

COPING WITH VIOLENCE IN BRAZIL

VIOLENCE, FEAR AND 'THE OTHER' IN RIO DE JANEIRO



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ABSTRACT

Rio de Janeiro forms an emblematic case of endemic urban violence. Gangs of drugs traffickers, police forces, death squads, militias, vigilante groups, private security organizations and some individual citizens, mark the cities violent fabric. The widespread violence, and the fear and insecurity it generates, shape the daily lives of the citizens. Rio de Janeiro, also known as 'divided city', is furthermore characterized by high levels of inequality and social exclusion. Different social groups are therefore related to armed actors in a different way and have different recourses to protect themselves against them. This study analyses how people perceive and deal with urban violence, within the context of the mutual relationship between the neighboring residents of a favela and a middle class neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro. Further, the question whether the residents interact or deal with each other in order to cope with violence, is explored. Based on ethnographic fieldwork I argue how perceptions about violence and insecurity, and strategies to deal with it, are structured by the way the residents of these neighborhoods relate to each other. I therefore build upon notions about urban violence, fear and insecurity, Othering and coping strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary cities throughout Latin America are significantly characterized by violence. Urban violence is perpetrated by a wide scale of different actors, either formally and publicly or illegally and disguised. Violence is, for instance, perpetrated by the army, police, paramilitaries, citizens, social and political movements and criminal organizations. The widespread violence, and the fear and insecurity it generates, are endemic and undermine social cohesion, civil society and democracy (Koonings & Kruijt 2004: 9-15). Furthermore, violence and fear are shaping the daily lives of Latin American urban citizens. The way people live their lives and the way they are involved in relationships with others, are influenced in an important manner by violence and fear (Rotker 2002: 13). Within this Latin American context, Rio de Janeiro forms an emblematic case of endemic violence. Gangs of drugs traffickers, police forces, death squads, militias, vigilante groups, some individual citizens and private security organizations are all marking the city with violence, threats and fear (Arias 2006; Gay 2005; Koonings & Veenstra 2007; Leeds 1996; Zaluar 2001).

Current manifestations of violence are characterized as 'new violence', as opposed to 'old violence' from before the 1990's. Throughout Latin America, a shift has taken place from violence caused by authoritarian regimes and civil wars, towards more fragmented forms of violence coexisting with democracy. The newness of contemporary violence patterns is that it takes place within the context of democracy, while modern democratic nations officially aim for equal citizenship, and protection of those citizens by the state, through the enforcement of the rule of law. Furthermore, contemporary violence in Latin America is perpetrated by a much wider scale of different violent actors (Koonings & Kruijt 2004: 8). Brazil was ruled by a military dictatorship between 1964 and 1985 and then made the transition towards democracy. Despite this political transition, violent police strategies and death squads remained. Violent repression of political opponents has been replaced by repression of favelados (favela residents). In addition, violence has become a public means for a great variety of actors, rather than a political instrument of the government (Van Reenen 2004: 42).

'New' violence and the expansion of violent actors, combined with other processes, have led to the emergence of what has been named 'parallel powers' or 'alternative powers' (Leeds 1996). Parallel powers are formed by non-state violent actors who have become powerful enough to control territories. These physical territories have previously been abandoned by state forces and institutions and are characterized by a socially and economically excluded population. They become 'no-go areas' or targets for police forces (and thus increasingly excluded), after the rise of parallel powers. Parallel powers can be formed by, for instance, guerrilla forces, paramilitary forces or youth gangs. Their urban territories are slums. These urban gangs have emerged as alternative rulers, keepers of social order and judges (Koonings & Kruijt 2007: 3). In Rio de Janeiro, drug gangs are 'ruling' many of the cities' more than 1000 favelas (O Globo, 19/07/2009). More recently, militias took control over favelas in the West Zone (*Zona Oeste*) of the city (Gay 2010). Through the holding of violence and coercion, to such extent that they form a threat to the states monopoly of violence, the security of Rio de Janeiro's society as a whole and its democracy are endangered.

There is another important factor in this context, which is globalization and drugs trade. From the 1970's onward trading in drugs has developed into a global, complex, violent and well organized network, which has affected Rio de Janeiro as well. Rio de Janeiro became a transport station for drugs, between producing countries (Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia) and consumer markets (VS and Europe) (Zaluar 2004: 147). Both Brazil and Rio

de Janeiro are not the only centres of drugs trade. Rather, it is part of a global trend, and big urban centres worldwide are facing similar problems with drugs gangs and violence. Although there are national and local differences in the manifestation of the drugs trade and the violence it generates (ibid.: 142).

With the proliferation of the drugs trade, a vast increase in violence and murder rates developed, which has affected favelas the most (ibid.: 147). Vellinga has argued how the drugs trade and violence are directly interrelated. In the first place, the illegality of drugs results in a 'great risks-high profits' market sector. Since the trade is illegal, conflicts among the participants are dealt with in an illegal way as well, thus involving violence. Due to high risks and also high profits, violence levels then rapidly increase. Economic crisis and neo-liberal policies, during the 1970's and especially the 1980's, increased economic instability, poverty and inequality, and therefore created a positive climate for the emergence of an alternative, illegal and 'great risks-high profits' market (Vellinga 2004: 73-76). The drugs trade is related to an increase in urban violence and to the emergence of parallel powers in areas of exclusion. Furthermore, it is related to the role of the state in the domain of urban violence, because state actors are simultaneously combating and participating (illegally) in drug trafficking as well (Koonings & Veenstra 2007: 624).

Within a context of 'new violence', parallel powers, repressive police strategies, the international drugs trade, and social exclusion, citizens are living their daily lives in violent social spaces. However, people living in Rio's favelas are affected by the urban violence the most. They are particularly vulnerable to violence from both gangs, the police and other violent actors (Zaluar 2004: 144). They do not have the living place or the means to protect themselves against violence with for instance high walls and private security guards. Furthermore, they are stigmatized as perpetrators of violence by the media, police, political policies and society (Caldeira 2000: 2; Zaluar 2004: 146). In Rio de Janeiro an estimated one million people were living in more than 600 favelas until 2006 (Koonings & Veenstra 2007: 619). More recently already 1000 favelas were counted (O Globo, 19-07-2009). Several scholars have described how socially excluded citizens are dealing with violence, fear and insecurity in their daily lives (Caldeira 2000; Gay 2005; Goldstein 2003; Moser & McIlwain 2004; Scheper-Hughes 1992). Although fewer scientific literature addresses higher classes in this context, others have addressed how more wealthy segments of society are dealing with violence, fear and insecurity (Caldeira 2000; Restrepo 2004). These groups live in different social, economic and political circumstances and are therefore related to armed actors (e.g. criminals, police, drug gangs) in a different way and have different recourses to protect themselves against them.

Thus, in a city characterized by urban violence, citizens from different social-economic backgrounds are exposed to violence, and deal with it, in different ways. Although poor citizens and their living places (favelas) are affected, and subjects for scientific research, the most, the wealthier citizens have to deal with it as well. Several scholars describe the supportive structures and mutual relations between state actors, social actors and criminal actors, from all layers of society, that reproduce Rio's violent fabric (Arias 2006; Leeds 1996; Perlman 1976). Few studies, though, address the mutual relations between social actors from a favela and social actors from a higher class neighbourhood. Caldeira (2000) addresses how, in São Paulo, stereotyped perceptions of violence and fear are related to class relations and social boundaries, but she does not focus on the mutual relation between citizens from different classes. She argues how violence leads to 'stereotyped narratives of fear', which reproduces violence through criminalization, discrimination, repressive police violence and private security violence against favelados (35-39). This study therefore addresses how citizens from Rio de Janeiro deal with violence, embedded in the relation between a favela and a middle class neighbourhood.

The following question was therefore posed: *What different perceptions of urban violence, and strategies to cope with it, are present among favela residents and middle class residents in Rio de Janeiro, and how do these two groups of residents perceive each other in terms of violence and insecurity and their responses to it?* The answer to this question was explored during a four month fieldwork in two different neighbourhoods in Rio de Janeiro, from February till June 2009.

In Rio de Janeiro favelas and middle class or elite neighbourhoods are dispersed throughout the city and always close to each other. The fieldwork for this study took place in favela Acari and (lower) middle class neighbourhood Fazenda/Botafogo, in Rio's Zona Norte (North Zone). The neighbourhoods border each other, and are physically divided by a metro line.¹ The metro line is fenced off, on both sides, by an approximately four meters high wall. It is a forty minutes metro ride to the centre of the city, from metro station 'Fazenda/Botafogo/Acari'. Before the opening of this metro station in 1998, both neighbourhoods were separated from each other by a road (Avenida Pastor Martin Luther King Junior). Fazenda/Botafogo is situated in the quarter Coelho Neto, whereas Acari is situated in the quarters Coelho Neto, Acari, and Irajá. Many of Rio de Janeiro's favelas are situated on hillsides, and the word hill (*morro*) is often a synonym for favela. However, both Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari are stretched out on a flat area. Acari has a history of poverty, gang violence, and police violence.

The research location was chosen during a pilot study of three and a half weeks, which involved visits to four different favelas², where I used observations and informal conversations, with residents and community leaders, in order to orientate myself and determine the research location. Due to the violent setting in which the fieldwork took place, I had to deal with insecurity and armed actors. The favela, Acari, is 'ruled' by a drug gang that belongs to the Terceiro Comando, and the community knows a history of police violence. Therefore I had myself introduced into the community by community leader Wanderson, and as the fieldwork advanced I met more residents that could guide me during my stay in the community. After the pilot study, key informants, participant observation, individual in-depth interviewing, group discussions, life history gathering, and additional data gathering were used as research methods. The aim of this anthropological study is to provide an in-depth and 'emic' exploration of the posed question.

The research locations, and the people living within these communities, are framed by the violent context. Hence, the fieldwork is also framed by the violent setting. Fieldwork in a setting of urban conflict influences the researcher, the research methods, and the gathered data. Kovats-Bernat (2002) argues that current anthropological theories and official codes of ethics, are not comprehensive enough to understand the influence of violence in the research location on the research ethics and methodology (ibid.: 208-214). Contemporary ethics suggest that anthropologists need to make sure the informants stay safe, and their integrity and privacy preserved, during participation in field study. Further, an anthropologist should always be clear about their goals and interests in the research location (informed consent). However, in a violent research location, the informants may be more capable to calculate the dangers of participating in the study compared to the 'foreign' researcher. Moreover, sometimes it can be safer not to inform someone on your exact goals, due to safety reasons (ibid.: 214, 215).

Therefore, Kovats-Bernat argues that anthropologists should approach violent fields based on notions of 'mutual responsibility' and 'localized ethics'. This means that, in trying to safeguard yourself and informants, researchers should rely on the capability of both yourself and the locals to act and react towards violence and danger, instead of paternalistically relying

¹ Photo on front page: Metro line between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, with a view on favela Pedreira. Made in Fazenda/Botafogo during the fieldwork

² Julio Ontóni, Vila Cruzeiro, Terra Encantada, Acari

just on yourself to 'keep informants safe' (ibid.: 214, 125). Moreover, according to Kovats-Bernat, anthropologists should acknowledge the influence of the violent setting on themselves and their research methods. Therefore, own experiences, perceptions and coping strategies in relation with violence, fear and insecurity should be taken into account and noted down. Further, memorization of data (until reaching a safer place or your residence) can and should be privileged over note taking or audio recording, in certain situations (ibid.: 216, 217).

The violent context in which the fieldwork was situated influenced the way I have approached Acari and its residents, the way they talk to me, and the information they give to me. In this way, the violent setting influenced my data as well. In the first place I had myself introduced into the community by community leader Wanderson. In the second place, I noticed the influence of the coercive power of the drug gang. People seemed to talk quickly and easily about police violence (and other problems), but they were less inclined to talk about (violence related to) the drug gang. In the third place, although I indeed relied on both locals and my own calculations, this became complicated due to varying and contradictory information about safety from locals. On the one hand I was told that Acari was safe for me and in fact safer than Fazenda/Botafogo. On the other hand I was advised not to visit Acari by myself due to 'safety reasons' and because 'people wouldn't trust me'. Moreover, I was told that the presence of the drug gang would not get me into trouble, but the perceived reason for that was precisely the violent proliferation of the drug gang. In the past, residents have been murdered by the gang, as I heard from some residents, but was denied by others. I thus received contradictory information about safety. Since I relied on local people for information about the local situation, this complicated my own calculations of the dangers in the field.

Furthermore, the different social-economic backgrounds of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, and the different ways they relate to urban violence, influenced the research methods and data. The methods of key informants and participant observation were particularly helpful for data gathering in Acari, whereas in Fazenda/Botafogo individual in-depth interviews and group discussions were particularly useful. In Acari I needed to build up contacts with key informants to introduce me to the favela, whereas it was possible to enter the middle class neighborhood by myself before (and in order to) getting to know people. My key informants have proved to be an important entrance into the community, an important source of information, and they enabled me to gather a lot of data by participant observation. Therefore, the research methods of key informants and participant observation were particularly helpful in Acari. In Fazenda/Botafogo though, I would just walk through the neighborhood and ask people hanging around their houses if I could talk to them. Often, groups of neighbors were sitting or hanging around together. Due to the different context in Fazenda/Botafogo in-depth interviewing and group discussions proved to be particularly helpful there, whereas key informants and participant observation were less applied, compared to Acari.

The findings of this study will be presented in four chapters. Chapter one will provide an outline of the context of violence and the main processes and armed actors involved. Both the broader processes and the experiences of the residents in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo will be addressed. Moreover, the way social class structures these experiences will become clear. Chapter two assesses the impact of violence, in terms of perceptions of fear and insecurity. Build upon theoretical understandings of fear and processes of Othering, the images of Others that are held by the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo will be described. Chapter three analyses how the residents try to deal with the violent context. Integrating theories of coping strategies, spaces of agency and boundaries will become clear. Moreover, the question to what extent the residents of each neighborhood deal or interact with each other, in order to cope with violence, fear and insecurity, will be addressed. The fourth chapter addresses the different dimensions that characterize the mutual relationship between the residents of Acari

and Fazenda/Botafogo. The concluding part will discuss the main findings of this study. I will argue that these findings can contribute to a better understanding of the way mutual relations between various societal actors reproduce, but also contest and soften, Rio's violent fabric.

1. VIOLENCE

The residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo are living their daily lives in a city that is characterized by endemic violence. Both broader political, economical and institutional processes and the experiences and perceptions of the people living within this context are shaping urban violence in Rio de Janeiro. Endemic and fragmented violence, high levels of violent crime, drug gangs, the international drug trade, social exclusion, repressive police strategies, criminal networks between state actors, civilians, and criminals, and highly unequal class relations, structure the daily context for residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. This study explores how the residents of these neighbourhoods perceive and experience the violent spaces they live in. As it will become clear, violence is a broad and complex concept. Therefore, the concepts of violence will first be addressed, in order to define violence and address the complexity and comprehensiveness of different forms of violence. This will be followed by an outline of the residents experiences with violence in their daily lives. Their experiences draw the context of violence in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, and the main processes and violent actors involved.

When one tries to find a comprehensive definition of violence, the complexity of this concept instantly becomes clear. Violence can not be easily captured in one single definition. It refers to processes or conditions, rather than just to physical conditions, such as 'pain'. For one type of violence can lead to another type of violence and violence can be structural, like exclusion, poverty or degradation (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois 2004: 1,2). Moser and McIlwain refer to Kean's definition of violence 'as the use of physical force, which causes hurt to others in order to impose one's wishes' (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 8) and widen this definition by indicating that 'hurt' can refer to a wide range of conditions, such as psychological hurt, material deprivation and symbolic disadvantage. An important conclusion from this definition is the interchangeability of violence and power, because violence always involves the exercise and negotiation of power (ibid.: 9). Concha-Eastman combines the above mentioned characteristics of intentionality and purposefulness, the infliction of 'hurt', and the role of power into the following definition of violence:

'Violence is an intentional use of force or power with a predetermined end by which one or more persons produce physical, mental (psychological), or sexual injury, injure the freedom of movement, or cause the death of another person or persons (including him or herself)' (Concha-Eastman 2002: 44).

The different forms of violence can be categorized into types and levels of violence. A wide range of different categories is used in scholarly literature, depending on analytical purposes. For instance, categories according to perpetrators and victims, injuries (physical, psychological or sexual) or motives (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 11). Concha-Eastman has classified violence according to motive, type and actors (both victims and perpetrators). He distinguishes between politically, economically and socially or interpersonal motivated violence. Politically motivated violence may involve homicides, massacres, kidnappings, rapes or other injuries and is perpetrated by political actors, such as guerrillas, paramilitary forces and army forces, for purposes of political power. Economically motivated violence can be divided between organized crime and non-organized crime. They may involve homicides, assaults, robberies and rapes, and are perpetrated by for instance organized gangs and drugs traffickers, or by less organized gangs and (criminal) individuals, for purposes of economic gain or power. Socially motivated or interpersonal violence may involve fights, verbal abuse, intimidation, domination, control and assaults and is perpetrated by social actors, such as

family members, friends, acquaintances, partners and neighbours. Social violence is domestic or intra-familial violence and is perpetrated for purposes of social gain or power (Concha-Eastman 2002: 46-47).

Next to categories, there are also different levels of violence. Here, Concha-Eastman distinguishes between structural, institutional and situational or direct violence (2002: 46). Structural violence is related to structural factors underlying violence and inequalities (ibid.: 46,47). This involves 'everyday violence' which is implicit and normalized and has a structural character. Structural violence is manifested in social exclusion, inequalities, dehumanization and poverty (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois 2004: 23). Institutional violence involves institutions which, due to their nature or essence, favour the occurrence of violence. Such institutions may be political institutions, the police, the justice system or social institutions like marriage and the family. Impunity, unequal power relations and lack of trust are among the problems related to institutional violence. Situational or direct violence refers to circumstantial factors that facilitate violence perpetrated by individuals. These circumstantial factors may involve alcohol or drugs abuse, possession of weapons and 'tolerant' perceptions towards the use of violence (Concha-Eastman 2002: 46-49). The residents from Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari find themselves exposed to different types and levels of violence. When asked about the most important problems in their neighbourhood, they identified structural, institutional, and situational or direct types of violence. The motives they ascribed to the perpetrators of these types of violence will be further elaborated in chapter two.

The boundaries between different categories and levels of violence are not clear cut, but rather overlap and are interrelated. Individuals, households and communities experience different types of violence at the same time, violence may be simultaneously politically, economically and socially motivated (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 60), people may be perpetrator and victim at the same time or interchangeably (ibid.: 9), and one type of violence by one perpetrator may lead to another type of violence by another perpetrator (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois 2004: 1). One factor and one level influence the others through a dynamic connecting the different levels (Concha-Eastman 2002: 46).

Furthermore, experiences of violence vary according to identity factors, such as gender, ethnicity, age and socioeconomic position (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 8). First, violence in Latin America is concentrated in urban areas and poor neighbourhoods. Acari forms no exception among Rio's favelas and knows a long history of poverty, police violence and gang violence. All of the Acari inhabitants I spoke to considered violence, such as police violence or inequality issues, it's main problem. The residents of Fazenda/Botafogo, on the other hand, sometimes mentioned problems such as light and pavements as more important than security issues. Although these middle class residents are by no means unaffected by urban violence, they are relatively less exposed to it. Second, some types of violence are gender based, meaning that the occurrence of it is biased by gender. For instance, domestic violence and rape against women or homicide and assaults 'in the streets' against men (ibid.: 8). Third, young people in marginal urban neighbourhoods are more frequently exposed to violence (as both victims, witnesses or acquaintances of perpetrators) than their neighbours in other age categories (Cárdia 2002: 156-159). Exposure to violence is thus related to class and power relations, and differences in experiences with violence are visible between, but also within, neighbourhoods with different social-economic backgrounds.

Acari is a lower (working) class neighbourhood, whereas Fazenda/Botafogo is a (lower) middle class neighbourhood. The residents of these neighbourhoods are living in different social-economic contexts. Therefore they are related to armed actors (e.g. criminals, police, and drug gangs) in a different way. Their social-economic position structures their experiences with violence. This is reflected in the residents perceptions about the most

important problems in their neighborhoods. In Fazenda/Botafogo people's main concern is economic violence, and to some extent also structural violence. For them, urban violence mainly means robberies and assaults, but sometimes also a lack of quality health care, education, and job opportunities. Since Fazenda/Botafogo is a lower middle class neighbourhood, most of its residents can not afford private schools and hospitals and are therefore dependent on the same public education and health care systems as the residents of Acari. In Acari people's main concerns involve structural and institutional violence. For them, police violence, gang violence, and a daily life structured by poverty, inequality and exclusion, is what urban violence means.

1.1. Structural violence: 'There are two Brazil's'

Urban violence thus has different meanings and manifestations for citizens from different classes and neighbourhoods. Due to their lower social-economic position, and due to the structural factors underlying this position, residents from Acari are more exposed to violence. Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari illustrate the persistent inequalities that are visible throughout Brazil. People from Acari often describe these inequalities in terms of two different countries or spaces within Brazil: favelas and the rest. As one man from Acari put it: *'There are two Brazil's; the favelas and the rest, (...) the beauties and the miseries. (...) Here (in the favela) people survive, there (in the rest of Brazil) people live'*.³ Rio de Janeiro forms an emblematic case of inequality structures in Brazil. There are great differences between rich and poor, and the elite-, middle-, and lower classes are dispersed throughout the city, side by side, in different neighbourhoods or buildings. The poor and excluded citizens are housed in Rio's world famous favelas, of which Acari forms one of many.

The history of Rio's slums goes back to the early nineteenth century, when runaway slaves settled in informal squatter camps on the outskirts of the city. At the end of the nineteenth century the first favela appeared after soldiers returned from the Canudos war in Bahia, and settled themselves in a squatter camp, together with freed slaves (Arias 2006: 22; Leeds 1996: 58). Since then, poor people started informally building their own houses on abandoned terrains in the city. Between 1920 and 1960, the number of favelas increased from approximately twenty six to three hundred. The rapid expansion of the favelas was caused by rural-urban migration, natural population growth, and the growth of industry (Koonings & Veenstra 2007: 618). Rural migrants were attracted to Rio de Janeiro, especially in the 1970's, due to the presence of a middle class, a tourism industry, and the subsequent opportunities of the informal market. In the 1980's an economic crisis increased the inequalities in Rio de Janeiro and the development of the favelas. Ever since the development of favelas, the local government has developed different strategies to deal with and regulate the (growth of) favelas, from removal or replacement to formalization and the proliferation of clientelism relations (Arias 2006: 22-30). Recently, governor Sérgio Cabral initiated the construction of a high wall, around eleven favelas in Rio's Zona Sul.⁴

Nowadays, Rio de Janeiro counts more than a thousand favelas with more than a million favelados (O'Hare & Barke 2002: 226).⁵ Due to different developments throughout time, and due to different, local development programs, the favelas form a variety of diverse neighbourhoods and populations, with different levels of (ethnic) origin, employment, income, and civil society, between and within favelas (O'Hare & Barke 2002; Koonings & Veenstra

³ Interview with Edson, March 03, 2009

⁴ O Globo (19/05/2009) *'Cabral explica a lideres comunitários a construção de muros em favelas'*, O Globo, May 19, 2009. <http://busca2.globo.com/Busca/g1/?query=muro%20favelas> (accessed on August 27, 2009)

⁵ According to O'Hare & Barke there were one million favela inhabitants in six hundred favelas in Rio de Janeiro in 1991. In a recent counting by O Globo (19/07/2009) more than one thousand favelas were counted.

2007: 619). Throughout the past decades, the housing conditions of many favelas improved, and water, sanitation, electricity and other services have been developed (Arias 2006: 23-30; Gay 2010: 20). According to Perlman (2005), traditional boundaries between Rio's favelas and other neighbourhoods have become more vague. The originally illegal and informal favelas are now often legalized, developments of water, sewage, and electricity services decreased the lack of urban services, wooden one story houses are often replaced by brick multiple story houses, originally 'free' houses are replaced by rental prices that sometimes equal prices in 'regular' neighbourhoods, and differences in wealth are no longer significant only between favelas and 'regular' neighbourhoods, but increasingly within all types of neighbourhoods (Perlman 2005: 1-2). A recent development are the Pacifying Police Units (*Unidades Polícia Pacificadora*) that have taken over the place of traffickers and militias in favelas that were recently occupied by the police. The UPP's provide security and assistance with commonplace problems for the residents (O Globo, 19/07/2009).

However, structures of inequality between favelados and other citizens remained. Many inhabitants of the favelas work in the informal sector or are periodically laboured in the industry or service sector, and are therefore also not or unstably connected to the welfare system. Unemployment rates are high (Leeds 1996: 59), discrimination of favelados often makes it difficult to find a job, and the public education system is a disaster (Gay 2010: 20-21). Citizens are unequally protected against violence by the state. Moreover, boundaries between favelas and the rest of the city are still visible and reproduced in the stigmatization of favelas (Cladeira 2000; Perlman 2005). Leandro, from Acari, describes how there are 'two different Brazil's':

*'Look, there is a big wealth, and a big misery next to it. One next to the other. Here we call it as; we have a Brazil Europe, you can live as if you were living in Europe, you know in some parts of Brazil, and there is Brazil Africa. You know, there is a population that lives as if they were living in Europe, and another population that lives as if they were living in the worst places of Africa. There is a lot of wealth. A place where there is mineral wealth, a big industrial area. We have everything, we have everything in this country. But people are exploited, violently exploited, to maintain the wealth of other people'*⁶

According to Leandro, there are not only structural inequalities between favelas and the rest of the city, but this reality is also very difficult to escape from. He describes these circumstances as slavery:

*'Slavery did not end. Because there is a way to produce slaves. Free slaves. (...) If you are going to look for a job, the entrepreneur comes to you and says: 'you have a salary of 500 Reais to work twelve hours'. You have to accept doing that job. The work (mão de obra) is cheap. Because if you don't accept it, if you say 'no that's a very small salary', the entrepreneur will say: 'All right. Look at the line. There's a line with thousands of people wanting your vacancy'. So, it is a way of maintaining, you know, these low salaries. This low salary is a form of slavery.'*⁷

Leandro describes the structural inequalities as a modern, continued system of slavery, associating favelados with Africa and slaves, and the rest of the population with Europe, wealth, and slave holders.

In Acari structural types of violence form an important issue for most of the residents. Several of them think of inequality in Brazilian society as more important than any other type

⁶ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

⁷ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

of violence in their daily lives. A variety of important problems are recognized, such as children leaving school early, lack of quality education and health care, poverty, misery, inequality, machismo culture, a lack of means of communication, segregation, and discrimination. Acari, and other favelas in Rio de Janeiro, are thus stigmatized and structured by exclusion from the labour market and quality health care and education, which reduces chances for social-economic upward mobility. In other words, these structural processes of exclusion make it difficult for people from favelas to improve their living situation. Their persistent exclusion forms a structural violence against more than a million citizens of Rio de Janeiro.

In middle class neighbourhood Fazenda/Botafogo, structural types of violence do not form such a significant issue in daily life. They often perceive other problems as more important (especially criminal violence), and they do not use metaphors of two different countries or spaces within Brazil to define their own position. However, some of the residents perceived a lack of quality (public) health care, education, and job opportunities as an important problem in their neighbourhood. Since Fazenda/Botafogo is a lower middle class neighbourhood, most of its residents can not afford private education or health care, and are therefore dependent on the same public schools and hospitals as their neighbours in Acari. The vice-president of the *Associação dos Moradores* (AM) expressed his concern:

*'Education is not a problem anymore. It used to be a problem, but now there is a school. Health is a problem. There is a hospital there (in Acari), but that one is not good because there is no first aid. There are three other hospitals around here who also don't have first aid. Then the residents (of Fazenda/Botafogo) have to go to hospitals much further away. If you go to the hospital here, you have to make an appointment and then you can come after fifteen days. But in fifteen days you can die!'*⁸

Some residents also expressed the feeling of being unequally assisted by the government. Luíz, for instance, is worried about the use of drug among young people in his neighbourhood:

*'The government can do something about it (use of drug), but they don't do anything. In the Zona Sul it is different, there they have everything going on. My vote counts just as much as the vote of someone from the Zona Sul, but here they don't come. This is also middle class!'*⁹

Another resident, who owns his own company in Fazenda/Botafogo, believes he receives unequal police assistance, compared to citizens in the *Zona Sul*. According to him the police have other priorities than to drive around in Fazenda/Botafogo, because they work in places where the rich live. Not in his neighbourhood, where people are poor.¹⁰

Due to structural processes of exclusion, many residents of Acari find themselves particularly confronted with structural types of violence in their daily lives: discrimination, unequal hardship in daily life, unequal access to good education and health care, and unequal opportunities for a better life. Residents from Fazenda/Botafogo are affected by the poor functioning of the public health care and education systems as well, and some of them believe they are unequally assisted by the state compared to the middle- and elite class areas in Rio's South Zone (*Zona Sul*). However, in general processes of structural exclusion are not perceived as an important issue for them.

⁸ Interview Carlos, March 30, 2009

⁹ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

¹⁰ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

1.2. Institutional violence: Drug gangs and police

Structural violence is thus mainly an issue in Acari and not so much in Fazenda/Botafogo. Processes of social exclusion are not only a type of violence, but are also related to two other important sources of violence in Acari: drug gang violence and police violence.

1.2.1. The drug gang

'Parallel powers' (Leeds 1996), in the case of Acari the local drug gang, are 'ruling' many of Rio's favelas. Scholars have explained the emergence of parallel powers by different processes: state failure, neoclientelism and illegal networks (Arias 2006: 3). The state failure approach explains the emergence of alternative powers by an absence or failure of the state, in the spaces where these powers are able to develop. The state is absent or failing in the sense that police forces or state institutions are inadequately or illegitimately present in these areas, and failed to incorporate their population into society (ibid.: 4). The neoclientelism approach goes further than that and argues the existence of patronage relations between state actors and criminal actors of parallel powers. Within these relations, state actors provide recourses to criminal actors in exchange for, for instance, political support. Beside a certain failure of the state, the state is then also very much present at and contributing to processes of alternative power (ibid.: 4,5). According to Arias relations between state actors and criminal actors are more complex and go beyond clientelism, and should therefore be explained by an illegal networks approach: Criminal actors and state actors are involved in complex relations, including clientelism (ibid.: 6). Furthermore, other scholars have described relations and supportive structures between elite groups and other social actors, and the development of parallel powers (ibid.: 9,10). Hence it appears that mutual and complex relations between state actors, social actors and criminal actors, from all layers of society, are reproducing violence and alternative powers.

'Parallel powers', including drug gangs, thus emerge in areas with a socially and economically excluded population: favelas. There are various and interrelated factors that lead to the emergence of these drug gangs, which Cruz defines in a 'environmental model. There are various and interrelated factors that lead to the emergence of these drug gangs, which Cruz defines in a 'environmental model' (Cruz 2007: 23): Social conditions, such as lack of education- and job opportunities, and the socialization and institutionalization of violence (in a context of endemic violence), political decisions (repressive and violent policies), and personal circumstances (e.g. intra-family violence) frame an environment in which gangs can emerge (ibid.: 19-23). The structures of inequality and exclusion that cause the emergence of favelas, bring together individual, communal and social circumstances that create an 'environment' for the emergence of gangs (Ibid.: 55). The gangs are formed by residents of areas characterized by inequality and exclusion. They form only a minority of the residents though, and most people are not involved in gangs or criminality. Rather they are informal workers (Zaluar 2004: 144).

From the 1980's onwards Rio de Janeiro became an important transport station for the global drugs trade. The proliferation of the drugs trade within the city, increased levels of violence and empowered drug gangs in the favelas with economic and political power, to the extent that they now often form 'parallel powers' (Leeds 1996: 56). There are four major drugs organizations in Rio de Janeiro, covering a large number of gangs: Comando Vermelho (CV), Comando Vermelho Jovem (CVJ), Amigos dos Amigos (ADA), and Terceiro Comando (TC). Comando Vermelho is the oldest and biggest drug gang, whereas the other gangs

originate from CV or developed as an opponent of it (Arias 2006: 32). The proliferation of CV since the 1980's, is related to urban guerrilla groups of the 1970's. The origins of CV can be traced back to the state prison on the island Ilha Grande, where political prisoners of the dictatorship were imprisoned together with criminals (e.g. bank robbers). This had the unintended affect that the guerrilla influenced the organizing principals of the criminals, who were generally from Rio's favelas: The CV was born (Leeds 1996: 52-55). The local drug gang in Acari belongs to the Terceiro Comando faction, which forms an opponent of CV.

Since the 1980's the number of homicides and rates of death's by firearms in Rio de Janeiro, mostly taking place in favelas, have increased dramatically. Especially the increased number of children and adolescents killed by firearms is significant. This is related to the increased number of children and adolescents employed by drug gangs (Dowdney 2003: 158-166). The number of children under eighteen killed by firearms, are even higher than those of many countries that are in a state of war (ibid.: 172). Although the residents of Rio's favelas are mostly affected by the drug trade, it is not restricted to favelas, but involves (powerful) members of other classes as well. The *donos* (highest leaders) of the drug gangs within the favelas, buy their drugs from *matutos* (mediators) and *atacadistas* (international drugs dealers). *matutos* and *atacadistas* are powerful members of society, and certainly not favelados. There is evidence of linkages between *matutos* and *atacadistas*, and members of the Brazilian Congress and the federal military (Arias 2006: 32, 33). There are an estimated hundred *matutos* and *atacadistas* operating in Rio de Janeiro (Dowdney 2003: 41). And an estimated 10.000 (1%) people of Rio's favela population are employed in the hierarchical and militarized structures of the armed drug trade, involving 5.000 to 6.000 minors (ibid.: 51).

Experiences with violence in Acari are thus also structured by the proliferation of the international drug trade and Rio's organized drug gangs. Throughout the past decades, different *donos*, and their relationship with the community, influenced the impact of the presence of the drug gang on the neighbourhood. In the 1970's and 1980's Tonicão was the leader of the gang in Acari. He violently enforced his own 'law' in the neighbourhood, and gave parties, money and other types of support to the residents. Robbery, maltreatment of elder women, rape, and drug use by young children were 'forbidden', and Tonicão often resolved disputes between residents (Alvito 2001: 222-223). In 1989 Tonicão was murdered by local police men, after getting into conflict with them about a murdered police man (ibid.: 225-226). His death was followed by a violent struggle for his succession, eventually resulting in the leadership of Jorge Luís dos Santos, who continued Tonicão's 'policy' (ibid.: 228-229). In March 1996 Jorge Luís died in a prison in Rio de Janeiro, either by murder or suicide (ibid.: 232). One month later, in April 1996, Acari was 'taken over' by the police during a police occupation. After that, a group of five young men took over the leadership of the drug gang. That number came down to two men and one clear leader, after the other three were murdered by their own gang members (ibid.: 258). Another important leader of the drug trade in Acari, Cy, has been imprisoned since 1989, but still controls a big part of the drug trade from there (ibid.: 16). Several residents, from both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, mentioned the 'war' that has recently taken place between the drug gang belonging to TC in Acari, and the drug gang belonging to ADA in neighbouring favela Pedreira. Struggles over power within the local gang and struggles between different gangs thus structure local experiences with drug gang violence in Acari.

The presence of the drug gang is often seen as an important problem by the residents of Acari. Residents are concerned about the risk that young people will start working for the drug gang, which increases the risk to be killed, and about the violent 'enforcement' of the 'law' by the gang. A worker on a school, for instance, explained that in 2008 the community had lost eighteen boys, who worked for the drug gang, in just two months:

*Fernando shows me some of his pictures on the computer. We are sitting in the office of the school. There are pictures of teenagers in the swimming pool of an entertainment park. They were made during a trip with the members of Christiano's project 'vivendo e aprendendo' (living and learning), he explains. While scrolling through the pictures he points at different boys: 'That one is already a man now, he has a family now, that boy is expelled, and that one is in jail now'. The expelled boy has a brother who used to work for the drug gang. He and his brother often fought with each other, they had problems. He lives somewhere else now, with family. The boy who's in jail now, worked for the drug gang. That is why he ended up there.'*¹¹

According to Fernando, the young people in the community are living with blinders before their eyes: They see a lot of violence, problems, and believe they are going to die anyway. Further, they want the best clothes and the best brands of beers, like the guys of the drug gang. Therefore they start working for the drug gang. They don't see that there is also 'another way'.¹² Some residents don't see the presence of the drug gang as a problem at all though. The vice-president of Acari's AM, for instance, believes the drug gang provides security in the community and prevents police violence by paying the police to stay away.¹³ Other residents also believe the drug gang provides security in Acari. It is also often recognized that the violence committed by the drug gang has reduced, whereas levels of police violence are often perceived as unchanged. Wanderson, for instance, believes that it is relatively calm now in Acari, because levels of gang violence are reduced. Police violence will always come and go though, for it has been the same like that for thirty years.¹⁴ Leandro believes levels of gang violence in Acari are permanently reduced, whereas levels of police violence remained the same. He also believes that there is less gang violence in Acari, compared to other favelas. He explained:

*'This violence, which still occurs in other favelas, but here not anymore(...), we had debates (between residents and including traffickers), explaining why there is this violence. We have to stop being violent with each other. (...) Here the drug traffickers are all from this favela. That's easier. In those other favelas, which are more violent, the traffickers are from other places. These guys don't have any referential at all.'*¹⁵

Thus although residents often recognize risks that are installed by the presence of the drug gang, they also often perceive that the violent behaviour of gang members has improved, or that the gang forms no problem at all. The residents of Acari are much less ambiguous towards police violence.

1.2.2. The police

The residents of favela Acari are mostly afraid of police violence. The police is seen as the dominant violent actor and as more violent and more threatening than the drug gang. Their experiences with police violence are related to repressive police strategies, aimed (officially) at combating the drug trade. It is also related to social exclusion. For the socially excluded residents of Rio de Janeiro are not only more vulnerable towards structural violence, gang violence, and participation within the drug trade, they are also stigmatized as perpetrators of

¹¹ Field notes, April 4, 2009

¹² Interview with Fernando, April 4, 2009

¹³ Interview with Bruno, March 28, 2009

¹⁴ Interview with Wanderson, March 3, 2009

¹⁵ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

violence by the media, police, political policies and society (Caldeira 2000: 2; Zaluar 2004: 146).

Police strategies to combat violence and crime are often violent and directed against favelas. Since the 1990's repressive policies against favelas resulted in many 'invasions' of favelas, during which not only actual criminals but also other favelados were arrested, harassed or killed (Koonings & Veenstra 2007: 623). In the first place the police confronts drug gangs in favelas, in order to enforce the law and protect public security, by means of violence and repression. Their violent and repressive strategy is enabled and legitimized by the political landscape. Many citizens from middle class and elite groups are afraid of violence, and some politicians adapt to that situation by promoting 'zero tolerance' policies. Moreover, many Brazilians believe that Human Rights should not be applied to criminals (ibid.: 623; Caldeira 2000). In the second place though, the police participates in the drug- and arms trade, by extortion of gang members and the trade of arms. The violent repression of favelas, in stead of a democratic enforcement of law, enables corrupt police to continue to earn money from the drug trade. The police thus enables and participates in violence in and against favelas, and has to combat it at the same time (Koonings & Veenstra 2007: 624).

Further, politicians, private security organizations and criminal organizations organize death squads and death squad activities, to secure their interests. These dead squads, often made up by (off-duty) police agents, are then paid by companies, politicians or criminals to murder 'criminals'- in other words favelados- who in some way endanger their economic (legal or illegal) interests (Van Reenen 2004: 41-42). The police in Rio de Janeiro have a particular violent reputation and kill an average of one thousand civilians each year. Institutional problems reproduce the violent police: police men are often poorly trained, badly equipped, badly paid, insufficiently monitored and persecuted, encouraged to use violence, and the judicial system is overburdened and works inefficient (Gay 2010: 8-11).

Acari also knows a history of police violence. Between 1994 and 1995 Acari was one of the favelas who were a main target of 'Operation Rio'. During this period the police occupied, with tanks, what were considered the most dangerous favelas in Rio at that time, in a 'war' against violence and drug traffic (Alvito 2001: 1). In April 1996 Acari was 'taken over' by the police during a police invasion that would last until 1998 (Alvito 2001). Leandro remembers this occupation as a sad period in Acari. He recounted that between 1994 and 1998 a lot of violence by police men against residents had taken place, and *baile funk*'s (favela funk parties) were forbidden. After that period there was more poverty, due to a break down of the local drug trade, and more violence, according to him. Moreover, the police had solved no problem and arranged no facilities, on the contrary to what they had promised.¹⁶

Wanderson lives and works in Acari for more than thirty years and is a member of the movement *Rede de Comunidades e Movimentos contra a Violência* (RCMV), which denounces and combats police violence against favelados. The movement denounced five different cases of police violence against residents of Acari, involving the death or disappearance of twenty residents, including a two and a half and a nine year old child. With all these cases, which occurred between 1990 and 2005, only two police men were prosecuted and sentenced, and families and eye witnesses involved received resistance and threat's.¹⁷ According to Wanderson, in reality there are much more cases of police violence in Acari than those announced by the movement. However, most residents are too afraid of violent retributions by the police to take their story to the RCMV. He explains that the occurrence of police violence in Acari is now reduced, '*but the trauma continues*': '*The police are now*

¹⁶ Field notes, March 20, 2009

¹⁷ <http://www.redecontraviolencia.org/Casos> (accessed on August 10, 2009)

working on operations in other favelas, but the violence can always come back. You never know when.'¹⁸

As one student said it: *'Our insecurity starts when the police comes'*.¹⁹ The people in Acari often mention that when the police comes to the community, they come in shooting. The residents can get hit by stray bullets (*balas perdidas*) or be physically or verbally abused by police men. A student, for instance, told me that one day, when the police were there, he was hiding inside his house when he heard that police men were beating and swearing at someone in his street. When he looked outside his window, to see what was going on, a police man shot at him.²⁰ A twelve year old girl showed me the scars on her chest and back, caused by a *bala perdida* from the police. The bullet hit her while she was hiding inside a shop during a shooting between the drug gang and the police.²¹

1.3. Economic violence: 'Assaults, assaults, assaults....'

Where the residents from Acari mostly experience police violence, but also drug gang violence and the impact of structural inequalities on their lives, the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo mostly experience the threat of robberies and assaults. Their neighbourhood is not 'controlled' by a drug gang, and there has never been a police occupation. Moreover, some residents believe that the most important problems in their neighborhood are the bad lightning, the streets that could use new paving, and the rainwater that stays in the streets after heavy rainfalls, rather than issues of (in)security or violence. However, for many residents of this middle class neighborhood robberies and assaults are an increasingly big problem.

Fazenda/Botafogo forms no exception on this matter. In Rio de Janeiro there are high incidences of violent crimes, such as car robberies, carjacking's, residential break-ins, bank robberies, and assaults on pedestrians. This has created an atmosphere of fear and perceptions of high public insecurity, leading people to adapt their lives and limit their movements (Gay 2010: 2-3). Moreover, among middle classes and elite groups, fear for violence leads to increased criminalization and discrimination against favelados, and it legitimizes (violent) private security measures and support for violent and repressive police strategies against favelas. Violence and fear then form a circle of violence (Caldeira 2000: 35-39). Other than most favela residents, these citizens have the means to live in gated communities, hire private security and limit mobility patterns to for instance the home, workplace, and shopping malls (Caldeira 2000; Restrepo 2004: 179-185).

In Fazenda/Botafogo the majority of the residents live in family houses, which are all surrounded by walls and gates, some more extensive than others. Some houses are adapted with electronic private security systems. Family cars are often parked within these residential spaces, rather than outside on the public streets. Some residents recall how their neighborhood was safer and more open in the past, but became more insecure throughout the years. Roberto explains:

'It (assaults) became worse. In the past, when I was little, you could just go to the hill (now Pedreira). After school I always went there. It was all forest. Acari was there, but only some houses. It was not so big yet and the drug trade, those weapons, they were not as developed as now. Now it's different, now there is more violence. (...) This neighbourhood is surrounded by favelas, that's the problem! The houses here used to be open, like American houses. Now,

¹⁸ Field notes, March 9, 2009 & and field notes March 3, 2009

¹⁹ Group discussion with Angela and Paulo, March 20, 2009

²⁰ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

²¹ Field notes, March 3, 2009

*everything is closed. Everybody builds walls around the houses. All houses are closed with walls. It wasn't always like this. About fifteen or twenty years. Because the violence increased.*²²

Another man, Luíz, also saw his neighbourhood deteriorate:

*'This (Fazenda/Botafogo) is lower middle class. Until ten years ago it was still higher middle class. That's what it used to be. But not anymore. It used to be a good neighbourhood, everybody wanted to live here. Robberies and assaults weren't here. It became an area of risk, because there are many robberies and assaults now. Therefore people don't want to live here anymore, the neighbourhood is worth nothing.'*²³

Roberto and Luíz experienced how their neighbourhood became increasingly insecure. Perceptions about levels of public insecurity vary among the residents. According to some of the residents robberies and assaults occur on a low frequency in their neighbourhood, whereas others believe they occur a lot. During a discussion between neighbors, for instance, a woman explained that the neighborhood was very nice and calm, but 'the only thing' was that robberies and assaults took place sometimes. Her neighbor though, an older woman, disagreed with her and said *'but robberies and assaults hardly take place here!'*²⁴

In Acari, contrary to Fazenda/Botafogo, people often believe that robberies and assaults do not take place at all. They are perceived to be a matter for Fazenda/Botafogo, or other higher class neighborhoods. Angela, for instance, believes nobody steals in Acari, because you would be taken away and killed by the drug gang: *'That's why nobody does that here, it's save. On the other side it's not save, there are a lot of assaults'*. And Bruno explains:

*'Everyone knows each other here and it is save here. I can leave my car out here in the open, nothing will happen. Nobody steals from each other here. There (la fora) that is not possible, because there are a lot of robberies and assaults there. I could already leave, live in a middle class neighborhood, or on the other side (Fazenda/Botafogo). But I don't want that. Here, it is saver.'*²⁵

1.4. Class and violence

Perceptions about the types and levels of violence that characterize the residents daily lives, are clearly, generally different among the residents of Acari and the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo. Even though both neighbourhoods are physically located right next to each other, their positions in the context of urban violence are often miles apart. In addition, perceptions about types of violence that take place in the other neighbourhood often emphasize that symbolic distance: Violence occurring in the other neighbourhood is often perceived to be different. In this sense perceptions of violence reveal a social boundary: People are related or exposed to violence in a different way, according to class. This is not only a perception, but to a large extent a reality.

However, this boundary is not always clear cut or rigid. Although experiences of violence vary according to identity factors, this does not mean that identity factors are determinant. A middle class woman from Fazenda/Botafogo, for instance, recounted how during a confrontation between the police and the drug gang in a neighbouring favela

²² Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

²³ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

²⁴ Group discussion, May 12, 2009

²⁵ Interview with Bruno, March 28, 2009

(Pedreira), a resident of Fazenda/Botafogo got shot by a stray bullet (*bala perdida*).²⁶ ‘Lost bullets’ are an often mentioned problem of violence by the residents of Acari, but not by the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo. However, that does not mean that these middle class residents aren’t sometimes affected by them as well. Two residents explained how ‘heads’ of death bodies were placed on the wall of the metro station one night. The horrified residents found them in the morning. The bodies were found elsewhere near the metro line. According to them, the (unknown) people to whom the heads belonged must have been murdered by the drug gangs of Acari and Pedreira, because they are ‘in war’ with each other.²⁷ A group of young guys told me about a group of residents of Fazenda/Botafogo that organized themselves to form a neighbourhood surveillance group. According to the guys, they were then murdered by the drug gang of Pedreira, because they thought it was a militia group.²⁸

In Acari, both primary schools have had to deal with robbery and vandalism. In of the schools, the teachers arrived at the school on morning, to find out that class walls were plastered, materials destroyed, and tables and chairs thrown onto the ground:

There are only a couple of children in the class room, and there is no class today. The children are playing games, while two teachers are watching them. ‘Well’, says Rosana, ‘you arrived at the right time!’ She explains that the children were send home today, because vandals have stolen, broken, and plastered school materials. Later, her colleague adds: ‘We didn’t call the police. The problem is that the police only come when something valuable is stolen or destroyed. There were no computers taken or broken. Only closets, chairs, games, things from the closets. The police only come in the ‘caverão’ (tank). The leaders of the drug traffic also don’t like it if the police comes. We are in the middle of it: Between the police and the drug traffic.’²⁹

At the other school, the director has also experienced robbery. At the fifteenth birthday party of the school, he told me how a man tried to rob the school, and threatened him with a gun twice. After that, he got so fed up with it that a made a complaint to the drug gang.³⁰ Thus although many residents of Acari believe that robberies only take place in neighbourhoods like Fazenda/Botafogo, and never in their community, in reality there are also residents with experiences of vandalism and robbery in Acari.

These examples show that the differences in exposures towards violence, according to class, are not always the case. Residents of Fazenda/Botafogo can also be exposed to ‘lost bullets’, during confrontations between the police and a drug gang, and both residents from Acari and from Fazenda/Botafogo have been exposed to gang violence, robbery and assault. However, their perceptions about the types of violence that take place in their neighbourhoods often emphasize the differences between both groups, rather than similarities.

The experiences of the residents from Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo are based on both the local and the broader context of endemic violence and violent actors in Rio de Janeiro. Through perceptions about violence, social boundaries are emphasized and reproduced. This touches upon the impact of violence, namely fear and insecurity. In the next chapter, this impact and the meaning people give to their experiences will be analyzed.

²⁶ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009

²⁷ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009 & Group discussion, May 14, 2009

²⁸ Group discussion, May 14, 2009

²⁹ Field notes, interview with Rosana & interview with Viviane, March 9, 2009

³⁰ Field notes, March 24, 2009

2. FEAR AND INSECURITY

Fear and insecurity are inevitably related to violence. First, they form part of violence, in the sense of structural, everyday insecurity and vulnerability. Second, they are the social impact of violence. Everyday violence (or other types and levels of violence) generates uncertainty, and thus fear and insecurity (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 4-5). The fears people hold may not always be in accordance with real exposures and incidences of violence. However, those fears can have equally harmful consequences (ibid.: 6). Thus perceptions of violence, rather than only realities, lead to perceptions of fear and insecurity. Third, perceptions about violence, fear and insecurity can legitimize acts of segregation, violence and discrimination. For instance the building of walls, the use of private or informal security actors, and discrimination towards lower classes (who are perceived as violent). These acts and 'measures out of fear' then reproduce violence and fear (Caldeira 2000: 1-2). Fear and insecurity can thus (re)produce violence and fear, and are therefore also a cause of violence. Hence, fear and insecurity form part, impact and cause of violence. The concept of fear and insecurity will be addressed, in order to explain how fear is constructed, how it manifests itself, and how it is reproduced. Next to that, the fears of consecutively the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo will be analyzed. Their fears reveal the social impact and the meaning they give to their experiences with violence, and how those meanings simultaneously reproduce and resist violence, fear and insecurity, and social boundaries.

Just as violence manifests in different types, categories and levels, so do fear and insecurity. Rossana Reguillo (2000: 189) compares societies with human bodies, which can become ill or threatened, due to different types and levels of violence. The social body is threatened by, for instance, rebellion, poverty or backwardness. Reguillo argues how fear is individually experienced, socially constructed and culturally shared (ibid.: 192). Fear is not just a biological response to perceived dangers, but most of all a social response, because people are embedded in a social environment. Within society and its social spaces, individuals learn to identify danger and respond to it, through processes of socialization. In this way, fear is socially constructed. How this fear is constructed is influenced by society, culture, sex, gender, class, ethnic group and other personal characteristics. Although individuals respond to perceived danger, their fear and reaction is influenced by the society and culture they live in (ibid.: 191). Furthermore, members of the same (sub)cultural group share identical fears and responses, due to processes of acculturation. Different cultural or sub-cultural groups, for instance based on ethnicity or class, can maintain different perceptions of fear. For instance, a religious group may perceive their God as most frightening, whereas other social groups perceives terrorist attacks as the biggest threat. Their culturally shared fears can be in harmony with, or in conflict with the dominant discourse in society (ibid.: 193). Here, the role of power is important, since it regulates which group has the power the define fears and responses to it.

Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo form two different social groups, based on class. How these different social environments structure different exposures to violence has been discussed in chapter one. In this chapter, the way these social environments structure perceptions (and actions) of fear will be addressed. Their fears become visible through the analysis of what or whom they identify as dangerous and as the sources of violence, and what they perceive as the right responses to that. While the residents of Acari mostly fear police and social exclusion, and sometimes gang related violence, the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo perceive criminals, drug, favelas, and a lack of control by authorities as most frightening.

2.1. Social exclusion, corruption and money

Walton proudly shows me 'his' samba school. He is wearing the t-shirt of the school, with the print of a man smoking a huge joint on it. 'The unofficial shirt, only for here in Acari', he explains laughing. He takes me, Leandro and Wanderson to a cinema and play room in the back of the school. There are holes in the wall, broken chairs, and a broken football table. Walton explains that the cinema and play room haven't been in use for a while now, since the police invaded the school and broke everything down. He recounts how they kicked the doors in, held the people who were present hostage for a couple of hours, and accused them of holding an illegal cinema and secret refugee and escape route for members of the drug gang. According to Walton, the real reason for the police action is that 'they don't believe that people like us should have those kinds of entertainment'. He explains that residents from Acari don't have money to go to the cinema, and therefore the community organizes places like this. They are rebuilding the cinema, and there are plans for an office and library. But he is afraid that the police will break everything down again. 'Everyday I'm afraid', says Walton, 'every day I think about that'.³¹

The police invasion in the samba school is another example of police violence and inequality, that forms part of daily life in Acari. Walton explains this violent police action in terms of the active exclusion of favelados from 'kinds of entertainment', such as a cinema and play room. Although the residents of Acari can (informally) built, and rebuilt, spaces they are excluded from, there is the insecurity and fear that this can be taken away again at any time. Another resident, Leandro, argued how communication companies, such as *OI*, work together with the police and the Brazilian elite, to prevent and repress mobilization of favelados, in order to secure their own wealth. According to him, the elite plant their ideology in the heads of police men, who are from lower middle classes, during their training to become police men.³² According to this resident, police violence is the result of the purposeful repression and exclusion of favelados, by the Brazilian economic elite. The residents of Acari do not only relate their experiences with structural inequalities to the police, but also to politicians and middle class or elite neighbourhoods and residents: richer and more powerful people who discriminate or repress favelados.

Next to exclusion, the corrupt, violent, and discriminative character of the police is often seen as a cause of violence. When two residents discuss police violence, they mention physical violence, hitting, verbal violence, and 'lost bullets'. According to them, favelados are treated differently (worse) by the police, because they do not have the same rights as other (and more powerful) citizens. Moreover, police men are corrupt, don't earn enough money and 'have that personality':

Angela: 'When the police comes to the dour outside the favela, in a middle class neighbourhood, they knock on the dour, politely say they have a warrant, and take the person with them. Here they kick the dour down and drag you with them. Because here people don't know their rights. And if you say I have the right this and that then they will hit you. Here the police treats people different then there'. 'It's corruption', says Paulo, 'they take money'. Angela explains: 'What they earn in one month is about 700 Reais. They come one day to the favela and they earn 1.000 Reais at ones. It's not just the money, it's also those personalities'. 'Violence come from above (powerful people)', says Paulo, pointing is finger to the sky.³³

³¹ Field notes, March 9, 2009

³² Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

³³ Group discussion with Angela and Paulo, March 20, 2009

Joaquim, a member of a funk group also mentions that police men are corrupt because they don't earn enough money, and that they treat favelados worse than other citizens. He explains how the police think that everyone in the favela is a criminal (*bandido*): *'The police always comes in shooting, even though there are people and children on the streets, and people can get hurt. (...) The police think that everyone in the favela is a bandit, everyone. That's why they come like this.'*³⁴ According to some of the residents, the violent police men are from lower middle class neighbourhoods, while other residents think they are from higher classes that live in the *Zona Sul*. Edson doesn't know anybody who lives in Fazenda/Botafogo, but he is convinced that a lot of police men live there.³⁵ Nobody mentions that there could be (lower ranked) police men living in Acari or other favelas.

The police thus forms not only an important actor of violence, but also an important source of fear and insecurity, for the residents of Acari. But also politicians, elites, communication companies, and middle class or elite neighbourhoods and citizens are seen as 'collaborators of the violent police' or the cause of inequality between favelas and other neighbourhoods (inequality between levels of wealth, education, health care, protection of citizenship rights and exposure to violence). Corruption, money, bad personalities, power, and negative stigmas towards favelados are seen as the motives of these perpetrators of violence.

Although the residents did not always mention the presence of the drug gang as a problem, or they even mentioned it as a form of security, the presence and the 'rules' of the gang proves to be a source of violence and fear as well. As described in chapter one, intra- and inter-gang warfare, and the loss (death or imprisonment) of boys from the community who work for the drug gang, form a source of violence and fear in Acari. Further, the drug gang enforces their 'rules' and the 'security' in a violent manner. For instance, Angela told me that if someone steals, he would be taken by the drug gang and killed. When she talked about this, as we were sitting on the street, she looked over her shoulders, bended towards me and started whispering³⁶. A school director explained how a man tried to rob his school and had threatened him with a gun twice. Therefore, he went to the drug gang to make a complaint. The gang then killed him and cut his body into pieces.³⁷ Thus the drug gang can be a source of violence, fear and insecurity as well. However, the gang's relationship with the residents is more ambiguous than people's relationship with the police. Leandro, a working student who was member of a gang in the past, explains:

'Many (drug traffickers in Acari) were childhood friends. You talk to them! I know various who went working and didn't succeed to maintain themselves economically, couldn't have basic alimentation with their job. And then there's the drug trade circulating a lot of money, a lot of money. So you become tired of being a slave, you're a rebellious slave, you're a drug trafficker. You run a risk of life as a drug trafficker, but at least you can feed yourself. You can even feed your family, have money to buy a house. Because you can't pay rent and food with a worker salary. It is tough, very tough, because it's violent. But there is no alternative anymore. You don't want to go back to that slavery, you don't want to continue that life. I see many people in the drug trade dreaming: I will work one year to save money to buy a house and then I will leave. Some leave, others don't succeed, others died, others are in prison. (...) Many traffickers here became traffickers after being beaten by police. (...) For them to work, people need to respect traffickers. And for people to respect them, they need to be afraid. And to be afraid for them, they have to be violent. For instance, if someone doesn't accept them,

³⁴ Interview with Joaquim, March 24, 2009

³⁵ Field notes, March 3, 2009

³⁶ Group discussion with Angela and Paulo, March 20, 2009

³⁷ Field notes, March 24, 2009

*reports the traffickers, you have to be violent. It's an example for others, you know. But they don't abuse, these guys help. If you have a problem, if you don't have money to buy medicines, you can go there and ask.*³⁸

In the first place, Leandro addresses how he, other residents, and drug traffickers know each other and talk to each other. In the second place, he explains how people start working for the drug trade due to a lack of money, opportunities, alternatives, and due to personal experiences with police violence. He calls them 'rebellious slaves': resisting a life characterized by poverty and exclusion by becoming a gang member. In the third place, he legitimizes gang violence as necessary violence to maintain the work of the drug gang. According to him this violence is only committed against people who 'broke the rules' and not randomly or against 'innocent' people. Finally, he explains how they help the community.

Although residents might recognize dangers in the presence of the drug gang, they often explain that they could understand why people would join the drug gang (because of a lack of education- and job- opportunities, and because of experiences with police violence), they mention how they knew gang members as children, family, friends or ex-colleges, they perceive the gang as providers of security, or they believe the drug gang only uses violence against people who do not 'obey the rules'. Angela explains: *'Only a few people from the favela can get to faculty, and there are few jobs. Without education or jobs, people will work for the drug trade. More and more young people without opportunities go to the drug traffic.'*³⁹ Fernando has friends in Acari who work for the drug trade. Although he works as a concierge at a school now, he used to be a gang member as well: *'When I had the age of those boys (students of his school who work for the drug trade), I worked for the drug trade as well. But I got out when I got this opportunity (his current job). I wanted the best brands of clothes and bear, go to the shopping mall...Now I just work hard everyday, but that's alright.'*⁴⁰ (refer to Zaluar?) The residents thus explain gang violence in terms of social exclusion and sameness.

Contrary to how the police and other 'sources' of violence and inequality are perceived, the motives of the drug gang are thus seen as positive: providing a good income for yourself or your family, providing security for the community. Furthermore, members of the drug gang are disadvantaged, just as the other favelados, whereas the police and their 'collaborators' are seen as different, from outside of favelas, and belonging to the dominant part of society. Moreover, if levels of police violence are more often seen as unchanged, whereas levels of drug gang violence are more often seen as reduced (as discussed in chapter one), the drug gang is seen as more dynamic than the police: They can change for the better.

The broad denouncement of police violence and the simultaneous perceptions of traffickers as just providers of security to the community, has been discussed by Arias and Rodriguez (2006) as 'the myth of personal security'. They argued how, in a context of social exclusion and police violence, the support for traffickers as the providers of security, forms a strategy for residents to feel secure and not marginal (ibid.: 60). Interactions between traffickers and residents continuously recreate the image that the drug gang protects the residents, by the establishment and enforcement of the rules in the favela, to such extent that it is safer in the community than in other (middle class) neighbourhoods. Although the residents are discriminated against and excluded in Brazilian society, they are safe and respected in their community (ibid.: 55-56). However, in reality complying with the rules does not necessarily lead to safety and inclusion. Drug gangs attract police violence, and gang violence is often more arbitrary than is generally perceived by favela residents. Security towards gang

³⁸ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

³⁹ Group discussion with Angela and Paulo, March 20, 2009

⁴⁰ Interview with Fernando, April 4, 2009

violence depends more on a position of respect and social connections in the favela than on compliance with the rules (Arias & Rodriguez 2006: 62-65). Leeds (2007) argued how the relation between the police and favelas is violence-producing: Violent police actions generate antipathy towards the police among favela residents. The increased social distance between favelados and the police, enables the occurrence of even more police violence and the opportunity space for gang- proliferation and violence (ibid.: 32-29). In Acari, the residents' perceptions about the police and the gang, help to provide a sense of security and inclusion in their community, and a sense of resistance against the rest of society. However, this security is often more 'myth' than reality, leads to the support of trafficker power, and the subsequent reproduction of violence and inequality.

In Acari, ideal solutions, to stop violence, fear and insecurity, are regularly seen in a change of government, towards the left or to socialism, or even by a revolution (as mentioned by Leandro). They believe this change of government can reduce inequalities and improve the police. Wanderson and Leandro would also like to see mobilization of favelados, through participation in projects or movements that raise awareness and protest against inequality, to stop violence. According to Edson the police body has to be removed or entirely replaced⁴¹. Education, jobs, and moving to the interior or to better neighbourhoods are mentioned solutions as well.

The residents of Acari thus explain their experiences with violence, fear and insecurity in terms of social exclusion, corruption among state actors, and the money involved in the drug trade. They believe this should be solved by the social inclusion of favelados, and resistance against exclusion, which could be achieved by education, employment, a socialist government or also by the mobilization of favelados themselves.

2.2. Criminals, drugs, favelas, and lack of parental control

The residents of Fazenda/Botafogo are mostly afraid of robberies and assaults. The authors of robberies and assaults are often identified as being 'from another neighborhood' or from 'out there' (*la fora*). They are believed to come from distant neighborhoods, because they would need to commit their crimes in places where people could not recognize them. Roberto, for instance, explains: '*They (authors of robberies and assaults) are from out there. Not from here. Here people know each other, so you can not go rob here.*'⁴² A woman explicitly names the favela Acari as the place where authors of robberies and assaults come from. She explains that these crimes used to occur more, but that this diminished with the coming of the metro line that now separates Acari from Fazenda/Botafogo. Ever since '*the people from the other side don't come and mess here anymore*', she explained.⁴³ Although not all residents related criminals explicitly to Acari (but rather to 'people from distant neighborhoods' or from 'out there') criminal violence is usually related to favelas.

The favela, Acari, is often mentioned by the middle class residents as a place where drug traffic comes from. Roberto, for instance, explains how people who are poor and unemployed live in favelas and work for the drug trade: '*Poverty, unemployment...people have no money, no job. Then they go live in favelas and start working for the drug trade....that's how it goes*'.⁴⁴ Solange explains how unemployed favelados send their children to the streets to sell things 'from their hands'. Then sooner or later someone will offer these children money to buy some drugs for them: Out on the streets on their own, eventually these children will end up working in the drug trade. According to her, Fazenda/Botafogo itself is a

⁴¹ Field notes March 3, 2009

⁴² Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

⁴³ Group discussion, May 12, 2009

⁴⁴ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

calm and save neighborhood, but the favelas Pedreira and Acari are very dangerous and violent places, causing fear and problems in her neighborhood: *'If there is a shootout in the favela, we need to run inside. I'm very scared, I quickly run inside!'*. Solange also witnessed the heads of dead bodies that were placed on the wall of the metro line, which is close to her home and the bar where she works. She believes they must have been placed there by the drug gang of either Pedreira or Acari, due to a war between both gangs. She thinks that, next to unemployment, separated parents cause this violence and insecurity: A lack of parental control over children, causes children to end up either using drugs or working for the drug trade. Moreover, she says, *'it (criminality) is in the blood'*.⁴⁵ Favelas and the drug trade are thus perceived to be caused by poverty and unemployment. According to one resident, a lack of parental control and 'criminal blood' cause the violent drug trade as well.

Luíz explains how the increased and easy access to drug, in particular crack, increased insecurity in Fazenda/Botafogo. Drug addicts, 'from other places', come to the neighborhood to rob people.⁴⁶ Antônio believes that Fazenda/Botafogo became more dangerous, with the occurrence of robberies and assaults because *'the police don't come at night, because it is an area of risk'*, due to the presence of favela Acari and the drug trade there: *'Since twenty something years there is this traffic. First there was only marijuana, it was isolated. But since twenty five or thirty years, since cocaine came to Brazil, it's like this. The relationship (between Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari) was always peaceful, but now there are these little problems (some robberies and assaults).'*⁴⁷ According to Roberto, 'the urban war in Rio' and the occurrence of robberies and assaults in his neighborhood, worsened because both favelas and drug trading increased: *'This neighborhood is surrounded by favelas, that's the problem!'*⁴⁸ Favelas and the drug trade are thus perceived to cause robberies, assaults and insecurity in Fazenda/Botafogo.

Most of the Fazenda/Botafogo residents believe that Acari is therefore a dangerous place. Moreover, that danger could be inflicted upon the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo, especially children and youth. A woman explained that you should not let younger children, who do not understand what is right and wrong yet, go to Acari, because they could start using or trafficking drugs. Adults though, who do know what is right and wrong, can safely go there.⁴⁹ Luíz expressed his concern for adolescents in his neighborhood. If young boys from his neighborhood have nothing to do they can *'think to much and go to Acari and use drugs'*.⁵⁰ Other residents expressed their fears about the arms, related to the drug trade, that are visible in Acari. Solange, for instance, explains: *'Acari is the worst. There are many men with firearms on the streets there. They are sitting like this (she hangs like a couch potato in her chair), with a firearm in their hand, a firearm here (on their leg), a firearm here (she points to her back). They are talking in their radio, like this (she pretends to talk into a radio). I'm not going there it's much to dangerous!'*⁵¹ Another resident says she would not even go to Acari if someone offered her money, because she is afraid of those firearms.⁵² The nearby presence of favelas, drug, and firearms thus installs fear and insecurity among residents of Fazenda/Botafogo.

There are two teachers, Rosana and Viviane, who are working on a school in Acari. They both live in middle class neighborhoods, though not Fazenda/Botafogo but Saes Peña and Méier. During their work, they have experienced drug gang violence, police violence,

⁴⁵ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009

⁴⁶ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁴⁷ Interview with Antônio, May 11, 2009

⁴⁸ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

⁴⁹ Group discussion, May 12, 2009

⁵⁰ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁵¹ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009

⁵² Group discussion, May 12, 2009

robbery and vandalism. They had children in their class who joined the drug gang and died, they have hid with their students in the corridor of the school during shootouts between the police and the drug gang, and they dealt with robbery and vandalism in the school. According to one of the teachers, violence from the police and the drug gang are caused by geographic location: *'The children are in a prison here. it (Acari) is a geographic prison'*.⁵³ Within that 'prison', unemployment, 'the violence kids grow up with and that makes them destructive', and 'not knowing the other world (middle class world)' causes violence. According to the other teacher, the violence is caused by lack of parental control, poverty, misery, and violence. She explains how she teaches the children values, but during the weekends the children spent on the streets in the favela, they always lose these values again. According to here she always notices the difference on Mondays: *'The children are more aggressive then. That aggressiveness has returned'*.⁵⁴ Both saw a solution in showing the children 'the other world' (middle class life). These two middle class teachers thus experience drug gang violence and police violence, just like other favela residents, during their work. However, they explain these experiences in a different way, compared to the favelados. According to them, not social exclusion, police violence and corruption, but poverty, unemployment, the 'world' or 'culture' of the favela, a lack of parental control, and a lack of values (or street values), cause violence. These perceived causes of violence are more closely related to the fears of the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo, even though they are related to different types of violence (violence taking place in Acari).

The residents from Fazenda/Botafogo thus relate crime and criminals (their source of violence, fear and insecurity) to dangerous and marginal favelas, which negatively affect their own neighborhood. Caldeira (2000) argues how middle class and elite citizens in São Paulo associate crime and criminals with favelas. Favelas are perceived as dangerous, criminal, polluting and contaminating places. To protect themselves from violence, fear and insecurity, they need to protect themselves from favelas, by creating both symbolic and real distance and separation: They build walls and symbolically differentiate themselves as much as possible from the image of criminals, and thus from favelas (ibid.: 78-90). This study confirms these processes. Caldeira further argues how the citizens from São Paulo also perceive crime as 'an evil that spreads and contaminates easily and requires strong institutions and authorities to control it'. 'Evil and contaminating crime' is perceived in opposition to reason. Therefore, people who's rationality is considered most delicate, such as children, women, teenagers and the poor, are more vulnerable to it. The evil must be controlled with reason, culture and strong authority. For the citizens of São Paulo crime is primarily a matter of authority, whether that is the school, family, government or police (2000: 53-91). Among the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo the fear for 'contamination' of crime and the control of crime with reason, culture, and authority, are present as well: As discussed, some residents are afraid that the nearby presence of Acari will cause their children and youth to use drug or become a criminal. The teachers believe that the violence and 'street values' in the favela create 'destructive characters', aggressiveness and violence. Furthermore, a lack of parental control is perceived to cause crime.

Although the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo mostly fear robberies and assaults, some of the residents also perceive a lack of quality (public) health care, education, and job opportunities, and poorly maintained light and pavements as important problems in their neighbourhood. António, for instance, believes the government, who makes only promises around election times but never lets them be followed by actions, is responsible for these problems in the neighborhood.⁵⁵ And Luíz believes the government should be more

⁵³ Interview with Rosana, March 9, 2009

⁵⁴ Interview with Viviane, March 9, 2009

⁵⁵ Interview with António, May 11, 2009

concerned about the lack of job opportunities in his neighborhood. He thinks the government is the one who can do something about that, but they don't.⁵⁶ These types of problems are thus related to politics and the government.

The residents of Fazenda/Botafogo have different ideas about what would be the right responses towards the violence, fear and insecurity they experience. Many residents believe the police should respond. They believe that more police on the streets and a police station in the neighbourhood could provide more security. The residents themselves should respond to violence and danger by calling the police. They explained that the police should combat violence and insecurity by patrolling in the neighbourhood 24/7. According to some residents the police currently does not provide this security because they are more interested in the richer South Zone (Zona Sul). Other residents believed the police security would improve in the future. One man believed there was no such thing as a right response towards violence and insecurity: *'There is just no way (jeito)'*, he said.⁵⁷ A woman believed the death penalty would be the only right response:

*'Look, to reduce the violence there needs to be the death penalty. The police must go to those places in the favelas where they sell drugs and kill. The police must go there again and again, and kill them. There are those murderers. Those people who kill and steal. Then they are arrested and taken by the police, and the next day they are on the street again! So then they can continue. In my opinion, the death penalty is the only solution. Or someone must go to prison for a hundred years, then he will die there. (...) These monsters, for me they are monsters, must get the death penalty. It's the only solution. They will do it again because it comes from inside, here (she places her hand on her heart), it's in their blood. (...) People must know: If I steel now, then I will never be out there again. Now they know they will be back on the streets, so they will just do it. An example must be made. (...) People must know: If I do something like that I will die. Then they won't do it. When you have a group of ants and you put something sweet in the middle, will all the ants not be drawn towards it? But if you put poison in the middle of them, the ants will disappear. That is why perpetrators should be punished heavily. There must be an example'*⁵⁸

This woman thus also believes the police is the right actor to combat violence and provide a sense of security. In addition, she supports violent strategies against favelas to be used by the police. When the police does not 'deal' with criminals in this violent and repressive matter, in other words if they are 'dealt with' in a more democratic way, she believes this 'sweet' attitude will attract crime. Besides the police, actions from the government, a change of government and employment and activities to prevent young people from going to Acari to use drug, have been mentioned as the right responses.

The quest for strong authorities to control 'contaminating' crime, as described by Caldeira (2000), is thus also present among the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo: Solange views the death penalty as the only way to combat crime, because it is 'in the blood', and residents often perceive the (violent and repressive) police as the right weapon against crime, while Rio's police has a particular violent and undemocratic method and reputation. Caldeira further argues how perceptions about crime therefore reproduce violence: They legitimize segregation, discrimination, and violence against favelas and favelados.

In sum, the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo explain their experiences with violence in terms of unemployment, poverty, drugs, separated parents (leading to a lack of parental

⁵⁶ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁵⁷ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

⁵⁸ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009

control), and (the drugs trade in) favelas. These are the causes that are related to robberies and assaults taking place in their neighborhood, and people are worried that their children will start using drug. Moreover, the nearby presence of favelas, drug trade, firearms and shootouts install residents with fear and insecurity. Next to this, the (corrupt) government is mostly held responsible for problems such as bad lightening, runoff of rainwater, and health care system, but also for a poorly functioning police system. They mainly believe the insecure situation should be solved by (violent and repressive) police action, to protect the neighbourhood against favelas and criminals from favelas, or to actively combat criminals in the favelas themselves. Furthermore, the government could improve their situation.

2.3. Others

Fear is often reduced to rigid and clear categories, rather than seen as the complexity violence comprises in reality. In Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari there are several categories people use in their accounts about violence, fear and insecurity. In Acari they are represented by the police and by powerful segments of Brazilian society, such as politicians and citizens from higher classes. In Fazenda/Botafogo they are represented by Rio's poor population, living in the cities favelas.

People need to name fears, categorize them and put a face on them, as a way of explaining experiences of fear and regaining order (Reguillo 2000: 192). Usually, the identified cause or face of fear is from outside the own social group. This is where fear of The Other is constructed. The Other can be an individual or a group and is from outside, is different and is identified as dangerous. Othering forms a mechanism to channel fear. For instance, urban crime in Latin America is often represented as crime from lower class neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods and their residents than become The Other, representing perceived fears within society (ibid.: 194-204). Power relations and social boundaries between different social-cultural groups channel the constructions of fears and Others, and determine who has the power the define fears and responses to it, in for instance the media and formal institutions.

Caldeira (2000) argues how processes of Othering reproduce different forms of violence in São Paulo. She argues how violence leads to 'stereotyped talks of fear', which in turn leads to the reproduction of violence. When experiences of violence, social decay (e.g. economic recession, inflation), or social change (democratization) lead to the breaking down of the social order and uncertainty, then the stereotyped 'talk of crime' reorders that social environment and recreates (perceived) security. She shows how this talk of crime fits into rigid categories and images of The Other, represented by Brazil's poor population. Subsequently, these marginalized groups are criminalized, discriminated against, and repressive police violence and private security violence against them is legitimized (ibid.: 35-39).

In Fazenda/Botafogo 'The drug trafficker', 'The favelado', 'The criminal', and 'The other side' form important Others. 'The drug trafficker' is in any case a poor favelado, and often also dangerous, heavily armed, violent, and malicious in a fixed way. 'The favelado' is in any case poor and unemployed, and often also a drug trafficker, drug addict, or criminal, characterized by a lack of parental control, and by specific favela- or street- values. 'The criminal' is a favelado and often a drug addict. All of these Others are related to Acari, because they represent favelas and favelados. Acari itself often forms an Other as well. In their talks about Acari, people from Fazenda/Botafogo hardly ever use the name Acari, but usually talk about '*the other side*', thus using Othering terms. Moreover, they sometimes refer to them as '*strangers*'.

In Acari, on the other hand, 'The police man', 'The politician', 'The other society', and 'The other side' are important Others. 'The police man' is in any case violent, corrupt, malicious, money driven, and discriminative against favelados, in a static way. Moreover, he could belong to lower or higher middle classes, but he is not a favelado. 'The politician' is powerful, corrupt, and represses favelados. 'The other society' is 'the rest', 'the beauties of Brazil', and 'the Brazil Europe': that part of Brazilian society outside of, and opposed to, the favelas. It is in any case richer, more powerful, and actively excluding, discriminating, and repressing favelas. The category 'The other society' is most clearly related to Fazenda/Botafogo, while other images of Others are not explicitly related to it. However, all Others are believed to exclude and repress favelas. Just like the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo, the residents of Acari hardly refer to Fazenda/Botafogo by its name. Rather, they talk about 'the other side'.

In addition to Othering between neighbourhoods, there are processes of intra-neighbourhood Othering as well. In both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, for instance, there are significant differences in wealth within the community. In Acari there are richer (and often older) areas and (often newer) poorer areas. In the richer areas there are brick houses, with relatively high rental prices, more facilities, cars, and paved roads. In the poorer areas there are wooden shacks, narrow and unpaved dirt roads, and there is an open drainage canal. One day, I walked through a poor area with Wanderson, who lives in a better part of Acari. When I wanted to speak to some residents there, he disagreed and advised me to leave the area, because according to him those residents are 'not interesting and inarticulate' and they would not be able to tell me anything.⁵⁹ Like Acari, many favelas in Rio de Janeiro are divided. There are good housing constructions right next to perilous wooden shacks (O Globo 2009).

Although the images of Others are not exclusive to inter-neighbourhood processes of differentiation, and although they are not used by all residents from both neighbourhoods, and not at any time, they form dominant images that residents can 'pick up' and use to explain their experiences with violence, fear and insecurity. When these images are used, they draw and emphasize social boundaries and social distance between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, and on a broader level between favelas and higher social classes. This works both ways. Images of Others representing favelados legitimize class segregation, repressive police violence, private security violence, and discrimination against favelas, and therefore reproduce violence, inequality and social exclusion (Caldeira 2000). Images of Others representing dominant society legitimize drug gang presence and violence, and form resistance against social exclusion. This also reproduces violence, segregation and inequality (Leeds 2007: 32-29; Arias & Rodriguez 2006). Due to social and physical differentiation processes between favelados and richer segments of society Ventura (1994) characterized Rio de Janeiro as a 'divided city' (*cidade partida*), which has been a commonplace synonym for the city ever since. Images of Fear and insecurity are thus channelled by The Other, and Othering is reproduced and contested within power struggles and alongside social boundaries.

In this chapter, the social impact of experiences with violence has been analyzed, in terms of constructions of fear and insecurity. The concept and real images of Others help to understand how violence, fear, and social boundaries are reproduced and contested. Moreover, they help to understand which actors in society are associated with violence, fear and insecurity and therefore need to be coped with. In the next chapter, the coping strategies of the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo will be addressed.

⁵⁹ Field notes, March 24, 2009

3. COPING STRATEGIES

Violence, fear and insecurity are related to power relations. Exposure to violence varies according to one's socioeconomic position and is concentrated in poor neighbourhoods. Through violence power is exercised and negotiated. Further, powerful groups define the hegemonic discourse about danger, fear and right responses, and power struggles and social boundaries between different social-cultural groups channel the constructions of fears and Others. However, perpetrators and victims and the powerful and the marginalized are no fixed and rigid categories. Rather, perceptions, images and positions are continuously contested. By addressing coping strategies, the agency of people towards violence, fear, and social boundaries becomes visible. They can be reproduced, resisted, shared and changed, within power relations. In this chapter the coping strategies used by the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo will be addressed, revealing both spaces of agency and boundaries, and senses of power and powerlessness.

Coping strategies are strategies to 'deal' with violence within the given context and within hierarchic relations, which can be done both individually and communally. Coping with violence does not necessarily mean solving the problem of violence, although a coping strategy can prevent or control violence to some extent (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 178). Moser and McIlwain explored different strategies to cope with violence in more detail, during fieldwork in eighteen poor urban communities in Guatemala and Colombia. They divided their findings in four distinct categories: Avoidance, confrontation, conciliation and other strategies (ibid.: 179). The coping strategies of the residents from Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo can be placed within these categories. In addition a fifth category, resistance, will be described, based on Koonings' (2009) understanding of 'resistance' and 'recovery' as additional coping strategies.

3.1. Avoidance

The most commonly pursued coping strategies are avoidance strategies. This counts for both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, although the type of avoidance strategies pursued in each neighbourhood are often different. According to the findings of Moser and McIlwain (2004), the most commonly used coping strategies, in poor urban communities in both Guatemala and Colombia, are related to avoidance as well (179). Avoidance strategies are intended to avoid encounters with violence. This can be achieved by maintaining silence in violent situations, in order to avoid violent retribution or exacerbation of the situation. Another strategy to avoid encounters with violence is to change mobility patterns, through avoidance of places and darkness where (perceived) violence concentrates. Further, people involved in crime and violence can be avoided or escaped and looks can be adapted in order to prevent robbery or rape. One could for instance escape the house when domestic violence occurs, quickly get away when gang violence is witnessed, dress 'decent' and not luxurious to prevent rape and robbery, and stay inside the house after sundown. Avoidance strategies are used out of fear of (more) violence and violent actors and due to senses of powerlessness, where one believes nothing can be done against them anyway (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 179-181). The common use of avoidance strategies in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo indicate perceptions of distrust, lack of agency, and Otherness.

3.1.1. Avoiding police, gang and bullets in Acari

In the first place, people in Acari try to avoid bullets and police violence, during police invasions and shootouts between the police and the drug gang. They then try to hide in safe places, inside houses and other buildings. Most of the residents of Acari know that the only thing you can do when the police comes in shooting, is run away and hide inside the nearest house or shop. Paulo affectionately hugged his niece, Angela, and laughed at her, when he explained how he spent much time in his life running away from the police with her on his arm (she is now an adolescent).⁶⁰ However, hiding inside houses is not always enough to stay safe. Joaquim, for instance, explained that even inside the houses people are not safe, because bullets can hit people inside their houses: *'What can you do? Nothing. When the police comes, you stay in your house, you don't go outside. Sometimes bullets enter houses as well. Sometimes through the windows'*.⁶¹ Wanderson explained that if the police comes in shooting it is usually early in the morning. That is when people are on the streets because they go to work and young children are going to school. Because they are on the streets, they can easily get shot.⁶² The situation where most residents believe the only thing you can do against police violence and shootouts between police and the gang is hiding, is related to the second strategy.

In the second place, the residents try to avoid police violence and gang violence by 'silencing': They usually do not report violence perpetrated by the gang or police to formal institutions or organizations. This is motivated by fear, distrust, and perceptions of otherness towards the police, and by both fear and trust, and perceptions of sameness towards the drug gang. People are afraid to report police violence, out of fear for violent repercussions by the police. The mother of the twelve year old girl who showed me her scars caused by a police bullet, did not report this incident because she was afraid of repercussions by the police.⁶³ Angela told me she would not report police violence if she witnessed it, because she would not have the courage and because nobody did it. She knows another resident, Edson, who witnessed against police violence. She believes that was the right thing of him to do, however she would never dare to do such a thing.⁶⁴ Wanderson, member of RCMV, explained that although the movement has announced only a few cases of police violence in Acari, in reality there were much more cases. However, most people are afraid to report their cases.⁶⁵

Reporting gang violence is not allowed under the rules of the gang, and can have violent repercussions by the drug gang as a consequence. In addition, the gang is often perceived as a provider of security to the community and perceived in terms of sameness. As a resident explained: *'It (denouncing traffickers) is a shameful act, an unworthy act, it's an act that I don't have words for to tell you now, but it...it's a wrong act for a human being'*.⁶⁶ The two middle class teachers in Acari also pursue 'silencing' as an avoidance strategy, during their work in the favela. They do not report violence to the police either. On the day that I spoke to the teachers, the school building had just been damaged by vandals. It was better not to call the police about this incident, they explained, because the police only comes when valuables, such as computers, have been stolen or damaged, and because *'the gang would not like it'*. The two middle class school teachers thus share this avoidance strategy with the residents of Acari, because of their jobs.⁶⁷ As described in the previous chapter, gang violence is often believed to be perpetrated only against residents who 'broke the rules', and

⁶⁰ Group discussion with Paulo and Angela, March 20, 2009

⁶¹ Interview with Joaquim, March 24, 2009

⁶² Field notes, March 9, 2009

⁶³ Field notes, March 3, 2009

⁶⁴ Group discussion with Paulo and Angela, March 20, 2009

⁶⁵ Field notes March 3, 2009

⁶⁶ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

⁶⁷ Interview with Rosana and Viviane, March 9, 2009

in order to provide security, which can give residents a sense of security and inclusion. This sense of security is limited in reality though, and leads to the support of trafficker power. For many residents in Acari, not reporting gang violence, and thus complying to the 'law' of the gang, is therefore a strategy to cope with violence and insecurity. This simultaneously forms a strategy of avoidance and compliance.

Although silencing forms a coping strategy, it is also a tool for violent actors to control a population (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 179). In many favelas drugs gangs uphold a *lei do silêncio* (law of silence) which prohibits people to talk or cooperate with police. Residents who violate this 'law' risk 'punishment' through violent repercussions (Arias & Rodriguez 2006: 62; Leeds 1996: 61). This coercive trafficker position can also break down though, as Arias and Rodriguez (2006) argue with examples of developments in several favelas in Rio de Janeiro. When traffickers lose legitimacy, because they fail to control levels of violence or residents who are not involved with trafficking get hurt, residents sometimes take actions against traffickers, demand reforms in trafficker behaviour, engage in protest that attracts unwanted attention to the favela, or cooperate with the police or a competitive gang against the traffickers (2006: 73-77). Thus although a common strategy is to avoid drug gang violence, due to the coercive position of the traffickers, under certain circumstances drug gangs can be confronted or resisted as well.

In the third place, people in Acari sometimes want to avoid Acari itself. They sometimes want to 'move out of the favela' (as an ideal rather than a realistic strategy), to middle class neighbourhoods or other states. Two women, for instance, explain that moving to a better neighbourhood would be a solution, but they rather stay in Acari because they grew up there and know everyone.⁶⁸ Not all the residents want to move out of the favela though. The vice president of the AM, for instance, explains that he has enough money to move to another neighbourhood, but he prefers to stay in the favela because it is safer '*due to the boys*' (of the drug gang).⁶⁹ However, next to perceptions of security and inclusion in the favela, opposing the rest of society, some residents perceive moving out of the favela as an ideal strategy to avoid violence. Paulo and Angela, for instance, both agree that Acari is a safer neighbourhood than Fazenda/Botafogo, due to the security provided by the drug gang. At the same time Paulo, who ran with his niece on his arms so many times, wants to move to the interior where it would still be safe. His niece, Angela, wants to move to Copacabana. Money is the problem though, that would not make it actually possible for them to move.⁷⁰ This example shows that perceiving the gang as providers of security, can be a strategy to feel secure in a highly insecure environment, more than it actually brings security. Family members of Angela and Paulo use to live in Acari, but are currently living in Fazenda/Botafogo.

The middle class school teachers working in Acari share the strategy to avoid, or escape, Acari with some of the favela residents as well. They explain how they prefer not to talk about violence with the school children, since they already have to experience so much violence. Rather, they want to talk with the children about 'the other world' that exists outside of Acari. They do this by taking the children to the cinema, to a shopping mall, by teaching them values (e.g. not stealing), and by explaining how they could achieve a better future with jobs, cars and nice houses in better neighborhoods.⁷¹ In other words, they want to 'show' the children a 'middle class world'. The teachers thus perceive education as a strategy to leave the favela, in order to avoid violence. They see it as part of their job to help the children in Acari with that. As described in chapter two, education forms a perceived solution to stop violence

⁶⁸ Field notes, March 3, 2009

⁶⁹ Interview with Bruno, March 28, 2009

⁷⁰ Group discussion with Paulo and Angela, March 20, 2009

⁷¹ Interview with Rosana and Viviane, March 9, 2009

among residents of Acari as well. However, they see this as a way to achieve inclusion for the residents of Acari, rather than as a strategy to avoid (move out of) Acari. Moreover, the teacher's strategy is based on perceptions of Othering, rather than sameness.

3.1.2. *Avoiding assaults, Acari, drug and firearms in Fazenda/Botafogo*

Among middle class or elite citizens avoiding strategies are often expressed in a different way compared to poor citizens. They have the means to live in gated communities, hire private security and limit mobility patterns to for instance the home, workplace, and shopping malls (Caldeira 2000; Restrepo 2004: 179-185). The avoidance strategies that are common among the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo are generally different than those in Acari. While the residents of Acari try to avoid violence, fear and insecurity by not reporting ('silencing') both police- and gang violence to the police or other institutions, hiding inside houses during shootouts, and (ideally) moving out of the favela, avoidance strategies in Fazenda/Botafogo are changing mobility patterns, avoiding places and people involved in crime (this mainly involves avoiding Acari), and building walls and gates.

For the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo one main avoidance strategy is 'not going to Acari', or only going there under certain circumstances, such as during the day, only adults, and without getting involved with drugs or drug traffickers. A man who is not afraid to go to Acari explains that he regularly visits a particular bar there, with a friend who lives in Acari.⁷² That is no problem, he explains, because as long as you are not involved in drugs you can move between both neighborhoods without any problems. A woman among her neighbors explains you should not let your children go to Acari, and Acari should be avoided when it is late.⁷³ Several other residents though, believe it is too dangerous to go to Acari at all. Some of them explain how they have been in Acari in the past, but do not go there anymore, because of frightening experiences with the much and publicly carried firearms there.

A second important avoidance strategy is 'building walls'. Most of the houses in Fazenda/Botafogo are family houses surrounded with different types of walls and gates. One man, for instance, explains that he and his family can protect themselves with '*the security of the house*' and '*the rest is a task of the government*'.⁷⁴ Not everyone believes that building walls is enough to stay safe though. Another man, Roberto, explains that since the neighborhood became more dangerous, people started building more and more walls and gates around their houses. However, Roberto does not believe that this strategy actually works: '*It doesn't help. They will rob you anyway. With walls, without walls, with windows, without windows. They come in anywhere*'.⁷⁵

Restrepo (2004) argues how the coping strategies people pursue are often structured by fragmentation of social spaces and contraction of time. For the social impact of violence is insecurity and fear of Others, which leads people to limit their movements, avoid certain places and people whom they perceive to be dangerous, and live day by day. Restrepo describes how elite groups in Colombia fragment their social spaces by building gated communities, hiring private security, driving bullet prove cars and limiting their movements to the home, workplace, the highway and recreational areas (2004: 179-182). In Fazenda/Botafogo avoidance through limited mobility patterns particularly fragments social spaces. Residents have often limited their movements to or through Acari and their contacts with residents of Acari. Moreover, the houses in their own neighbourhood have become more closed. Although the strategies of Fazenda/Botafogo' residents, and their fragmentation of

⁷² Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁷³ Group discussion May 12, 2009

⁷⁴ Interview with António, May 11, 2009

⁷⁵ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

social spaces, intend to avoid violence and insecurity, they tend to increase social inequalities and endanger democracy.

Caldeira (2000) argues that the increase of walls, fences and bars in São Paulo are a manifestation of fear, suspicion and segregation, which together with values and practices of isolation, enclosure and exclusion, create a city in which the quality of public space and the possibility of social encounters have changed dramatically (296). She emphasises how these changed perceptions and practices of the use of public spaces are historically rooted and contradicting democracy. Throughout the twentieth and twenty-one century, different forms of social segregation have existed in São Paulo, and the 'problem of the poor' has been expressed and dealt with in various terms. The different ways in which public life has been structured indicate how social groups relate to each other (ibid.: 213-215). Since the 1980's São Paulo is characterized by the proximity of different classes and by walls. In this period with economic decay, the growth of the informal economy and a growth in violent crime and fear, the 'problem of the poor' has become particularly important, and is now expressed and dealt with in an obsession with security and social discrimination (ibid.: 254-255). The subsequent inequalities in citizenship contradict the process of political democratization initiated in Brazil in 1985. According to Caldeira it is exactly those significant changes (economic decay and democratization) in society that underlie this contradiction: Transformations, such as the opening and blurring of boundaries, are unsettling and upsetting (especially for higher classes) and trigger opposing processes (ibid.: 333-335). Violence and fear of Others thus often led residents of Fazenda/Botafogo to build walls around their houses and to (partly) avoid Acari. The impact of these strategies is that symbolic and social distances between the neighbourhoods increases. The increased inequality between them is contradictory to democratic notions of (equal) citizenship.

3.2. Confrontation

Rather than avoided, encounters with violence can be confronted or conciliated with. Confrontation strategies are intended to confront violence or violent actors. This can be achieved with violent responses, by murdering someone before they kill you, carrying a weapon to defend oneself in violent situations, or to intimidate others as a preventive strategy. Further, people may defend themselves in violent situations by screaming or fighting back. Confrontation strategies are less common (or more hidden) out of fear for violent repercussions, but are more common among gangs in slum areas (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 181).

3.2.1. Confronting exclusion and police in Acari

Residents of Acari often explained that they could understand why people would join the local drug gang due to a lack of education- and job- opportunities, and because of experiences with police violence. Fernando worked for the drug gang in Acari in the past, motivated by the desire to uphold an otherwise unreachable consumption style (see chapter two).⁷⁶ Zaluar described the strategy of some youngsters in Brazil's favelas to become a gang member as 'perverse integration' (Zaluar 2000: 661, 662). Due to a lack of opportunity structures to integrate into Brazilian society through for instance formal jobs, education or consumption styles, some youngsters in the favelas turn to drug gangs as an alternative or 'perverse' way to integrate in society. By the use of firearms, performance of illegal activities and membership of a gang, these youngsters take pride in their identity and pursue recognition, respect and

⁷⁶ Field notes, April 4, 2009

being feared (ibid.: 661, 662). In this way, confrontation strategies can be related to identity and belonging. In Acari, joining the local gang can thus form a confrontation strategy. Although working for the drug gang may bring youngsters to take pride in their identity, and a way to cope with violence and insecurity, in reality drug trafficking often hardly offers real integration into society for favelados. They often end up dead or in prison, and much of the money from the drug trade ends up in the hands of corrupt police, lawyers, and powerful traffickers (ibid.: 671).

Confrontation strategies are not only related to identity and belonging, but also to contraction of time (Restrepo 2004). In absence of a sense of future, some people are willing to risk their lives for a sense of (short lived) status and respect. Restrepo argues not only how coping strategies are often characterized by fragmentation of space, but also by contraction of time. Colombian citizens often live day by day, because of the contraction of time in a context where hope and future are undermined by insecurity. Colombians then often live in an absolute present, spending personal savings rather than to invest them, using alcohol, drugs and sex as a temporal escape, but also humour, music, dance and celebration. Or, in the *barrios* (slums), some youngsters become a gangster or hired killer (179-185). Fernando argues that the adolescents in Acari sometimes chose to work for the drug trade, because they don't see that there is also 'another way'. They see a lot of violence, problems, and believe they are going to die anyway.⁷⁷ Leandro argues: '*It looks like...alright I am going to run risk of life, but I will have money. But after that you will live that life and you will see it's very hard. (...) But it's very hard, very hard to get out, because there is no alternative*'.⁷⁸ Fernando and Leandro both express the lack of a sense of future or alternative as additional motives for the work in the drug trade.

Furthermore, reporting police violence forms a confrontation strategy pursued by some of the residents, despite of fear for violent repercussions. Although most people stay silent by not reporting police violence, there are also people that do report it. Wanderson is a member of the RMCV, which announces police violence. Several cases of murder by police in Acari have been denounced by the RMCV. Edson witnessed how the police killed two young men from Acari on a afternoon in December 2005:

*Rafael and Lindomar, aged sixteen and twenty, arrived in Acari on a motor when they were ordered to stop by two police men. One police bullet, perforating Rafael's neck and Lindomar's head, then killed both adolescents at once. Laying dead on the ground the police men inspected the belongings of the adolescents and, failing to find arms or drug, placed arms on their bodies. Although many people witnessed the murders, only Edson was willing to testify against the two police men, despite of dead threat's by the police. The policemen were eventually prosecuted and one of them was sentenced to fifteen years in prison for homicide in 2007. However, in 2008 the case was reopened due to new evidence and the policeman was released.*⁷⁹

Edson explains that although many residents did not have the courage to testify against the police men, he was determined to do it: '*I am not afraid of the police. I respect, but I don't fear*'. The period was frightening for Edson and he was threatened with death by police: '*Maybe I will live another five minutes, or ten or fifteen minutes, but I had to testify*'.⁸⁰ In other words, Wanderson and Edson did not remain silent.

⁷⁷ Interview with Fernando, April 4, 2009

⁷⁸ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

⁷⁹ <http://www.redecontraviolencia.org/Casos> (accessed on August 10, 2009)

⁸⁰ Field notes March 3, 2009

Finally, confronting police behaviour, by talking to policemen about citizenship rights and by resisting bad police behaviour, forms a confrontation strategy. Leandro explains that he used to be afraid of the police and was therefore physically and verbally abused by them. According to him policemen are like dogs: they smell it when you are afraid and that is exactly when they will attack you. He changed his attitude after he became politically aware. Now, he says, if a policeman treats him bad, he will stay calm and not show fear. Rather he will tell them they do not have the right to do this. He believes he can only do this, though, when there are other people around, because *'if you are alone with the police you never know what they will do'*.⁸¹ Leandro thus defends himself against police violence with a fearless attitude and knowledge about rights. Although Moser and McIlwain describe 'reporting to the police' as an 'other' strategy, and Leandro aims to defend himself in a non-violent manner, I see these strategies as a confrontation because violence is confronted rather than silenced, by protesting against violence and directly against an important violent actor, and by facing fear for repercussions.

3.2.2. Confronting crime and insecurity in Fazenda/Botafogo

In Fazenda, Botafogo confrontation strategies are uncommon. However, one group of young guys told me that there had been an attempt by a couple of men from Fazenda/Botafogo to organize themselves for the security of the neighborhood. According to these guys, the men wanted to 'patrol' through the neighborhood but were eventually murdered by the drug gang from the neighboring favela Pedreira, because they mistook them for a militia. The organization of a 'neighborhood patrol' forms a confrontation strategy: Violence and violent actors (in this case criminals) are then confronted, rather than avoided or conciliated with, in a private matter.

Several residents mentioned the possibility of taking (caught) criminals to the drug gang in favela Pedreira, instead of to the police, where they could 'punish' him or her. Although nobody revealed they actually did that, some residents said they knew people who did. Luíz recounted: *'There are people who do that. I would never do that. I want to sleep with an easy conscience at night. I know people here who do this. These people are looking for a quick solution. I would take the thief to the police, that is what you should do'*.⁸² A group of adolescents, who claim they would do it themselves if they caught a criminal, explained:

One of the guys explains to me: 'There are a lot of robberies here, assaults... Nine months ago my mother's car was robbed. The neighbor has been killed during a car robbery.' (...) I ask them what they could do about these robberies. They all start laughing loudly. 'Cry!' Says one of them. 'You work to save money to buy a new one. There is no way', says another. I ask if they could go to the police as well. 'No, no, that's not worth the effort. That does not work', is their reaction. (...) 'Residents here can do nothing. When residents tried to do something, organizing security (fazer segurança da rua), they were murdered. By the traffic. Here, nobody tries again. They (the traffic) thought they were a militia, and they were not a militia. It was one year ago'. (...) 'The police is completely involved in the traffic. If you go to the police, nothing happens. They all get money from the criminals'. The guys start telling me about a thief, who robbed the bag of a lady right across the street, who was caught by a couple of residents. They took him up (pra cima), to Pedreira: 'As if it was taking to the police station, here people take to the hill, because they kill right away'.⁸³

⁸¹ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

⁸² Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁸³ Group discussion, May 14, 2009

The confrontation strategies used by residents of Fazenda/Botafogo are examples of situations where people take justice in their own hands. When coping strategies take the form of alternative (and often illegal) forms of justice, this contributes to a 'cycle of violence' (Caldeira 2000: 207). Continued support for a violent police since the end of the authoritarian regime in 1985, and perceptions of fear, distrust and denigration towards the police, among both higher and lower classes, create a context of fear and insecurity. Strategies to cope with violence and fear then sometimes take the form of private and illegal justice, by taking justice in own hands (either in discourse or in practice), supporting violence against criminals, and disrespecting the law. This causes the further break down of the legitimacy of the rule of law and encourages private reactions to crime, rather than public means of justice. Subsequently a 'cycle of violence' increases violence, fear and insecurity (ibid.: 158-210).

3.3. Conciliation

Conciliation strategies intend to conciliate with violent actors and with violence in general, as a way to prevent or deal with violence and fear. This can be done by getting to know people who are involved with crime and violence, or even joining them (by participating in gang activities), out of hope that they will subsequently not harm you. Another conciliation strategy is to turn to a religion and put your faith in the hands of God (including the faith of perpetrators of violence) (Moser & McIlwain 2004: 181, 182).

3.3.1. Conciliation with God and gang in Acari

In the first place, conciliating with the gang forms a conciliation strategy for residents of Acari. Generally, people are 'conforming' to the coercive '*lei do silêncio*' (at least to a certain extent). Furthermore, talking to, and negotiating with, members of the drug gang in Acari can be a strategy. Leandro, who used to be a gang member, believes that levels of gang violence in Acari have reduced because some residents talked to the gang members about politics, about repression, and about how they should not hurt their own people. He talked with them as well. He believes the gang became less violent, because of these interactions.⁸⁴ A school director faced problems in and around his school, due to fights between rival drug gangs (Terceiro Comando from Acari and Amigos dos Amigos from Pedreira). He talked to the students (who were gang members), and they respected him. Now, according to the director, there are no fights, guns or drugs in the school territory anymore.⁸⁵ A concierge at the same school, also believes that the school director managed to keep the school safe from drug gang activities: '*We had to stop fights at the time. Now it is quiet. The school is a place for education and not for war*'.⁸⁶

The conciliation strategies among the residents of Acari are all related to gang violence and not to police violence. Residents can thus talk or negotiate with drug gang members, in order to reduce violence and fear. Moreover, in many favelas maintaining a position of respect forms a strategy to stay safe, because social connections, status and respect provide security towards gang violence. When people who have 'broken the rules' know drug gang members, they may be able to escape or negotiate with them about 'punishments' (Arias & Rodriguez 2006: 68-69).

In the second place, religion forms a conciliation strategy in Acari. People sometimes conciliate themselves with the violent and insecure context, through their religious faith. There are a lot of churches in Acari and there is for instance a wall in the neighborhood on

⁸⁴ Interview with Leandro, March 10, 2009

⁸⁵ Field notes, March 24, 2009

⁸⁶ Field notes April 4, 2009

which is painted: *'Only God can keep us save'*. Marcus Alvito (2001) has studied the role of religion in Acari. He described how religion, as a system of symbols, can make life feel more bearable for many residents in Acari, despite of its complexities suffering and injustice (178). Religion does not stop suffering, but it makes it tolerable. It serves not to immediately explain everything that happens, but to have certainty that everything has its reason and explanation. 'Where there used to be only chaos and confusion, there is now a plan of God, which immediate meaning could escape us but soon will reveal itself' (ibid.: 179). Religious groups in favelas can pursue different strategies to deal with the context of violence. Favela residents in Rio belonging to Pentecostal churches often believe it is almost impossible to achieve things without the support of drugs dealers and confrontations with them are undesired, which makes conciliating with drugs dealers a realistic compromise for them. Other religious groups though, may pursue avoidance strategies (Zaluar 2000: 665).

3.3.2. *Conciliating with God in Fazenda/Botafogo*

The residents of Fazenda/Botafogo sometimes use their religion to conciliate themselves with a context of violence and fear as well. Roberto, for instance, believes there is nothing he could do to protect himself: *'Nothing but a miracle can keep us save. (...) Only God can keep us save'*.⁸⁷ He thus conciliates himself with the idea that violence and fear interfere with his daily life, while he can't do anything about that. Some residents of Fazenda/Botafogo know people from Acari, because they visit to the same church (a church located in Acari as well as a church located in Fazenda/Botafogo). Religion therefore forms a shared coping strategy between residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. Several residents believe they could do nothing to stay safe, because it is not in their hands, but in the hands of God, the police, or the government. These residents thus try to deal with violence, fear and insecurity by conciliating themselves with the violent and insecure situation, which is out of their hands. Next to a religion, or 'surrendering' oneself to the situation, people could pursue conciliation through other types of believe systems. Martín-Barbero argues that middle class or elite citizens may reconcile themselves with urban violence in general, by searching for 'senses of belonging' (2002: 32). By identifying oneself with a particular group, community, tradition or movement, one can compensate for the fragmentation of space and contraction of time, caused by violence and fear (ibid.: 31-33).

3.4. Resistance

The categories for coping strategies of Moser and McIlwain can be extended with Koonings' (2009) understanding of 'resistance' and 'recovery'. Resistance against violent acts or actors can take place through popular protesting or petitioning, through grass root organizations or institutions. Recovery from experiences with violence and fear can be pursued by addressing, and resisting, the consequences of these experiences. This strategy is not directed at armed actors themselves, but towards broader societal inclusion. For instance through religion or memory and place initiatives. Residents of Acari pursue different strategies in order to reject stigmatization and exclusion, claim inclusion, and petition and protest against violent acts, while a residents from Fazenda/Botafogo deploys a strategy to combat the impact of the drug trade and claim security. I will address these strategies as resistance strategies. Resistance strategies thus intend to resist violence, fear and insecurity. These strategies are different from confrontation strategies because the resistance is not directed against violent actors, but towards broader societal inclusion.

⁸⁷ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

3.4.1. Resisting social exclusion in Acari

Several residents of Acari try to resist social exclusion through the ‘mobilization’ of favelados against violence, forming community organizations and projects, aimed at reducing inequality and discrimination, or raising awareness about processes of inequality and discrimination among the residents of Acari. For instance the projects of Leandro and Wanderson. Leandro believes that ‘mobilization of favelados’ can stop violence and repression. In order to raise awareness and mobilize people, he initiated a project called ‘trata de favelas’ which includes the demonstration of a movie each week, followed by a debate about the way favelas are portrayed in these movies. One of the movies he wants to show is City of God (*Cidade de Deus*). For the debate about this movie, he tries to arrange the participation of one of the actors in this movie. According to Leandro there is a new hype, which started with City of God, that when you need actors to play the role of criminals (*bandidos*) you say ‘come, let’s go to the favela’. Residents of the favela are then chosen for the role of the criminal, in order to make it ‘more real’. ‘It is based on an old stigma, even before City of God, that criminals are black, poor, and favelado. But politicians are the worst criminals’, he explains. With his project Leandro thus tries to reject stigmatization. According to him this is very difficult in reality though, because favelados who start to mobilize are immediately repressed by the police. Moreover, the favela lacks means of communication. First, he believes that his and Wanderson’s phones are tapped by the police, because they are afraid that they will mobilize people. Second, he argues how the police combats the use of communitarian radios (*radios comunitárias*). Under the cloak of combating radios because they are illegal and used by drug traffickers, they shut down communitarian radios when residents use them to mobilize people.⁸⁸

Wanderson also believes that mobilization of the residents of Acari can reduce levels of violence. He used to be part of a black movement (*movimento negro*) himself. However, he believes levels of mobilization in the community are currently fragile, and less strong than they used to be, due to a lack of public organization and due to ‘the population’. Therefore, he believes that mobilization is not possible nowadays.⁸⁹ Wanderson works on another community project. He tries to arrange cinema and photography workshops for interested adolescents in Acari. One morning a woman who works for a Brazilian NGO talks with Wanderson in Acari about his work in the favela:

When Wanderson explains to her his cinema and photography project, she nods and says: ‘to keep youngsters away from the drug trade, right’. He reacts fierce: ‘No!’ and starts to explain that he does not go to every adolescent in Acari and ‘drag’ them to the workshop in order to take them out of the drug trade, because they are not working for the drug trade. Wanderson then starts arguing strongly that when adolescents in middle class areas want to do something like that it is called that they develop their talents or pursue their interest, but when adolescents from favelas want such a thing it is called that they need to be taken out of the drug trade. He just wants people in Acari, who happen to have a talent or are interested in cinema and photography, to also be able to develop themselves. The workshop is thus only for people who want to participate.⁹⁰

Wanderson thus aims to reject exclusion and claim inclusion with his project. He wants to provide the means for adolescents to ‘develop their talents and interest’, just like adolescents from higher classes. Next to this project, as a member of RMCV he participates in various activities, such as protests, petitions and debates, that reject violent police acts.

⁸⁸ Field notes, March 10, 2009

⁸⁹ Field notes, March 9, 2009

⁹⁰ Field notes, March 20, 2009

Fernando started his own project '*vivendo e aprendendo*' (living and learning), with young residents, in order to keep youngsters away from the drug gang. Most of the adolescents who participate in the project are students at the school where he works as a concierge. It takes place each weekend at the school and involves several classes, such as sports, sewing, cooking and soap making. Soaps and hand bags, made during the classes, are being sold. Sometimes there are trips, for instance to an entertainment park. According to Fernando there are 'two ways' in life for the adolescents: One way is very hard, where you have to work hard, and you don't have much possessions, but it is a good way (the life of a worker). The other way is easy, you can have nice clothes and other things, but it is not good (the life as a worker in the drug trade). He believes that most students only know the wrong way, the way of violence, the drug trade and death, and aims to teach the students that they have a choice.⁹¹ Fernando thus rejects the drug trade and social exclusion.

3.4.2. *Resisting drug in Fazenda/Botafogo*

One resident of Fazenda/Botafogo, Luíz, tries to prevent adolescents in his neighbourhood from going to Acari in order to use drugs. He wants to do this by attracting jobs to Fazenda/Botafogo. He perceives '*the easy access to drugs*' as an important problem and believes that if young boys from his neighborhood have nothing to do they can '*think to much and go to Acari and use drug*'. He therefore works on an initiative to start this job project: '*They must be busy. Therefore I want to make sure that they have something to do*'.⁹² Luíz is thus trying to resist the impact of the drug trade and claim security. There is a resemblance between Luíz' project in Fazenda/Botafogo and Fernando's project in Acari. Both residents try to resist the impact of the drug trade by enabling adolescents to 'be busy' or work (formal labor in Fazenda/Botafogo versus informal labor in Acari), though each in different terms.

3.5. Other

Finally, other strategies are used to cope with violence, described by Moser and McIlwain (204) as reporting incidences to authorities or civil society organizations or to surrender when confronted with violence (182). In Acari, another strategy is supporting left wing politics. This is related to the perceptions of some residents that a leftist government will improve their situation. Although some residents of Fazenda/Botafogo also hoped for the government to do something, they did not particularly support a socialist government. On the contrary, one woman supported a government in favour of the death penalty. Another coping strategy in Fazenda/Botafogo is calling the police when you see a stranger or when a crime has taken place.

Vicinity forms a strategy for residents in both Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari. Vicinity is often mentioned by residents. In Fazenda/Botafogo, they believe that knowing each other in the neighborhood protects them, because strangers can be identified and people can help each other whenever necessary. One woman, for instance, explains that Fazenda Botafogo is safer than Santa Teresa (In the South Zone), because in her neighborhood people know each other. Her friend explains that when one neighbor says '*ai*', the other would already come and take a look.⁹³ Several residents of Acari also mention the vicinity that they believe characterizes the favela. According to them, people in Acari know and help each other. A member of a funk group mentions that nothing can or should be done by the favelados to stop (police) violence or improve the education and health systems. According to him the people in Acari are already doing everything they can do, by '*helping out each other*'. The rest is only up to the

⁹¹ Field notes, April 4, 2009

⁹² Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

⁹³ Group discussion, May 12, 2009

government: They must change things.⁹⁴ The vice president of the AM in Acari believes that residents in Acari help and talk to each other ‘face to face’, while the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo are sitting in their walled houses and don’t know each other.⁹⁵ Trust in a future governments and trust in vicinity thus forms a coping strategy for the residents of both neighbourhoods.

In sum, citizens living in violent social spaces are not only subjects to violence, but can also act and react towards violence. However, the strategies can be motivated out of a sense of lack of agency. Class, violent actors, perceptions of fear, (dis)trust and power(lessness) influence the possibilities and manifestation of coping strategies. The residents’ strategies to cope with violence demonstrate agency as well as boundaries. Their agency becomes visible in the way people can avoid, confront, conciliate with and resist violence, fear and insecurity. Boundaries become visible as well. Residents in Fazenda/Botafogo have more financial and public means to protect themselves. They can build walls, hire private security, live in a less violent neighborhood, and they have access to police protection. Whereas Acari residents often lack those means. They lack the money, the possibility to live in or move to better neighborhoods, and citizenship rights such as protection and means of inclusion.

Therefore, although residents from each neighborhood try to cope with violence, fear, and insecurity, their strategies are usually different. They often avoid, confront, conciliate with, and resist different actors and spaces. However, conciliation through religion sometimes forms a shared strategy: Residents from both neighborhoods use religion to conciliate themselves with a context of violence and insecurity and in addition they sometimes belong to the same religious group. Another strategy that sometimes becomes ‘shared’ is the avoidance of Acari: residents can achieve to move to Fazenda/Botafogo, in order to avoid Acari, like many residents in Fazenda/Botafogo do. Further, in each neighborhood a community leader tries to resist the impact of the drug trade on their adolescents, although in this case they don’t interact with each other: They ‘share’ this strategy separately.

To what extent do the residents of each neighborhood then deal or interact with each other in order to cope with violence, fear and insecurity? Some residents may interact with each other in the church, but otherwise there are no interactions based on a coping strategies. They often ‘deal’ with each other in the sense of dealing with Others: they often try to cope with each other in stead of coping together. Their coping strategies can have unintended outcomes as well. Measures to protect against violence and insecurity may increase the power of armed actors, and social inequalities, and contribute to a ‘cycle of violence’ in practice. Thus through their coping strategies, the residents simultaneously resist and reproduce violence, fear and inequalities. In the next chapter, mutual relations and interactions between the residents of Acari and the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo will be addressed.

⁹⁴ Interview with Joaquim, March 24, 2009

⁹⁵ Interview with Bruno, March 28, 2009

4. INTERACTIONS

The mutual relationship between the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo has now been discussed from different angles. In terms of experiences and perceptions of violence, constructions of fear, and strategies to deal with violence and insecurity, the way these neighbourhoods relate to each other has been addressed. In this chapter, the different ways and extend the residents interact with each other will be described. Their interactions reveal spaces of both conflict and community.

4.1. Discrimination, otherness, and fear

By now, it has become clear how processes of Othering shape violence, fear and insecurity, and coping strategies in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. Othering is violence, when it takes the form of structural violence through processes of segregation, discrimination and exclusion. Othering is fear and insecurity, as in being a channel through which complexities of fear and insecurity are reduced to simple, convenient categories. Othering is a coping strategy because channelling fear through images of Others makes the complex and chaotic world more clear, and thus enables people to reorder that world. In chapter two, I have discussed how perceptions of Others, in Fazenda/Botafogo and Acari, are often directly or indirectly related to the other neighbourhood. Moreover, they legitimize repressive police violence and discrimination against Acari, and enforce drug trafficker power within Acari, therefore reproducing structures of inequality, segregation, and violence between the neighbourhoods. In chapter three I have discussed how the residents from Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo subsequently often don't interact with each other in order to cope with their experiences of violence, fear and insecurity. Rather, they often cope with each other, in the sense of dealing with Others. Their coping strategies therefore not only contest but often also contribute to a cycle of violence and inequalities. This way of thinking about each other and (not) interacting with each other, structured by Othering, forms an important dimension of the mutual relationship between the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo.

The residents themselves often describe their relationship with the residents of the other neighbourhood as a negative relation. Residents of both neighbourhoods often hold negative perceptions about the people who live 'on the other side'. These residents believe that they do not, and should not, interact with each other. In Acari many people believe that people 'on the other side' think negative about them. Wanderson, for instance, explains that he doesn't really know anybody in Fazenda/Botafogo, nor does he know what kind of problems of violence the residents experience there. *'They think very negative about us'*, he explains. Wanderson, a community leader in his own neighborhood, has never worked together with residents or community leaders from Fazenda/Botafogo. Although he thought it could be interesting to cooperate with them, he did not want to that, because it would be too difficult: *'People from here and people from there think differently'*, he believes.⁹⁶ Other residents believe that residents from Fazenda/Botafogo think all, or almost all, residents of Acari are criminals (*bandidos*), that they perceive Acari as very dangerous, and are not accustomed to the firearms which are carried publicly by drug gang members. One resident explains that even when residents come to the community to buy drugs, they will not enter it. They will usually pay someone to go in and buy the drugs for them.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Field notes, March 10, 2009

⁹⁷ Field notes, March 10, 2009

'On the other side', In Fazenda/Botafogo, AM vicepresident Carlos doesn't know anybody from Acari. He only knows people from favela Pedreira. He explains that people from Acari can never come to Fazenda/Botafogo, because there are different drug gangs in Pedreira and Acari, whom are in war with each other. Since people from Pedreira visit Fazenda/Botafogo, and parties at the AM, residents from Acari cannot come to the neighborhood: *'Nobody from Acari can come here. Because then they come here, and then it's like: 'where are you from?... I'm from Acari'... You know, that's not possible'*.⁹⁸ A group of young guys explain that residents from Fazenda/Botafogo do not go to Acari, because of the cooperation between some of the residents with the ADA gang in Pedreira, which is an opponent of the TC gang in Acari. Therefore, they consider it too dangerous to visit Acari, although they do visit funk parties in Acari.⁹⁹

Between the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo fear and otherness thus form an important part of their mutual relationship. Within the mutual relationship between Us/I and The Other(s), social boundaries and identities are constructed and marked by sameness and otherness. This process of differentiation has always existed in all processes of identity constructions. In order to define oneself, as a person or as a group, differences in comparison with others need to be emphasized. In this sense, characteristics of others define the own characteristics and identity presupposes Others (Larrain 2000: 27-29). However, when oppositions between sameness and otherness become hostile and exclusive, the relationship becomes characterized by social conflict.

According to Honneth (in Larrain 2000), mutual recognition, between others and selves, are crucial for shared identity constructions. Mutual recognition is structured by love, respect for human dignity and rights, and recognition of ones value and contribution. Likewise, an absence of these forms of recognition lead to struggles for recognition and thus to social conflict. Disrespect and misrecognition for others is performed through physical abuse or threats, structural exclusion from certain rights, and social-cultural devaluation (social inferiority) (ibid.: 27-28). The relationship between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, which is often structured by misrecognition, thus leads to social struggles for recognition. The negative, devaluating, and exclusive oppositions between both neighbourhoods are then characterized by social conflict. However, the relationship has other dimensions as well, which I will now turn to.

4.2. 'Everyone knows each other'

Many of the Fazenda/Botafogo residents know people from Acari. The relationship with people from Acari is often described as *'everyone knows each other here'*. However, not all of them visit their friends or acquaintances in Acari. Antônio, for instance, explains that he knows a lot of people from Acari and regularly sees them in the favela. *'There is a very nice companionship (convivência)'*, he says.¹⁰⁰ Luíz explains: *'People from here go there and people from there come here'*.¹⁰¹ A group of women talk about how they know people in Acari and have friends there: *'Everyone knows each other here'*, explains one of them. They see their friends there as long as it is not too late in the evening.¹⁰² Solange, on the contrary, explains how she regularly meets friends from Acari in her own neighborhood Fazenda/Botafogo. *'Everyone (from Acari) comes here, people know each other here'*, she explains. She would never visit any of them in Acari though, because she perceives that to be

⁹⁸ Interview with Carlos, March 30, 2009

⁹⁹ Group discussion, May 14, 2009

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Antônio, May 11, 2009

¹⁰¹ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

¹⁰² Group discussion, May 12, 2009

too dangerous. One day Solange's friend, who lives in Fazenda/Botafogo, invited her to meet each other at a Christmas celebration in Acari. However, when Solange saw the number of young men with firearms she immediately returned, called her friend and told her: '*For God's sake, never let me go there again!*'. She never returned to Acari since that day: '*They (friends from Acari) can come here. We will go to a bar or a pizzeria, and then it's all fine*'.¹⁰³ Thus most Fazenda/Botafogo residents claim to have regular contact with residents from Acari. Some of these interactions take place in both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, whereas others take place only in Fazenda/Botafogo, because some residents avoid going to Acari.

In Acari, people know residents from the other neighborhood as well. The contacts with people from Fazenda/Botafogo take place in both neighborhoods. Angela and Paulo, for instance, have family living in Fazenda/Botafogo. Their family used to live in the favela, but moved to 'the other side'. They visit each other in both neighborhoods, and the family is not afraid to come to the favela, because they are accustomed to it (since they lived there in the past).¹⁰⁴ Joaquim has friends who live in condominiums in Irajá, which is another middle class neighborhood located next to Acari. They often play football together. His friends come to the favela, to play football or to visit a *baile funk* (favela funk party), and he goes to the condominiums to visit his friends and play football at the field over there. '*Everyone knows each other here*', he says. According to Joaquim, people that come to the favela for the first time, are shivering out of fear because they are not accustomed to firearms. However, despite of that fear some people do come to the favela. Mostly for *baile funk* parties, but also '*because there is always that curiosity*'. He explains that it used to be difficult to get into condominiums, but that this situation has changed. If he visits his friends, the guards only write down his name sometimes and he can always get inside.¹⁰⁵ Leandro used to have a friend in Fazenda/Botafogo. He explains how they met each other in Fazenda/Botafogo one day and started to talk about community leadership. Both shared ideas about starting projects for the improvement of their neighborhoods. Later, they started making hip hop music together. However, after a fight they lost contact with each other.¹⁰⁶

The relationship between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo is thus not only characterized by fear, Otherness and social conflict, but also by experiences and perceptions of community and vicinity. This is often expressed in terms of '*everyone knows each other here*'. As has been observed by DaMatta (1997) personalized relationships are important in Brazil to determine social relationships, both in terms of exclusion and hierarchy and inclusion and proximity. People who think about the other neighborhood, and cope or deal with it, in terms of Otherness, sometimes also perceive their relationship in these other terms (vicinity and community). Othering often takes place on a more abstract and symbolic level, when people are dealing with 'categories', while personal interactions with friends and acquaintances are perceived in terms of proximity and trust. Othering thus has a double character: Processes of differentiation are not always (and on every level) hostile and exclusive, but can simultaneously be friendly and inclusive.

4.3. Meeting each other in the shop, the church or at a baile funk

Most of the contacts between residents from both neighborhoods, take place during daily or weekly routine practices and social interactions. António, for instance, regularly visits Acari to go shopping.¹⁰⁷ Roberto would never go to Acari, but he meets people from Acari in his

¹⁰³ Interview with Solange, April 17, 2009

¹⁰⁴ Group discussion with Paulo and Angela, March 20, 2009

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Joaquim, March 24, 2009

¹⁰⁶ Field notes, May 16, 2009

¹⁰⁷ Interview with António, May 11, 2009

church in Fazenda/Botafogo.¹⁰⁸ Another group of women from Fazenda/Botafogo are members of a church in Acari.¹⁰⁹ Luíz regularly visits a particular bar in Acari where he sits down with a good friend from the favela.¹¹⁰ A group of young guys regularly visits funk parties in Acari.¹¹¹ These examples illustrate how residents from Fazenda/Botafogo visit shops, the market, parties, churches, bars and restaurants, and friends or acquaintances in Acari. The other way around, residents from Acari visit family, friends, colleagues, the church, and their work place in Fazenda/Botafogo. Angela, for instance, works in a shop in Fazenda/Botafogo.¹¹² Hence, the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo meet each other during shopping, in church, at a party, in bars or restaurants, and on the streets. Other interactions take place in schools. Middle class teachers work at a school in Acari, and students from Acari go to school in Fazenda/Botafogo. It is during these personal interactions, in mostly public spaces, that the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo can construct perceptions and interactions based on community.

The mutual relationship between the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo can be characterized by both Otherness and community. The other neighborhood and its residents are often perceived in terms of Otherness. Although this often takes place on a more abstract and symbolic level, it also influences practices. Categories of Others can lead to practices of avoidance or confrontation, for instance, while people try to cope with those categories of Others. In the previous chapters, I have analyzed how Othering can reproduce a 'cycle of violence'. On the other hand, during personal interactions, residents from the other neighborhood are mostly perceived in terms of vicinity and community. Personal interactions can thus produce trust and social proximity, in stead of fear and social distance. In that sense, personal interactions could reduce social boundaries, fear, insecurity and violence. Through interactions between residents from Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, on both a symbolic and a practical or personal level, trust and fear are continuously 'negotiated'. Within that interaction, personal interactions can then create more spaces of community. In this chapter I have discussed how the mutual relationship between the residents of both neighborhoods are related to the 'cycle' of violence in Rio de Janeiro. Therefore I will now turn to the concluding part.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Roberto, April 22, 2009

¹⁰⁹ Group discussion, May 12, 2009

¹¹⁰ Interview with Luíz, May 15, 2009

¹¹¹ Group discussion, May 14, 2009

¹¹² Group discussion with Paulo and Angela, March 20, 2009

CONCLUSION

Contemporary cities throughout Latin America are significantly characterized by violence. Within this Latin American context, Rio de Janeiro forms an emblematic case of endemic urban violence. Although Brazil made an important transition from military dictatorship towards democratization in 1985, the state still fails to realize equal citizenship and protection for a large part of the population. On the contrary, violent repression of political opponents has been replaced by violent and repressive police strategies against favelados. With the proliferation of the international drug trade during the same era, many favelas are not only subjected to state violence, but also to the coercive power of drug gangs. Besides formal police forces and gangs of drugs traffickers, death squads, militias, vigilante groups, private security organizations, and some individual citizens, are all marking the city with violence.

Socially excluded favelados are affected by the widespread levels of violence the most, which has often led scholars and journalists to refer to Rio de Janeiro as a divided city (Ventura 1994) with parallel or alternative spaces (Leeds 1996), and is experienced by residents of Acari as a city with 'two Brazils'. However, middle class citizens are by no means unaffected by the urban violence, as the experiences of people in Fazenda/Botafogo confirm. Moreover, *favelas* and *bairros* ('regular' neighborhoods) are indissolubly connected with each other. For mutual and complex relations between state actors, social actors and criminal actors, from all layers of society, contribute to a cycle of violence and segregation. Moreover, as I argue, citizens perceptions about urban violence, and strategies to cope with it (which form the social impact of, and contribute to, violence) are indissolubly related to their relationship with the other neighbourhoods.

Subsequently, the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo are living their daily lives in violent spaces. For the people in Acari urban violence means police violence, drug gang violence, and the impact of structural inequalities on their daily lives. They experience violent acts and inferior treatment by the police, in a context of institutional problems, impunity and corruption. The drug trade frames their living spaces with the coercive and violent enforcement of trafficker rules, violent struggles within and between drug gangs, and the risk of recruitment among adolescents. And finally, they have to face discrimination, unequal hardship in daily live, and a substantial lack of access to good education, health care, and formal jobs. Among the residents of Fazenda/Botafogo, experiences with urban violence are structured by economic violence. Against the backdrop of high incidences of violent crime and high senses of public insecurity, the middle class residents particularly experience the threat of robberies and assaults. The different exposures to violence in successively Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, illustrate that even though both neighbourhoods are physically located right next to each other, their positions in the context of urban violence are often miles apart.

However, I have exemplified that this difference does not form a rigid boundary. Rather, residents of both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo have been exposed to gang violence, robberies and assaults, and violent confrontations between the police and drug gangs. At the same time, residents' perceptions about the types of violence that take place in their neighbourhoods often emphasize the differences between both groups, rather than similarities.

The violence that structures daily lives, leaves citizens with senses of fear and insecurity. As fear is often reduced to rigid and clear categories, rather than seen as the complexity violence comprises in reality, Othering shapes the fears of the residents from Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. The people in Acari explain their experiences with violence in terms of social exclusion and corruption among state actors. The police is perceived as intrinsically corrupt, violent, discriminative, powerful, and bad. Dominant society, or 'the other Brazil', represented by politicians, elites and higher class citizens, are seen as

'collaborators of police violence' or the cause of social inequalities. The image of the local drug gang is much more ambiguous. Although residents often recognize dangers in the presence of the drug gang, the traffickers are perceived in terms of sameness, and as providers of security and inclusion.

The residents of Fazenda/Botafogo explain their experiences with violence in terms of criminals, drug, favelas, and a lack of control by authorities. Criminals and drug are perceived as evil and contaminating, while favelas are seen as dangerous, marginal places, and as sources of crime and drug, which must be controlled with strong authority, reason and culture. The consequence of the manifestations of Othering in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, is that they legitimize and reproduce class segregation, repressive police violence, discrimination, and trafficker power. The way the fears of the residents are constructed and shared, thus reveals the social impact of violence. Simultaneously, I have described how Othering does not only take place between the neighbourhoods, but also within them. Intra-neighbourhood Othering again reveals how social boundaries are complex, rather than clear cut and rigid, in reality.

Citizens living in violent social spaces are not only subjects to violence, but can also act and react towards violence. Structured by class, violent actors, perceptions of fear, trust, powerlessness and power, the residents aim to avoid, confront, conciliate with, and resist violence, fear and insecurity. The common use of avoidance strategies in both Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo indicate perceptions of distrust, lack of agency, and Otherness. Residents from both neighborhoods use religion to conciliate themselves with a context of violence and insecurity and in addition they sometimes belong to the same religious group. However, other coping strategies are often characterized by the attempt to cope with each other, in stead of coping together. Although their strategies can make them feel secure in a highly insecure environment, the residents simultaneously resist and reproduce violence, fear and inequalities through their coping strategies.

Processes of Othering are thus shaping violence, fear and insecurity, and coping strategies in Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. This way of thinking about each other and (not) interacting with each other, structured by Othering, forms an important dimension of the mutual relationship between the residents of Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo. When oppositions between the neighbourhoods become negative, devaluating and exclusive, the relationship becomes characterized by social conflict. However, I have described how the mutual relationship has other dimensions as well. The relationship between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo is not only characterized by fear, Otherness and social conflict, but also by experiences and perceptions of community and vicinity. The residents meet and interact with each other in shops, at the market, at parties, in churches, in schools, in bars and restaurants, and on the streets. Moreover, they often have friends, acquaintances, family, and colleagues in both neighborhoods. People who think about the other neighborhood negatively and in terms of otherness, can perceive personal contacts with residents from that neighborhood as positive and in terms of community. Processes of differentiation are thus simultaneously friendly and inclusive, and hostile and exclusive.

The aim of this study has been to analyze the different perceptions of urban violence, and strategies to cope with it, among favela residents and middle class residents in Rio de Janeiro. Moreover I wanted to know how these residents perceive each other in terms of violence and insecurity and their responses to it. The residents perceptions about urban violence, and strategies to cope with it, are indissolubly related to their relationship with the other neighbourhood, as well as with the way social groups in Rio de Janeiro relate to each other in general. Their experiences with violence, the meaning they give to these experiences, and the way they deal with it, are embedded in a social relation characterized by fear, Othering and social conflict. Coping with violence and fear then often takes the form of

coping with the other neighbourhood, which contributes to a cycle of violence, fear and insecurity, and inequality.

However, at the same time the social relation is characterized by perceptions and interactions based on senses of community. Through personal contacts interactions often become softened, friendly, and inclusive. Further, religion and churches fulfil a special role between Acari and Fazenda/Botafogo, forming a space of interaction and a shared coping strategy. These findings can contribute to a better understanding of the way mutual relations between various societal actors reproduce, but also contest and soften, Rio's violent fabric. Moreover, the role of personal, face to face contacts and spaces of interaction contribute to the debate about urban violence, fear and insecurity.

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