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/Geneva-Declaration-Armed-Violence-Development-091020-EN.pdf>. Currently more than 100 states, including Canada, Brazil and South Africa, have signed the declaration, meaning they are committed to strengthening efforts to integrate armed violence reduction and conflict prevention programs.

violence generated by individuals or ad-hoc groups? Answering this question may clarify if OUV is a distinct category of urban violence.

Savitch and Ardashev (2001, 2517) ask whether “more collective forms of violence occur in conjunction with rising urbanisation.” An exploration of the relationship between urbanization rates and collective violence would offer an understanding the unique urban nature of OUV and how city development can affect violence. As mentioned in this thesis, although it is problematic to use homicide and crime rates as measure of urban violence, it may be useful to evaluate levels of violence (such as through homicide rates) along axes of time and urban population to map the relationship between urbanization and violence. Part of this exploration could also consist of a qualitative assessment of how physical structures contribute to the exacerbation or mitigation of violence.

From the perspective of a student of Conflict Studies, another direction for further research could be to position the category of OUV in concepts of violence and conflict found in Conflict Studies literature. For example, how do concepts of collective violence – the collusion of two or more people with the intent to attack another (Tilly 2003) and communal violence – the mobilization of group identities by both perpetrators and victims of violence (Brewer 2010) inform our understanding of violence generated by OAGs? Additionally, how do the existing approaches to urban violence discussed above address such issues such as identity (Redekop 2002), restorative justice (Liebmann 2007), and human needs (Galtung 1996; Burton 1997)?

The process of developing this thesis on urban violence has deepened my respect for those who conduct the field research in cities around the world, especially for those who engage in participatory research in marginalized and violent communities (i.e. Moser and McIlwaine 1999; Rodgers 2006). My understanding of the nuanced and complex nature of urban violence, of the multifaceted ways that OAGs gain and maintain legitimacy in their communities, and of the young males who so predominantly contribute to and suffer from urban violence would be significantly poorer if not for their committed research and insightful writing. Therefore, in concluding my thesis I want not only to point to potential directions for further research, but to acknowledge the rich body of literature which has informed this project and the numerous researchers and writers who have taught and informed me. I hope that this thesis will contribute to the important dialogues on urban insecurity and further our understanding of violence in order to advance the possibilities for peace.

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Appendix A: List of articles from peer-reviewed journals

Africa Today

2005

Ross. Urban Development and Social Contingency: A Case Study of Urban Relocation in the Western Cape, South Africa

American Journal of Public Health

1999

Szwarcwald et al. Income Inequality and Homicide Rates in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Cadernos de Saúde Pública

2005

Briceño-León. Urban violence and public health in Latin America: a sociological explanatory framework.

Cities

2000

Wilkinson. City profile: Cape Town.

2001

Barke, Escasany and O'Hare. Samba: A Metaphor for Rio's Favelas?

2007

Lemanski. Global Cities in the South: Deepening social and spatial polarisation in Cape Town.

Development and Change

2009

Rodgers. Slum Wars of the 21st Century: Gangs, Mano Dura and the New Urban Geography of Conflict in Central America.

Environment and Urbanization

1996

Vanderschueren. From violence to justice and security in cities.

1999

Moser and McIlwaine. Participatory urban appraisal and its application for research on violence.

2004

Esser. The city as arena, hub and prey patterns of violence in Kabul and Karachi

Hume. "It's as if you don't know, because you don't do anything about it": gender and violence in El Salvador.

Lemanski. A new apartheid? The spatial implications of fear of crime in Cape Town, South Africa.

Meth. Using diaries to understand women's responses to crime and violence.

Moser. Urban Violence and Insecurity: An Introductory Roadmap.

Rodgers. "Disembedding" the city: crime, insecurity and spatial organization in Managua, Nicaragua.

Roy, Jockin and Javed. Community police stations in Mumbai's slums.

Sanín and Jaramillo. Crime, (counter-)insurgency and the privatization of security – the case of Medellín, Colombia.

Winton. Urban violence: A guide to literature.

- Winton. Young people's views on how to tackle gang violence in "post-conflict" Guatemala.
2005
- de Swardt et al. Urban poverty in Cape Town.
2008
- Lemanski. Houses without community: problems of community (in)capacity in Cape Town, South Africa.
- Ethnography*
2002
- Caldeira. The paradox of police violence in democratic Brazil.
- Geoforum*
2001
- Acioly. Reviewing urban revitalisation strategies in Rio de Janeiro: from urban project to urban management approaches.
- Freire-Medeiros. The favela and its touristic transits.
- Riley, Fiori and Ramirez. Favela Bairro and a new generation of housing programmes for the urban poor.
- Rolnik. Territorial exclusion and violence: the case of the state of São Paulo, Brazil.
2008
- Jaglin. Differentiating networked services in Cape Town: Echoes of splintering urbanism?
- International Social Science Journal*
2001
- Zaluar. Violence, Easy Money, and Justice in Brazil: 1980 – 1995
- Zaluar. Violence in Rio de Janeiro: Styles of leisure, drug use, and trafficking.
- Journal of Development Economics*
2002
- Gaviria and Pagés. Patterns of crime victimization in Latin American cities.
- Journal of International Development*
2001
- McIlwaine and Moser. Violence and social capital in urban poor communities: Perspectives from Colombia and Guatemala.
- Moser. Insecurity and social protection – has the World Bank got it right?
- Journal of Latin American Studies*
2006
- Arias. The Dynamics of Criminal Governance: Networks and Social Order in Rio de Janeiro
- Rodgers. Living in the Shadow of Death: Gangs, Violence and Social Order in Urban Nicaragua, 1996 – 2002.
2007
- Macaulay. Knowledge Production, Framing and Criminal Justice Reform in Latin America
- Journal of Urban Affairs*
2008
- Freeman. Great, Good, and Divided: The Politics of Public Space in Rio de Janeiro. Latin American Perspectives
- Costa Vargas. When a Favela Dared to Become a Gated Condominium: The Politics of Race and Urban Space in Rio de Janeiro

Appendix A

Latin American Politics and Society

2004

Arias. Faith in Our Neighbors: Networks and Social Order in Three Brazilian Favelas

2006

Arias. The Myth of Personal Security: Criminal Gangs, Dispute Resolution, and Identity in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas

Latin American Research Review

2006

McCann. The Political Evolution of Rio de Janeiro's Favelas.

Political Geography

2002

Western. A divided city: Cape Town.

Progress in Development Studies

2003

McIlwaine and Moser. Poverty, violence and livelihood security in urban Colombia and Guatemala.

Security Dialogue

2009

Abrahamsen, Hubert and Williams. Special Issue on Urban Insecurities: Guest Editors' Introduction.

Amar. Operation Princess in Rio de Janeiro: Policing 'Sex Trafficking', Strengthening Worker Citizenship, and the Urban Geopolitics of Security in Brazil.

Ismail. The Dialectic of 'Junctions' and 'Bases': Youth, 'Securo-Commerce' and the Crisis of Order in Downtown Lagos

Jütersonke, Muggah and Rodgers. Gangs, Urban Violence, and Security Interventions in Central America.

2010

Jensen. The Security and Development Nexus in Cape Town: War on Gangs, Counterinsurgency and Citizenship.

Urban Affairs Review

2008

Bénit-Gbaffou, Didier and Morange. Communities, the Private Sector, and the State: Contested Forms of Security Governance in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Urban Studies

1990

Christopher. Apartheid and Urban Segregation Levels in South Africa

1997

Parnell. South African Cities: Perspectives from the Ivory Tower of Urban Studies.

1999

Werlin. The Slum Upgrading Myth.

2001

Bannister and Fyfe. Introduction: Fear and the City.

Savitch and Ardashev. Does Terror Have an Urban Future?

2006

Appendix A

Lemanski. Spaces of Exclusivity or Connection? Linkages between a Gated Community and its Poorer Neighbour in a Cape Town Master Plan Development

Minty. Post-apartheid Public Art in Cape Town: Symbolic Reparations and Public Space
2010

Samara. Policing Development: Urban Renewal as Neo-liberal Security Strategy.

Social Justice

2000

Huggins. Urban Violence and Police Privatization in Brazil: Blended Invisibility.

World Development

2006

Moser. Latin American Urban Violence as a Development Concern: Towards a Framework for Violence Reduction.