



# Urban Violence

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## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND INITIAL THOUGHTS

### **Alcides Eduardo dos Reis Peron** (University of Sao Paulo)

Since 2017, I've been studying how new surveillance technologies may help police authorities to deal with crimes and conduct investigations. During my research, I began to realise that these technologies seem to reinforce certain discriminatory and arbitrary practices, not only by the authorities, but also amongst residents. Moreover, the spreading of these surveillance systems in São Paulo apparently responded to state interests and was directed to control or even ban certain groups within these areas. In 2014, the São Paulo state government announced the implementation of a surveillance system, which would enable the automated identification of criminals, and synchronise several data sources to enhance police activity. This system was designed by Microsoft to strengthen terrorism prevention in New York, and it was adopted to reorganise the way São Paulo's Military Police deals with public security. However, since its adoption, police brutality remains a problem, and the dispersion of cameras in both degraded areas and rich neighbourhoods exposes security policies as a way of governing unease and attending to private interests. The presence of a series of private companies and associations in the security milieu (instead of organising a new model for facing crime) seems to promote a regime of visibility that focuses on the control of undesired flows of people in specific spaces. Drawing on Foucault's analysis of government through his idea of *dispositifs*, and on Critical Security Studies, I have explored how the introduction of the Detecta system has enabled a heterogeneous form of policing, focused on governing the 'quality of life in certain perimeters, and sharing responsibilities with private organisations in this process'. The hypothesis is that this process, far from overcoming the usual police arbitrariness, seems to reinforce traditional practices of discrimination, creating an atmosphere of permanent mistrust, and blurring and weakening the lines between public and private security apparatus.

### **Andres Saenz De Sicilia** (University College London)

My research addresses questions surrounding the nature, causes and effects of violence in modern societies. I have sought to develop a rigorous philosophical framework for the conceptualisation of violence drawing principally on Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Foucault and Fanon. Yet the aim of my work is not to produce a general theorisation of what violence is, but to utilise this framework in conjunction with the tools and methods of a range of other disciplines in order to address concrete contexts of violence today, especially in urban environments. Urbanisation is increasing – globally there are now more people living in urban than rural areas. Understanding the dynamics of social life in urban zones - including key issues such as the prevalence and evolution of various forms of violence - is crucial if we are to effectively manage and organise the needs of global society going forward. A constellation of key questions are raised here: Which forms of violence are particular to urban life? How does violence become constitute of certain urban identities? How and why does violence become a mode of inhabiting urban space and how is violence bound to spatial transformation of the lived environment? How are the boundaries and tensions between state, non-state and criminal violence in urban zones negotiated and contested? Methodologically, I approach violence not principally in moral or psychological terms, or as an isolated phenomenon, but in relation to broader economic and political tendencies shaping how individuals interact and behave in a globalised, market driven society. Amongst these tendencies I argue that increasing structural inequality and precarity are key determinants of the character and extent of violence experienced in urban environments, insofar as they give rise to the kinds of subjects who are willing and even incentivised to engage in violence. The specific focus of this research up to now has centred on the issue of violence connected to organised crime in Mexico, where especially brutal forms of violence have emerged and become widespread over the past 10-15 years (kidnapping, torture, femicide, etc). This has involved examining the deep web of connections between organised crime, state and capital in Mexico's recent history as well as the geopolitical conditions and strategic function of 'narco enterprises' within the world economy. Alongside a consideration of political and economic factors I have also sought to make sense of Narco-violence by exploring its forms of aesthetic expression, analysing the production and circulation of images of violence throughout Mexican society.

### **Anna di Ronco** (University of Essex)

My main research interests cover the regulation, representation and enforcement of incivilities in the urban space, and individuals' and groups' resistance to social control in the physical and digital space. Incivilities—which are also known under other names, such

as anti-social behaviour, disorder, quality-of-life crimes, public nuisance and petty offences—encompass a variety of behaviour, including littering, vandalism, public drunkenness, aggressive begging, noisy neighbours and so forth. Incivilities have become construed, both at the local and the national levels, as a risk to future crime and, as such, something to be managed, or better yet, criminalised. This has been the case in many European countries and cities in particular, where local authorities have punitively sanctioned incivilities in the conviction that, if left untouched, they will lead to serious crime. In my research, I critically and comparatively analyse incivility regulations and their related enforcement practices in different social contexts (mostly, cities in Italy, Belgium and the UK) by considering the effects they have on individuals and social groups, including street drinkers, street sex workers, migrants, activists and protesters. I do so also by considering the city spaces where these regulations are mostly enforced, and the reasons for this (e.g., historical reasons, cultural meanings, values, social and media representations of space); in addition, I look at the way criminalised individuals and groups perform and represent resistance in the physical and digital spaces. My two more recent research projects, for example, focus on the local regulation of prostitution in European cities and their effects on sex workers (the first one), and on the role of social media in supporting otherwise criminalised or silenced environmental activism (the second one). At the same time, I also look at, and engage with, organisations whose aim is to reduce urban conflict and the harm caused on already vulnerable individuals (often unintentionally) by punitive regulations. Many of these organisations do so by providing safe and open spaces that facilitate interactions between different social groups and ethnicities, also in places of the city that are perceived as 'dangerous' and are thus not much attended by the middle class (they are usually the spaces where migrants and the urban poor live). In so doing, social movements strive to increase social cohesion and reduce conflict and violence. I am committed to research-led teaching and, therefore, I include my research interests as well as the findings of my studies also in my teaching, in particular in the second- and third-year UG modules on which I teach and that I coordinate: Sociology of Crime and Crime Control (SC204), and Crime, Media and Culture (SC306).

#### **Ashvin Devasundaram** (Queen Mary University of London)

Under the broad banner of urban violence, serialised occurrences of rape and brutal assaults on women in urban centres are urgent themes relevant to both Brazil and India. A poll ranked India 'the world's most dangerous country for women' in terms of sexual violence (The Guardian, 2018). In Brazil four girls under 13 are raped every hour, with violence against women reported every two minutes (CNN, 2019). It is important to avoid retrenching stereotypes and deterministic causative factors whilst trying to make sense of these topical issues, instead striving towards more intersectional, contextual and international mappings to derive deeper understandings and posit potential solutions. One of my research specialisms deals with urban spaces as sites for representation of overlooked minority narratives. I convene two modules - New Independent Indian Cinema (Level 6 / 7) - the first university module in the UK and globally, to focus on new Indian Indie films, and Contemporary World Cinemas (Level 5), which broaches independent film discourses in the Global South. I have engaged specifically with the theme of Urban Violence through multi-dimensional public engagement events and scholarly publications on rape, gender-based violence, refugee journeys and LGBTQ rights. As Associate Director of the UK Asian Film Festival - London (UKAFF) I curated several film events around an 'F-Rated' (female-centric) festival theme in 2017. I organised a screening of Deepa Mehta's docufiction film - Anatomy of Violence, about the 2012 gang rape and murder of a young Delhi-based medical student on a moving bus. I chaired a post-screening panel discussion on 'Gender Violence: Cinema as a Mirror of Ethical Evaluation', featuring a diverse panel of senior academics. The YouTube video of the discussion, uploaded on the UKAFF channel, informs an ongoing interdisciplinary co-authored article (with Prof. Ravinder Barn, Royal Holloway, University of London) blending film, sociology, gender studies and law - 'Performativity of Rape Culture Through Fact and Fiction: An Exploration of India's Daughter and Anatomy of Violence' - accepted for publication in the International Journal of Cultural Studies. I am also engaged in researching comparative cinematic portrayals of the urban space including Brazil, through my involvement in a worldwide research group on 'Soft Power, Cinema and the BRICS Nations'. Brazil's Cinema Novo movement and its modern avatars share similarities with the new wave of independent Indian cinema through social realist confrontations of urban violence, spanning representations of the favela space in the tour de force - City of God to the recent Indian film Article 15, which meditates on sexual violence towards 'lower-caste' Dalit women. I will be able to share insights and inferences from my recent curation experiences and scholarly studies on pervasive urban incidents of rape and counter-rape mobilisations including the Women in Cinema Collective (WCC) and #MeToo India, utilising multiple disciplinary viewpoints - political, economic, religious, legal, social and cultural. These themes have relevance to gender violence in Brazilian cities, and a comparative lens will disclose overlaps and specificities, shedding light on the symposium's broader theme.

#### **Bruna Gisi Martins de Almeida** (University of Sao Paulo)

During the past ten years of my academic trajectory, I have been dedicated to the study of the practical functioning of crime control institutions, ranging from the justice system, the police and juvenile correctional centres. The sociological approach adopted in the development of this research states that the daily functioning of the institutions officially responsible for controlling violence is a decisive factor in understanding urban violence and related phenomena. The first research topic I have investigated and that is related to this broad approach was the processing of juveniles by the juvenile justice system. In the analysis of the way the actors of these

agencies construct the rationality of their decisions during the interventions, it was possible to understand how the definition of the adolescents as delinquents is progressively fixed. This process is critical to understanding the effects of juvenile justice system interventions on adolescents. I have been working with the current research programme 'Building Democracy Daily: Human Rights, Violence and Institutional Trust' developed by the Center for the Study of Violence, at the University of São Paulo. The main objective of the project is to investigate how the legitimacy of law enforcement institutions is constructed daily through the contact between the population and representatives of these institutions. The hypothesis is that the way authority is exercised during these contacts – if it is considered just and proper – affects populations' attitudes toward legal institutions. A population with positive attitudes not only allows legal institutions to be more effective through cooperation, but also might contribute to the operation of the rule of law, increasing the possibility for the democratic control and regulation of violence. Understanding these processes is particularly urgent in the Brazilian context, where high rates of interpersonal violence and the recurrent use of illegal violence by law enforcement agencies indicate that attaining a monopoly on 'legitimate' violence is a constant challenge. In Brazil, creating conditions for the democratic control of violence is especially critical. The possibility of resorting to state agencies for the resolution of conflict – instead of using private means of violence – is necessarily linked to how these agencies respond and perform their activities.

#### **Chandra Morrison** (London School of Economics)

My research examines graffiti art and its relation to transformations of public culture and urban space in Latin American cities. Graffiti offers fascinating insights to contemporary urban conditions. Nearly all citizens come into contact with and hold opinions about these markings. Over the last decade, too, certain forms of graffiti art have become widely accepted (and legalised) in Latin America, coinciding with public painting attaining unprecedented visibility and presence across the region. Yet, graffiti's aesthetic, activities, and artists still feature heavily in the production of negative urban imaginaries and discourses about criminality, delinquency, and insecurity, all of which delineate how threats of urban violence are perceived. My first book *Metagraffiti* (under review), based on my doctoral dissertation, observes how graffiti practitioners from São Paulo and Santiago de Chile utilise their artwork to negotiate, confront, and reimagine diverse systems of power shaping urban space and the social body. Within this analysis, violence emerges directly – when artists appropriate violent imagery to speak back against their criminalisation as delinquent figures – and indirectly – by constructing other modes of social movement when confronted with restrictive class systems or by illuminating the detrimental effects of pollution on the urban environment. Shifting focus onto disputes over graffiti's place in the city, my current research investigates cultural politics and public responses prompted by the removal of graffiti murals from the historic centre of Lima in 2015. This project builds on an interest in debates and policy connected to recent episodes of mass graffiti erasure occurring across the Latin American region, typically initiated by government officials under a guise of cleaning the city. Central to this project is the concept of erasure. Moving beyond traditional graffiti debates about vandalism and property rights, I adopt this analytical lens to draw out political motives underpinning attempts at urban cleansing and patterns of cultural censorship, as well as to expose novel forms of public resistance to regimes of authority and value that can generate different power dynamics between civil society and the state. My research expertise on conflicts over the urban aesthetic will make a dynamic contribution to the symposium's exploration of how violence shapes cities, especially regarding the way it materialises in public space and surfaces in contestations over heritage, culture, and power. Alongside ethnographic insights from my work in four Latin American countries, I bring a research practice that intentionally repositions marginalised sources and subjects as integral to a production of knowledge which enhances our understanding of urban dynamics by highlighting multiple histories, narratives, and experiences. I embrace this outlook within my teaching of fieldwork methods where I encourage creative and critical scholarship that searches out perspectives garnered from unexpected places. Extending this approach to symposium activities, within our collective discussions I am especially keen to explore how erasure functions as an act of violence – an attribution openly levied in critiques of Lima's mural removal – and how this process in the visual sphere links to other forms of silencing, cleansing, loss, and disappearance taking place across Latin America and beyond.

#### **Daniel Ganem Misse** (Fluminense Federal University)

I have been studying the phenomenon of urban violence through public policy since I finished my doctoral dissertation in 2013. Over the past few years, I have been predominantly teaching and researching police-oriented policies. Programmes focused on the reduction of violent crime have been implemented at a progressive scale in Brazil since the beginning of the 21st century. Originating in the states, they were encouraged by multiple actions carried out by the Federal Government, such as the National Safety Plan (Plano Nacional de Segurança, 2000), Safety for Brazil Project (Projeto Segurança para o Brasil, 2003), and National Program of Public Safety with Citizenship (Programa Nacional de Segurança Pública com Cidadania –PRONASCI, 2007). Programmes such as Fica Vivo! (Stay Alive, Minas Gerais), Pacto pela Vida (Pact for life, Pernambuco), Pacifying Police Units (Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora –UPP), and Integrated Targets System (Sistema Integrado de Metas –SIM) gained national relevance in Brazil, influencing a number of strategies enforced by the Federal Government in support of state security forces. Some of these policies showcase control mechanisms of police performance, such as the payment of financial bonuses to police officers who meet a predefined performance goal. Programmes implemented in Rio in 2009, such as SIM, UPP, and Additional Regime of Service (Regime Adicional de Serviço –RAS), believed to be able to decrease 'state strategic crime indicators', are analysed through the lens of police incidents, field observation, and interviews

with civil and military police officers, as well as public administrators. My studies about the UPP, SIM and RAS in the state of Rio de Janeiro aim to understand some of the results from these policies focused on reducing violent crimes in the state of Rio de Janeiro. UPPs, SIM, and RAS were put in place concomitantly, which makes it hard to analyse the impact of each policy individually. This analysis does not side-line the bonification programmes for additional workload, such as PROEIS and Segurança Presente, since it is understood that they are also police-oriented incentive programmes. The investigation of violent lethality indicators used by SIM reveal many challenges in identifying the impact of Strategic Crime Indicators (Indicadores Estratégicos de Criminalidade –IEC) determined by the targets policy. Notwithstanding the gradual decrease in murders and homicides resulting from police intervention since 2007, the reduction in violent lethality is more noticeable in the first few years after policy-implementation.

#### **Elizabete Ribeiro Albernaz** (Fluminense Federal University)

My contribution is the result of a comparative fieldwork exercise conducted in Brazil in a ‘favela’ (slum) situated in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro city called ‘Morro do Palácio’ (Palace Hill), between 2015 and 2017, as well as in Maboneng – a precinct of Johannesburg, South Africa – between June and December 2017. I seek to explore everyday forms of politics and analyse the workings of long-term structural inequalities through the direct observation of mundane forms of the mechanics of poverty management in both countries. As a common background for comparison, it can be argued that the two sites share a ‘colonial’ past, connecting them to contemporary debates on the ‘global-south’. Besides that, the workings of a discursive economy of ‘safety’ comes to light; in the interest of governing poverty and managing social inequality, organising space and the circulation of people leads to segregated areas. Despite their similarities, I’d like to affirm the significant differences between Maboneng and Morro do Palácio. In Maboneng, government policies of ‘urban development’ and ‘affordable housing’ posing as responses to immediate safety concerns screen actual market and commercial interests. The operation of those markets (real estate, private security, eviction companies, and others) produces a ‘developed’ segregated space, a ‘place of light’ (the meaning of ‘Maboneng’ in IsiZulu), that projects shadows, like a ‘favela in reverse’. The shadowy neoliberal player of what I call ‘public interest forces’ created by the state, market forces and ‘civil society’ produces discontinuities in the citizenship status of residents that do not partake in the prosperity of this ‘developed’ urban community. In the case of Palácio, I observed the exact opposite; that political economy of risk seemed to work to prevent, instead of favouring, the establishment of a liberal market, articulating in its place what I call ‘markets of exclusion’. Instead, the ‘discredited’ inhabitants adopt tactics to make their lives materially and morally viable in the ‘dangerous’ favela.

#### **Fábio Ferraz de Almeida** (Getúlio Vargas Foundation)

I am a socio-legal researcher working on social interaction between lay people and police and legal professionals. I completed my PhD in Social Sciences at Loughborough University (2019), where I studied police investigative interviews with suspects in England. Drawing upon 120 audio-recorded interviews from cases involving neighbour disputes and using conversation analysis, I have investigated the communicative practices employed by officers, suspects and lawyers within that institutional setting. I was particularly interested in identifying and describing the linguistic resources and the sense-making practices used by officers to elicit admissions and transform lay narratives into legally informed material. Rather than using overtly violent or oppressive methods to perform this task, officers in England rely on questioning techniques which are much more subtle. As part of my doctoral studies, I presented my data and methodology at a workshop on ‘Communicative Practices for Police Officers’. Since completing my PhD and returning to Brazil, I have collaborated with researchers from the Institute of Comparative Studies in Conflict Management (InEAC) and the Centre for Sociology of Law (NSD).

#### **Fernanda Mendes Lages Ribeiro** (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation)

I have a degree in psychology and research experience on violence and health that began in 2005. Since finishing my PhD in 2014, I have dedicated myself more directly to urban violence-related activities and its fallouts. My interests concern the role of religious entities in violence prevention and in recovery and rehabilitation in the Manguinhos Complex, with a focus on how churches develop religious-moral care work that has public functions in conversation, partnership or conflict with social policies at peripheral/vulnerable areas within big cities. I have been developing research in Manguinhos related to the impacts of violence on the physical and mental health of people who work in healthcare, education, and organised civil society services, user population, and the services itself within squatter settlements. Urban violence dominates, and especially that of ‘community’ violence, which arises through armed conflict between security forces and groups with territorial control, such as those factions dealing in drugs and weapons. Through my research, I have observed several accounts of psychic suffering due to experiences with violence, as well as interruptions in the normal activities of services. It’s important to stress that Manguinhos doesn’t differ from other squatter settlements in Rio de Janeiro, where the presence of the state consists mainly of the police force, whose actions are based on the security policy of a ‘War on Drugs’. The propositions that I am developing are based on action research, which includes producing a local diagnosis on the armed violence and elaborating an interventional proposition following the identification of strategies to confront violence.

**Flavia Medeiros** (Federal University of Santa Catarina)

My contribution focuses on the justification and legitimacy of physical, social and moral deaths that have occurred in the context of armed conflict, especially those related to police agents and gun disputes over the psychoactive substances precarious regions in the Rio de Janeiro metropolitan area. I will explore narratives of subjects who act as police and judicial agents as well as subjects who act as activists and militants in support of relatives of people who were killed, identifying how categories such as “war”, “human rights” and “Police violence” are triggered in different contexts. As methodology, I have been conducting interviews and conversations; direct and participant observations; and analysis of journalistic material and documents, all to be analysed from an ethnographic perspective. From these data, I intend to discuss the performance of state mechanisms for the institutional construction of the dead, analysing deaths involving state agents, either as their perpetrators or as their victims. Since the debate in the field of “public security”, I also intend to analyse how the expansion and strengthening of the state securitisation apparatus justifies the use of the “war” category, and this in turn has derived from public security policies that result in the growing incarceration and lethality of young black people, as well as the spread of fear, suffering and hatred along the society. By relating the context of securitisation in the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro to the global markets of circulation of illegalisms, I intend to point out how “police” and “violence” are associated, becoming elements for thinking and discuss moral and social uses and disputes. , ethics, politics and economics on the categories “war”, “human rights” and “police violence”, as well as discussing the repercussions and consequences of their actions in the current context of public security in Rio de Janeiro I am a social scientist and anthropologist, who have been working in the field of public safety, as a scholar in a research network involving professionals from different fields such as Anthropology, Sociology, Law, History and Communication. In the development of my work, I have prioritised the interdisciplinary dialogue that can strengthen my analyses and interpretations, from the dialogue with diverse knowledge that cross the issues analysed by me. As an example, I highlight the work done during my master's degree in Anthropology (2012) which resulted in the book "Killing the Dead": an ethnography of the Medical-Legal Institute of Rio de Janeiro, in which in addition to dialogue with disciplines of the humanities and social sciences, I was also required to approach the field of medical knowledge, especially that linked to the production of truth about the dead through autopsies. Similarly, during the doctoral research, also in Anthropology (2016) and which resulted in the book "Lines of Investigation": an ethnography of the techniques and moralities in the investigation of homicides in Rio de Janeiro, I had the opportunity to expand my observations on the production of truths about the dead and analyse how different knowledge and practices affect the investigations of murders.

**Giane Silvestre** (University of São Paulo)

I have been studying subjects directly related to urban violence since 2007 when I was still studying undergraduate in social sciences. My first scientific research analysed the social impacts of the construction of prisons in small cities in the State of São Paulo, within a policy of expansion and internalisation of São Paulo prisons that began in the mid-1990s. During my master's degree finished in 2011, I deepened this research by analysing the impact of incarceration on the lives of prisoners' families and the processes of violence and stigmatisation that follow them. In 2014 I worked on a national research on police officers' violence, and the relations with racial profiling to a research call to the National Secretariat of Public Security of the Ministry of Justice. In 2015 I also worked on the elaboration of diagnoses about the incarceration of youth in Brazil for a National Youth Secretariat. In addition to issues related to incarceration, policing and police violence, I worked as a consultant to non-governmental organisation (Brazilian Forum on Public Security) on research on gender violence and the criminal justice system. In recent years, my scientific research has focused on how violence is handled and practiced by state agents, especially in crime control activities. In my PhD research, completed in 2016, I analysed how state agents reorganised their crime control strategies from the growth of so-called organised crime in the state of São Paulo. I am currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for the Study of Violence from University of São Paulo and have been conducting research on the legitimacy of law enforcement institutions, especially the police and the judiciary. I have been analysing how police officers and judges build their perceptions of authority and legitimacy (self-legitimacy) in the exercise of their professional activities. I am also a member of the Center for the Study of Violence and Conflict Management at the Federal University of São Carlos (GEVAC -UFSCar), and associate researcher of the Institute of Comparative Studies in Conflict Institutional Management -INCT-InEAC. I published two books -the first one is the result of my master's research and analyses the growth of the prison system in the state of São Paulo and the social impact of this process in the small cities and in the life of prisoners' families. The second one is the result of my doctoral dissertation that analysed the ways in which police officers, prosecutors and judges responded to the growth process of the First Command of the Capital (PCC). I also have published book chapters and articles in international and national journals discussing the results of my scientific research related to the theme of urban violence.

**Graham Denyer Willis** (University of Cambridge)

My research agenda traces the relationship between the politics of life and death and urban space in Latin America. As an ethnographer, I have carried out intensive participant observation research in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro with homicide detectives and other police, on organised crime and prison life, and with cemetery workers and parents of young men and women that have increasingly 'gone missing' in the city. All of this work asks how cities are a focal point for governance and violence, for the maintenance



of political order in spatial terms, and for the ongoing use of Black life in policing, and as the subject of policing. This research takes written form in a number of research publications, including my first book, *The Killing Consensus: Police, Organised Crime and the Regulation of Life and Death in Urban Brazil* (California 2015). Based on three years of participant observation with homicide and other detectives, this work traces the everyday relationship between investigations of police violence and investigations of homicide -the two most ubiquitous forms of lethal violence in police work. In doing so, I ask how detectives make sense of the rise of an organised crime group alongside a precipitous drop in homicides -by upwards of 85% -, detailing how the influence of this group is 'nested' in banal ways within the state. Building on this, I have placed articles in leading venues like the *American Political Science Review*, *World Development*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *Public Culture*, and elsewhere. All of this work interrogates longstanding questions about everyday security, agency and survival, and the relationship between capitalism, the state and violence, as is well evidenced through practices of mass incarceration. My current work is centrally concerned with how and why 20-25,000 people 'go missing' in Sao Paulo state every year. I trace this problem ethnographically through the lives of family members left behind, city cemeteries, clandestine cemeteries, the city morgue (IML) and the work of advocate prosecutors. This research is the basis for my second monograph, *Politics Gone Missing*, which I will submit for review in 2020. This work directly informs my teaching at undergraduate and graduate levels in Geography, Politics and Development Studies, where I often start by focusing on particular empirical problems - cloned cars, 'resisting arrest' killings, pacification, a city built in the shape of an air plane- as a means to open discussions about bigger theoretical considerations like urbanisation, infrastructures and political order, agency and institutions, and governance over life and death -especially in racial terms- as rooted in the historical development of capitalism.

### **Jonathan Rock Rokem** (University of Kent)

Urban violence in contested cities is a central focus of my research and teaching. Since my PhD awarded June 2015, I have developed a research agenda that reinforces, broadens and regenerates the sub-field within my wider interdisciplinary interests in researching; rapid urbanisation, forced international migration and barriers to mobility and diversity within contested cities, and, how they give rise to urban violence, aiming to answer the following three broad research questions: • How do spatial and social differences explain the variations in opportunities for violence in cities? • Are certain urban locations more prone to violence than others? • How do mobility, proximity, and connectivity shape the opportunities available to individuals and groups to engage in violent conflict? My work on urban violence exploring these three questions has so far been published in a wide span of internationally leading peer-reviewed academic journals within the disciplines of Political Geography and Urban Studies (See CV). My future research plans focus on three crosscutting themes within the wider framework of utilising interdisciplinary research methods to continue my investigation of urban violence, bridging the disciplines of Political Geography, Urban Studies, Architecture, Planning, Criminology and Political Science: 1. The Geopolitics of Urban Conflict: the on-going restructuring of global, regional and local geopolitics and its multi-scalar impact on urban conflict and violence in cities. 2. Comparing Urban Violent Conflicts: how urban theory and practice can be advanced from comparing cities and planning policies situated in contrasting regional settings. 3. Re-framing Urban Violence: how cities are producing new forms of social and spatial violence and why this requires reframing urban violence as a dynamic and mobile process. Recent research publications and collaborations relates to *Urban Violence: Edited book* (with Camillo Boano) "Urban Geopolitics: Rethinking Planning in Contested Cities" (Routledge, 2018). Paper published in *Political Geography Journal* (Rokem et al 2018). We assessed how spatial configurations shape and transform individual and collective forms of urban violence, suggesting that geographies of urban violence should be understood as an issue of mobility. The research documents and maps violent events in Jerusalem, assessing the possible impact of street patterns: segmenting populations, linking populations, and creating spaces for conflict between the city's Jewish and Palestinian populations. We demonstrate that, in the case of Jerusalem, street connectivity is positively associated with individual violence yet negatively associated with collective violence. The findings suggest that understanding the logic of urban intergroup violence requires us to pay close attention to local urban morphology and its impact on intergroup relations. I recently organised an International Symposium at the University of Kent: "Cities against Nationalism" (18th June 2019). This event was in collaboration with several leading academics in the field.

### **Juan Masullo** (University of Oxford)

My research and teaching focuses on the micro-dynamics of violence, with a special focus on civilian (organised) responses to armed groups and citizens' attitudes towards policies and strategies to build peace, curb violence and combat crime. I am deeply interested in questions such as: Why do some communities living in war zones choose to collaborate with armed groups while others opt to organise non-violent resistance? Why large portions of the population living in violence-affected countries support "iron fist" approaches to combat criminal organisations? How does exposure to violence and crime shape peoples' attitudes and preferences towards policy responses? While most of my work on civilian-combatant interactions focuses on rural settings, my work on policy attitudes focuses mainly on urban contexts. Below I outline how two current projects can make a contribution to the core theme of the Symposium. The first project aims to understand the determinants of citizens' support for militarisation of public security in Mexico's "war on drugs". With Davide Morisi (Collegio Carlo Alberto), we examine whether awareness of the human costs of militarisation has an impact on peoples' support for militarisation via lab and survey experiments we conducted in 2018. Findings are

scholarly intriguing and policy relevant. We found that while awareness of the human costs of militarisation do decrease support for militarisation, this is only the case when these costs involve civilians. In addition, directly addressing the Symposium's focus on how experiences of violence shape peoples' lives, we found that these effects are stronger among those who have not been victims of violence. I will be thrilled to feed this knowledge exchange opportunity with both substantive and methodological lessons from this study and explore opportunities with participants to collaboratively examine these issues in other countries where urban violence has spurred militarised security policies. The second project aims to understand attitudes towards alternative policy approaches to tackle urban violence in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo favelas. Policies that privilege law enforcement strategies conditional on criminal groups behaviour (as opposed to unconditional crackdowns) have been found to be more effective in reducing urban violence across different violence contexts (Lessing 2018). However, these approaches aren't used more widely because – allegedly – they lack popular approval. This project aims to assess whether this is the case in Brazil, as well as to identify which sort of policy trade-off residents of Rio and São Paulo are willing to accept in order to back conditional policies. This study is at its early stages. We have secured funding for a first set of lab experiments, which will conduct in December 2019. We then plan to field representative surveys in both cities and conduct qualitative fieldwork in purposively selected favelas. This project also promises to make a policy-relevant contribution to the theme of urban violence. I expect to feed our exchanges in March with findings from the first round of data collection and to take advantage of the Symposium to improve the design and implementation of the following stages of the project.

#### **Laurie Denyer Willis (University of Cambridge)**

My work explores the entangled relationship between urban violence and Neo-Pentecostalism in the Zona Oeste of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with a particular focus on Realengo, Batan, Fumacê and Vila Vintém. I conducted just under three years of ethnographic research while living in Batan, on Pentecostalism, political life and everyday political refusal. I am currently advancing this research to think deliberately about the intersections of suburban life, trafficking and milícia networks, and Neo-Pentecostal faith. Over the past two decades, soft alliances between non-state armed groups, Neo-Pentecostal pastors and church communities became more explicit arrangements, exacerbated and further codified after the political success of hard-line Evangelical politicians both nationally and in the city of Rio de Janeiro itself. In the Zona Oeste specifically, non-state armed groups and religious organisations have united under claims for security and 'order'. By invoking Neo-Pentecostal faith, non-state armed groups are better able to cement their leadership and systems of control by tying together notions of security and Godliness. Traffickers and militias, along with national politicians, are deploying and manipulating the Neo-Pentecostal doctrine of salvation to their ends, both to gain legitimacy and to enhance forms of soft governance. This shift in alliances between traffickers, milícias, and Neo-Pentecostal congregations has led to distinct kinds of violence, including violent 'cleansing' of religious practices connected to Umbanda and Candomblé. There have been major violent incidences linked to this religious 'cleansing' in both Morro da Formiga and Favelado Dendê, that have attracted considerable media attention. More recent reports from individuals and families in communities where I have been conducting ethnographic research, however, indicate that while these kinds of violent interactions are between Neo-Pentecostals and practitioners of other religions are becoming more routine, there is less local media coverage of these ongoing conflicts. In the Zona Oeste, many churches and pastors specifically attend themselves to reformed drug traffickers and to Laertius Costa Pellegrino, the maximum security prison colloquially known as 'Bangu 1'. Here, the knot of security and charismatic Evangelical faith has been central to prison logics of control and captivity. These logics then flow out of the prison and back into communities, informing the current modes of violence we see unfolding in the city today. From these suburbs of Rio, I argue that we cannot understand contemporary forms of urban violence and politics without attending to the logics of Neo-Pentecostalism and the combined Evangelical prescription and doctrines of salvation and holy warfare. I approach Neo-Pentecostalism and its connections to urban violence as tethered to everyday relations of hope and aspiration, and consider how the socio-commitments to faith and future are often manipulated by Neo-Pentecostal churches and pastors.

#### **Lívio Silva de Oliveira (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul)**

My work aims to dissert on the notion of territory as a determining category for the implementation of public security policies in Brazil over a period of ten years (2007-2017). In this sense, our units of analysis will be two programs: (i) Territórios de Paz (Territories of Peace), within the scope of the National Program of Public Security with Citizenship (Programa Nacional de Segurança Pública com Cidadania-PRONASCI), of the Federal Government via the Ministry of Justice; and (ii) Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora-UPP (Pacifying Police Units), considered an exemplar project against the criminality and urban violence, being located in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The justification for this text is the comparative effort between my master's dissertation, referring to the technical teams of the Guajuviras Território de Paz, a peripheral neighbourhood of Canoas (Porto Alegre metropolitan area); and from my doctoral thesis in which the objective was to analyse the reconfiguration of the urban space of Rio de Janeiro through the UPP in the context of Urban Entrepreneurship. In these researches, violence was identified as a dependent variable to legitimise discourses on security and the types of "necessary" interventions to prevent criminal acts, especially crime related to the sale of illicit drugs. The sociological problematisation is indicative of the idea of collective criminalisation of a population, making individual rights more flexible by producing an ideal catalogue of criminal suspects, in which racialised and class elements are components of these idealised types, demonstrating the historical subjection of marginalisation of groups and/or individuals, which highlights the situation of vulnerability in the economic,

social and legal dimensions. However, both programs presented in their premises dimensions that promote and guarantee rights, such as the right to property, and access to formal employment, as forms of social inclusion and a kind of symbolic recognition for citizenship, even though they overvalue consumption. To analyse these paradoxes, the chosen methodology will be the dialogue between the Sociology of Conflict (José Vicente Tavares dos Santos) and the Margin Theory (Veena Das), articulating with the notion of Extended State in Latin America (Lucio Oliver and Luis Arismendi) to understand social interpretations of violence and how public security projects and programs are produced that legitimise or not the selective suppression of rights of marginalised historical subjects.

**Luana Dias Motta** (Federal University of São Carlos)

I have invested in research that seeks to look at the connections between repressive and social interventions in poor territories. Therefore, the question of the production of legibilities, classifications and taxonomies has occupied a prominent place in my research agenda. I have tried to understand how the construction of different profiles produces continuums that classify the poor and has continuums of corresponding state practices. In the conduct of investigations of state practices with the poor, the category of vulnerable youth emerged with a centrality, given that poor/vulnerable youth are perceived as the main victims and main agents of violence. Therefore, state practices with so-called vulnerable youth and/or in conflict with the law has been a line of investigation that has proven fruitful in understanding state practices of urban conflict management. The proposal is to present results of an ethnographic research conducted with policemen-teachers who developed social projects in the favela Cidade de Deus-RJ. In addition to the description of the daily routine and practices of these state agents, the purpose is to reflect on strategies to classify and produce profiles of vulnerable youth. From the presentation of these profiles and the justifications for sustaining them, I reflect on the connections, articulations and tensions between repression strategies and social management strategies.

**Manuela Trindade Viana** (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro)

My main research interests relate to the polymorphic formation and transformations of the use of violence at the local, regional, and international level, taking Latin America as an entry point to understand global dynamics. Working within frameworks of International Political Sociology, critical criminology, and critical security studies, I pursue the problem of the local and global use of violence in Latin America in five main topics: i) the professionalisation of the police and the military in transnational (mainly, but not exclusively, continental) circuits of knowledge-power on the use of violence and constitution of order; ii) the correlate multiplication and transformation of boundaries and interchanges between war and crime, and the associate military and police expertise; iii) the nexus between security and development and their mutual constitution in processes of ordering and pacification; iv) the production of “public security” as a problematisation and knowledge-power domain in Latin America in relation to the three previous issues; and v) the resulting polymorphic modalities of war that constituted and continue to constitute the structural organisation and everyday existence in modern societies, both in the region and beyond.

**Marcelo da Silveira Campos** (Federal University of Grande Dourados)

I finalised my scientific initiation in 2005 on proposed amendments to the constitution that are in favour of reducing the legal age of majority. The IC survey interviewed deputies and senators opposed and in favour of the proposals, analysed the justifications of the proposals and collected the influence of two communication vehicles (Veja and Folha de S.Paulo). The research received an opinion of excellence, and was published in 2009, in the Revista Pública Pública (UNICAMP qualis A1), as a pioneering article in the scientific field. Then, at the Master of Political Science at UNICAMP, I defended a master's dissertation on legislation passed in public security and criminal justice from 1989 to 2006. The research compared the punitive directions of the approved laws, as well as the variables of the approval of a legal device. in the legislative process (year of approval, proposing party, state of proposer, processing time, proposing house, presidential term, etc.). The main scientific finding of the research, through quantitative and qualitative methodology, is that the legislation on public security and criminal justice approved in Brazil is constantly in dispute and combines punitive-hierarchical principles that coexist with universalizing-democratic principles, even within the same legal device (current drug law case). This work won the IBCCRIM award for best work in criminal science in Brazil and was published in book format by IBCCRIM. Finally, at USP I defended in 2015 a thesis, with a year of sandwich doctorate at the University of Ottawa, on the formulation and main effects of the current Brazilian drug law (Law 11.343 / 2006). The research was recognised by the evaluating bank as a reference work on drug law and indicated for publication in a book, which will be published in 2019 by Annablume Publishing House, with quantitative and qualitative methods showing that the criminal justice system does not displace drug users to the public health system and yes to the criminal justice system. The research was also recognised and disseminated through interviews in the main mass media of the country (Globo News, Exame Magazine, The State of Sao Paulo, El Pais, Le Monde Diplomatique, Jornal do Correio and Correio Braziliense). Several articles have been published in excellent journals, the result of the thesis, being an international thematic dossier published by Revista Tempo Social (USP, qualis A1) with articles on public policies on drugs in practice in Brazil and several countries in the world. The Federal Supreme Court (Extraordinary Appeal No. 635,659) cited one of the articles published in one of its votes. As a teacher of higher education, UFGD, I am coordinator of LADIF, I was president of the Center for Strategic Studies on Borders, coordinator of the



Specialisation in Sociology Teaching (UAB / CAPES) and deputy coordinator of the Graduate Program in Sociology. There I guided two master dissertations with scholarship (CAPES and FUNDECT / MS) and scientific initiation work (PIBIC / CNPQ), specialisation and graduation. I also coordinate a project on Violence, Drugs and Borders (CNPQ -track A -Universal).

**Márcio Júlio S. Mattos** (Superior Institute of Police Sciences - PM-DF)

Communities are important for understanding life in society. Communities matter in establishing diagnoses about causes and consequences of different aspects of individuals' routines. In this sense, communities are not restricted to physical territories or to individual norms, practices and values. Prior to this, communities are crossed by characteristics of these territories, moral meanings, and historically constructed relationships between individuals, spaces, and social groups. Since the beginning of my doctorate in 2015, I engaged in a research agenda that addresses how communities inform and explain variation of criminal incidence in Brazil. Despite being an established agenda in other countries, it is still incipient in Brazil. Therefore, I offer an innovative perspective for the criminological debate in the Brazilian context. Specifically, I discuss how neighbourhood social configurations, such as collective efficacy and legal cynicism, impact the incidence of both property and personal crimes in the Federal District (Brasilia). In the wake of the Chicago School's research tradition, I benefit from the ecological perspective to evidence how local interactions between residents and local neighbourhoods of the Federal District impact victimisation chances. I conducted extensive interviews and focus groups in local communities, besides analysed data from different sources such as victimisation surveys and the Census. So far, three types of social configurations were evidenced. In the first place, social control carried out through articulated strategies at the parochial level has proved to be central, extrapolating the public dimension in material and symbolic terms. The supervision of children and adolescents played a central role in the parochial logic of social control at the local level. In addition, social control at the public level seemed to reflect a limited ability to mobilise external resources to the neighborhood. That is, political marginalisation was an essential aspect of understanding the production of control in the local context. Finally, the presence of gangs was evidenced as an additional obstacle to the engagement in social protection through community mobilisation.

**Martyn Wemyss** (Goldsmiths, University of London)

I approach the theme of the symposium through the prism of long-term ethnographic fieldwork in the city of El Alto, Bolivia on the topic of human rights and decolonisation, and will take a diachronic approach to the analysis of urban violence in a particular neighbourhood, the Anexo 25 de Julio. My contribution will begin by addressing embodied and materialised histories of violence in the city told through life history interviews with residents and legal case histories of violent conflict and its resolution. I will show how residents' understandings of urban locality are structured by both historical experiences of violence (particularly during the revolutionary uprising of 2003 when protesting residents were fired on by the army) and circulating narratives of predatory violence which reinforce a perception of insecurity in the neighbourhood and wider city. This perception is countered in the neighbourhood which I will describe through the creation of an ad-hoc system of legal interventions by residents; hanging puppets which promise the lynching of thieves, painted signs which threaten interlopers and a repertoire of practices (night patrols, coded alarms) created by residents to respond to threats. I will examine these practices in relation to the legal practices and mythopoetics of residents' home villages (as most are first or second generation migrants from the countryside) and their understandings of violence (as fundamentally antithetical to indigenous Bolivian personhood, but in a colonial world a lamentable necessity) and in relation to wider urban imaginaries, histories and quotidian practices. There is a profound contradiction in residents' hatred of violence but willingness to represent themselves as potentially willing to lynch any interloper. I analyse this contradiction in relation to recent revolutionary history as well as longer duree history as told through life history interviews. I further analyse the relation between urban and rural practices of justice, thus troubling any notional sharp distinction between urban and rural. I observe the texturing of neighbourhood relations through binding contractual agreements and the modes through which urban violence, even when not immediately present or 'happening', nonetheless 'haunts' the urban imaginary and generates a series of social and symbolic practices. I will conclude by arguing that the subjectivity of the urban neighbour holds some potential to ameliorate urban violence, if elevated to a status similar to that of citizen or 'indigenous originary peasant' in Bolivia. As a mode of being in the world in El Alto it carries certain rights and duties informally but holds the potential to mediate across difference, in areas where indigenous migrants are living together without support for their traditional ways of life. To conclude, my contribution will focus on urban violence in El Alto across four dimensions: as a problem of place and territory, as a temporal/historical issue, as something productive of material objects and artefacts and as a topic of mythopoetical reflection. I will end by observing the improvements in citizen security in recent years and how these suggest ways of ameliorating urban violence in Bolivia and wider Latin America in the future.

**Maziyar Ghiabi** (University of Oxford)

As a scholar working on the lifeworld of drugs, violence has been a cross-cutting element in my research. Violence is inherent to the illegal economy of drugs, with its actors composed of international traffickers and dealers, local criminals managing the distribution and security of products as well as in the violence of anti-narcotics strategies produced by state and parastate agents, i.e. policy, intelligence, army and anti-drug militias. My research tries to connect the blatant aspects of drug violence which is, after all, the object

of much drug research and popular cultural production (e.g. Netflix series) to the hidden transcripts of violence and human disruption produced by drugs' other life, that of consumers and people seeking recovery. The latter dimension is more strictly connected to the biological, health aspects affecting the lives of people using and abusing drugs. It is also phenomenologically part of the continuum of the drug world, made of the drug economy as trafficking and dealing and the drug economy as consuming and healing. This is what I call 'the drug assemblage' and is the primary object of my investigation. My initial contribution to the study of Urban Violence is to bring these two often distinguished dimensions to a closer analysis, one that would benefit greatly from interdisciplinary engagement. Indeed, my objectives to take advantage of anthropological, historical understandings of violence around the theme of drugs, situating it in the frame of urban studies. Cities are the lieu where these two dimensions - the security dimension of crime and anti-crime and the health dimension of consumption and treatment - knit together. Building on my previous collaboration with anthropologists working on drug economies and scholars of violence in the Americas, in particular Dennis Rodgers and Philippe Bourgois, I intend to explore the 'drug assemblage' in the context of the Middle East, paying heed to the case of Iran - my long-term research field-site - and Lebanon - a research site on which I have worked since 2017. In both these contexts, drugs and violence interplay in the urban context connecting the world of security to that of health, both from the perspective of the state and that of individuals involved in the drug economies. As a researcher who experiments with methodologies and moves across disciplines within the social sciences and humanities (i.e. politics, anthropology, history and health studies) I am also keen to develop comparative frames which explore the south-south dimension of urban violence and drugs. To maximise the potential of research dissemination, I am keen in using visual methods, as I have done for other research themes, mixing written narratives with photographic and video tales. Overall, I believe that my contribution is original both for bringing together health and security aspects in understanding a key aspect of urban violence, i.e. drugs, and in casting light on an understudied area of scholarly research, i.e. the Middle East and North Africa. These two elements could trigger much innovative collaborations and enrich each other in productive, comparative ways.

#### **Michelle Degli Esposti (University of Oxford)**

I will contribute to the theme of Urban Violence through my unique interdisciplinary study of violence. My research is underpinned by an ecological framework – recognising that urban violence does not occur in a vacuum but at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal level. Drawing from my interdisciplinary background (eg, epidemiology, history, psychology, and social policy), my research crosscuts these levels to provide a richer understanding of the scope, nature, and social determinants of urban violence. One strand of my research focuses on the role of changing communities and societies on violence. I have developed a novel approach for harnessing big data and using advanced methods to map out the distribution of violence across sub-populations, time, and space (Degli Esposti et al., 2018; PLoS ONE). I have applied this approach to domestic violence, peer violence, and interpersonal violence across geographical areas (Degli Esposti et al., 2019; Lancet Public Health). For example, to examine changing rates of violence across the UK and related media reporting, I extracted area-specific data on different types of interpersonal violence and obtained media data through a Python web-scrape. Through an in-depth analysis of these data I found that, despite exponential growth in media reports on increases in violence, there was little evidence for actual increases in violence with overall trends following a downward trend. However, there was evidence for localised increases in specific types of violence in urban areas, such as non-fatal stabbings in London (in press at the BMJ). These findings highlight a worrying trend in stabbing in UK cities specifically, indicating that media attention – and subsequent public concern and political agendas – are being driven by a specific subset of urban violence. Another strand of my research examines the social determinants of these increases in urban violence and ways to counteract them. Although primarily based at the University of Oxford, I have been awarded a grant by the Violence Abuse and Mental Health Network to spend 2-weeks with the world-leading Space Time Epi Group at the University of Pennsylvania in August 2019 (and have applied for a further 6-week research visit in 2020). As part of this collaboration with Prof Douglas Wiebe, I will be using natural experiments, including interrupted time series analysis, to evaluate the impact of expanding the right to use self-defence (“Stand Your Ground” laws) on rates of homicide and crime across the US. I will also gain valuable experience working alongside colleagues who examine the role of green space in protecting against urban violence, and who are currently conducting interventions that aim to reduce violence by “cleaning and greening” urban areas (eg, demolishing abandoned buildings, planting vegetation). In summary, I will contribute to this symposium by bringing a multidisciplinary perspective, expertise on harnessing big data on violence, and a wide-set of advanced quantitative skills. I also bring specialist topic knowledge and novel research approaches that will be invaluable in helping to unravel the bi-directional relationships between space, time, and violence; which in turn can inform initiatives for reducing urban violence.

#### **Rebecca Jarman (University of Leeds)**

My research is situated at the intersections between culture and politics in contemporary Latin America, focusing on the conflicts that drive urbanisation in diverse geographical and historical contexts. To date, my work has examined the ways in which these tensions are mediated in visual and textual discourse, and how such discursive practices contribute to the production of abstract social imaginaries and concrete urban configurations. My first initial contribution to theme will be to explore the possibility of a cross-disciplinary, collaborative research project to identify the historical forces that have given rise to the violent encounters that, in turn, have shaped the contemporary cityscape. An overarching aim will be to identify regional trends and patterns in global cities while

developing expertise in the variations that occur in local areas. To this end, my forthcoming monograph, *Representing the barrios: Culture, Politics and Urban Poverty in Twentieth-Century Caracas*, traces the evolution of informal settlements and the social anxieties that accompanied urbanisation in the Venezuelan capital, along with the development of the oil industry from the 1920s onwards. The book employs discursive analysis to evaluate the history of conceptualising urban violence in low-income neighbourhoods, informed by frameworks that begin with positivism and unfold into dialectical theories. Simultaneously, it accounts for the state's recourse to mechanisms of structural violence in exercising power in a postcolonial environment. The book is based on my doctoral research, elements of which have also appeared in high-impact peer-review publications. Bringing together the diverse lines of inquiry that run through these publications is an analysis of how structural conflicts are rehearsed, staged and diffused in cultural production that takes the city as its protagonist. This research has been integrated into my undergraduate teaching, especially on the history of Latin American cinema, and revolutions in Latin American culture, that interrogate the mutually constitutive origins of film and military combat. In 2018, I led a collaborative workshop on the basis of this teaching at the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua that was sponsored by the British Council Higher Education Links initiative. Following on from this, my second initial contribution to the symposium is to use this exchange as a model to facilitate teaching between transnational institutions on the topics of world cinema and urban violence. Beyond academia, my research on Venezuela has received attention in national UK media in the context of rising political demonstrations in the country and the violent repression of these on behalf of state security forces. I have made recent appearances on prime-time news bulletins for BBC 5 Live and BBC Wales, and have written articles for BBC History and BBC World History Magazines that expand on the headlines about the Venezuelan crisis. In addition, I have organised, and spoken at, public engagement events that use Latin American cinema as a platform for discussion about social conflicts. My third and final proposal for the symposium is to explore the possibility of co-hosting a workshop on the ethics and pragmatics of discussing urban violence in public-facing events and outlets.

#### **Rhys Machold** (University of Glasgow)

Broadly, my research is concerned with questions of governance, urban violence and the production of knowledge as well as a quest to better understand how critical scholarship can assist in abolitionist organising. This type of organising focuses on limiting the scope of state power and transforming how publics imagine state agencies like the police. Toward these ends, my initial contribution on the theme will focus on the roles of mythmaking in the (re)production of urban violence. Prevailing public imaginaries of "urban" violence, such as rising crime, disorder and terrorism, are predicated in racialised and classed myths about the sources of threats to society. For instance, historical moral panics around the phenomenon of "mugging" in Britain were based on highly simplified narratives, which suggested that a few widely covered assaults represented a "new" crime epidemic threatening urban social order. Indeed, the legitimacy of state actors like the police and security forces in managing political crises of order are closely tied to the ongoing production of such mythic knowledge that classifies certain urban spaces, activities and populations as disorderly and menacing to society and thereby enables their targeting and exclusion. Critical scholars, therefore, argue that breaking apart the myths involved policing and state power remains analytically and politically paramount to challenging the legitimacy of violent statecraft. Indeed, increasingly one of the most common strategies employed by grassroots mobilisations against state violence by activists and critical scholars is to try and discredit the core myths about "crime" and "disorder" that policing is predicated on. Yet as I have begun to explore in my recent published work as well as in my current postgraduate course on the intersections of race gender and violence, these critical strategies of exposure and revelation are not always successful in challenging the legitimacy of state violence against vulnerable urban communities. Taking this concern on, my contribution draws attention to the inherent limitations of critiques by way of myth-busting and exposure. It also, however, explores possible alternatives for transforming the terms of public and intellectual debate on urban violence by cultivating alternative forms of knowledge, vision and practice. Building on feminist theory and methodologies, I suggest that bringing new perspectives and forms of embodied experience into the conversation is necessary. In addition, I suggest that we need to actively contend with the politics of exposure itself in the sense that exposure is a particular kind of political manoeuvre that enables but also limits imaginations for how to challenge violence in contemporary cities. Building on recent critical theorisations of police power that foreground abolitionist politics, my contribution will focus on probing lines of inquiry that can enrich our theoretical understanding of violent statecraft, yet in such a way that equally avoids accepting governing regimes as already all-powerful totalities.

#### **Roxana Pessoa Cavalcanti** (University of Brighton)

My on-going research and teaching are organised around the theme of urban violence. I have carried out research in Brazil and in the UK, where I write about armed violence and gun control (see Cavalcanti, 2017a), and the challenges faced by young people in the context of new security interventions (see Cavalcanti, 2017b). In my teaching for the Violence and Society module, and for Cross-Cultural Criminology students at the University of Brighton, as well as in my research (Cavalcanti, 2020; Cavalcanti and Garmany, forthcoming), I examine enduring tensions engendered by Brazil's vast socioeconomic and regional inequalities, including the ongoing struggle to democratise the police, criminal justice institutions and social relations. During lectures, seminars and workshops with my students, we examine how actors inside and outside states have tried to deal with these issues, and how new security interventions

have – and have not– changed developments on the ground. My work challenges dominant practices and notions of security and control (Cavalcanti, 2017b; 2020). It exposes the aggravation of social problems by the expansion of the penal and crime industry, unsettling the applicability and universalism of mainstream managerial criminology. My research shows that new security programmes have failed to inhibit diverse forms of violence and exacerbated the inequalities that affect the most marginalised populations. With a focus on decolonising knowledge, I invite discussions that shed light on issues relating to urban violence, policing, coercion and the great socioeconomic, historical and spatial inequalities that shape the lives of millions of people in the global South. While comparisons can be made with other post-colonial and post-dictatorship countries in the world, some contemporary trends – for instance, growing socio-economic insecurities, violence and spatial exclusion – can only be fully appreciated with detailed understanding of historical and cultural contexts. As a bilingual Brazilian and British citizen, attuned to local cultural norms, fluent in English and Portuguese, I provide a unique set of skills that facilitate collaboration and contributions that bridge knowledge exchanges and co-production of knowledge about urban violence beyond disciplinary and spatial boundaries.

#### **Sarah Hughes (Northumbria University)**

The contemporary moment of asylum geopolitics is characterised by the violence of increasingly integrated practices of border control. In the UK the 'hostile environment' has multiplied the border internally within the state, emerging particularly through the urban environment, in schools, workplaces and public transport: 'the' border has shattered (into) the fabric of everyday life. This seeping presence of the mobile border is not unchallenged; there has been a growth in asylum seeker advocacy groups, support and hospitality networks. As this resistance to immigration control expands, posing urgent questions for policy makers, advocates, and civil society as it does so, academic work has also emerged, commenting, critiquing and attempting to intervene within the multiple practices and policies of asylum seeker governance. However, this work has often remained wedded to a pre-determined account of what constitutes resistance (e.g. of activist groups, protests, hunger strikes). In my work, I ask how we might think differently about the relationship between resistance and urban violence in the context of the UK asylum system. This is grounded in my empirical research in the UK's dispersal system, where asylum seekers are forcibly moved to no choice accommodation (predominantly) in cities in the north of the UK to wait for a decision on their asylum application. During this period of waiting, asylum seekers are not allowed to work, and live within privatised accommodation often unfit for habitation (a UK Parliamentary Select Committee in 2015, noted widespread problems with rats, loose wiring and broken amenities). Drawing upon my volunteer-researcher position with an asylum seeker support charity in the North West of England, I argue for attention to the slow violence of the dispersal system, and the paradox of being kept alive but where enduring the everyday is a site of intense harm. I suggest that the seemingly 'mundane' forms of this slow violence open up new questions on the complexity of the relationship between violence and resistance in the city. How can academics interrogate the interplay between resistance, persistence and endurance in the city? This is a topic I will cover with students on the 'Critical Urban Geographies' module, which includes a fieldtrip in Newcastle facilitated by refugees and asylum seekers living within the city. Here students will be invited to think differently about what it means to experience violence in the city. Whilst focussing on the slow violence of the UK dispersal system, my work resonates beyond the specificities of this example into the often hidden slow violence of urban life. It therefore raises wider questions on how 'we' recognise, research and write about the relationship between resistance and violence, and how to move away from normative accounts of the processes, subjects and materials that become woven into these narratives. It asks, what forms of politics does a focus upon slow violence in urban spaces open up, and what does it risk precluding? In short, this contribution argues for a rethinking of some of the assumptions around the specificity of form of urban violence, and its relationship with resistance.

#### **Simone Gomes (Federal University of Pelotas)**

I have started researching violence related themes in my PhD research, where I dealt with the political opportunities available to young activists, living under constrained conditions in the West zone of Rio de Janeiro, a region hostile to social mobilisations, due to its low socioeconomic status and restricted democratic possibilities. The violent areas marked by the social fragmentation that results from conditions of generalised urban violence in Rio de Janeiro, marked by the presence of militias, illegal armed groups of policeman and soldiers that have taken root and grown in power, in the context of insecurity generated by the nearby presence of narco-trafficking, where essential fieldwork experiences. Later on, I have researched prison gangs in Brazil, in a Chicago University project of compared violence, as soon as I had finished my PhD, and now, as a professor, I have been researching violence related themes in frontiers. That said, the urban violence, as a result of an uneven geographical development (Harvey 2004) interests me, especially as a complex phenomenon related to 2006 New Drug Law in Brazil, that sparked the growth of the incarceration rates and the reorganisation of prison gangs in the country.

#### **Simone Toji (National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage)**

In my PhD studies in Anthropology, I analysed São Paulo through the presence of international migrants. In following the trajectories of individuals from different countries, such as Bolivia, South Korea, Paraguay, China and Peru, an environment of informal relations was disclosed in the city. In such an environment, undocumented statuses, irregular work affairs and precarious housing practices

provided the conditions for the emergence of certain situations of violence in everyday life. As follows, migrant workers were left unpaid, pregnant migrant women were exposed to caesarean section routines, migrant children were diagnosed as holding learning disabilities, and migrant families were considered intruders in squatted buildings. Although the dynamics of informality in the city inflicted such roughness on migrants' lives, it was in this same space of informality that they found recourse to overcome their difficult circumstances by activating unofficial networks of migrants from the same gender or country of origin, or by playing with the official rules of residency, work and housing. In taking into account this dialectic, I proposed to conceive of São Paulo as a 'gambiarra' city. A 'gambiarra' city is an unstable and unresolved urban space, which delivers flashes of hostility and sentiments of disorientation but allows people from all parts of the globe to find their own ways in the city as well.

#### **Stamatis Zografos** (University College London)

Urban violence is often expressed through the use of fire. Hong kongers are seen to set fires throughout their city protesting against Carrie Lam's upcoming policies; London and other cities in the United Kingdom were severely burnt during the riots in 2011; cities in Egypt, Syria, Libya and Tunisia suffered fire destructions during the Arab Spring; Athens has repeatedly been burnt during protests against austerity. These are just a few manifestations of urban violence that feature deliberate fires at their core. Images of these violent expressions travel instantly around the globe becoming a spectacle for an international audience. What stands out from these scenes of violence is the intense imagery of flames consuming lives, hopes, buildings and the urban landscape. The last memory from these scenes of violence is what fire leaves behind, its ashes. In my monograph *Architecture and Fire, A Psychoanalytic Approach to Conservation*, I employ 'fire as a methodology' to explore memory in architecture and develop a radical theory of architectural conservation that is based on Freudian psychoanalysis. The relevance of fire is based on the general assumption that architecture emerged around fire. Fire is therefore at the beginning of architectural creation thus also the latter's first memory. Yet fire destroys buildings therefore it is architecture's last memory too. In this sense, fire is present from the birth to the death of architecture. Exploring this intimate relationship between architecture and fire, it becomes apparent that buildings have the ability to absorb and preserve memory, just like archives do. Associating buildings with the function of the archive allows for an archival reading of architecture through the philosophy of Jacques Derrida. Following Derrida, violence is an inherent quality of the archive. Violence occurs as soon as something is archived, because the act of archiving does not only imply the establishment of a law but also its enforcement. An archive is therefore the place where power is exercised. Derrida further suggests that archives have an intrinsic characteristic, which he calls archive fever. Archive fever is the desire to return to the origin, to the primordial memory, which is a function likened to the Freudian death drive, namely the tendency that pushes towards an inorganic state, the destruction of memory. In this light, an archival reading of architecture suggests that urban violence is an innate expression of the archive/building and fire-related events are externalisations of the death drive. Based on this archival understanding of architecture, I have further developed an interdisciplinary art practice that explores how buildings and cities respond, remember and evolve through their own(self)destruction. For instance, a project I presented at the 3rd Lisbon Architecture Triennale Close Closer entitled 'Stage 3 – The retrieval of the archive: Witnessing the destruction of Seville' aimed to voice a specific community's death drive, which otherwise, if not externalised, can become catastrophic and dangerous for the future of the city. During this exhibition, the public was invited to experience an experimental film and sound installation, and 'witness' the conceptual destruction of the city.

#### **Stephanie Virginia Reist** (Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro)

Urban violence is not the central focus of my research. However, in my ethnographic research on youth movements and access to higher education in the suburban outskirts of Rio de Janeiro known as the Baixada Fluminense, or simply Baixada, violence is far from peripheral. These movements of predominately poor, Black and brown youth from this periphery of 13 municipalities often expressed feeling physically and conceptually trapped by myriad forms of violence. Sensationalist newspapers and politicians have long stigmatised the Baixada as a violence-ridden, culturally devoid foil to the charm of Rio proper--or at least to its beachside tourist destinations. And the Baixada is indeed violent: despite a population of 4 million compared to Rio's 6, the Baixada boasts a homicide rate two times higher, and in 2018, when over 60 thousand Brazilians were murder victims, one of its municipalities, Queimados, had the highest homicide rate of the country. What's more, the Baixada is also considered by sociologists like Jose Claudio Souza Alves as the birthplace of Rio's militias. These paramilitary mafias comprised of former and active police and other security personnel date back to the military dictatorship and exploit the lack of public investment in poor, peripheral neighbourhoods and municipalities by entrenching a political economy of death. They extort businesses to pay fines for protection and coerce residents to vote for their preferred political candidates by providing access to services like electricity, Wi-Fi, and transportation. To understand the possible connections between the Bolsonaro family and Rio's militias, one must contend with the political dynamics of urban violence forged in the Baixada. These processes of marginalisation--lack of access to health and educational services, poor sanitation and high rates of victimisation by crime--have symbolically told poor, Black and brown youth from the periphery to "know their place". However, the cultural and intellectual production--through the mediums of hip hop, film, blogs, policy dossiers, and undergraduate and graduate thesis--often many poor, Black and brown youth from this 'periphery of the periphery' aims to de-centre violence and stigmatising narratives about the Baixada. The Baixada is art; the Baixada is music; the Baixada is research. Thus, these youth movements question



the systematic neglect that underpins urban violence and strive to make their place, and themselves, known. Thus, these youth movements also force me to rethink my role as a researcher. How might I better research and write about youth from the Baixada Fluminense and acknowledge the prevalence of urban violence without essentialising it as inherent to the region? Do certain methodologies better lend themselves to this pursuit?

**Tomaz Oliveira Paoliello** (Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo)

My PhD was focused on the study of a private military and security company, DynCorp. My research interest originally arose from the company's participation in contemporary conflict stages, particularly Afghanistan and Iraq. The investigation into the company's activities led me to different contexts, and particularly one that caught my attention: the training of troops and police in occupied territories. The first research opening into the issue of security governance therefore took place in the light of the study of police and armed forces training missions in countries occupied by peacekeeping missions. In these scenarios the logic of the transfer of practices and policies in various areas was explicit, often with a social experimentalism tone. Reforms associated with the various peacebuilding missions include a broad set of security sector "design" practices. The so-called "security sector reforms" have become fertile ground for understanding how the best practices for security governance circulate and are transferred. From this point on I began to focus my research on security governance diffusion, notably in large Latin American cities, focusing on Brazil. In these locations it is also possible to perceive the international circulation and diffusion of security management practices, technologies and projects, although much less clearly than in international missions. When we talk about "security governance" we are faced with an ambiguous proposition. The study of security governance is a response to structural social transformations, particularly of state actors, which come to rely on various other private and voluntary sector actors to design, manage and deliver policies and services. But this literature also works to legitimise the same project that diversifies the network of policy and service managers and transfers public management functions to private actors. The governance literature is more focused on "governing" than on the study of state-centred institutions. In other words, studies focused on the idea of governance are concerned with investigating the complex set of state and non-state actors that have some influence on the governance of a given theme. As a rule, two types of actors were interpreted as "complementary" to state security provision, private companies and community surveillance actors. Additionally, in order to understand security management logic in Latin America, it is also necessary to understand the role of criminal actors in the complex management of security. My teaching activity has focused broadly on two main topics of interest, the issues of violence and security, and the specific discussion about the role of cities in International Relations. Last year I offered two courses for undergraduate studies in International Relations, "Violence and Democracy in Latin America", and "Security Governance: Local and Global Actors of Security and Insecurity", as well as a course for postgraduate studies, "The Role of cities in global governance". I also serve as coordinator of the International Conflict Studies Group and I am a researcher for the Security Governance Studies Laboratory, two groups dedicated to the study of violence and security from a social sciences perspective.

**Valéria Cristina de Oliveira** (Federal University of Minas Gerais)

Where, when and how does physical and social place most severely expose people to fear of crime and objective situations of violence? In general, this is the research question that I have tried to answer since the early years of my academic formation, as an undergraduate student in Social Sciences. In my senior thesis, defended in 2006 in Brazil at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), where I also got the Masters and Doctors degrees, I analysed the conditioning factors of the perceived risk of victimisation in the capital of the state, Belo Horizonte (RODRIGUES & OLIVEIRA, 2012). In my Master's thesis (2009), I replaced fear with victimisation as my research theme and estimated the effects of private, parochial and public social control strategies using data from a survey conducted during 2005-2006 in Belo Horizonte and two other Brazilian capitals (Curitiba and Rio de Janeiro). Finally, in my doctoral dissertation (2016), I discussed the potencies and limits of the concept of collective efficacy to explain victimisation through data from National Victimization Survey conducted by the Ministry of Justice between 2010 and 2012 (OLIVEIRA & RODRIGUES, 2013). In those three initial studies, we find that it is not always that strong social ties foster a willingness to response to problems of violence, which contradicts approaches as social disorganisation and collective efficacy (OLIVEIRA, 2016). These results show the inadequacy of these approaches to explain the distribution of violence in areas of economic deprivation and intense conflict, such as most of Brazilian peripheral spaces. Thus, during a postdoctoral internship at the Center for Metropolitan Studies at University of São Paulo (CEM / USP), I proposed an integrated methodology research design to investigate the effects of place on reactions to violence in urban peripheries (2016-2017). I conducted a case study of a small favela in the District of Sapopemba (São Paulo) and through participant observation, focus groups and semi-structured interviews that informed the building of a questionnaire (more sensitive to the particularities of social organisation in urban peripheries) that we applied to 200 households. Results indicated that despite the social cohesion, most of the time, due to fear, the neighbours' capacity to adapt and the distrust of public institutions, this does not directly affect local social and political engagement. Social movements just attain a strong popular support in specific situations where the sense of injustice goes beyond tolerated limits (PLACENCIA, OLIVEIRA, 2019). My engagement in studying and applying research methods has taken me to a new phase of my career as a faculty member at the UFMG' Faculty of Education in the area of Research Methods since August 2017. From that moment on I have accepted the challenge to contribute to the improvement of student training and the use of quantitative

methods in the analysis of violence in schools (a subject that I had had dealt with in 2012 as a research assistant at CRISP/UFMG). In the meantime, I am investing in analysing the neighbourhood effects on school-based violence and school outcomes (OLIVEIRA, XAVIER & LIMA, 2019).

**Wilker Ricardo de Mendonca Nóbrega** (Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte)

Since 2016 I have been interested in the cross-cutting theme of my education related to violence. This encouraged me to attend a postdoctoral internship for six months at the Crime and Security Research Institute (Cardiff University, UK), between July 2018 and January 2019. Also, more recently, specifically in July 2019 invited to join the OBVIO-RN (Observatory of Violence of the State of Rio Grande do Norte), which aims to contribute as an alternative statistic to governmental ones that are generally linked to a system of brakes and controls that turn it into simple statistics and not analytical. The initiative is to propose the construction of solutions and constructively criticise the actions employed, to assess whether they should be given to their strategies or whether they should be modified and adapted to achieve better results in the return of quality of life. Given these aspects presented I guess that the theme urban violence is appropriate so that I can broaden my learning about these aspects that will be debated and discussed at the symposium will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

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