

Citizen insecurity in Latin American cities: The intersection of spatiality and identity in the politics of protection

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1 Introduction

On May 10, 2010 The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) published its *Report on Citizen Security and Human Rights*. The Report addressed the problem of the high levels of violence throughout post-dictatorship Latin American democracies and the insecurity and fear engendered amongst citizens. The Report highlighted the high vulnerability of youth and urban poor to violence, the failure of the state to protect victims, the growing privatization of security and the resort to repressive measures as a solution to crime control. The stated aim of the Report was to '*change public policies on citizen security, changing the focus of attention from the repression to the prevention of crime and violence*' (IACHR 2010). Of greatest concern was the impact of high levels of violence on public confidence in democratic governance, the rule of law and justice. From the perspective of the IACHR Report growing citizen security was an index of state crisis and a failure of the rule of law pointing to the urgent need to implement human rights policies.

The concept 'citizen security' was coined in Latin America during transition to democracy to distinguish 'security' from its earlier use by authoritarian regimes to refer to the security of the state, not citizens. Citizen security relates to individuals and groups and assumes a human rights perspective on protection. The purpose of the IACHR Report was to establish how a '*right to security from crime or interpersonal or social violence expressly*' can be inferred from the obligation of the state to protect the individual. In the response to the crisis of insecurity engendered by pervasive violence the IACHR sets out to codify a new right, 'the right of citizen security'. The Report challenges the usual resort to traditional *mano dura* (hard-lined) policies employed to address citizen-security problems. It argues that the securitization of the urban poor and the introduction of 'measures like preventative detention, a lower age of criminal impunity, higher imprisonment rates, and participation of the armed forces and private security forces in domestic security issues amount to reactionary policies that do not necessarily solve the problem of elevated crime and homicide rates' (O'Loughlin 2010).

Latin America ranks second in the global homicide rate statistics (UNDOC 2011). While certainly alarming this continental figure distorts the uneven distribution of

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murderous violence across the region. In practice homicide rates vary greatly between the North and South; in Central America the rate is between 52-71 per 100,000 and in the Southern cone countries around 5.8 /100,000). The greatest incidence occurs in the large urban areas at where the homicide rate is 6.4 per 100,000 and the highest concentrations occur in particular cities – e.g. 284 per 100,000 in Medellín (Moser et al. 2005) and more than 50% of national homicides concentrated in Caracas, Lima, Mexico City, and Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo whose homicides represent more than 50% of the national totals (Briceño-León 1999). The fear of violence and insecurity are not just a recent phenomenon but have been normalized as the urban condition and become integral to modes of governance for a long time. Under authoritarian regimes the state engendered fear through repression to produce political consent and now, under neo-liberal democracy, insecurity and fear of crime are used to launch a new repression targeting the urban poor to protect the urban rich in the name of fighting crime and citizen security. The *Latinobarómetro* surveys¹ reveal that despite the initial optimistic expectations for democracy bringing accountability and the rule of law there is growing public dissatisfaction with democracy accompanied by a growing fear of crime (Blanco 2006). Fear of crime has become pervasive even where actual crime levels have not changed (Oviedo & Rodríguez 1999; Wacquant 2001).

This paper situates the phenomenon of citizen insecurity in the context of the crisis of the post-authoritarian neo-liberal democratic state in Latin America. It takes as its starting point the IACHR framing of the regional experience of vulnerability to criminal and violent acts as ‘citizenship security’. The IACHR Report argues from the human rights perspective ‘citizenship security’ refers to a bundle of rights – ‘the right to life, the right to physical integrity, the right to freedom, the right to due process and the right to the use and enjoyment of one’s property’ amongst others (Fontana 2009: 6). The report is the IACHR’s response to the difficulty of dealing with increasing numbers of petitions from victims covering a broad spectrum of violence from which their states have failed to protect them. The arrival of these rights demands, bundled as ‘citizen security’, point to the growth of unregulated violence on the one hand and the growth of human rights consciousness and claim-making on the other.

The emergence of ‘citizen security’ as a new human rights construct can be understood sociologically as a particular moment in the transformation of the organized violence and victims’ responses to it. I argue that the IACHR framing of the phenomenon of diverse violence as ‘citizen security’ captures the intersection of a moment of two large-scale historical processes – the impact of the ‘globalization of public violence’ on democratizing Latin American states as a consequence of the re-scaling of sovereignty and control over violence and the intensification of the ‘globalization of human rights’ in the context of state crisis in providing for the care, welfare and protection of their citizens promoting the growth of rights consciousness and forums for claim-making. The framing of the IACHR Report of the contemporary spectrum of daily violence as ‘citizen security’ highlights the depth of state crisis engendered by the intensification of public and private violence, the state’s securitization of urban poverty and the emergence of ‘grey zones’ in which the state cedes control over governance and the monopoly of violence. This violence includes not only national but also transnational violent actors,

¹*Opinion Pública Latinoamérica*. <http://www.latinobarometro.org/>

especially organized crime.

In the social science literature the phenomenon of post-authoritarian violence in Latin America has been characterized as the 'new violence' (Koonings & Kruijt 2004). The 'new violence'

is socially or politically organized to wield coercion by evading or undermining the legitimate violence monopoly of formally democratic states. This implies the permanent 'uneasy co-existence' of the legal democratic order and the new violence in a parallel logic that is at the same time antagonistic and complementary in present-day Latin America. This represents, in fact, a hidden form of state failure: on the surface the institutions and practices of democratic politics, civil society, and the rule of law hold sway; at the core, these very notions are undermined by violence (Koonings 2004: 8-9).

The 'new violence' is not seen as continuous with the recent period of authoritarian rule and civil wars but a rupture moving beyond dictatorship and insurgency ushering in a period of 'unrule of law', 'uncivil movements' and 'illiberal democracies' (Koonings & Kruijt 2004: 6). This violence is not political in the sense of competing for state power but instead '*occupies the interstices of the fragile and fragmented formal legal, institutional and political order*' (Koonings & Kruijt 2004: 8).

While the construction of contemporary violence as 'new' is useful in distinguishing it from earlier patterns of political repression it mistakes the emergence of new violent actors as a rupture with previous state violence. The 'new violence' should be understood as continuous with the organisation of public violence which the state has historically dominated and whose effects are experienced across a continuum of victims both directly and indirectly. The 'new violence' refers to a particular moment in the 'globalization of public violence' in Latin America and its corollary, the 'globalization of human rights'. The concept of 'public violence' is borrowed from the work of Holden (2004) on state formation in Central America from 1821-1960 and the consolidation of the coercive power by the state. He argues that the formation of the modern state is an early example of globalization. The 'globalization of public violence' which emerged in the twentieth century '*embraced the increasing capacity of the agents of those states, as well as their collaborators and adversaries, to more efficiently monitor, threaten, kill and maim ever greater numbers of people and to destroy more and more of their property*' (Holden 2004: 3). Public violence is seldom monopolized by state institutions within the 'field of state power' but is both contested as well as reinforced by different groups. Public violence includes war-making between states as well as within states and a wide range of disparate categories including '*political violence, collective violence, revolutionary violence, and acts of violence committed by death squads, vigilantes and self declared popular armies of national liberation*' (Holden 2004: 12). The globalization of public violence was intensified by firstly, the politicization and quasi-nationalization of the arms trade linked up to foreign policy, secondly, the expansion and institutionalization of transnational military and police collaboration, thirdly, the identification of research in military technology research and development with modernization and search for clients and fourthly, the integration of national militaries into the Cold War alliances and hosting US military bases overseas. In the post-Cold War era the US military has

continued to promote new forms of transnational collaboration especially in the 'war on drugs' and the 'war on terror' as well as internationalize policing as a mechanism of internal social control (Huggins 1998). The state's franchizing of the use of violence to private security companies has seen their rapid growth both nationally and transnationally. In fact former Latin America military and paramilitary personnel have been recruited into organized international crime – e.g. the Zeta drug cartel in Mexico – as well as transnational private security companies – e.g. former Chilean military personnel in the Unity Resources Group based in Australia and Dubai; UAE recruitment of Blackwater, a private security company, as a security force².

Parallel with the globalization of public violence has been the globalization of human rights. The two are interrelated, the latter emerging in response to, and in an attempt to constrain, the Cold War expansion of state repression as counter-insurgency. The contradiction however is that the torture of the body tends to engender not merely conformity but also greater individualization (Foucault 1977). In Latin America the experience of repression helped forge individual rights consciousness and the human rights movement. As Grandin (2007: 205) argues, state terror *'played an unexpected role in bringing forth the kind of subjectivity on which appeals to human rights depend. Government repression disaggregated powerful collective movements into individual survival strategies, extracted leaders from their communities and redefined the relationship of the self to society.'* The creation of the self-possessed moral individual became the basis for human rights to condemn the very violence that helped forge it. *'The irony is that in Latin America, it was, to a certain degree, torture itself that helped bring this autonomous rights-bearing subject into being'* (Grandin 2007: 206).

The 'new violence' must be positioned within the dynamics of the globalization of public violence and the globalization of human rights. The focus of the analysis here is on the experience of the most marginalized social sector, the urban poor and the slum, the site of the intensification of poverty in the city. In Latin America around 25% of the 471 million who live in cities live in slums (UNHABITAT 2010). The slum has become a metaphor for urban apocalypse and a space of exclusion to be governed by separation, intervention and pacification. Objectively the slum is the site of greatest violence and insecurity and subjectively the site of greatest fear either lived experience internally or constructed as an object of fear externally. The urban poor are 'the most likely to both be seriously affected by crime violence and be held responsible for the crime and violence committed' (Moser et al 2005: 125). From the perspective of urban governance the slum is an apocalyptic urban space arising from global processes of the urbanisation of poverty, the warehousing of surplus population (called a space of relegation), and the criminalization of the urban poor. It is seen as an existential space of insecurity and

²George Grayson Los Zetas: the Ruthless Army Spawned by a Mexican Drug Cartel, E-Notes, Foreign Policy Research Institute, <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/200805.grayson.loszetas.html> (accessed 17 August 2011) 'Australia withdraws troops guarding Iraq embassy', ABC News 10 August 2011. <https://civiliancontractors.wordpress.com/2011/08/10/australia-withdraws-troops-guarding-iraq-embassy/> (accessed 15 August 2011); Kim Sengupta Blackwater founder 'setting up mercenary army for UAE' The Independent 16 May 2011 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/blackwater--founder-setting-up-mercenary-army-for-uae-2284668.html> (accessed 17 August 2011); Mark Mazetti and Emily B. Hager Secret Desert Force Set Up by Blackwater's Founder The New York Times, 14 May 2011 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/15/world/middleeast/15prince.html?_r=2&pagewanted=all (accessed 17 August 2011).

vulnerability.

In studies of Latin American cities the slum has become constructed as a political space – the 'grey zone' where the legal and illegal become blurred (Auyero 2000a).

In Latin America, the spread of impoverishment and the exclusion from employment provoked by globalization is reinforced by the expansion of illegal economies and the growth of illegal businesses like drug and weapons trafficking. Along with the strengthening of these illegal processes, legality and the rule of law are weakened. Public security is replaced by private security, with the upper classes relying on watchmen and bodyguards, the middle classes on personal armament and the lower classes on the creation of violent gangs or mob killings of criminals. The new patterns of informal social control, in which the most powerful prevail, are the only solutions citizens visualize at a time when the state cannot monopolize violence, and still less exercise it legitimately (Briceño-León & Zubillaga 2002:38).

What is at play in the current violence, made visible through its victims, is the survival of nation-states with inclusive citizenship. Social marginalization, spatially and materially produced in urban the slum, is the crucible for the escalation of violence, the state's security response to it and the victims' claims for human rights protection. The IACHR Report anxiously addresses citizens' insecurity to emphasize the urgency of an inclusive state based solution based government for all, democratic participation, and rule of law, not the present security solution based on exclusion and selective legal protection.

2 Continuities and continuums of violence

Continuities of violence refer to historical patterns of violence sustained through the relations of domination in particular social relations. Continuums of violence refer to the different kinds of violence which sustain forms of domination from the personal to the state. For Bourdieu (2004) violence is everywhere in social practice and ranges from symbolic to physical forms which become '*naturalized into common sense discourse shred by the dominated and the dominant*' (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004: 23). The current crisis of violence in Latin America is shaped by continuities with patterns of state repression still unreformed after the democratic transition. Continuities persist as a consequence of impunity either because of amnesty laws for past political crimes or because the legal system does not work, especially for the urban poor. The continuum of violence is revealed in the way shaping patterns of domination in the post-authoritarian state.

From the historical perspective the continuity in the organization of public violence is the product of state formation and the growth of coercive state power (Holden 2004). State formation involved the realization of territorial control of the 'field of the state' through direct domination, the recruitment of allies and the defeat of those who resisted the state. However in Latin America the extent to which state institutions have dominated the field of the state has ebbed and flowed. In the 1980s and 1990s transition from authoritarian to democratic government saw the reconfiguration of the control over public violence. The state's monopoly over the use of violence changed

but not in the way anticipated by the rule of law, human rights and democratization agenda. Firstly, the coercive power of the state was not diminished and, despite the end of the Cold War remained connected to US imperial agendas and support. Secondly, the impact of another globalizing agenda, the implementation of neo-liberal economic reform, produced a social crisis and high levels of crime that most states met with repression.

The enormous coercive power of authoritarian regimes was not just a product of the size of their militaries and police forces but their integration into US anti-communist politics and counter-insurgency in Latin America during the Cold War. Military and security forces were trained by the US (e.g. School of the Americas) and other European states and their militaries armed by them. Their capacity for repression was greatly enhanced by their regional integration through military training and arms as member of this alliance (McSherry 2005). However the end of the dictatorships and the Cold War did not disconnect these military and police forces from US interests in shaping regional politics and order. The 'war on drugs', and to a much lesser extent in Latin America, the 'war on terror' militarized internal policing. The new anti-terrorism laws introduced in Argentina, Paraguay and Chile since September 11 were used to control dissent from indigenous populations, police social movements for land reform and intimidate human rights defenders more than counter international terrorism (Carpio 2011, Seelau 2011). US intervention continued through the new security focused on the internationalization of policing undertaken in the name of democratic consolidation but also as a vehicle to maintain strong influence over internal security of Latin American states (Huggins 1998).

Transition to democracy, during which repression was indexed as human rights abuse in truth politics, occurred at the historical moment in which 'the decline of socialist movements crossed paths with the ascendant efforts to consolidate liberal constitutional rule' (Grandin 2005: 46). A particular kind of democracy emerged which involved a move away from '*social-democratic principles of development and welfare, opening up their economies to the world market, and narrowing their conception of democracy to focus more precisely on political and legal rights rather than on social ones*' (Grandin 2005: 47). Instead of the thick citizenship of the developmental state the neo-liberal democratic state delivered only thin citizenship (Humphrey & Valverde 2008). Neoliberalism and securitization converged through the dual movement of 'less state' through the reduction of public spending and provision of services and 'more state' through the expansion of security and incarceration to manage the social impact of impoverishment.

In Latin America the neo-liberal democratic state saw the reconfiguration of the organization of public violence through the criminalization of poverty, the intensification of social control through incarceration, the emergence of a large private security sector and the penetration of international organized crime. The management of law and order became increasingly spatialized and fragmented creating 'grey zones', half governed spaces where the legal and illegal intersected. The '*grey zone*', Koonings and Kruijt (2007: 17) argue, is an urban 'governance void' where links emerge between '*the state (the politics, the law system) and "common" criminality and criminalized former members of the armed forces, the police, paramilitary units and guerilla combatants.*'. They co-exist

in shifting alliances where parallel structures either oppose or seek accommodation with the state.

The 'new violence' is the latest formulation of the historical legacy of prolonged internal state conflict which has seen the 'normalization of violence' creating norms, values, and attitudes that reinforce or stimulate the use of violence to resolve conflicts (Kruijt and Koonings 1999). Loss of the monopoly over violence results in the state ceding control to new violent actors as entrepreneurs in protection as well as crime. Markets of violence emerge sustained by new criminal economies (Elwert 2003). For example, drug consumption generates a spectrum of violence from the gangs who employ violence for protection and control over drug distribution and the drug consumers who become addicted and resort to robbery and assaults to be able to afford drugs. In the attempt to control drug related crime the state itself has used repressive policing, even to the extent of social cleansing of neighbourhoods where drugs gangs are active. The emergence of these new violent actors impacts on ordinary citizens who themselves become the object of new crimes including ranging from street assaults, robberies and burglaries to kidnappings, disappearances, armed attacks and murders engendering pervasive fear and insecurity in the city. The increase in crime only makes the justice system more congested and reinforces revenge and vigilantism as ways to resolve conflicts (Moser et al 2005).

For the state, fear becomes a mode of governance which can be used to galvanize support for repression and to gain political legitimacy amongst the constituency to be protected (Elwert 2003). From the perspective of citizens fear of violence becomes a normalized mode of being which connects authoritarian and neoliberal forms of rule even though the origins may be different. Governance through fear and protection only serves to extend the outsourcing of the state's monopoly over violence with the proliferation of private protection, security companies and gated communities to construct fragmented safe spaces.

The 'citizen insecurity' addressed by the IACHR Report is increasingly visible in the proliferation of victim movements who protest against the failure of the state to prevent harm or enforce the law. Their injuries arise from the state's neglect or repressive policing but what these victims have in common is a sense of complete defenselessness in the face of impunity (IACHR 2010: 26). What both the 'new violence' construction and the IACHR report focus on 'citizen security' is the spill over of violence into all areas of social life. This increasing resort to violence represents, for Bourdieu (2004), represents a crisis in symbolic violence resulting in a breakdown in legitimacy.

In a recent study of urban violence in Latin America Moser et al. (2005: 128-9) identify a spectrum of violence - social violence (routine daily violence, inter-generational violence, child abuse, domestic violence), economic violence (youth gangs, organized crime, protection rackets), institutional violence (state and private security violence) and political violence (state and non-state groups in political conflict). They argue there are continuums of violence from the readiness of individuals to resort to violence in domestic contexts and social relationships on the one hand, and the use of violence by states and non-state groups to resolve conflicts on the other. While there is considerable variation in the patterns of violence throughout Latin America the study draws out the following: violence is highest in large urban areas, in cities with a rapid population growth and in

poorer suburbs. Young men are most likely to be both victims and perpetrators and the *'type of violence is an important predictor of victimization by gender'* (Moser et al. 2005: 131).

From a legal perspective what is distinctive about the spectrum of victims and their protests about citizen insecurity is the merging of victims of public and private violence. The distinction between public and private violence is a legal construction that categorizes violence on the basis of scale and intent. While there is no limit to the number of potential victims of public violence the number of victims of private violence usually only involves one or very few victims. Public violence refers to coercion for political or economic reasons in contrast to private violence that occurs in private lives. Private violence by this definition is not political, neither challenging nor defending *"any social order"* (Holden 2004:12). Historically the legal construction of public and private violence in the area of domestic life legally quarantined 'private violence' as less serious and not even punished. Hence domestic violence was *'shaped by the common-law prerogative of chastisement, which allowed a husband to assault his wife within certain "reasonable" limitations'* (Decker 2007-8: 106). This public/private construction of violence has produced different legal protection and accountability. What is interesting about the merging of the 'new violence' is that it is as if the space of private violence, the space of impunity, has greatly expanded allowing a wider range of actors to resort to violence with impunity. One consequence of the expansion of violence constructed as 'private' – can be exercised with impunity – is that marginalized social categories are made even more vulnerable. A CEDAW Report (2005) on the proliferation of violence in Ciudad Juarez in Mexico highlights how these categories – women, children, and the urban poor – become even more vulnerable, victimized and invisible. The Report refers to the rupture in the social fabric which is *'reflected in the acceptance of violence against women, which is regarded as a "normal" phenomenon within the context of systematic and generalized gender-based discrimination'* (CEDAW 2005: 20).

Securitization policies targeting particular social categories as a way to manage violence as risk puts them outside the protection of the law. The expansion of impunity effectively sees violence towards particular social categories treated as if it were 'normalized' or 'private violence' – i.e. less serious, undertaken with impunity, justified as a legitimate form of disciplining. In other words, public violence constructed as if it were 'private' violence. The spectrum of the 'new violence' reveals a proliferation of the sources of violence as a result of the diminished capacity of the state to monopolize use of public violence. The state's resort to security becomes incorporated into the dynamic of governance that identifies who is to be protected.

3 Securitizing poverty

The slum is the site where the escalation of public violence and the proliferation of victims have been intensified. Slums are a product of large scale social relegation brought about by different globalizing processes – the articulation of public violence, rural displacement and urbanisation, neo-liberal economic reform – resulting in social polarization. Apocalyptic urbanism constructs slums as dysfunctional, disorganized and threatening spaces beyond the regulation of normal government and policing.

Slums are spaces of social relegation where surplus populations, those marginal to the urban economy, are warehoused (Davis 2006). Urban marginality is not merely a lack of urban integration but a structural effect of neo-liberal economics (Wacquant 2002). The worldwide growth of slums and urban poverty has seen them politically profiled as a 'global problem' - UN Habitat Report, Cities Alliance: Cities Without Slums - and helped transform slum localities into transnationalized spaces subject to 'new geographies of governmentality' (Appadurai 2002).

In Latin America urban poverty has become securitized by constructing the slum as a source of danger and made an object of risk management. The urban poor become '*an ecologically defined group rather than as part of the social system*' (Saunders 2010: 19). Urban poverty is policed in order to contain violence through the spatial segregation of the poor on the urban periphery and/or by evictions and slum clearance justified as urban renewal or redevelopment. Spatial policing of slums is reinforced by the racialization, criminalization and penalization of poverty. The collapse of the economic state, the withering of the social state and the rise of the penal state has increased the incarceration of the poor. '*The invisible hand of the market and the iron fist of the state combine and complement each other to make the lower classes accept de-socialized wage labor and the social instability it brings in its wake*' (Wacquant 2001: 404). Incarceration is used to deter crime, warehouse redundant labor and 'hold at bay populations judged disreputable, derelict, and dangerous' (Wacquant 2006: 84). Through the penalization of poverty political issues concerned with social inclusion and exclusion are thereby converted into law and order matters.

The patterns of securitization vary across states and cities in Latin America shaped by particular continuities and continuums of violence. Who lives in the slums, their role in the political economy of the city, the ethnic and indigenous divisions and their continuing connection to their rural origins,

In Buenos Aires a 'new marginality' has been produced through de-proletarianization of the workforce and informalization of employment and their concentration in the slums and shantytowns. This 'new marginality' has been produced in the 'relationship between the economy, the particular combination of the benign and malign neglect of the state, and the agency of the political actors inside and outside the slum' (Auyero 1997: 509). Spatial segregation of the urban poor is experienced as social disconnection and social rejection. Slum residents become disconnected from the wider society as a result of their intermittent participation in work and participation in public institutions such as schools but also because 'both the military and the democratic governments of Argentina constructed the slum population as an 'object to be removed', as an 'out-of-place' population, as the obnoxious and repugnant other' (Auyero 1997: 510). The flow of immigrants from Bolivia and Peru has seen the growth of new slums which at times has been violently contested by neighbouring suburbs defending residential property values.

The struggle for the 'right to the city' in Latin America has been a long one for the urban poor (Holston 2009). Some slums have acted as 'arrival cities' creating opportunities for newly arrived rural-urban migrants (Saunders 2010), others trap the urban poor in an alienated insecurity vulnerable to another displacement. Slums are an expression of the polarized 'dual city', zones increasingly disconnected by the new

marginality from urban development although still vulnerable to its expansion. The urban property market makes slums targets for urban renewal as a way to profit from socially devalued real estate and to relocate the urban poor. Urban renewal contributes to social fragmentation and advanced marginality arising from the dissolution of place as a social retreat. The experience of precarious urban employment and income is no longer ameliorated by safety nets of collective informal support. Consequently slums are being eroded as places connected by durable social networks. Instead sociality is under siege from insider predators (criminal gangs), outsider predators (developers) and state agents of surveillance and control policing violence and disorder. The very construction of urban poverty by individual terms such as 'homeless', an existential condition, reinforces the idea of the atomization of poverty as a socially shared and resisted experience.

The introduction of 'citizen security laws' (*Ley de Seguridad Ciudadana*) throughout Latin America in response to urban poverty and violence has resulted in the deployment of 'more state' in the form of police, courts, prisons at the same moment when neo-liberal policies have created 'less state'. The penal state's resort to incarceration only serves to 'feed criminality by its manifest contempt for the law and the culture of mistrust of others and defiance of authority it fosters' (Wacquant 2003: 201). Lack of justice only sees the use of violence intensified when victims of crime, overwhelming urban poor young men, become vigilantes (Wacquant 2003). The solution of paying for private security and living in gated communities available to wealthier citizens only further weakens public authority, contracts public space and makes those suburbs without private security even more vulnerable (Gledhill 2006).

In many respects these policies of intensive policing, criminalization and incarceration of the urban poor are exports of current US policing policies to Latin America. Huggins (1998) characterizes the US policies aimed at policing others as the 'internationalization' of policing based on centralization through the establishment of new police and security agencies integrated with US police and security institutions. In Brazil policing has become more repressive as a result of the '*centralization and militarization of "professionalized" policing, and, on the other, privatization and decentralization of repressive social control*' (Huggins 2000: 115).

Citizen security policies have emerged as an important opportunity for elected representatives to recover some political legitimacy from their core urban constituencies on the basis of providing protection. The state seeks to assert its authority through providing security after neo-liberal reforms have left them little else to deliver (Wacquant 2008). The growing sense of citizen insecurity has been magnified as violence has spilled out of the slums and threatened the middle class and wealthier citizens.

Physical dread and insecurity have diffused throughout the metropolis as the running battles among gangs and crossfire between the police and the heavily armed bandidos spill into adjacent districts, due to the close spatial propinquity of rich and poor in the Brazilian city (as in the upscale areas of Zona Sul and Barra da Tijuca in Rio de Janeiro), and as armed robberies in buses, hold-ups in commercial centers, and kidnappings of well-to-do residents become more common. Middle-class streets and upper-class residences have been turned into fortified enclaves secured by iron grates, intercoms, attack

dogs, armed guards in watchbooths or manning roadblocks after dark, while “gated communities” cordoned off from the city by high walls and advanced surveillance technologies have mushroomed and become a coveted ingredient of elite status (Caldeira 1996). A huge private security industry has grown to provide proximate protection to apartment buildings, businesses, and social clubs as well as wealthy individuals and their families. (Wacquant 2008: 59).

Reinforcing the militarization of poverty in Rio is a ‘hierarchical and paternalistic conception of citizenship’ which juxtaposes the “savages” and the “cultivated” and merges the enforcement of public order with the enforcement of the class’ (Wacquant 2008: 61-2).

In Brazilian megacities the policing of social exclusion has resulted in the spatial segregation of the urban rich and poor. Gated communities have become a form of urban spatial management against violence and insecurity. In her study of crime and segregation in São Paulo Caldeira (2000) demonstrates the degradation of citizenship with harsh punishment and privileged protection of the rich against the poor. The rejection of human rights by the upper and middle classes as a form of unjustified protection of criminals and the growing support for the death penalty constitute the withdrawal of the protection of the law for the urban poor. This is normalized by popular acceptance of death squads and vigilantism, as well as impunity, as a legitimate response to the spiraling levels of violence.

The fight for the urban poor’s ‘right to the city’ has had a strong focus on residential tenure in the ‘grey zones.’ The politics of survival - staying in place, securing the means of livelihood, personal security and well-being - is about negotiating the legal and illegal, formal and informal, institutions and processes. Survival occurs within ‘emergent geographies of governance’ through which the urban poor make claims on the state. They differ from citizens whose claims affirm their membership in the political community of the nation. *‘The claims of the marginalized are advanced through their participation in patently illegal activities, violating the rules upon which civil society is founded including the transgression of property laws and so on’* (Rao 2006: 229).

The demands of the urban poor and the strategies they employ to secure them are structured in the context of the governmentality they encounter. Slums as an informal urban space are characterized by a coalescence of legal and illegal activities. The terms ‘grey zone’ and ‘brown areas’ have been coined to describe slums as an in-between space. Javier Auyero in his study of looting in Buenos Aires slums during the banking crisis and urban riots in 2001 identifies the grey zone as the space – *‘where the activities of those perpetrating the violence and those who presumably seek to control them coalesce’* (Auyero 2007: 32). The grey zone refers to *‘a set of clandestine connections’ produced by the intersection of perpetrators of violence and forces of order (in the case of collective violence, neighbors, families, and community leaders (in the case of everyday life); and party leaders and members (in the case of routine party politics)’* (Auyero 2007: 49). Far from being simply an expression of spontaneous rage against their immiseration, Auyero (2007) argues, the looting of supermarkets during the 2001 banking crisis was organized and directed crisis by political party cadres.

Arias (2006) in a study of urban poverty, violence and crime in Rio de Janeiro uses the term ‘brown areas’, borrowed from O’Donnell (2004), to refer to the absence of the

state or state breakdown. But rather than violence being merely the consequence of the weakening of the state it is conditional on the collusion of state actors and non-state actors who share the field of the state. This is characteristic of the 'new violence' where state violence that provokes non-state violence (paramilitary, informal, criminal) to occupy the grey zones created by the de-legitimization of the legal order and the impunity that follows (Koonings & Kruijt 2004). Gangs present themselves as an ordering force and a source of protection. State violence aimed at reducing crime in fact exacerbates it and increases citizen insecurity by the impunity it produces. Petitioners to the IACHR on violence in urban Mexico highlighted the predicament of victims and human rights defenders in the 'new violence' (Mino 2011). Victims were too afraid to denounce state violence and state agents acted with impunity and blamed every act of violence on drug cartels or common delinquents. Some state agents themselves acted as criminal gangs committing acts of extortion and abduction against individuals and groups. The lives of human rights defenders were constantly threatened by state agents and criminal gangs – some reported they had been 'detained by State agents and later delivered to criminal organizations' (Mino 2011).

Policies designed to recover control over 'grey zones' have militarized citizen security and exacerbated the problem of impunity. Special legislation designed to regulate conflict has facilitated repression. In Peru the Decree Law 1095 resulted in the criminalization of social protest. Originally created in response to protest against a national irrigation project the law permits the deployment of military to manage protests and demonstrations and for military courts to prosecute 'illicit conduct' of the military during protests (Lynd 2010). While the Decree 1095 does not directly criminalize demonstrations it allows for the military to act with impunity given military tribunals only prosecute lower ranks and the low likelihood of prosecution anyway. Urban pacification and policing interventions sought to re-assert state authority through intervention backed up by the provision of urban services and the involvement of citizens in community security. Examples include 'the Pacification Police Units (UPP) in Rio de Janeiro, the law enforcement and military efforts of the Mexican authorities in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana, [and] the consolidation efforts of the authorities in poorer neighborhoods of Medellin' (Muggah 2012: 56).

The urban poor have had an ambiguous and uncertain relationship to political parties. In Buenos Aires they experience the grey zone as something that 'comes from above, is beyond their control' (Auyero 2007: 148). Political parties oscillate between political accommodation of the urban poor as clients and repression as a source of insecurity. Auyero (1999) refers to the way mass immigration into Buenos Aires was accommodated by the Peronist government (1946–55) by tolerating illegal urban squatting on public and private land. During the Argentine dictatorship (1976–83) the slum was targeted for removal as polluting and dangerous source of subversives.

On the whole patterns of resistance and mobilization tend to be local and fragmented. Community justice practices such as vigilantism and lynching arise in the absence of the rule of law (Goldstein 2005; Godoy 2006; Auyero 2000b). In his study of the fragmentation of Mexico City as an entity Canclini (1995) notes citywide mobilization of the urban poor occurs only after widespread disasters.

In Mexico City, movements of the urban poor are characterized by a vision

that is both local and territorial. For some this pertains to the part of the city where they live: for others it concerns such issues as the rights of street vendors. . . . Only exceptional popular movements – such as those arising after the 1985 earthquake, the ecology movements, and very recently some political parties – demonstrate an integrated vision of Mexico City (Canclini 1995: 749).

The city only exists as an entity in the vision of politicians and urban planners and in these rare moments of citywide mobilization.

Slums have always been sites of violence and social confrontation but globalization has only produced more complex violence through diversifying cultural and social identifications: *'urban terrorism from the extreme right and left, racist attacks, Islamic bombings, gang shootings, death squads, riots, vandalism, human rights abuses, vigilante lynchings, political assassinations, kidnappings, police shootings, high-tech security harassments, private justice making, civil disobedience, shantytown eradication, and soccer hooliganism suggest the enormous range of contemporary forms of collective violence'* (Holston and Appadurai 1996: 200).

4 Conclusion

The shared anxiety about citizenship insecurity in Latin America led to the IACHR report addressing the paradox that the transition to democracy had brought about higher levels of insecurity and violence. This violence has come to be known in the social science literature as the 'new violence'. The primary site of that violence has been the urban slums (favela, villa miseria, callampa, pueblo joven) and the urban poor. These urban margins are where violence has been highest and where the main victims live. The purpose of the IACHR Report was to counterbalance security through state repression (mano dura) with policies and strategies informed by human rights – right to life, right to the security of one's person³.

The interpretation of the 'new violence' as a legacy of the authoritarian past and its culture of impunity is only a partial explanation. We must understand the 'new violence' as connected to larger globalizing processes which are political, economic and cultural engendering an apocalyptic urban space experienced as divided between us and them, a heightened individual concern with bodily safety, the fear of being engulfed by the urban poor on the one side and the lack of protection from state, safety by physical separation and the use of violence against potential threats.

First, the new violence must be seen as moment in the history of the globalization of public violence – the concentration of public violence in the hands of the state and the increasing coercive capacity of the state. The new violence is an index of increased contestation of state power on the one hand and the securitization of urban poverty and social exclusion on the other. The new violence is an expression of the ebb and flow of central state power in the field of the state.

Second, the new violence is a dimension of the globalizing neo-liberal economic agendas to reduce the role of the state in public expenditure on social provisioning.

³The 'right to life' is protected under the American Declaration and the American Convention, the 'right to the security of one's person' is protected under Articles I, XXV and XXVI of the American Declaration, and Articles 5 and 7 of the American Convention, the right to personal liberty and security Article XXV of the American Convention and Article 7 of the American Convention. (IACHR 2009)

Transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes was accompanied by the economic orthodoxy of neo-liberal economic reform. The social impact has led to social polarization, informalization of employment and increased crime. Securitization represents a paradox where in response 'less state' as a result of neoliberal economic reforms 'more state' to enforce law and order occurs at the same time there. Securitization creates a polarizing lens that divides the world between friends and enemies. Securitization amounts to the punitive containment of urban poverty through physical separation reinforcing social polarization. The rich separate themselves by living in gated communities protected by proliferating private security companies, the poor are increasingly excluded by their marginalization from the economy and their urban containment.

Third, the globalization of the human rights movement is a response to the globalization of public violence. Grandin (2005) argues for an historical perspective on the emergence of a human rights consciousness and the gradual consolidation of the idea of the autonomous self as a bearer of rights in Latin America. He argues that defeats of revolutionary movements have gradually led to the consolidation of the idea of human rights. In other words, periods of repression and dictatorship have consolidated the human rights movement. The concentration of state power and enhancement of its repressive techniques through US imperial politics to counter communist insurgency has been accompanied by the growth of human rights. Most recently the experience of repression in the 1970s and 1980s, the intensification of the use of torture against 'subversives' produced a heightened awareness of the individual against state power (Grandin 2007). This was expressed in human rights resistance and protest (such as the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina) on the one hand and retreat into the inner life (INEXILIO) as a form of personal survival on the other. The experience of mass torture served to connect individuals to a globalised narrative of victimhood – victims of human rights abuse. Repression forged a regional human rights movement and the truth politics of transition reinforce the hope for human rights and justice from the perspective of the individual rather than political ideologies.

The new violence highlights the democratic crisis - of 'democracy lite' or 'democracy deficit' – in Latin America perpetuating insecurity and fear as a focus of governance. Citizenship insecurity is the new collective condition and the ubiquitous presence of victim movements an index of the spectrum of insecurity. The experience of democratic deficit has reinforced the idea of the rights bearing individual and the IACHR Report a human rights agenda to counter the polarizing securitization project which is about governance through selective security – constituencies of insecurity. These victims movements have also become the target of securitization because they reveal the hollowness of political legitimacy based on 'law and order' as well as the corruption behind the alliances forged through the 'new violence' and the culture of impunity that allows it to continue unchecked.

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