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**'YO NO ME VOY DE LA CARO';
DEALING WITH GENTRIFICATION IN AN INNER-CITY
COMMUNITY OF NEOLIBERAL SANTIAGO DE CHILE.**

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Santiago de Chile.**

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ABSTRACT

This proposal analyses the kinds of violence taking place in an inner-city neighbourhood of Santiago de Chile and how people cope with this challenging scenario to avoid gentrification processes. In particular, it examines the spatial dynamics of exclusion and stigma in which such violence occurs; it explores diverse drivers of exclusion and gentrification in the context of thirty five years of deep neoliberal reforms; this discussion goes through the ways in which people respond to, cope with and resist exclusion and threats of gentrification. The principal finding of this work is that there is a simultaneous long-term process of violence from above and below taking place in the settlement, interacting with and reshaping each other and the daily life of the community throughout. In addition, this innerburb, next to urban infrastructure, is somehow helpless to erase the stigma of a violent area despite all the self-help improvement and the public infrastructure built up in the last decade. Furthermore, this stigma had been used in an attempt to mix the borough in order to conduct a gentrification process within it. To be part of the old suburbs' ring places this neighbourhood on the symbolic periphery of the city. The symbolic periphery refers in this vein to the targeting of the area as a territory that can be transformed through the urban land market and spatial policies rather than a place in which a community is embedded. The spatial isolation of neighbourhoods from different social classes maintains the marginalisation of the turf and it does not provide better social integration despite being close to shopping centres.

KEYWORDS: Gentrification, exclusion, violence, stigma, neoliberalism

1. INTRODUCTION

This proposal analyses the kinds of violence taking place in an inner-city neighbourhood of Santiago de Chile and how people cope with this challenging scenario to avoid gentrification processes. In particular, it examines the spatial dynamics of exclusion and stigma in which such violence occurs; it explores diverse drivers of exclusion and gentrification in the context of thirty five years of deep neoliberal reforms; this discussion goes through the ways in which people respond to, cope with and resist exclusion and threats of gentrification.

An ethnographic method is followed in order to achieve a ‘thick description’ of everyday life in the settlement and to sort “winks from twitches” in people’s discourses and behaviours. The selection of the case unfolded in two distinctive steps; first selecting a country and second choosing a neighbourhood. As Hammersley (1992) proposes, the relevance of the case lies on its atypicality rather than its standard features. This is the framework in which Chile was chosen: a country renowned for its rapid economic growth, and changing social bonds which offers itself as a prime site for exploring the ways in which rapid cultural and social change produced by neoliberal policies affect how violence is experienced and perceived. Chile is one of the developing countries that embraced early neoliberal transformations in the 1970s. The In a general context of post-dictatorial era and neoliberal changes in the last twenty-five years, Chile has been considered by the international community as one of the best pupils within Latin American and developing countries (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002; Olavarría, 2003; Taylor, 2003). At the same time, these restructuring reforms reached relatively greater depth and scope in relation to other Latin American countries. On the same path, the Chilean experiment has been heralded as proof of ‘how’ to reform the economy successfully by committing to neoliberal policy prescription (Edwards & Lederman, 1998). According to Taylor (2003), Chilean neoliberal policies might represent the closest approximation of the kind of reformulation currently advised by the leading international financial institutions. As a result Chilean society has on the whole developed major cultural changes in the last twenty-five years led by individualism and entrepreneurialism, and the flexibility and insecurity of a liberalised socio-economy. This also introduced a new model of democracy based on an individualist concept of self and society (Arias & Goldstein, 2010). This also has had a great impact on the ways in which violence is both expressed and dealt with within the inner-city. It has, on these grounds, been vital to set violence within broader processes of social structure, social control and subjectivities.

The second step was to choose a place. Local spaces are increasingly considered as key institutional arenas (Brenner & Theodore, 2002) and nodes in a grid of cross-boundary processes were a negotiated form of capitalist regulation may be forged (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Sassen, 2000). Neighbourhoods are themselves nodes in a larger network of spatial relations and they are interdependent and characterized by a relationship between what happens at one point in space and what happens elsewhere (Sampson, 2006). Again, atypicality rather than average features was the key issue here. I have chosen Chile and José María Caro urban settlement as a paradigmatic case in the urban growth process of Santiago in the last fifty years, this is its atypicality. ‘La Caro’ – as it is called by their

dwellers – was built in 1959 as the first major social housing project of the Chilean State (Ruiz 2012) and settled at the edge of the city (See Figure 1). At the same time, it combined efforts of public housing policies and squatting movements to settle down a vast population of immigrants and new inhabitants who demanded a place to live in the city (Salcedo, 2010).

'La Caro' became an icon of the grassroots organizations of the late 1960s and early 1970s not only as a movement aimed at obtaining affordable and decent housing but also as a political force inserted into the wider struggle for the transformation of the country (Castells, 1973). After Pinochet's coup d'état in 1973, political participation was prohibited and the older social housing policy was replaced. 'La Caro' transformed then into a space of resistance against the dictatorship. Probably, during this stage it received the stigma of 'dangerous place' and 'critical neighbourhood' – a label that remains with the neighbourhood to this day (Flock, 2005). However, with the collapse of the dictatorship and the return to democracy in 1990, this stigma remains in place due to drug-related violence and the fear of crime. Actually, it was part of a governmental program towards 'critical delinquencies areas' between 2005 – 2008 (Ruiz, 2009).

Nonetheless, this area is also part of the symbolic imaginary of Santiago de Chile's inhabitants as 'the worst place', I think this can be illustrated better with a short story from outside of 'La Caro'. During my fieldwork period I also used to see my family and friends regularly – in their neighbourhoods far away from 'la Caro'. On one of these occasions I was helping my younger brother, who lives in the upper-class borough of Providencia, move some furniture. It is worth noticing that this district lies geographically, socially and culturally on the far side of Santiago (See Figure 2). As the task involved getting sofas and bed frames eleven floors down the stairs we hired some help from people who are usually in the street looking after that block's resident's cars. There I was, getting down from the bus and becoming again an upper-class person – or at least the older brother of one. While we were getting one especially massive sofa down the stairs our helpers started to argue with each other. One of them recriminated that the other was not performing the task according to the place they were in. He shouted:

Be careful with the walls! Don't put your filthy finger on them... come on, watch out what you're doing... be careful with the paint on the walls... you wanker, lift this leg better... don't put it there... Where do you think you are, in a street market? In 'La Pincoya'¹, in 'La José María Caro'? Behave yourself. These are decent people; you don't stain decent people's walls like that...

I was quite impressed by this out-of-the-blue dialogue about what it is to be 'decent' and which neighbourhoods fit in this category and which do not. However, the setting of the situation did not allow me inquire further what they meant by this. Why one of them was performing this display of 'correct behaviour' in front of us? Because this was – without a doubt – a performance. I think he was trying to present himself as somebody who knows his role in the presence of rich people and distance himself from others such as day-to-day janitors and employees who do not know this, in order to appear as reliable and

¹ Lower class urban settlement in the north of Santiago considered a 'dangerous' and 'critical' area.

trustworthy. In the meantime, he proved to me how embedded ‘La Caro’ is in the stigmatising symbolic imaginary of Santiago de Chile’s inhabitants.

In parallel, the area is now within the major inner ring of Santiago (Americo Vespucio ring-road), close to urban highways and modern shopping malls, as can be seen in Figure 2. Over the last fifty years this settlement was physically upgraded and improved through community organised self-help dwelling construction while the government gradually installed basic infrastructure and services, and encouraged integration of this working class settlement into the physical fabric of the city. As Santiago sprawled, this former periphery of suburban poor inhabitants gradually became part of the inner-city, forming today what Ward (2012) calls the old first-ring suburbs of Latin American cities or ‘innerburbs’. In this particular case, ‘La Caro’ has also the burden and stigma of being an old and dangerous poor suburb. The area and its community has been a privileged actor – sometimes in the shadows, sometimes in the front scenario – of the urban history of the city. From being at the edge of the city in the 1960s to being part of the core city today (Ruiz 2012).

In this former shantytown in the outskirts of the city, nowadays the whole area is fully urbanised and completely connected with the urban fabric (See figure 3). Today it is situated in the inner city, and close to modern infrastructure such as urban highways and shopping centres. Nevertheless, urban development does not necessarily imply higher levels of inclusion or lower levels of violence. To the inhabitants, the processes of urban growth are seen more as a threat rather than an improvement to their living conditions. Because of planning policies, they fear that gentrification processes would expel them rather than lead to their enjoying the benefits of development. From the inhabitant’s point of view, state cannot be trusted, the rule of the law had got thinner and they cannot count on services that ordinary citizens take for granted, including police response to a crisis, or a ‘fair’ trial. Many local people have limited faith in civil law: they do not trust it to serve and to protect them, but they know it will punish them – and not necessarily justly.

The principal finding of this work is that there is a simultaneous long-term process of violence from above and below taking place in the settlement, interacting with and reshaping each other and the daily life of the community throughout. By violence from above people mean at least three different things. First, the spatial politics exerted upon them since their arrival in the neighbourhood, which had several stages, from the rational urban planning policy applied to ‘La Caro’, passing through the political and administrative re-drawing of the borough during the dictatorship, and finally the political betrayal during the neoliberal democracy from the 1990s onwards. This has been accompanied by internal differentiations within the neighbourhood and its inhabitants. Second, they also speak of violence from above when referring to the political repression during the dictatorship and the policing under democracy which treats them as ‘second class citizens’. Third – strongly related to the previous and beyond the realm of the state – the inhabitants identify the stigma from the rest of the city focusing upon them and ‘the system’ that wants to capture and annihilate them.

Inhabitants address several issues in relation to violence from below. First, they make reference to a certain ambience of turmoil and distress which characterises some moments in the neighbourhood: brawls after football matches on Sunday afternoons, street fights, aggressive panhandling mostly by street-based drug addicts, and especially in the last years,

pointless shootings in the middle of the day or night. Second, violence from below also means to them the systematic violence exerted by their own fellow neighbours. During dictatorship times this was expressed in the urban guerrilla fighting the political repression of the regime, which although resisting the state collaterally harmed their own people and at some point cannibalised the social and political movement. Today, violence from below means assaults, robberies and especially drug-related trade. It shows an instrumental dimension as a resource but at the same time becomes a sort of an identity and an expression of the inhabitants' plight.

However, the drug dealer character assumes in their eyes a position between above and below. On the one hand, the drug dealer is one of them, part of their biographies and background, somebody's brother, cousin or uncle. On the other hand, the drug dealer somehow also introjects the external violence from above into the neighbourhood. Contemporary violence in 'La Caro' breaks the old pattern of clear identification between external/above violence and that which is internal/below. The neoliberalisation of social relationships expressed again in the character of the drug dealer, and commodification of violence have allowed this. The old *choros* had also instrumentalised the social bond within the community but somehow the character of the drug dealer responds more to neoliberal market conditions taking this instrumentalisation to a further level. In parallel, the ways in which people cope with structural settings such as violence – and not only by being 'innovative' – is addressed in the following.

In addition, this innerburb, next to urban infrastructure, is somehow helpless to erase the stigma of a violent area despite all the self-help improvement and the public infrastructure built up in the last decade. Furthermore, this stigma had been used in an attempt to mix the borough in order to conduct a gentrification process within it. To be part of the old suburbs' ring places this neighbourhood on the symbolic periphery of the city. The symbolic periphery refers in this vein to the targeting of the area as a territory that can be transformed through the urban land market and spatial policies rather than a place in which a community is embedded. The spatial isolation of neighbourhoods from different social classes maintains the marginalisation of the turf and it does not provide better social integration despite being close to shopping centres.

I argue that in order to cope with both – violence and gentrification – people develop several strategies. In this vein, the structural predicament of the inner-city streets is not simply a deficit of goods but also a cultural dispute were the outcomes are not only rational. In the aftermath of more than fifty years of violence and stigma, some people in this community try to politically resist the exclusion and gentrification, some look for more individualistic approaches to be better off, and some use violence to defend themselves within this challenging context. One thing is for sure, it does not matter how hard they are beaten, they do not want to leave their neighbourhood. Social exclusion not only leads to innovation and retreatist responses, but also a fluid process of negotiations of identity, demands for inclusion, social fragmentation and finally a landscape of violence. In response to blocked opportunities – or violence from above – people put in place several strategies of which only one is violence from below – or deviant/innovative response. Despite violence from below being only one of the ways in which people cope with social exclusion, it finally sets an epithet of violence which it seems almost impossible to escape from. Regarding the role of the state, this implies a redefinition of state-society relations

that privileges market mediation in a neoliberal context. This means to the dwellers that they had been both deceived and forgotten due to the ways in which the state applies substandard public policies in the excluded inner-city. It also seems that residents did not mobilise to overcome shortcomings, but to retain what they had achieved over time. They have a new status in relation to the exclusionary neoliberal city, a space that makes them feel privileged of having something to fight for, but paradoxically turns them into vulnerable individuals, owners with property rights. The equation lowers land prices and the good location itself explains the density aim.

I discuss these issues in depth and in dialogue with the conceptual framework supporting this thesis throughout four sections: violence from above, violence from below, marginal neighbourhoods as homogeneous areas and fragmentation, neoliberal state and citizenship.

2. VIOLENCE FROM ABOVE

What this work suggests is that at the beginning of the present decade (i.e. from 2010), several deeply interrelated forms of violence are taking place in the Santiago de Chile inner-city area of 'La Caro'. In this neighbourhood violence is a complex phenomenon involving several layers. In order to reveal the meanings of violence it has been crucial to consider this neighbourhood in its historical context.

The first of these layers has been the spatial politics exerted on 'La Caro' which has carved out the 'bad name' of the neighbourhood. These spatial politics implied – and still maintain – a sense of 'value free' technocratic rational planning without a minimum idea of social bonds or power relations illustrated in the way in which 'La Caro' was planned and settled. They also considered an attributed perception of conscious political pursuit of segregation and isolation through absence or poor-standard public policies in the first years but also today.

These spatial politics continued during the 1970s and 1980s as part as one of the major trends of neoliberal restructuring: 'selectivity and focalization' of spending, 'privatization' of service provision, and 'decentralisation' of remaining state responsibilities (Taylor, 2003). Some councils were given responsibilities for social and civic services previously managed by the central state apparatus, such as primary health care and education. At the same time, some bigger boroughs were divided into smaller units to make the management easier, but without allowing local fees for these services (Bossert *et al.*, 2003). The bigger borough of La Cisterna was split into five smaller ones and 'La Caro' was spread over three of them. The dwellers read this differently than rationalisation and management strategies. For them it was a strategy of 'divide to conquer' the poorer population which was at that time the more politically combative.

A similar process happened in the 2000s when a new zoning plan was proposed to make the whole borough denser. This sought to change urban building standards such as height, street width and so on in order to allow more density within the borough without any specific project investment. In particular, the aim was to produce the normative conditions which would encourage real estate investment (Parraguez, 2012). However, this was read by the dwellers as an attempt to gentrify the area and expel them from it. This would have meant a great deal of change to the 'La Caro' landscape with raising new buildings instead

of the current self-build houses. But according to Pancho, an old dweller, the landscape was not the main worry for inhabitants.

When we said NO to the zoning plan we had a lot of stuff in consideration, technical aspects as well... the people had to go, for sure, poor people have to go all the time. On top of that, we got an insight into what really was going on. They want to take this territory because of its location between highways, I mean, it is a privileged space for somebody who works in Santiago and the people with power want to be here. It would be very easy to take these people out, that was their intention, we were seeing that...

As with every zoning plan, this too was seeking to change urban building standards such as height, street width and so on in order to allow more density within the borough, without any specific project investment. Particularly, the aim was to produce the normative conditions which encourage real estate investment (Parraguez, 2012). However, this was read by the dwellers as an attempt to gentrify the area and expel them from it. According to Allen (1984), from a top down position, the aim of gentrification is to produce sociocultural diversity among old inner-city neighbourhoods which could provide the best of dense city living. The urban ambience of diversity is a continual source of stimulation and renewal and a reminder of the cultural relativity of one's own style of life (Allen, 1984).

However, the question of whether social mixing – moving middle-income people into low-income inner-city neighbourhoods – is a positive thing still stands (Lees, 2008). The outcome of a gentrification process is almost always a replacing of one social group for another (Harvey, 1989). On the other hand, from 'La Caro' inhabitants' perspective this process was seen as part of the alienated 'plan' to kick them out of their place rather than to promote a beneficial social mixing. The young musician and graffiti artist Chico Mario speaks of this, all the while playing with his hands:

Chico Mario: Sometimes I fear 'La Caro' will disappear.

JC: Why?

Chico Mario: Fear of what they are building up next to us, on the other side of the highway, where the airport was once. That kind of shit, the urban construction, the buildings, I don't know, the reorganisation of the city. I'm deeply afraid of the kind of solution that the government could come up with to solve our plight, I don't know, the settlement could be eradicated, the people could be split up. I don't know, they would think of moving people out and isolating them, I don't know, send them to other towns. I'm afraid of the población dying, I wouldn't like that happening and I don't think people are willing either. But this is what I see and I'm afraid of.

For instance, in the Figure 4 a new building emerges as part of the first draft project on the corner of Central Avenue and Buenaventura Street, just a block away from where I was living. Nevertheless, although this is only a proposal, the plan would normatively allow its development.

As a result, once some neighbours got to know about this zoning plan they organised themselves appealing to the older ways of organisation during the dictatorship and before. They became organised in every street initially to be informed of the proposal and later on



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to take a decision regarding what to do. The final outcome was a grassroots organisation built up to defend their houses, which succeeded at the end of the process.

This was discussed a great deal with several inhabitants. When I asked Pancho how ‘they’ were going to kick the inhabitants out the neighbourhood if they were owners, he explained.

They can do it with money. Here we have drug dealers, drug consumers... the houses over in Central Avenue could be sold for 25.000.000 million pesos², but the others? They lost their value immediately. If you build high buildings over Central Avenue, everything else can be sold at 10.000, maybe 15.000 pounds and people buy it. There was a Machiavellian plan going on.

As I claimed before, this can be considered as an expression of alienation on the part of the dwellers, at least in part. It also seems that residents did not mobilise to overcome shortcomings, but to retain what they had achieved over time. They have a new status in relation to the exclusionary neoliberal city, a space that makes them feel privileged of having something to fight for, but paradoxically turns them into vulnerable individuals, owners with property rights. The equation lowers land prices and the good location itself explains the density aim (Lees, 2008). As Ramiro, one of the people involved in that process relates,

The zoning plan came down from the government, but it was already ‘cooked’, you know? And in this process some facts are been kept off the radar, facts that are very important for us, things that can be intangible, such as history, like affection, as tradition... Therefore, when they come down here with the plot that we will develop a new zoning plan to Lo Espejo , to be part of modernity, we realize that we do not fit in that modernity. I mean, the zoning plan has one purpose and one purpose only that is take the land from us, estate property that will have a huge surplus in twenty years, nothing more than that. That's the development plan from this government, that is, to take our housing, to keep our heritage, which is all that every family has, that is, the unique heritage that our families have. This is the one house that we have and this is where one is born, develops and dies. Therefore, all that is intangible, get it? And they shoved everything up their asses. Period.

Their identity as inhabitants of a poor urban settlement is firmly related to the place they dwell rather than any political parties or class. In this setting, the ‘urban growth machine’ (Molotch, 1976) and the Estate appear to them as the major threat to their living (Parraguez, 2012).

The desire for growth provides the key operative motivation toward consensus for members of politically mobilized local elites – including also, but not only, local government officers, local businessmen and land owners. Further, this growth imperative is the most important constraint upon available options for local initiatives in social and economic reform. It is thus that Molotch (1976) argues that the very essence of a locality is its operation as a growth machine. The means of achieving this growth, of setting off this chain of phenomena, constitute the central issue for those important people who claim care about their locality and who have the resources to make their caring felt as a political force. This is the general outline of the coalition that actively generates the community’s ‘we feeling’ (or perhaps more aptly, the ‘our feeling’) that comes to be an influence in the

² This is approximately 25,000 UK pounds.



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politics of a given locality. Moreover, it is worth noting that in the ability of the production of space – such as the territorial distribution of administrative–political and economic powers often reap material reward (Harvey, 1989). This is the Machiavellian plan outlined earlier by Pancho. The city is, for those who count, a growth machine. In the extreme, this organized effort to affect the outcome of growth distribution is the essence of local government as a dynamic political force (Molotch, 1976).

However, there has always been a subversive thread of resistance. Treated as romantic, or as somehow irrational because they are opposed to ‘growth’ and ‘progress’ this minority was long ignored. In ‘La Caro’, however, the base of the antigrowth movement has become much broader and has reached sufficient strength to achieve at least toeholds of political power. But, like all political movements which attempt to rely upon volunteer labour to supplant political powers institutionalized through a system of vested economic interest, antigrowth movements succeeded here because the volunteer reform movements had a realistic constituency with a tradition of broad-based activism, free from an entrenched machine (Molotch, 1976).

What inhabitants do not state – and probably real estate developers either – is the fact that ‘La Caro’ is one of the most economically distressed and drug – and crime – ridden pockets of Santiago. In parallel, urban conditions are substandard as a whole since throughout the years the borough of Lo Espejo has been considered one with the worst quality of life in the whole Metropolitan area and even the country (Orellana *et al.*, 2011). It is this condition plus its unique location within the inner-city that has rung the bells of a possible gentrification process in the near future.

Inhabitants from ‘La Caro’ do not rely on the state, the rule of the law had got thinner and they cannot count on services that ordinary citizens take for granted, including police response to a crisis, or a ‘fair’ trial. Many local people have limited faith in civil law: they do not trust it to serve and to protect them, but they know it will punish them – and not necessarily justly. The identity fragmentation fills this vacuum and enables members of the community to deal with infractions or violations of respect. The described labels give a sense of a shared understandings of the system of rules that emerge as people deal with the prospect of public violence in dangerous neighbourhoods (Anderson, 2002).

Additionally, the accounts raise the complexity of marginalisation and structural violence. On the one hand, many of the community resources are aimed at distinguishing themselves from the mainstream society, politically and socially. This is not only an excluded neighbourhood but also a community full of ideas, energy and creativity. But they are at the margins.

To be part of the old suburbs’ ring places ‘La Caro’ on the symbolic periphery of the city. The symbolic periphery refers in this vein to the targeting of the area as a territory that can be transformed through the urban land market and spatial policies rather than a place in which a community is embedded. The spatial isolation of neighbourhoods from different social classes maintains the marginalisation of the turf and it does not provide better social integration despite being close to shopping centres. However, this is not the only meaning of symbolic periphery and the position of ‘La Caro’ within the metropolitan hierarchy.



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The political exclusion and the bureaucratic co-optation of the social movements of 'La Caro' after the return to democracy in 1990 are bitterly interpreted by them as part of these spatial politics. The advent of democracy in Chile has corresponded with the demobilization of mass actors. According to Okhorn (1994), the imperatives of governance within an authoritarian framework made it difficult, if not impossible, for Left-wing political parties to accept the emergence of an autonomous popular social movement. In this context, popular mobilization becomes potentially threatening because it may engender a backlash by hardliners within the authoritarian regime. Political parties become agents for moderation and social control to ensure that the transition runs its course (Okhorn, 1994).

After all these years, democracy has made space for gradual changes in terms of the organisational features, but representation remains similar. Chilean society has on the whole been captured by individualism and entrepreneurialism, flexibility and the insecurity of a liberalised socio-economy. This has also introduced a new model of democracy based on an individualist concept of self and society (Arias & Goldstein, 2010). Moreover, social relations also remain skewed towards the interest of capital, particularly within the hegemonic bloc (Barton, 2004).

These processes reveal continuities and changes which portray much of the violence from above on 'La Caro'. On the one hand, the inhabitants perceive that the spatial politics exerted until today, express the weight of the system upon them and they do not feel this has changed much through time. In the early developmentalist rational planning, through the neoliberal policies of the 1980s and 1990s, and the sweetened so-called democracy of the 1990s that followed, the inhabitants read the different faces and stages of the same system trying to beat them up. Much of the mistrust of external agents and the different layers of the state administration reflect this very issue. On the other hand, these spatial politics have changed over time since they appeal to different logics of the state according to the specific time in which they were applied. For instance, the extreme rational planning of the 1960s did not accept the sort of participation that has modified the local urban plan in the 2000s.

A second layer of violence from above is related with state responses to law-breaking situations and social order. From the perspective of the inhabitants, the question has always been one of order/disorder according to whom? A few days after the 1973 coup d'état, military control was absolute and soon its force was felt within 'La Caro'. During the initial years, large-scale house dragnets continued police repression among the inhabitants. Alongside this systematic institutional practice, the armed forces exerted a more selective political one. Many leaders were arrested at this point and disappeared, extending the list of the detenidos-desaparecidos (Stern, 2006). The notion was that a state of warfare permeated the institutional thinking of the armed forces and because of this the inhabitants were regarded as enemies that had to be overcome (Nicholls, 2006).

This scenario reached a climax during the demonstrations and riots of the 1980s which invited brutal police repression, deaths, injuries, and arrests. In 1984 the levels of violence increased when police troops mounted a series of brutal sweeps through the shantytowns in general and not only in 'La Caro' (Collier & Sater, 2004). This violence from above applied by police and army forces was directed upon all inhabitants rather than political activists alone. It was also random and irrational and not only took place during protests or



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on selected targets. However, this proved to be also quite rational since it was aimed to provoke panic and fear against social mobilisations. The message was clear: don't leave home in any circumstance.

Following the process of continuity and drift, the discourses around policing are not entirely different today. For young people, the everyday presence of police is disturbing not only because of their past role in the dictatorship but due to their current behaviour on 'La Caro' streets. Many times, walking around the neighbourhood, I saw police frisking and beating people up with no obvious reason. This is consistent with a general trend towards a significant increase in the number of unnecessary violence complaints against the police in Chile during democracy (Fuentes, 2005). Furthermore, the police officers are accused by neighbours of being corrupt, having agreements with drug traffickers and treating differently the 'La Caro' residents from the rest of the citizens.

As Campesi (2010) has marked out in the cases of Mexico and Brazil, some old strategies designed to control political opponents during dictatorships and the dirty war period had been replaced with new strategies designed to exercise social-control from top down to the new social marginal groups living within economically deprived urban areas. This also addresses a change within the continuity of police repression, as was discussed earlier. These strategies are largely inspired by the US model of repressive government and the UK model of public order (Campesi, 2010). In addition, according to Wacquant, these public order approaches sometimes allow elected officials to shore up their deficit of political legitimacy by reasserting state authority to the public opinion, homologating the control of the delinquency with 'firm hand'-right wing discourses (Wacquant, 2008a).

A third layer of violence from above is related to stigma. The discourses of stigmatisation were built since the first years and since then 'La Caro' carved out its reputation as a violent place. The conditions in the working-class areas and segregated enclaves must be carefully analysed. Yet it remains that the experience of urban relegation has, at this level, changed in ways that make it distinctively more burdensome and alienating today. Many students from the neighbourhood were stigmatised in the formal education system. At schools they were labelled by their very classmates or teachers as 'thieves' or 'lazy'. Many of inhabitants also lost their jobs or could not find a new one because the very fact of living in 'La Caro'. In the aftermath, they adopted all sort of strategies to deal with this within the cultural pattern of conformity (Merton, 1938), such as 'hiding' their address when they hunted for jobs. The experience as a space of relegation was especially true at the texture of everyday social life in 'La Caro'. A blemish of place was thus superimposed on the already existing stigma traditionally associated with poverty. The lack of connectivity and urban services, the disconnection from the rest of the city and the harsh conditions that they faced in the first years was the evidence of this stigma.

This stigma was the aftermath of the analysed spatial politics alongside crime chronicles written in newspapers. This reached a climax in the 'Railway Killing'. The massacre occurred in 1964 had a national impact as was set out in chapter five. The discourses of denigration flourished from above, in the journalistic, political and bureaucratic fields. The newspaper and magazines of the time covered the story in full since it was loaded with political, social and criminal angles. In parallel, for the first time the mass media became interested in 'La Caro' and the structural conditions of exclusion were made public. This



incident also provided the mass media and public opinion a name to associate with thieves, since the delinquency in the shantytown was highly publicised and ended by carving out ‘La Caro’s bad name. Henceforth, the violence from above exerted by the state marked the social and cultural stigma of ‘La Caro’ within the city. At the same time this is an unavoidable background of the further violence in the shantytown and the stigma in place to this day.

Life in the neighbourhood is full of assumptions which are part of the common knowledge or street wisdom shared by most. Stigma as an omnipresent feature of everyday life is one of them. A more subtle way to go around this issue is the conspiracy theory involving the schemes of the wider society to ‘take care of’ or even to annihilate the neighbourhood’s community. The plan involves the idea of persecution of ‘La Caro’ inhabitants through the city since its creation. This includes: their allocation on the edge of Santiago to hide them from the rest of the world during the 1962 football World Cup; the labelling of a combative area of resistance during the dictatorship; the spreading of drugs in the 1990s by police officers to break down the resistance against the dictatorship; the practices of segregation, gentrification, urban policies and employment discrimination; the expansion of the ‘prison-industrial complex’;— and the lack of action to remedy substandard inner-city public services.

These descriptions equal the idea of a space of relegation forged by Wacquant (2007). He argues that these ‘penalised spaces’ are the spatial effect of neoliberal reforms in the context of advanced marginality. While they are permanent fixtures of the urban landscape, discourses of denigration are bred about them ‘from below’, in the ordinary interactions of daily life, as well as ‘from above’, in the political, bureaucratic and even scientific fields (Wacquant, 2007). Although, as it has been stated throughout this thesis, ‘La Caro’ as a space of relegation has proved to be a heterogeneous social landscape, which expands and enlarges Wacquant’s understanding of spaces of relegation.

3. VIOLENCE FROM BELOW

Alongside the violence from above, the inhabitants of ‘La Caro’ have experienced violence from below since the outset. There were several manifestations such as knife and street fights often related to alcohol consumption. After the Sunday football matches there were brawls between teams and their supporters which on more than one occasion resulted with somebody badly hurt or dead. From that time a gang known as ‘Los Tártaros’ somewhat shaped the identity of the dwellers and the way in which the rest of the city saw the shantytown. This violence from below helped to forge the stigma of place that the community retains, despite the fact that not all the inhabitants are thieves or thugs, let alone fighting in the streets all the time. As was covered in chapter five, if from outside the labelling was lain upon the area as a whole, the inhabitants bitterly distinguished the ‘worst places’ within ‘La Caro’. A fair question arises from this: is this because they actually believe it or because they merely reproduce the stigma of being ‘the worst place’ for somebody else? Following Caldeira (2000), this is a distinction that works on a daily basis in order to make sense of the experience and operates as a symbolic device which shapes everyday practice (Caldeira, 2000). As a coping mechanism, people detach from each other and reproduce the discourse of blame exerted upon them over others less resourced.



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In parallel, one of the cornerstone characteristics of this was the clear example of the innovative type of deviance: the *choro*. This was a type of thug, someone who lived from thieving but also a tough guy always ready for a fight, although demonstrating a certain gentlemanly notion of the ‘good thief’.

Violence from below was dormant during seventies due to the political conditions in the country. Nonetheless, during the 1980s some people fought back against the violence from the police. The political and social organization exerted a tight turf control across ‘La Caro’. For the sake of a common enemy, the grassroots and political organisations joined ranks alongside the *choros* and all sorts of deviant categories. In the aftermath, the counterattack of the urban guerrilla and the following social violence from below only cannibalised the social and political realms. First, the eruption of the FPMR³ allowed the violence to seep into the grassroots organizations’ political practices and thus they lost credibility and cohesion. Secondly, the violence from below matched ordinary crimes with political opposition. As a result, the more institutionalised opposition to the dictatorship increasingly distanced itself from the insurrection scenario advocated by radical participants and observers of the protests. The violence surrounding the mass protests had generated a climate of uncertainty and fear that only helped strengthen the military regime. The regime was afforded a certain legitimacy in attempting to restore ‘law and order’, even though the state security apparatus was responsible for the bulk of the violence, and at the same time it encouraged middle-class suspicions of excessive popular influence in the opposition (Oxhorn, 1994).

After the 1988 referendum and 1989 elections a democratic rule commenced in 1990. The inhabitants felt let down by top-down decisions and the ‘democratic trades’ (Salman, 1994). ‘La Caro’ inhabitants go further, stating that the left-wing government, through a very careful and conscious plot, moved them away from the core of decisions at the dawn of democratic rule. The more procedural democracy the political actors attempted to gain – and especially from working class areas, the more institutional weakness and lack of social cohesion the people obtained. Furthermore, the conflicts between social stakeholders had no proper expression – and still do not even today – on the political level and this is so because they are neither fully represented nor trust the institutions.

In parallel, a new expression of violence entered the scene in a sort of breaking point between the dictatorship era and the rising democracy. If the re-democratisation process ended in high levels of political persecution and repression, the violence from drug trafficking began. Inhabitants date the beginning of the 1990s as the moment in which drug gangs started taking control of community spaces (Ruiz 2012). In order to do their business the drug gangs controlled the turf where they could establish their base of operations, drugs and weapons storage, distribution throughout the city and finally into the micro-traffic within the neighbourhood (Ruiz 2012). Neither gangs nor turf control were unknown in the social landscape of the neighbourhood, and this means that until today, people choose to keep quiet rather than cause a neighbour problems with the law. This implicit pact between drug gangs and the neighbours is reinforced by a myriad of strategies to exert their control established in those areas already stigmatised as ‘the worse’ where the

³ Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, Communist Party’s armed force which fought against the dictatorship during 1980s.



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'silent pact' with the old *choros* has a long history. However, the drug gangs and their leaders have instrumentalised the community bonds and used them to their own benefit to run their business, in a hypercapitalist stage of social relationships (Colker, 2012).

This diversification of the old *choros* appears to be hand in hand with the neoliberal macro-processes occurring in the economy and social life, as was illustrated in chapter six. Subsequently, a sense of neoliberal governance (Lemke, 2001) permeated 'La Caro' and a new sense of entrepreneurship boosted by individualisation of the self prompted some of the old thieves to start more lucrative businesses with less concrete boundaries to the community. There is no such thing as a moral deviant kind, but only individuals who function in a market of possible profits and losses (Dilts, 2008). It is worth asking under which type Mertonian analysis would classify this behaviour. Is the neoliberal deviant entrepreneur accepting the societal aims and rejecting the means provided or rather is the entrepreneurship itself also a means to reach wealth since they are taking a rational, economic decision of profit expectation and risks of loss? Since it is no longer a moral decision but an economic one, it seems that the neoliberal cultural framework makes it more complex to take a stand as to what deviance actually is.

Alongside with the instrumental use of the 'silent pact' by the drug dealers, the drug-violence relationship allows for more random acts when disputes between gangs get out of control or drug-consumers are involved in shootings or aggressive panhandling to obtain drugs, which has been referred to as 'disorganised crime' (Beato Filho *et al.*, 2005). Hobbs (2013) also calls attention to the fact that violence also has a market-oriented trait since the context of illegal trader situations allows stakeholders to create, protect and maintain a slice of the market(Hobbs, 2013). This produces a deep sense of fear and lack of community control in 'La Caro' since the threat or display of violence does not assume any pattern. Anybody can be assaulted, injured, or killed and not necessary because they are in the business. This again plays a role in the process of continuity and change since the irrational trait of violence is relatively connected to the dictatorship time. What I mean by this is that continuity with the random violence exerted by police and armed forces can be observed. Therefore, among these uncertain scenarios, people generate several coping strategies to face it as has been analysed in chapter seven.

Nonetheless, in the process of continuity and change, the violence emanating from the very members of the community somehow breaks the distinction between violence from above and violence from below. The violence from drug trafficking cannibalises – as did the urban guerrilla violence – one of the scarce resources of the community; the notion of 'us' as people from the neighbourhood, resisting the system: the oppressive system that 'takes care of' them. This may also be related to the market-oriented entrepreneurship post-1990 which constructed a form of identity around violence not only for expressive purposes but also market-oriented skills. This identity around the obligation to respond to perceived threats to the self remains central in illegal market economies, according to Hobbs (2013). Although, at the same time, this form of social exchange that holds would-be perpetrators accountable by promising 'eye for an eye' payback for transgressions is in the core of everyday street interactions, as Anderson (1999) shows. In service to this ethic, displays of aggressiveness reinforce an individual's credible reputation for violence both as a street identity and to hold market positions. In the aftermath, the drug dealer character assumes in inhabitants' eyes a position between above and below. The drug dealer is one of them,

part of their biographies and background, somebody's brother, cousin or uncle yet bringing the external violence from above into the neighbourhood.

Second, the glocalisation of gang cultures in 'La Caro' has helped to blur the boundaries between 'us' and 'them', 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. What emerges in a globalisation of 'gang lifestyles' is that certain elements of a black 'street culture' formed in the specific context of American ghettos have become commodified and exported, where they have, to some degree, been adopted and adapted. The young people both observed and interviewed during the fieldwork have engaged with some violent discourses available in gangsta style and hip-hop music which at the same time made sense within the disorganised crime in which 'La Caro' was involved. One of the groups analysed adopted the hip-hop culture and some sort of variant of home-grown gangsta rap as many youth around the world did as a way of contested resistance identity. Nevertheless, the gangsta style also mixes quite well with drug-related gangs since the *flaite* attitude is not only instrumental behaviour but also compounded by expressive rewards (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). Hagedorn (2005) has argued that this is no longer a transient subculture of alienated youth as subcultural theorists claimed in the 1960s, but a permanent oppositional culture arising in the wake of the retreat of the state and the parallel strengthening of cultural identities (Hagedorn, 2005).

As an outcome, it does not matter if as a rapper somebody is part of a drug gang or not, all of them are associated with that sort of realm anyway. As a dweller in 'La Caro' you cannot possibly know in an anonymous street encounter if the youth in front of you is 'one of us' or a 'gang member' who serves their own private interests only. This finally blurs the distinctions between insider/outsider, the distinction of violence from above/below.

The more distinguishable violence from above, the spatial politics and the stigma forged over the last fifty years merges today with the violence exerted by the very neighbours through drug-related power relationships. In parallel, violence from below seems both expressive and rational (Levi *et al.*, 1997). Finally, it is not possible to set clear distinctions between violence from police or state apparatus and from a fellow neighbour since today they are deeply interrelated.

The starting point for considering violence and its relationships to social structure was the Mertonian approach to deviance. Despite all the functionalist and materialist critique of this (Katz, 1988), this argument remains relevant in late modernity. One of the problems of the inner-city streets might be that they are at the same time all too strongly included in culture and, yet, systematically excluded from its realisation (Young, 2003). In addition, some violence and crime may now mirror the ironies of late modern cultural negotiation and representation as well as less rational responses to specific forms of fragmentation. The adrenaline involved in committing a deviant act, the pleasure and the fear of all involved redraws the ways in which violence and crime are understood and researched. In particular, the instrumental pay off of crime and violence – such as in drug-related gangs now runs alongside the cultural gain and its expressive traits (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). In conjunction with this, scholars show that in cities around the world, violence strikes strongly in the more disadvantaged districts (Bottoms, 2007; Hayward, 2004). Rather than being disseminated throughout working-class areas, violence in late modernity tends to concentrate in isolated and bounded territories increasingly perceived by both outsiders and insiders as social

purgatories, leprous badlands at the heart of the post-industrial metropolis where only the refuse of society would accept to dwell (Bourgois, 2003).

What the ‘La Caro’ case study reveals is that violence is a complex phenomenon which involves several layers. These apparently unconnected realms interact with each other on the local level (neighbourhood) and produce a landscape of violence leading to uncertainty and fragmentation. However, it is still in question why some areas are more prone to develop this scenario and why some individuals engage in violence and deviant acts while others choose differently. Merton did not provide the answer and I was not looking for it in this thesis. Although, the issue of how to deal with structural settings is developed in the next section.

4. MARGINAL NEIGHBOURHOODS AS ‘HOMOGENEOUS AREAS’?

One of the main issues discussed in this thesis has been the processes of inclusion and exclusion through violence and the new geographies of peripheries as a consequence of new regimes of marginality and neoliberal reforms. In terms of addressing both structure and agency, what this analysis enlightens is that the cultural and social composition of ‘La Caro’ is much more complex than the stigma placed upon its inhabitants would like to recognise. People live everyday life using a range of strategies to resolve misrecognition and build up a reality far more complex than the stereotyped ghettos in inner-city Santiago. However, violence upon and between inhabitants fragments the community and places it on the symbolic periphery rather than the physical edge it once occupied in the city.

This analysis is framed within the dynamics of class, violence and social control in the context of the fluidity of late capitalism (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). Scholars such as Young (2007) argue that the invisible social forces crystallized in the image of ‘turbo-charged capitalism’ generate an underclass of the economically redundant and high-crime rates in some specific areas of major cities which allow violence strike strongly in the more disadvantaged districts (Young, 2007). At the same time, iconographic neoliberal modernisation has been developed in Chile since the late 1970s transforming not only state–market relations but also the cultural attitude to entrepreneurship as was analysed in chapter six. As a result, the Santiago de Chile inner-city shelters both modern key nodes receiving massive investments and low-income city areas lying under the shadow of violence and stigma. As argue throughout this work, the inner-city becomes a node in a grid of cross-boundary processes where a negotiated form of capitalist regulation may be forged (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Sassen, 2000).

In this vein, Merton (1938) argued that crime was an alternative route to the realisation of the American Dream and that criminal behaviour was an ‘adaptation’ to social inequalities as normal as going out to work. The rich subcultural tradition that followed Merton represented today by Wilson (1991) and Wacquant (2008), carries forward this analysis dynamically presenting that there is a specific set of behaviours, expectations, and outcomes among people living in seemingly identical structural conditions. One argument is that an isolated social context such as ghettos in US inner-cities not only gives rise to weak labour-force attachment, but increases the probability that individuals will be constrained and be forced to seek income derived from illegal or deviant activities (Wilson,

1991). Furthermore, Wacquant argues that American ghettos are compulsory spaces where dwellers become a homogeneous group unable to leave the area; neighbourhoods, in which economic exclusion, territorial stigmas, and the drug economy are combined, generating a vicious cycle of violence; and spaces in which the state is present only through repressive policies, abandoning any protective or service-providing role. In these neighbourhoods, the dwellers become a homogeneous group that differs in their values and behaviours from the rest of society (Wacquant, 2008).

My findings suggest a conflicting approach to this. I have argued that violence – in its different levels and expressions – has led inner-city communities to cope with violence in different ways – and not only by seeking income in illegal or deviant activities. People continuously redefine their socio-cultural context and rearticulate their subjectivities. I have argued further that some of them seek more individualistic approaches to become better-off – or what has been identified as ‘moyeneised poverty’, some of them try to culturally counterattack the experience of exclusion and violence – which has been called a strategy of resistance, and some use violence to defend themselves within this tough context – which has been called the *flaite* attitude. These findings contradict the image of a cultural monolithic inner-city ghetto in Santiago de Chile, but also dispute the notion of criminals as the only everyday resistance to capitalism (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). At the same time, this also recognises the variations in behaviour, decision-making and outcomes among people living in seemingly identical structural conditions (Small *et al.*, 2010).

For people outside the neighbourhood, the inhabitants of ‘La Caro’ are all the same and as was stated in many interviews, inhabitants of ‘La Caro’ perceive this as well. However, the ‘moyeneised poverty’ attitude coexists in the same stigmatised area with strategies of resistance and alienation in a combination that is forgotten under the influence of the ghost of violence and stigma. Following Young (2003), this diversity of social landscapes presents evidence for a world of globalization, not separation; of blurring, not strict lines of demarcation; it is culturally a world of hybrids, not of pedigrees; of minor, not major differences. Young argues that the border between exclusion and integration is not as clear as some studies would like to show. Rather there are continuities, such as families and groups moving from exclusion to integration and vice versa (Young, 1999). Small (2007) adds to this that since there are differences between neighbourhoods in terms of access to resources, transportation, gang penetration, police presence, and other conditions, it is very difficult to consider all such neighbourhoods as homogeneous ‘ghettos.’

The cultural and social composition of ‘La Caro’ is much more complex than a ‘homogeneous ghetto’ since the precarious position of the excluded – but also many of those considered as ‘included’ in late modern society – in turn breeds anger, vindictiveness and a taste for exclusion. I have analysed the settlement as part of the innerburbs trend (Ward, 2012), which combines the worst of being an old, poor suburb woven into today’s urban fabric. At the same time its inhabitants are under the structural dilemma familiar in inner-city poor areas (Young, 2003). They are culturally included in the pursuit of upward social mobility but at the same time are blocked through social and economic exclusion as Merton (1938) argued in the past. This combination of the acceptance followed by rejection generates, according to Young (2003), a dynamic of resentment of great intensity which leads to a state of humiliation. In this vein, *flaite* strategy it is not driven by some simple desire to redistribute property alone, but to obtain respect and dignity (Bourgois,



2003). At the same time these *flaite* resorts to violence and the rampant unavoidable dosage of neoliberalism carve out the very peripheral position within the symbolic structure of Santiago de Chile. The symbolic periphery refers to the stigma of being a violent and dangerous community, a ‘no-go area’ crowded with delinquents. This symbolic position is fully fuelled by the *flaite* attitude, despite this being quite a diverse area.

There is also a specific argument in the general Latin American context that I argue against. Latin American cities have a distinctive spatial structure in comparison to US cities. Since the 1950s, a growing population placed upward pressure on land and housing markets, compelling the working classes to create their own housing solutions on the periphery of the cities. Along with this, elites and middle classes also abandoned the inner-city, relocating to increasingly remote suburban areas away from those occupied by the poor (Portes & Roberts, 2005). Alongside this the common trend has been the persistence of, or rise in, levels of inequality. Perhaps unsurprisingly in view of the widely noted relationship between crime and inequality (Fajnzylber *et al.*, 2002), Latin American cities have generally experienced a sustained rise in violence and insecurity since the 1980s and beyond (Moser & McIlwaine, 2006) and this increasing insecurity in urban life has generated a new urban exclusion (Rodgers *et al.*, 2011).

However, for lower-class communities living in the inner-city slums can bring beneficial gains due to the ‘market opportunities’ of living close to where the jobs are and have attained larger, better serviced housing from the state. This further implies a high degree of informal social organisation and resistance to fight back against dominant class and state interests (Eckstein, 1990). Furthermore, those communities in areas closer to wealthy or middle class residents might attract local opportunities which may change the daily life and social plight of the poorest neighbours (Sabatini *et al.*, 2009). This can result in a vibrant inner-settlement in Latin American cities representing the extreme of slum vibrancy and community resilience, which leads to identifying them as ‘slums of hope’ in contrast to ‘squatter-settlements of despair’ on the outskirts (Eckstein, 1990).

The case I describe suggests a fragmented community which copes with violence in several ways and meets despair and hope halfway. This thesis has stated that ‘La Caro’ is neither a hopeless ‘purgatory space’ nor an inner-city area full of opportunities. What these strategies reveal is a sort of struggle between antagonistic trends. On the one hand, there is a heavy degree of individualism pushing them to individualistic efforts combined with a strong sense of community that drives them towards collective action. This tension between individualism and collective action appears to be a core issue when attempting to understand the ways in which people face everyday violence. This tension further appears to be the consequence of replacing the strong family and community ties with a culture of individualism and lack of community control over territory. In the aftermath everyday life is privatised, and individualistic symbols of status and differentiation, such as clothing, cars and so on, grow in importance.

Furthermore, the apparent homogeneity in the landscape of the neighbourhood assigned by external forces and by the inhabitants’ own sense of stigma is unmasked once the coping strategies are revealed. What the stories of the inhabitants show is that they are part of a heterogeneous, fragmented, globalised culture sharing in common some values, such as being *choro* – although, they are also different yet living in the same place. Young people

– especially those developing a *flaite* attitude – build up a private public space closed to foreigners whereas other young people perform resistant strategies trying to negotiate their cultural integration. On the margins of this dispute, the efforts people undertake in everyday life are more connected and integrated with the city beyond rather than their own community.

Everybody suffers the disadvantages of the neighbourhood – what Bourgois (2003) calls the tone for public life set by violence and stigma. In the aftermath, the *flaite* attitude spreads as the only cultural trait of the inhabitants and therefore stigma and stereotypes apply to the whole community. At the same time, stereotypes are applied to poor urban minorities providing a key to a discourse that recurrently targets the most recent newcomers and the most vulnerable populations in the city. Labels applying both to people and places clarify the grid through which we read society (Body-Gendrot, 2001). It is this false homogeneity – among other things – that build up prejudices and stigma.

Following Saraví (2004), the landscape of violence set especially by *flaites* ceases to be a coping strategy for violence and becomes a powerful factor of exclusion for the community as a whole (Saraví, 2004). However, people cope with this hard structural setting in different ways and to some extent, through these diverse coping-strategies, new symbolic and fragmented peripheries are shaped not only at the edge as in the past but in the inner-city where pockets of heterogeneous, stigmatised, excluded communities deal with violence and exclusion. These findings redraw the way the spatial politics and social settings of Latin American excluded settlements at the edge of the city are usually understood (Rodgers *et al.*, 2011). What this thesis brings to the fore is a node full of meanings; the coping-strategies are a new layer in the construction of a symbolic periphery as stated earlier.

Nevertheless, while heterogeneity stresses the decision-making ability of some people in the community, it also pervades the dream of integration pursued by some of them. This situates ‘La Caro’ in the symbolic periphery of Santiago just as it was on the edge when it was built. The idea of a symbolic periphery also refers to the foggy umbrella of alienation which has been pointed out alongside the history of ‘La Caro’ and which continues until this day. Finally, this sense of exclusion and marginalisation is connected in inhabitants’ discourse with violence. The violence and stigma reinforce the marginalisation of the turf and place it in the symbolic periphery of Santiago.

Nonetheless, this opens more questions than it provides answers. Is this symbolic periphery a new trait of structural poverty in Latin American countries? Or alternatively could diversity work as leverage – a bridge – in which ‘effort people’ and the ‘moyeneised poverty’ attitude become an asset to this community for a brighter future?

5. FRAGMENTATION, NEOLIBERAL STATE AND CITIZENSHIP.

Once the impacts of violence upon excluded communities are assessed it is worth asking how all of this reshapes citizenship. The political exclusion of ‘La Caro’ inhabitants after the return to democracy in 1990 is interpreted by them as violence from above which the dwellers bitterly address. The advent of democracy in Chile has corresponded with the demobilization of mass actors as was shown in chapter five. According to Oxforn (1994), the imperatives of governance within an authoritarian framework made it difficult if not



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impossible for the left-wing political parties to accept the emergence of an autonomous popular social movement. After 1990, political activity has been focused on establishing the electoral rules of the game and the electoral process itself rather than to promote 'substantive democracy'. In this context, popular mobilization becomes potentially threatening because it may engender a backlash by hardliners within the authoritarian regime. Political parties become agents for moderation and social control to ensure that the transition runs its course (Oxhorn, 1994).

After all, these years of democracy have given space to gradual changes in terms of the organisational features but representation remains similar. Chilean society has on the whole been captured by the individualism and entrepreneurialism, flexibility and insecurity of a liberalised socio-economy. This also introduced a new model of democracy based on an individualist concept of self and society (Arias & Goldstein, 2010). Moreover, social relations also remain skewed towards the interest of capital, particularly within the hegemonic bloc (Barton, 2004).

However, the coping strategy of citizenship as resistance breaks the pattern of the poor urban outcast without chances and trapped by the system described by Wacquant (2008). Despite the overwhelming structural political conditions some grassroots organisations within 'La Caro' become a sort of 'retreatist' type of deviant – according to Mertonian analysis – defying the structural setting by proposing unconventional aims that run in direct opposition to capitalist neoliberal Chile's goals. At the same time this strategy follows a different path from the older closed grassroots organisations in the post-authoritarian Chile ruled by original members of the community, described by Salcedo and Rasse (2012). My analysis shows that the young people organise themselves and build up grassroots organisation from below – despite the violence and the stigma – and forge a form of local citizenship that engages inhabitants in the management of their own affairs and that make them participate whenever needed (Holston, 2008). A clear example of this has been the antigrowth movement in 2005 opposing gentrification' in La Caro'. This become much broader and has reached sufficient strength to achieve at least toeholds of political power through heavy modification of urban planning.

Nonetheless, in the end political mobilisation is still episodic and it gets really hard for a local-based movement to move from opposition tactics to proposition. Therefore, it makes more sense to understand the realm of local political participation as non-continuous mobilisation that is institutionalised (Holston, 2008). This means that rather than a political movement in the old sense, some grassroots organisations negotiate their collective identity in cultural, social and political forms. According to Lamont and Bail (2007), those who are most frequently confronted with discrimination and stereotypes are more likely to have developed a wider range of strategies to face the daily indignity of misrecognition. This is analysed as 'equalization strategies' used by members of stigmatized groups to establish equivalence with their counterparts in dominant majority groups (Lamont & Bail, 2007).

What the revision of other developing countries' cities show is that one of the impacts of violence is the co-optation of the society from the state. In this framework, the return to democracy in the cases of South Africa and Brazil, along with the deepening of exclusion led by structural neoliberal reforms, has triggered violence. Furthermore, the operations of

criminal gangs in some districts such as Cape Flats and City of God, are central to any understanding of democracy (Arias, 2006; Jensen, 2010). In ‘La Caro’, if the re-democratisation process ended most of the political persecution and repression, the violence from the drug trafficking started. At the same time, ‘La Caro’ inhabitants state that the left-wing government, through a very careful and conscious plot, moved them away from the core of decisions at the dawn of democratic rule.

In this vein, from the point of view of the neighbours the primary source of violence is actually the state. The state exerts structural and institutional violence in public policies, urban planning and political betrayal analysed in chapters five and six. On top of this, the more distinguishable violence from above mixes today with the social and economic violence exerted for the very neighbours through drug-related power relationships. Nonetheless, violence seems also quite irrational, random and thus expressive when nobody can know in advance who will be the next victim. In this context, the democratic system has not been able to fulfil its promises of participation and inclusion – both social and political, precisely because of the inequalities and violence. Furthermore, Arias and Goldsmith point out that contemporary violence in Latin America is the logical outcome of neoliberal democracy’s unfolding rather than a simple result of institutional failure (Arias & Goldstein, 2010).

A second process which has been indicated by scholars is the fragmentation of the cities and the absence of the state from the poorest and more excluded districts (Caldeira, 2000; Jensen, 2010). It is clear that violence has a significantly fracturing effect on society. It impedes the state’s ability to deepen and consolidate democracy, and undermines its legitimacy in the face of its perceived incapacity to respond effectively to violence. Other scholars argue that violence also undermines the development of shared spaces of social citizenship, as citizens retreat in the face of violence to increasingly parochial forms of social organisation (Barolsky and Pillay, 2009).

What this paper illustrates is that the outcome scenario is more complex than the former. On the one hand, the state has becoming less important as an economic, political and cultural ‘power container’ because the pressure of global trends to transfer the economic and social policy-making functions upwards, downwards and sideways (Jessop, 2004). The re-escalating of the nation-state has implied progressively more non-state mechanisms in shaping economic and social policies. In the context of neoliberal rule this means – alongside monetarist approaches to inflation control and a broader package of policies that facilitate economic orientation along the lines of international comparative advantage – a redefinition of state-society relations that privileges market mediation (Kurtz, 1999). For example, the focus has shifted from government towards governance, giving a more highlighted role to soft regulations in economic and social policies (Jessop, 2004). Although, a critical view argues that this trend moves in one direction only: the progressive shrinking the welfare state and the increase of inequality and marginalisation (Wacquant, 1999).

On the other hand, the findings show that rather than an absence of the state or forging of a ‘lawless zone’, the inhabitants feel that they had been forgotten due to the ways in which the state applies its public policies. In the aftermath, one of the services that stands out for their low quality on the perception of the people, are those associated with the actions of

the police and justice. Because of the lack of resources and the need to prioritise the response to complaints and calls, neighbours point to a lack of police presence and patrolling, as well as leakage to the drug-related gangs. Added to this, the police's everyday presence is disturbing – especially for young people. This is not only because of their past role in the dictatorship but also due to their current behaviour on 'La Caro' streets.

Substandard public policies are not applied to policing only; it is not a matter of lack of schools or health centres, it is the careless and bad quality outcomes which are regretted. The inequalities are palpable every day precisely because of the poor standard of public policies. They go further and accuse 'the system' of been involved in this careless way to hold them back and to maintain the leash around lower classes. This means that the only face which the state shows in excluding communities is the control system in all its brutality. In addition, the several coping strategies analysed to deal with violence from above but also violence from below fragment the common idea of 'us' within the neighbourhood. The problem is that the consequences of fragmentation and privatization are deep due to the walls once they are built, they alter public life in an antidemocratic way (Caldeira, 2000). Consequently, rather than creating 'parallel states' far away from the rule of law, these communities and spaces form a formal-informal sequence in the social fabric (Arias, 2006).

It is still in question to what extent these bottom up grassroots organisations will reconfigure the local political scenario in this area or to what extend some more active and participative social movements will reconfigure citizenship at the national level. This is particularly interesting within the ongoing social and political debate of urgent transformations in 'the neoliberal model' in which Chilean society has been operating over the past forty years. To what extent do the varied expressions of violence have a role to play in these processes? How will these local scale organisations coordinate their activities with the larger student movement, applying pressure for structural changes?

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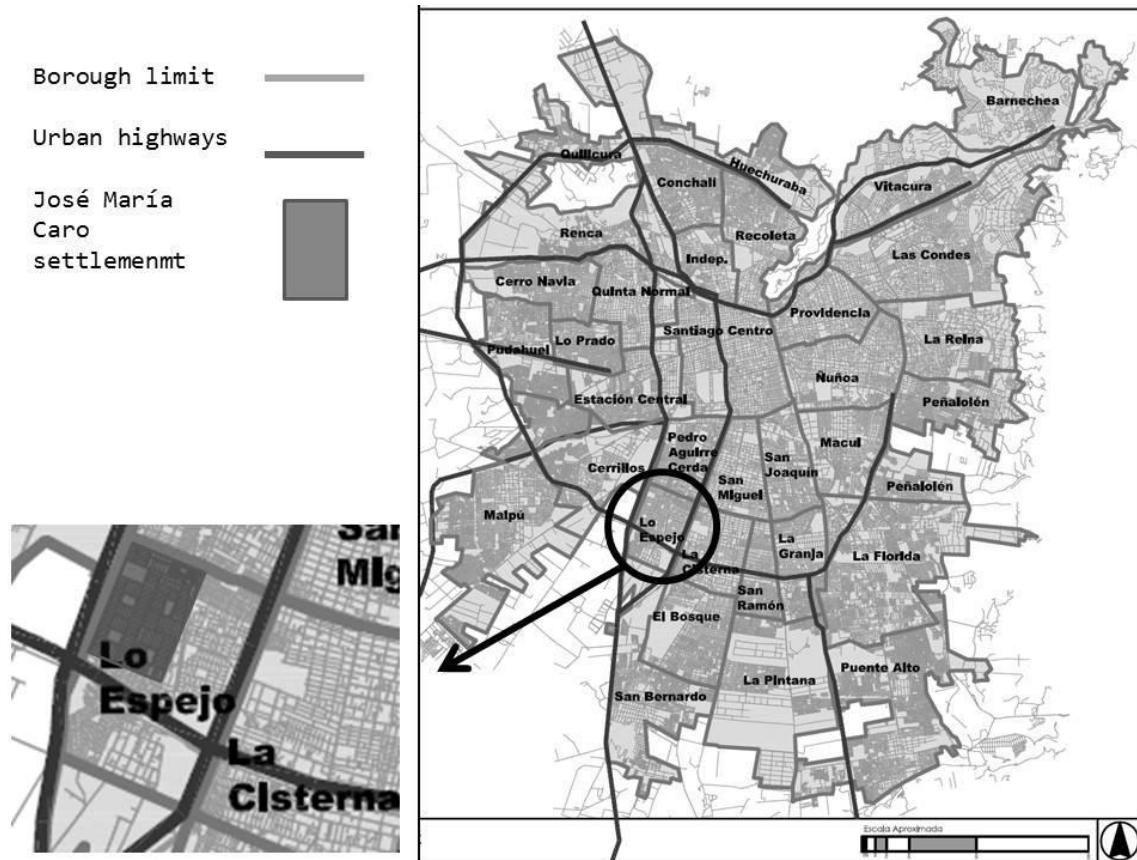
7. FIGURES

[Figure 1: Location of Jose Maria Caro settlement in Santiago, 1959.](#)



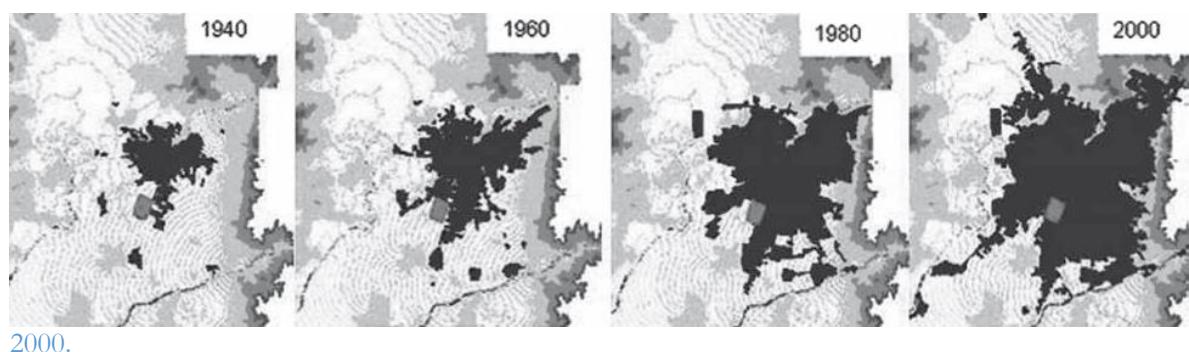
Source: (Godoy & Guzmán, 1964)

Figure 2: Location of José María Caro settlement. 2012.



Source: (Ruiz 2012)

Figure 3: Lo Espejo Borough location in relation with Santiago de Chile urban growth. 1940 –



Source: Parraguez, 2012.

Figure 4: Photomontage first draft project zoning plan.



Source: Parraguez, 2012.