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Everyday Security: privatized policing, local legitimacy and atmospheres of control

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Abstract

In this paper I examine the tactics, underpinning logics and forms of legitimacy through which urban security is produced and maintained in a volatile urban environment. I argue that urban security is produced through subtle, everyday practices, as much as it relies on the use of force. Research from Johannesburg's inner-city reveals that even powerful actors, such as private security personnel, have to engage in contingent, everyday practices which adapt to the socio-spatial realities they are confronted with in order to effectively create regimes of security and order. The article makes a novel contribution by combining literature from policing and security studies with work on gentrification, ambient power and the privatization of public space. It also draws on original empirical research carried out in inner-city Johannesburg over an extended period of time. The central goal of the article is to shift analytic lenses to examine the ways in which social and spatial realities shape security and policing practices and agendas, and to broaden our understanding of the rationales, logics and meanings of urban security, particularly in volatile, conflictual urban spaces (mostly, but not exclusively) in the Global South.

Keywords: Private Security, Policing, Everday Life, Domestication, Ambient Power

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Introduction

In this paper, I aim to move the debate about regimes of urban security and public space management away from spectacular forms of policing, and focus instead on the everyday, mundane elements which go into creating regimes of order and security. I will do so by focusing on the processes through which a form of privatized policing has come to operate with and gain local legitimacy, and thus support within, a volatile neighborhood in inner-city Johannesburg. I will demonstrate how privatized policing is not necessarily imposed onto urban areas and populations through force, but that it operates with recognizable codes and values which make it desirable and legitimate amongst local populations. Furthermore, the type of policing being offered is exercised through ambient control and by creating an atmosphere of regulation. This atmosphere is effective not because it is imposed by powerful actors, but because it serves wider needs and responds to desires for order, control and community formation which already exist. In theorizing processes of local legitimacy and support, I am not intending to validate or endorse the forms of policing under discussion in this article. However, I do wish to draw attention to the ways in which policing and security are often desired, and even desirable. They are thus ambiguous, and academic critique needs to reflect this.

The discussion in this paper is based on narratives and insights accumulated during an extended period of fieldwork carried out in the inner-city between August 2012 and July 2013. Research entailed interviews with various actors involved in policing, urban renewal and the provision of affordable housing, including housing developers (16), building managers (7), area managers employed by housing companies (2), representatives of the main private security company operating the neighbourhood (3), coordinators employed to oversee the running of the Residential Improvement District (RID) (2), and representatives of the local Community Policing Forum (3). Interviews were also conducted with 57 residents living in affordable housing developments in the area. I also engaged in ethnographic research, including attending management meetings, community events and accompanying the local Community Policing Forum (CPF) on patrols; numerous informal conversations and interactions with private security guards working in the neighbourhood and residential buildings in which research took place also inform this piece.

Everyday policing and order

Accepting intrusive policing

One Saturday night in 2013 I was accompanying the Hillbrow CPF on their patrol[1]. Comprising a group of civilian volunteers and a police reservist, the street patrollers assembled at the local police headquarters and, after donning their orange high-visibility vests and going through a military-style roll call, dispersed to canvas the streets of one of the busiest, most densely populated areas of the city. It is also an area notorious for its high levels of crime, violence and the pervasiveness of drugs. Unarmed, the patrollers set off in groups of two, with one overly-enthusiastic young man breaking protocol and running out ahead of the others. I walked alongside the reservist, a tall, self-assured and commanding man who has been involved in crime fighting initiatives in the area for a number of years. Not long into our patrol, we turned into Quartz Street, a short stretch of road with several taverns and clubs crammed alongside one another. In due course we approached a young man exiting one of the taverns. Politely but authoritatively, the patroller introduced himself and asked if he could search the young man who, judging by his accent, was of Francophone African origin. Signalling that this was an interaction with well-rehearsed and familiar rules, the young man first demanded to see the patroller's hands to make sure he wasn't holding anything that could be planted on him, and then, satisfied that nothing was present, consented to being searched. After a vigorous frisking, which did not turn up any evidence, the patroller apologized and explained that it wasn't personal, he was just trying to "keep the community safe" (a refrain widely repeated by the patrollers). Shrugging his shoulders and with no apparent animosity or even resentment at being subject to such an intrusive, physical search in public, the man simply declared "It's allowed," and walked off into the night.

This experience resonated with me and left me wondering how it came to be that invasive stop-and-search measures, conducted by one civilian on another, can simply by accepted as

[1] Community Policing Forums (CPFs) are volunteer groups established in South Africa which are intended to build bridges between local police forces and the communities they serve. They are statutorily mandated and were designed to bring the police force, which under apartheid had functioned as a quasi-military branch of a repressive state, under civilian control (Marks, 2005). According to law, every police station in the country is required to establish a CPF, which acts as a type of neighbourhood watch group. The activities which CPFs engage in vary; in poorer areas it is common for local CPFs to conduct daily foot patrols and act as the primary form of policing (Fourchard, 2011), whilst in wealthier suburbs CPFs frequently act primarily as points of liaison between local residents and the police, and some have even helped fundraise and subsidise their local police stations (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2006).

'allowed', particularly in a neighborhood that for almost two decades was rife with violent crime and almost ungovernable (Leggett, 2003). What are the regimes of order and registers of legitimacy at work which have allowed these practices to become accepted by the local population, and that have brought relative stability and safety to the neighborhood? Upon careful consideration (and some wild speculation), the answer for me lies not in the exercise of force, but in the ways in which the security regime at work in the space operates with routine, contingent and everyday practices and approaches to policing.

Security responding to subjective needs

The southern section of Hillbrow has become a Residential Improvement District (RID). RIDs are informal versions of the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) which have come to oversee large amounts of urban territory in Anglo-American cities. They are informal because membership and contributions are made on voluntary bases and the governing bodies do not enjoy statutory recognition (Peyroux, 2008). However, through the financial contributions secured from several large housing companies who own properties in the neighborhood, the Hillbrow RID, known as the Ekhaya Neighborhood, has been able to exert significant influence over the territory it lays claim to. Through financial contributions and cooperation on management and security matters, Ekhaya has subsidized the deployment of a private security company which patrols the streets and has installed CCTV cameras to monitor public spaces in the area, and has also launched several urban management and cleaning campaigns. These measures have generally been effective in reducing crime in the area. Whilst Hillbrow still reports some of the highest levels of crime in Johannesburg, in the years during which I was conducting research the numbers of crimes recorded annually were significantly lower than in preceding years. For instance, there were 56 murders recorded in Hillbrow in 2012 and 63 in 2013, compared to 84 in 2008 and 88 in 2009[2]. Significant reductions are also recorded for attempted murder, assault with attempt to inflict grievous bodily harm, common robbery and robbery with aggravating circumstances between 2008 and 2013, pointing to the efficacy of the policing strategies under consideration. Interviews I conducted with tenants corroborated these trends, with the general consensus being that, although crime was still a predominant concern, feelings of safety in the neighborhood had improved dramatically. Although the stop-and-search incident described above took place in a street which falls just outside of the RID's boundary, the establishment of Ekhaya and the ways in which policing and public space

[2] https://www.crimestatssa.com/precinct.php?id=261. These figures were obtained from the website crimestats.sa.com, and verified against the statics made publically available by the South African Police Service (SAPS). SAPS' figures were obtained from https://www.saps.gov.za/services/crimestats_archive.php

management have taken place have been highly influential in making the practice I witnessed legitimate, and thus in establishing a regime of security and policing in the area.

Policing cultures and ideas about what constitutes legitimate policing are vital for the successful exercise of authority and acquiescence of those who are being policed (Garland, 1996). In South Africa, the black population has, generally, only experienced harsh, heavy-handed approaches to policing. Thus, stop-and-search procedures, once they have been carefully negotiated, are tolerated by the local population, as they are seen as the normal way in which policing functions (Hornberger, 2011; Steinberg, 2008; Vigneswaran, 2014). Furthermore, not only are they 'allowed', they also respond to culturally ingrained norms and expectations regarding perceptions of what safety and effective policing look like.

Interviews with residents living in Hillbrow reinforced the desire for and, consequent legitimacy of, harsh, physical approaches to policing, including stop-and-search measurers. For example, when asked what would improve the neighborhood, one young man declares,

> If they can put cameras around and the police are patrolling 24/7 you know that, *ai*, [speaks forcefully and claps hands for emphasis] *when you turn around this corner [clap], there's a police, when you turn this side [clap] there's a police*, then you're safe there.

Another tenant reiterates this when, responding to the same question, she declares, "If police are patrolling the streets, searching everyone who they suspect and making sure the kids cross the streets safely". In the context of the inner-city, legitimate policing is thus seen as a practice which is constant, indiscriminate, performed through daily routines and by policing people's bodies. It is also regarded as part and parcel of everyday safety. Hence stopping and searching people is part of the same continuum of everyday policing and regulation as helping children cross the streets. The street patrollers form part of this constellation and come to enjoy legitimacy because they publicly perform the routines and practices which people understand as policing, and to do so on a rigorous, interpersonal scale (Diphoorn, 2015).

Additionally, community policing is not only endorsed by the South African state, it is also historically and culturally ingrained (Buur and Jensen, 2004; Super, 2015). Black communities in South Africa have long-standing practices of relying on community networks to police their neighborhoods. During apartheid the police force terrorized, rather than protected communities. Therefore, day-to-day order was enforced by street committees and vigilante groups, which continue to be influential in some areas (Fourchard, 2011; Super 2015). There is, consequently, a prevailing situation in which patrols, stop-and-search procedures and visible policing are all normalized and integrated into, rather than imposed onto, the social fabric of the neighborhood, and come to reflect "not only popular responses to vacuums left by state collapse and neo-liberalism, but also specific historical and cultural logics" (Fourchard, 2011, p. 611). It is these specific logics which are at the heart of the processes and practices through which policing takes place, and therefore towards which our analytic lenses should be trained if we want to understand how particular forms of order are generated.

Private security and everyday life

Although conducted regularly, community street patrols are not a constant presence or mechanism of policing in Hillbrow. Rather, a private security company called Bad Boyz has led the process of integrating security into everyday life. They are responsible for policing the streets of the Ekhaya Neighborhood and other areas of Hillbrow and providing security inside residential buildings that are members of the RID. Their signage has become ubiquitous, with signs declaring buildings to be 'Ekhaya member[s]' or 'Under Surveillance by Bad Boyz' scattered around the streets and the facades and interiors of residential buildings. They have guards stationed on the streets from 6am until 11pm and operate 24-hour CCTV camera surveillance in the blocks which fall under the RID.

Bad Boyz make use of masculine, menacing 'bodily capital' (Diphoorn, 2015), intimidating imagery and the threat of force to secure their presence in the neighborhood. They were originally hired by private affordable housing companies operating in the area, and were given the express mandate to protect these businesses' investments. They do, therefore, fit into a regime of privatized policing which works with the goal of enhancing the exchange value of space. However, because the companies they are hired by are in the business of providing residential accommodation, enhancing the value of the space entails addressing the concerns of residents and improving the liveability of the area. Thus the company has become a key

partner in the RID and has inculcated community-oriented aspects of policing into their mandate and activities. Although they are primarily serving private companies' interests, they also enjoy support amongst (some members of) the residential community in the area. As one tenant living in Hillbrow reflects,

> previously we were not feeling safe 'cause anytime someone can snatch your phone but now there's cameras by the streets, cleaning staff, and there are security guards around the streets. I'm feeling nicer. Most of them they are Bad Boyz. They are doing a good job (29/05/2013).

Like street patrollers and private security providers across the globe, they gain support by responding to people's needs and providing visible forms of regulation, which are seen to be effective. Partly, this is earned through a harsh, aggressive approach, which signals to residents that they are in control. In volatile situations, people tend to prefer security and policing which produces visible results, generally through the use of violence, above the rule-bound practices public police are supposed to abide by, but which often offer slower, less cathartic forms of punishment (Berg et al. 2013; Super 2015). As the company's founder declares, "We're not *bad* [in reference to the company's name], but we don't tolerate crime, grime, any form of misbehaving!" But beyond recourse to using force, Bad Boyz gain legitimacy by being seen to serve a wider social good and 'community', rather than narrow, exclusive interests. Private security has a notorious reputation for doing the latter; in predominantly white suburbs in South Africa, this is certainly the case, as poor black people have come to be targeted and removed from upper- and middle-class neighbourhoods, and unequal landscapes of security and safety have become the norm (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2006, 2008; Clarno and Murray, 2013; Dirsuweit, 2007; Dirsuweit and Wafer, 2006; Landman, 2006).

In Hillbrow, where private investment and redevelopment sit alongside urban dilapidation and decay, actors have been careful to avoid creating a similar situation. One of the main organizers of the CPF points out that they have cultivated good relationships with the private companies operating in the neighborhood, and that a collective approach to securing the area is in action. He explains that they constantly engage with private security actors and property owners at public meetings, such as the Community Safety Forum, and remind them to be aware that "security does not only end at your doorstep but *around* [the area] and the people around the

neighbourhood." He further notes that "You know that when you see any security company you can stop that person, you can stop that car and say 'Please help here,' which they do." By serving a broader public, Bad Boyz begins to stray into territory ostensibly occupied by public police. Rather than focusing on the narrow security needs of clients, they play a significant role as a quasi-public service, which earns them legitimacy in the emerging broader social order. As a tenant living in social housing in Hillbrow points out, "Most of the things they [Bad Boyz] do are for our protection."

Bad Boyz' contribution to the social order being created in Hillbrow, and their legitimacy and effectiveness in it, is bolstered by the ways in which they take up responsibilities and activities which go beyond policing crime and disorder. Several scholars have pointed out how non-state policing actors have increasingly come to perform functions associated with the state (Davis, 2010; Diphoorn, 2015; Jaffe, 2013). In South Africa, where the state is relied upon as a provider of basic services, this does not only apply to security personnel engaging in policing practices, but sees them taking part in other forms of service provision, social care and public management too. Moving away from a focus on policing as an episodic display of force, which the public police still tend to rely on, they come to involve themselves in much more routine activities, demonstrating that the construction of urban orders is itself a much more mundane practice. Bad Boyz describe themselves as an 'urban management' rather than security company, and use the resources at their disposal to contribute to the upkeep of the neighborhood. In addition to using CCTV cameras to monitor suspicious activities, they also use the equipment to record and report maintenance issues and create records which can be used to hold the relevant municipal agencies accountable. They also perform some of the tasks which the local government has been neglecting in the area. For example, their Twitter feed includes examples of them assisting in public cleaning, clearing blocked drains which are causing flooding, and even delivering babies when emergency medical services fail to arrive in time.

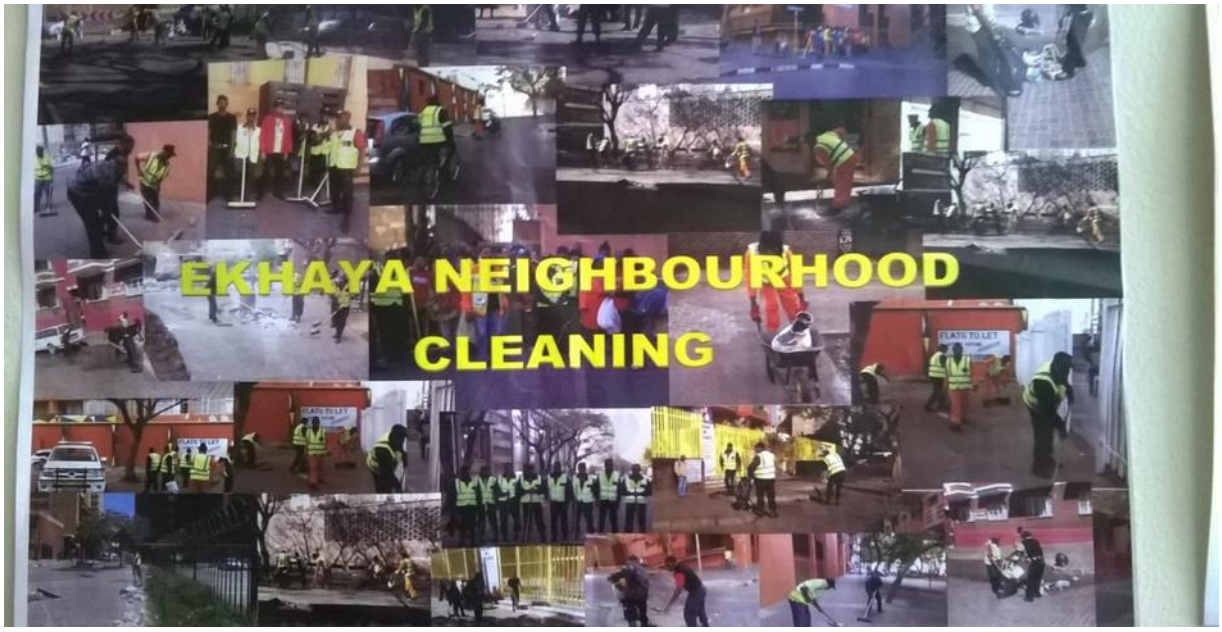

Image 1: Composite image of cleaning and maintenance activities undertaken by Bad Boyz. Photograph by the author.

Image 2&3: Screenshots of Bad Boyz' Twitter feed showing them contributing to everyday management and service provision in the neighborhood. Source: https://twitter.com/badboyzgroupsa?lang=en

Although part of a regime of privatization, they come to serve more inclusive, public goals. As an employee of the company explains, "it's not good for our clients, it's good for anyone that will come here and pass through here that Hillbrow is clean and it's good." In these ways, they respond to the needs of the area and people residing in it, and fill governance voids which have resulted from the privatization of municipal services and an under-resourced and inefficient local state. They also become key components of ordinary life in the neighborhood, and thus calls for the same people who stop and search people on the street to help children cross the road safely come to both make sense and reflect an already existing reality in which security is embedded in and actually helps facilitate everyday life. This problematizes arguments that equate privatized policing and spaces with the establishment of exclusive, sanitized regimes (Flusty, 2002; Bannister et al, 2006; Low and Smith, 2006; Swanson, 2007), and emphasizes instead how people in deprived regions have come to depend on private security to secure their daily survival.

Adapting policing practices to spatial realities

The everyday management activities which Bad Boyz engage in underscore how even dominant actors have to be adaptive to spatial realities, and cannot simply remake urban spaces as they see fit. Spectacular displays of force have been mobilized in efforts to reorder Johannesburg's inner-city in line with grand ambitious (Bremner, 2000; Gaule, 2005; Murray, 2008). In addition to the creation of several City Improvement Districts, in which informal traders, beggars and homeless people have been subjected to intensive forms of policing and control (Bénit-Gbaffou et al., 2012; Didier et al., 2012), numerous blitzes and policing crackdowns have been carried out (McMichael, 2015). These swift, violent police raids have primarily targeted unregulated informal traders and undocumented migrants. Whilst they have recovered illegal firearms and helped bring some buildings which had become criminal dens under control, they also left scores of people homeless and resulted in migrants, including those with legal permission to be in the country, being harassed and abused (Landau, 2005). In one of the most recent cases, on the eve of national elections, the municipal police launched Operation Clean Sweep. In a series of attacks on informal traders located in the Central Business District (CBD), stock was destroyed, numerous people were arrested and, in the most bitter of ironies, the stalls which the traders were legally required and licensed by the City to utilize were dismantled (Nicolson and Lekgowa, 2013).

Despite their violence and the harm they cause, crackdown campaigns on informal traders are short-lived, and it is common consensus that the traders will quickly return to the streets they were removed from, or others will come to fill their places. In contrast, the regime of security and policing which has been much more enduring is one which makes incremental changes and works with, rather than against, the realities of the inner-city. Cleaning and maintenance activities are part of this approach, as are the ways in which security personnel deal with the social-spatial dynamics and diverse populations which make up areas like Hillbrow. Thus, whilst policing practices utilized during crackdowns are notoriously xenophobic and intolerant of a varied, messy social order, Bad Boyz come to accept and work with the residents of Hillbrow. As the company's founder explains,

> the difference is everyone else, they outsource people from different areas and they come and dump them here by the buildings and they don't understand the concept or the environment that Hillbrow's created of...It's Nigerians, it's Zimbabweans, it's South Africans, it's Angolans…We take people from the area that understand the people, that understand the culture, they understand languages and we train them and leave them in the building and they adapt [to] the situation.

In contrast to episodic displays of force, sustained policing is about integrating the norms and routines of a given area into one's worldview (Brito and Dantas, 2009; Paoline, 2003). Adapting to the situation, in the Hillbrow context, means being tolerant of practices which the state's law and order regimes have targeted. Thus, whilst in official discourse informal trading is not permitted in the RID, in practice a much more permissive approach dominates. Building managers employed by housing companies actually work with informal traders, and have even been known to offer them shelter inside their buildings during police raids (Mkhize, 2014). Thus, a disposition prevails in which the lived realities of the area and the various contests for space which characterize it come to define the approaches adopted to urban management and policing. This serves as a reminder that there are multiple types of order present within society, and the order the state seeks to enforce is not necessarily the type of order needed or wanted in a community (Berg et al., 2013). Bad Boyz' founder demonstrates the ways in which effective urban management means discarding overly-ambitious desires and attempts to reorder the inner-city and accepting the realities which currently define it. He reflects,

> The hawkers, if they're off the street [it] will create that European feeling of the shops and all that thing but we must accept this is Africa and accept this is a kind of single-man business and they also have the right to be here, they just need to be regulated.

It is therefore apparent that a form of 'domestication' (Koch and Latham, 2013) has taken place in which, rather than violent actions being used to tame the space, the space itself has tamed or domesticated the practices of groups who have the use of violence at their disposal.

Domestication by football

The term 'domestication by cappuccino' was popularized by Zukin (1995), as she sought to highlight how consumption practices are at the vanguard of gentrification, and often serve to cover up some of the harsher, revanchist practices which coincide with upper-class recolonization of urban space (Smith, 1996). In Hillbrow, however, domestication is taking place in a different (although not always less violent or exclusionary) way. As the area went through a drastic process of decay and demographic transition, social relations also became frayed. The prevailing climate of crime and disorder was caused by and exacerbated tensions and social distance between people. What was once a relatively stable, cosmopolitan residential population was replaced by a transient, often furtive one, as single men, many of them undocumented migrants from other African countries, moved into the area in search of short-term accommodation (Morris, 1999). Decayed buildings also became convenient shelters for criminals, and a general sense of fear, suspicion, animosity and anomie came to define the neighborhood. Creating security and order in this context has therefore been a process of reclaiming decayed buildings from illegal occupiers, frequently through the use of force and with harmful consequences for impoverished people living in them (COHRE, 2005; Wilhelm-Solomon, 2016), but also attempting to nurture and revitalize communal relations and calm hostile social terrain. Through the collective effort of housing companies, charities, local government and even Bad Boyz, a range of social and community-building initiatives have been started, under the blanket coordination of the Ekhaya Neighborhood. One particularly visible and popular project has been the creation of Ekhaya Park. The park was built on a previously derelict lot which had been occupied by drug dealers and taxi drivers. Through a combination of forceful policing and communal initiative, the land was steadily reclaimed and converted into a temporary football pitch. This was not a seamless process, and drug dealers in particular defended their territory, with one apparently even attempting to ram his car into a crowd who had gathered for a makeshift football tournament.

Although the full details of how the patch of ground was reclaimed remain slightly murky, eventually Ekhaya succeeded in securing the land and, through the efforts of the Johannesburg Development Agency and funding from the 2010 Football World Cup legacy project, some jungle gyms and play equipment were installed and an astro-turf football field was eventually built. At first glance, it is easy to dismiss this as a cosmetic alteration. However, the park's creation stands as a significant achievement and addition to the neighborhood on two levels. Firstly, the inner-city is densely populated, currently home to far more people than the area was originally designed to accommodate. It is a veritable concrete jungle, with almost no green spaces and recreation facilities. The situation has become even more acute as, as urban regeneration efforts have brought increased stability, household structures have changed and family-type living arrangements have become far more common. Many people employed in the inner-city or nearby suburbs live with their young children, who have few places to play. It is therefore extremely welcome and important that a green recreation space was built, right in the heart of Hillbrow.

Secondly, the park plays a central role in cultivating communal relationships. One of the main goals of the Ekhaya Neighborhood has been enhancing social cohesion and reducing tensions and distance between people. The football pitch has been central to this; several times each year teams comprised of children, and sometimes adults, from surrounding residential buildings come together to compete in tournaments. These were designed as vehicles through which community-building and friendships could be cultivated. By composing teams out of residential buildings, they also encourage identification between people and the spaces in which they live, and help cultivate shared senses of belonging. As the current coordinator explains, "we encourage them to play together so that they grow up knowing each other and knowing who is who." In addition, Ekhaya also hosts events for children during school holiday periods, helps arrange life-skills training and workshops at the Hillbrow Theatre and also draw in adults who volunteer at the events in their spare time. Bad Boyz play a prominent role in these activities, donating equipment and making financial contributions, and also providing supervision and transporting the children from the various buildings to and from the park. Even on days when there are not organized events in Ekhaya Park, several security guards are present to keep watch over the children. Through these activities, important socialization and recreation

activities take place and help overcome some of what the current coordinator terms the "anonymosity"[3] that contributed to the decay and violence which previously prevailed. This form of domestication, then, is not about attracting more affluent customers to space and taming it to maximize the profit which can be extracted; rather it is a process which serves to create spaces in which a broader form of ordinary communal life can be staged, in what was once a frightening and hostile terrain.

Image 3: Kidz Day Soccer Tournament at Ekhaya Park. Photograph by the author.

In addition to the park and renovations to residential buildings, there have been several smaller interventions into the RID's built environment. Unlike episodic blitz campaigns, ongoing maintenance is a key focus, and housing companies have pooled resources to pay for additional private cleaning services. Ekhaya also facilitates monthly meetings between housing companies' employees and representatives of the City agencies responsible for refuse collection and public infrastructure maintenance. They therefore attempt to ensure that a managed, clean and orderly public environment is sustained. Whilst these efforts are done with a view to maximizing the attractiveness of the area, and therefore the value of property in it, they also respond to the needs of residents, who bear the brunt of poor management and have to contend with litter, blocked drains and broken pavements on a daily basis. They are also put in place as a way to produce order in the area, and are therefore part of the domestication and security efforts underway.

[3] Although she is potentially mis-speaking, I prefer to retain this phrase as an excellent indication of how anonymity and animosity were intertwined in the neighborhood previously, and in the thinking of those involved in producing security and order in the area.

Ambient power and producing social order

Literature on revanchist gentrification and the privatization of public space emphasizes how increased management, securitization and alterations to the built environment are tactics which serve to introduce regulation and consumerism into the public realm. The majority of this literature focuses on the criminalization of certain behaviors (predominantly begging or panhandling, but also skateboarding, busking and loitering) and shows how both disciplinary and coercive force are at work in these processes (Atkinson, 2003; Flusty, 2002; MacLeod, 2002; Németh, 2006; Smith, 1996). Whilst coercive force is used in the Hillbrow RID at times, there are also more subtle processes at play. A growing body of literature focuses on how atmospheric attunements and ambience affect social life and interactions. By focusing on assemblages of materials, feelings, moods, different actors and temporalities, research has underscored how particular types of settings both generate and are also generated by the affective and ambient currents which circulate in and through them (for example Anderson, 2014; Shaw, 2014; Stewart, 2011). Turning their attention to surveillance and regulation in public and semi-public spaces, some scholars underscore how different types of design strategies, materials and technologies are used to direct people's behavior and the ways in which they encounter and act in particular spaces (Adey et al., 2013; Adey, 2014; Allen, 2006; Hayward, 2004). Various objects, topographies and architectural typologies send subtle signals regarding what is permissible or expected, and what is not. For Allen (2006), this type of ambient power is particularly influential as it works with recognizable patterns and pre-existing desires, and thus operates according to a seductive logic.

A type of ambient, seductive power has been exercised in Hillbrow. The intention hasn't only been to privatize the space or extract commercial value from it, but to shape the behaviors of people in it and make it a more manageable, orderly environment. When narrating the process of change in the neighborhood, one example which stood out for interviewees was the cleaning up and closing of the alleyways between buildings. During the 1990s and early 2000s, public services in the neighborhood were almost non-existent. Refuse was not collected and simply piled up. Exacerbating the situation, management structures collapsed in many buildings, leaving residents to fend for themselves. Without any disposal systems in place, people resorted to throwing waste from their apartments into the alleys between buildings. Even today, many remain clogged with litter, garbage and sewerage. One of the first public infrastructure interventions was therefore to clean these spaces and seal them off so dumping could not take

place. Reflecting on the process, the first coordinator of the Ekhaya RID, who was instrumental in getting the regeneration process started, relates, "the JDA fixed the lanes, then suddenly people stopped peeing [urinating] there; something triggered something."

The 'something' she is referring to is ambient power. In Hillbrow, following insights which share similarities with the 'broken windows' approach to policing (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004), people equate disorderly environments with crime and destructive social behaviors. One long-term resident of the area demonstrates this; when asked about the previous destructive behaviors which used to proliferate in the neighborhood, such as littering and throwing objects from windows, and why they have now stopped, he exclaims:

> They were justified, they were justified! I didn't respect Hillbrow, I grew up in Hillbrow and I didn't respect Hillbrow. There used to be *tsotsis* [criminals] here, now they are gone (29/05/2013).

He therefore draws correlations between disorderly urban environments and the prevalence of crime, but also demonstrates how crime creates damaging dispositions amongst people, which are reflected in their affective encounters with the space. Thus, by making incremental changes to the environment and improving the standards of maintenance and services, the managers in the RID are able to establish an atmosphere of control, and shape people's conduct accordingly. The current coordinator points out that there has been a reduction in anti-social behavior because, as people have come to see improvements in the built environment and cultivate stronger bonds with each other and the area, their attitudes have changed. As she explains, people "are now being controlled by the area." She further points out that this is happening as people read signals from the environment around them. Thus, on entering the neighborhood and seeing the new signs of order, upgrading and management "You will tell yourself this is not the right place for that [type of behavior]." These practices, then, have been used to shape people's actions and create a situation in which regulation is part of everyday life. It is a decidedly more subtle way of exercising power and shaping urban space. Rather than relying on spectacular, coercive force, it works on people's dispositions and attitudes by shaping 'material-affective relations' (Adey et al. 2013 p.300). Whilst this form of regulation is less visible and harder to identify, its subtlety also makes it more successfully ingrained in the area.

The appeal of security

Like the legitimacy earned by stop-and-search tactics, civilian street patrols and Bad Boyz, the process of domesticating the neighborhood has also worked because it has been able to respond to the needs and desires of the population residing there. Like a security company which also takes responsibility for maintenance and urban management needs, ambient power responds to needs and desires which are pre-figured in people and culturally relevant. Thus desires for clean, orderly environments and the acceptance of privatized management of public space are not signs that a population has been somehow transformed or pacified into being passive consumers, but are indicative of what matters to people and what they want from the spaces in which they live. In interviews with tenants, complaints about the state of the inner-city and the need for intensive management were frequent. Desires for even more security and effective policing were also widespread. Thus, to understand the logics by which the privatized regime of policing and security in Hillbrow operates and through which it becomes accepted, we also need to account for the ways in which it responds to everyday needs, concerns and fears (Pow, 2015).

As mentioned before, following the process of urban decay, Hillbrow was notoriously violent and inhospitable. For many residents, crime or feelings of vulnerability were part of everyday reality. This not only made them fearful, but also created relationships of detachment, antagonism and alienation both between people and in how they related to the space. One building manager who arrived in the area in the late 1990s recounts:

> When I first came here to Johannesburg, *sho*, the muggings, the robbings, it was a daily thing; you'll get mugged during the day, broad daylight and nobody would do anything about it! Myself I never got mugged but I've seen a lot of people getting mugged and the *tsotsis* [criminals] were getting guns and knives and you would be afraid to confront them; it was horrible, actually.

Here he captures the prevailing sense of powerlessness and fear, and the way crime not only disrupted people's daily lives, but also made them feel marginal in the area's public spaces. In this light, policing crackdowns emerge as efforts to reclaim or reassert control over public space and return a sense of agency to local authorities. By the same token, everyday forms of policing serve a similar function, but empower a type of community, rather than a state or branch of

local government, and are thus integral to processes of belonging, domestication and claiming space.

This is noticeable in the narratives residents provided when describing the current situation in the neighborhood. Although fears of mugging remain, there was a shared sense that the area is much safer and a community, through both a private security company which serves its needs and collective practices, now control it. As one resident recounts, “Fighting crime brought people together, when you see someone being attacked people try and help.” Another living in the same building paints a starker picture and, in doing so, reiterates how processes of community formation continue to rely on repertoires of vigilante violence. With some pride he declares,

> Hillbrow was very tough but [now] everything is cool. Now people have the authority to scream ‘Help me!’ and people will come. Before people were afraid to rescue you, now you get help easily. We beat whoever does crime and now we can move around at 23:00 or midnight and not be scared of anyone.

Another resident, originally from Zimbabwe, also draws attention to the ways in which enhanced senses of safety have enabled people to feel greater senses of belonging in and ownership of public space. He points out, “We’ve noticed heightened security, installation of cameras; you don’t just do as you please on the illegal side of the law. You can almost walk tall.” These quotes emphasize a sense of feeling empowered, demonstrating the relationship between belonging, community formation, claims to space and policing practices. The regime at work in Hillbrow has, in part, been effective because it has responded to a very real need people feel, and has given them a sense of renewed control over the area. In distressed circumstances, particularly where the state and other civil society formations are largely absent, community formation comes to rely heavily on vigilante practices and forms of violent self-policing (Buur and Jensen, 2004; Super, 2015). In Hillbrow, the state is unreliable but not entirely absent, and there are many active faith-based organizations and NGO’s (Winkler, 2008). However, the area continues to be defined by transience and weak social bonds, as most residents regard it as a stepping stone to elsewhere in the city (Landau, 2018). In the absence of collective forms of identification and long-term attachments, fighting crime has emerged as both an immediate, shared concern amongst residents, but also a collective practice on which community formation of sorts can coalesce. Thus the seductive power of policing comes to the

fore, and the legitimacy and support afforded to street patrollers, regulatory regimes and Bad Boyz begin to makes sense, when they are understood in light of the localized logics (Lemanski and Oldfield, 2009) and desires which shape them and which they respond to.

Exclusivity and exclusions

However, this is by no means to endorse or celebrate the practices at work in Hillbrow. Because a practice has local logics and legitimacy, is widely supported and contributes to community formation does not mean that it is without problems or dangerous implications. The concept of 'community' is of course highly problematic and often serves as a stronger indicator of who/what is excluded, rather than included (Staeheli, 2008). In Hillbrow, as much as the policing measures at work attempt to serve the population residing in the area, they also work as a form of social ordering in which boundaries of inclusion/exclusion are drawn and attempts to define who qualifies as legitimate members of the community are enforced. The result is that particular groups have come to be targeted and, in some instances, policed out of the area.

Because the majority of residents in the area are black African, the practice of targeting black males adopted in other parts of the country (see Diphoorn, 2017) is not a feasible policing tactic. Instead, people are profiled according to their age, presumed occupation or source of income and style of dress. Bad Boyz' security cameras monitor public streets and their personnel look out for what they deem suspicious activities, such as loitering or gambling. As one of the company's supervisors explained to me, they use their cameras to compile records of young men who congregate and gamble on the streets. Whilst these activities are not prohibited by the City's bylaws, these young men are singled out because they have no discernible forms of income. They are therefore assumed to engage in other deviant, criminal activities and threaten the moral order which is being created (Hier, 2004).

Beyond profiling people who use the streets inappropriately, the type of community which is being desired and molded becomes apparent through the way in which surveillance is trained on styles of dress and movement. As in São Paolo, security personnel are trained to develop a "sensibility of constant suspicion" in which types and rhythms of movement are the objects of scrutiny (Kanashiro 2008, p. 281). As the supervisor relates, personnel operating the cameras focus on "the movement, the dressing" of people; he further explains that someone who walks

with a specific, purposeful direction – i.e. a commuter – is acceptable, but someone who loiters or walks up and down a street repeatedly or circles around a block several times draws their attention. They thus determine the boundaries of reasonable purpose and legitimate presence in the neighbourhood (Cooper-Knock 2016). Belonging is also defined on the basis of propriety, and styles of dress (which also serve as codes for class status) are used as proxies for this. As the company's founder points out,

> somebody who goes to work, he'll have a tog bag, he'll have leather shoes, his shoes will be clean; the youngsters that's loitering [and consequently singled out as potential criminals] will be in groups of two or three, they'll wear hoodies, they'll have All Star takkies [trainers].

So whilst the Hillbrow community might be composed of all races and nationalities, it helps to be gainfully employed and dress with middle-class pretentions.

Image 4: Poster for Bad Boyz, including images of 'suspicious individuals' captured by CCTV cameras.

Due to these boundaries of belonging, the young men who live on the streets in the area have come under sustained assault. They are generally singled out by residents and urban management personnel as threats. For example, a building manager describes the antagonistic relationship people have with them, and points out that part of the urban regeneration process has involved removing them from public spaces:

> Street kids, most of the people, they don't trust them because of this thing of stealing. You can leave them here and then they can steal your phone, they steal whatever it takes, they deceive. So that's a problem…But they are not many in Hillbrow anymore, especially in our area...we are working very hard to make the street to be clear and nice (28/02/2013).

In this instance, it becomes clear how, as in other communities in South Africa, criminals are being constructed as outside of the normative bounds of the citizenry (Super, 2016), and are therefore portrayed as legitimate targets for 'the community's' fear and anger. Whilst subtle and ambient forms of policing are taking place, this example also demonstrates how social ordering relies on a combination of both violent and subtle forms of regulation.

The security practices which have been adopted are also problematic because, as much as they adopt inclusive rhetoric and practices, they are also, ultimately, privatized solutions. Thus although there is no formal boundary drawn around the Ekhaya Neighborhood and it is far more porous than other CIDs and enclosed suburbs around Johannesburg, the establishment of security remains contingent on investment and property companies having interests to protect. Thus, although social cohesion in the area has improved dramatically, as with other instances of 'broken windows' approaches to policing and vigilante policing formations, the key drivers of crime – particularly unemployment, substance abuse and lack of care facilities for vulnerable populations – are not addressed, and crime is being displaced to surrounding areas which have not attracted private investment. So whilst the language of "fortified enclaves" and "privatized fiefdoms" (Murray 2008) is overly-alarmist and dramatic, a form of 'splintering' (Graham and Marvin, 2001) has indeed taken place. Furthermore, the types of crime which private companies focus on are selective (Koskela, 2000). Thus, whilst suspicious activities like gambling and loitering attract attention, violent, invasive practices which target women's bodies escape scrutiny. Cat-calling, and even inappropriate touching are not picked up by security cameras, and leave women feeling greater degrees of anxiety on the streets than men. Again, the limitations of approaches to security which prioritize investment and private interests come to the fore, and remain areas of concern, particularly in a society with disturbing levels of gender-based violence.

Conclusion

Despite these exclusions, I have attempted to show that the regime of security which is functioning in Hillbrow and producing the urban order in that space is more complicated than the prevailing 'crackdown' and revanchist narratives allow for. The practices described can be thought of as a complex amalgam of adaptive, subtle and inclusive approaches, but with a decidedly hard edge, and which do lead to some exclusionary outcomes. It therefore emerges that urban improvement and providing security in fraught, volatile urban areas are complex and varied undertakings. Again, I am not trying to endorse or commend the practices at work in Hillbrow, but want to expand our analytic scope so that the less visible and sometimes less violent elements of producing urban order come to the fore. Security, for all its coercive elements, also has a mundane, everydayness to it, which we need to be alert to. This mundaneness is part of making spaces home, of domesticating them not only for the pursuit of profit, but so that diverse, and in the Hillbrow context, lower-income communities, can find places to belong in the city. Thus, whilst policing remains a problematic, exclusionary and violent endeavor, it is also part and parcel of everyday life that responds to real fears and vulnerabilities, and helps facilitate forms of communal belonging.

Academic discussions about privatization, surveillance and policing public spaces tend to paint a picture of a relentless march towards homogenization and a loss of public space. Whilst the trends that this literature responds to are indeed real and worrying, they also proceed from an epistemological blind spot. The figure of 'the public' and the type of space that should be accessed emanates from an unspoken, white Western, patriarchal standpoint (Houssay-Holzschuch, 2016). Precisely because it is not named, it is a viewpoint which takes itself and its own experiences for granted, and assumes that public spaces and encounters within them, even when they are encounters with diversity, share a common meaning and frame of reference (Bonnett, 1997; Tolia-Kelly, 2006). Thus, in calls for spaces of difference and encounter, we are repeatedly pointed to the liberating, democratic potential of these, rather than made aware of how encounters with difference for groups who do not conform to the white, patriarchal, heterosexual Western norm, are frequently anxiety-inducing or based on micro-aggressions or uncomfortable feelings (for example see Ahmed, 2007; Brighenti and Pavoni, 2017; McKittrick, 2011; Neely and Samura, 2011). In postcolonial contexts, proximity to violence, disorder and even death are also much greater and publicness takes on varied, sometimes dangerous meanings (Alves, 2014; Mbembé 2003). Against this background, the processes

through which forms of community take shape and come to feel safe in particular spaces, even when they are based on forms of exclusion, need to be taken seriously. As this paper has shown, desires for order and security, particularly in stressed urban environments, are real and constitutive of daily life. They are also, more often than not, exclusionary and frequently violent. They are, therefore, ambiguous and offer a pointed to challenge to how research engages with processes of security, policing and belonging in (public) urban space.

I have thus sought to bring to attention the ways in which regulation, safety, policing and ordering public spaces operate according to varying, contextually-relevant regimes and registers of legitimacy. Whilst I am sympathetic to Houssay-Holzschuch's (2016) recent call for more disorder and chaos to be introduced into state-centric visions of public space, the case presented here is an important reminder that for some vulnerable groups, more order, policing and regulation is precisely what is desired, and even necessary. Experiences from Hillbrow demonstrate clearly how privatized forms of everyday policing have been conducive to the formation of a sense of publicness and collective belonging in the area, and remind us that privatized security is not necessarily deleterious for public space. At the same time, the case also serves as a palpable reminder that processes of order-making and policing, particularly when reliant on private services, are inherently exclusionary, and that this exclusion does not only take place in spectacular displays of force, but is an everyday occurrences too. Thus, an approach which moves between the spectacular and everyday, contingent practices which shape urban orders is required, and gets us closer to the messy, complex, contested realities which produce and are produced by urban space.

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