



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Urban landscapes of territoriality and ethnic violence

The spread and recurrence of deadly riots in Jos, Nigeria

Madueke, K.L.

Publication date

2018

Document Version

Other version

License

Other

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Madueke, K. L. (2018). *Urban landscapes of territoriality and ethnic violence: The spread and recurrence of deadly riots in Jos, Nigeria*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, P.O. Box 19185, 1000 GD Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Introduction

A series of large-scale Christian-Muslim clashes ravaged the central Nigerian city of Jos, killing over 5,000 people between 2001 and 2010. Scholars have to a significant extent already analysed the underlying causes of ethnic conflict and violence in Jos (see Best, 2001, 2007; Danfulani and Fwatshak, 2002; Higazi, 2007, 11; Ostien, 2009; Krause, 2011). More recently, however, an emergent strand of Jos-centred literature has begun unravelling the factors that shaped the spatial spread of violence across the neighbourhoods of the city (Scacco, 2012, 2014; Bunte and Vinson, 2016; Nyam and Ayuba, 2016; Krause, 2017). This growing interest in the spatial dimension of violence follows research traditions in other violent cities around the world (see Calame and Charlesworth, 2011; Jarman and O'Halloran, 2001; Varshney, 2001; Wilkinson, 2006; Kaufmann, 1996; Berenschot, 2011). Scholars in this subfield generally emphasise ethnic composition as one of the preeminent factors to affect a locality's vulnerability to incidents of violence (Weidmann and Salehyan, 2013). Views, however, differ on how the two variables are interrelated. One set of experts argues that ethnic segregation promotes violence by fostering in-group solidarity, out-group resentment and reducing the costs of intragroup communication and mobilisation for violence (Boal 1972; Cunningham & Gregor 2014). A second perspective contradicts this and submits that ethnically mixed localities are more prone to violence because contact between members of rival groups can engender competition, friction and, often, violent confrontation (Kaufmann, 1996). Empirical evidence has been conflicting, supporting the first position in some instances and the second in others (see Weidmann and Salehyan, 2013). Moreover, Jos' neighbourhoods – some of which are segregated and some of which are mixed –

reveal levels and patterns of violence for which existing models do not provide adequate answers. Contrary to these views' rather determinist stance, official records show that ethnically segregated and mixed neighbourhoods in Jos have both had their share of violence. The takeaway, thus, is that ethnic composition, alone, is not enough to explain violence and non-violence.¹¹⁹ Another source of bafflement, moreover, is that while some mixed neighbourhoods have become battlegrounds for recurrent violence, other areas characterised by similar ethnic diversity have stayed non-violent (see Krause, 2017).

This dissertation began with observations about the lack of clarity and consensus on how ethnic composition and violence interrelate. It then went on to trace that ambivalence to three oversights in the literature, namely: 1) a focus on a neighbourhood's ethnic composition while not paying adequate attention to its location and the ethnic composition of adjoining areas; 2) a disregard for the shared boundaries of neighbourhoods and the roads, alleys and other demarcations that separate or link them; and 3) a neglect of the mobile nature of armed mobs, which causes a conflation of their origins with the destinations of their violent events. In an effort to fill in these gaps, the following overarching question guided this study: how does a neighbourhood's ethnic composition in combination with its location shape the spread, patterns and recurrence of ethnic violence within and across different neighbourhood settings in Jos? This was broken down into the following sub-questions: what is the interrelation between neighbourhood ethnic composition and location and violence's spread and patterns? How does a neighbourhood's ethnic composition in combination with its location affect violence's spread and recurrence? How does a neighbourhood's ethnic composition in combination with its location affect mobilisation and mobility of armed mobs within and across neighbourhood boundaries? In addressing these questions, the dissertation argued that the ethnic composition of a neighbourhood is not enough to explain its vulnerability to violence; rather, the neighbourhood's location and adjacency to surrounding areas of similar or dissimilar ethnic composition and their shared boundaries also affect its susceptibility to violence.

¹¹⁹ For official accounts of the different incidents of violence, see Human Rights Watch (2001, 2009) and International Crisis Group (2012).

This conclusion chapter highlights the dissertation's key findings, academic and practical implications, limitations and possible directions for further enquiry.

Key findings

Various crucial findings emerged from the study. Following chapter 1's introduction, chapter 2 revealed how territoriality in particular Jos neighbourhoods is rooted in the social and political history of the city. It uncovered how the colonial administration's segregationist urban policy helped construct competing ethnic categories that became attached to certain parts of the city. Apart from creating rival social categories and engendering territoriality, spatially separating groups on the basis of ethnic differentiation by the colonialists necessitated the creation of chieftaincies and administrative systems that were conflictive. The chapter expounded on how contestations over city ownership played out within neighbourhoods and how rival groups selectively appropriated aspects of Jos' spatial history to bolster their own ownership claims. Finally, it demonstrated the role of ethnic and neighbourhood networks in forging solidarity and mobilising for active conflict, especially in segregated areas.

Building on chapter 2's observations of the premises of ethnic competition, divisions and territoriality, chapter 3 showed how the neighbourhoods of Jos are all fragments of a single sociospatial mosaic, with shared boundaries and multifarious crisscrossing social networks. This approach departs from the, by now, traditional conception of neighbourhoods as spatial islands. The chapter examined two distinct neighbourhood settings in order to explain group dynamics and violence's spread and patterns: namely, strongholds and frontiers. The stronghold is an ethnically segregated locality that shares boundaries with other similarly segregated settlements or is set apart by main roads or other physical barriers. However, it also shares a portion of its boundaries with an ethnically mixed area. The stronghold is comparable to what Doherty and Poole (1997: 522) described as 'ethnic heartlands' in Belfast's contested landscape. The frontier is an ethnically mixed area that is located between rivalling segregated settlements and is also characterised by crosscutting social ties and spatial practices. Group dynamics also help differentiate strongholds and frontiers. The stronghold is characterised by

social networks that rank high on ethnic solidarity and capacity for collective action. The frontier is characterised by groups that are divided along ethnic lines and exhibit less capacity for collective action.

This chapter also traced the processes underpinning the emergence and development of strongholds and frontiers. It focused on how political developments and events at higher spatial and administrative scales (national, state and city) affected ethnic composition and social networks within and across neighbourhoods. It observed that the fall in oil revenue and the SAP of the 1980s shocked the Nigerian economy, leading to scarcity of resources, greater group competition and a surge in ethnic mobilisation. It was then that neighbourhood associations in Jos started undergoing processes of ethnicisation. Further, the chapter detailed how 1994's low-level violence elsewhere in the city contributed to polarising group relations between Christians and Muslims in Angwan Rogo. Against this background, it described how the political appointment of a Hausa man as coordinator of a federal agency increased cohesiveness and solidarity in the ethnically segregated neighbourhood of Angwan Rogo but polarised groups in mixed Ali Kazaure. Furthermore, apart from intensifying internal rivalries, these events encouraged rival groups in the adjoining segregated areas to invade and dominate Ali Kazaure. These observations revealed how struggles to expand territorial and political dominance usually reach a crescendo during campaigns and elections.

Chapter 4 showed how a neighbourhood's ethnic composition in combination with its location affects its vulnerability to violence. The location of ethnically mixed Ali Kazaure between Christian Apata and Muslim Angwan Rogo made it an opportune battleground, experiencing more incidents of violence than other ethnically mixed areas that are not similarly located. A close examination of group dynamics within the neighbourhood revealed that the area was particularly vulnerable to violence because, apart from being fraught with internal rivalries, it was consistently pressurised by struggles between rivalling ethno-political networks in the adjoining segregated areas. Each of the rival groups in the adjoining areas was bent on extending the frontiers of its political and territorial dominance. This fierce competition was displayed during elections. Ali Kazaure was considered a

'no man's land' and a prize to be taken by the stronger. Some of the polling units there proved to be the most contested during elections. The ethno-political networks contained criminals and gangs, who formed part of the armed mobs. These networks are analogous to Brass' (2004) 'riot systems' in Meerut and Berenschot's (2011) 'patronage networks' in Ahmedabad; both scholars saw riots as opportunities for conquering territory through killing and displacing the rival group.

Building on this, chapter 5 demonstrated that armed mobs are likelier to originate in strongholds, though ethnically mixed areas, especially when sandwiched between rivalling segregated areas, are more susceptible to violence. The ethnic concentration in the stronghold of Angwan Rogo translated to both cognitive and spatial proximity, which facilitated communication and movement, so residents and potential fighters could find their way to a congregation point in times of riots. In all the incidents of violence, residents of strongholds (Angwan Rogo and Angwan Rukuba) easily navigated from their homes to the main streets of these neighbourhoods; there they could meet other residents, get information about the security situation and, for some, physically participate in response. Even though most of the residents did not participate in the riots, it was from these crowds that armed mobs emerged, usually led and coordinated by a handful of local criminals and political activists. This is unlike what occurred in the ethnically mixed parts of Nasarawa Gwong and Ali Kazaure, where Christian and Muslim residences were interspersed. Residents could not move far from their homes for fear of encountering a rival just down the street or at the next turn. Moreover, physical barricades were mounted on streets and sections of these areas to prevent passage. This made movements difficult, so rather than a unified force, there were only small bands of armed men, who mostly stayed in their immediate vicinity. Apart from being unable to attack, the frontiers were thus, unlike the strongholds, unable to build lay armies formidable enough to thwart incursions.

As chapter 4 had noted, the frontier neighbourhood of Ali Kazaure experienced some form of violence in all three major episodes analysed within the study period. This indicates a high susceptibility to violence, notably when compared to most other areas that experienced only one or two incidents. A close

examination of group dynamics in the neighbourhood explained why this was so. Apart from being fraught with internal rivalries, Ali Kazaure was under pressure from struggles between rivalling ethno-political networks in the adjoining segregated neighbourhoods of Angwan Rogo and Apata, and they were bent on extending the frontiers of their political and territorial dominance farther into the area.

Chapter 5 additionally showed how the peace-maintenance efforts of joint patrols comprising Christians and Muslims were put to test in the frontier when riots erupted. Highlighting the importance of location, it found that such joint patrols were less likely to be effective in ethnically mixed areas sandwiched between segregated ones due to the infiltration pressures coming from two ends. Though the civilian violence prevention networks in Ali Kazaure and parts of Nasarawa Gwong initially succeeded in maintaining order, they eventually collapsed as violence escalated and pressure by external forces mounted. Conversely, civilian joint patrols proved more effective in ethnically mixed areas not located between rivalling segregated ones, such as Farin Gada and Mister Ali areas.

Further, the chapter uncovered some roots of the ambivalence surrounding the interrelation between ethnic composition and the spread of collective violence. For one, it is the tendency to overlook the mobile nature of armed mobs, thereby conflating their origins with the destinations of their violent events. Tracing the footsteps of armed mobs from the points at which they mobilised, along the routes they marched to the sites of past confrontations revealed that their origins and destinations were often quite some distance apart. Parts of the armed mobs who perpetrated violence in Ali Kazaure had their origins outside the neighbourhood, in the strongholds of Angwan Rogo and Apata. This confirmed one of the fundamental propositions of the dissertation: that location and adjacency influence whether a neighbourhood is vulnerable to violence. Another important revelation that came from tracing these footsteps was armed mobs' penchant for narrow and unpaved back routes that are inaccessible to security forces. Fighters marching from Angwan Rogo to Ali Kazaure used very narrow alleys that were impossible for military or police vehicles to track. Similarly, fighters from the stronghold of Angwan Rukuba heading into Nasarawa Gwong used the complex network of alleys that

link the areas. Contiguous boundaries and a network of alleys between the Christian stronghold of Apata and Ali Kazaure facilitated the movement of armed mobs from the former into the latter. Armed mobs used main roads only when they had no alternative whatsoever.

These chapters collectively clarified that ethnic composition, alone, cannot explain variations in the spread of violence across neighbourhoods in a divided city. In addition to a neighbourhood's ethnic composition, its location and adjacency to areas of similar or dissimilar ethnic composition are crucial for explaining violence's spread and recurrence across demographically identical neighbourhoods. Chapter 5 showed that apart from location, the shared boundaries of neighbourhoods – in terms of contiguity and the roads, alleys and other demarcations that link or separate them – contribute to facilitating or hindering armed mobs' mobilisation and mobility, thereby affecting spread of violence.

Academic implications

The findings highlighted thus far have academic implications. To begin with, rather than treating segregated and mixed neighbourhoods as spatial islands in explaining their vulnerability to violence, this dissertation demonstrated the importance of considering the ethnic composition of adjoining areas and their shared boundaries, which also account for violence's spread and patterns. Moving away from segregated/mixed and violent/nonviolent dichotomies, as reflected in contact and conflict theories, the study distinguished between strongholds and frontiers and found that both contributed to the dynamics of ethnic violence. By so categorising neighbourhoods and tracing the processes underpinning their emergence and development, the study provided a conceptual framework for systematically investigating, understanding and explaining patterns of violence in the divided city. Jarman and O'Halloran's (2001) similarly used neighbourhood location to categorise Belfast's interface areas into enclaves, splits and buffer zones. Boal (2002) also used the concept of the frontier to describe Belfast's violence-torn landscape. Rather than conceiving violence as completely chaotic, haphazard and decoupled from its sociospatial context, the concepts of stronghold

and frontier emphasised how patterns of violence recursively interrelate with the demographic and physical environment in which they occur. These distinct sociospatial settings are thus both a consequence and a predicator of particular social networks and forms of violence. For example, the stronghold of Angwan Rogo was dominated by intra-ethnic armed networks, and violence mostly took the form of asymmetric attacks analogous to pogroms and massacres. Berenschot (2011a, 2011b) explained how conditions of poverty, deprivation and lack of resource access can encourage patronage systems, whereby residents support politicians in exchange for favours mediated through local criminals. These patronage networks are not unlike Brass' (2004) riot system, essentially a network of politicians, government officials and local criminals who instigate, coordinate and sustain riots. Significantly, this dissertation has drawn attention to how a neighbourhood's ethnic composition and location can contribute to shaping the development and patterns of such networks' behaviour. Insights from classical scholars such as Foucault (1980), Goffman (1969, 1971) and Giddens (1984) emphasise the fundamentality of spaces and arenas in shaping social reproduction and human agency.

Some research has suggested that armed networks instigating violence are likelier to originate from strongholds. According to Tilly (2000: 144), the mobilisation of people into mobs is more feasible in 'safe areas' where 'contentious claim making gains protection from routine surveillance and repression' and individuals freely engage in 'speech-making that would have brought rapid incarceration to their participants elsewhere in the metropolis'. In this way, the stronghold provides an opportunity for local politicians and activists to openly present themselves as champions of ethnic agendas without risking backlash from the rival group or regulatory authorities. Fuelling dissent is more feasible in these settings since it is easier to implement a reward and punishment system that can sustain the struggle (Weidmann, 2009: 7). Moreover, the spatial proximity that characterises these settings means co-ethnics can freely engage in the cost-effective communication needed for facilitating and coordinating conflict action (Lichbach, 1995). Toft (2005) also found that group concentration, which is a

feature of segregation, provides the political, economic and social networks that groups need to initiate and sustain fighting.

While the literature does acknowledge the role of these networks in the dispensation of violence, their mobile nature is conspicuously missing from most analyses. That perpetrators' movement during riots contributes to violence's spread may seem quite obvious, but it has escaped systematic scrutiny. Even if mobility is implicitly acknowledged (see e.g. Brass, 2004; Berenschot, 2011; Krause, 2017), it remains left out from examinations of the spatial distribution of violent events. Acknowledging fighters' mobility and the factors that shape their movement helps explain why neighbourhoods whose internal dynamics do not necessarily make them violence-prone can nonetheless be plunged into violence by invaders. Tilly (2000: 140) posited that 'costs and benefits that are spatially distributed and mediated by accessibility of one location to another strongly affect the character of contention, especially when movement of information, resources, or persons from place to place enter directly into the action'. Indeed, the very character of violent action within a locality depends on how accessible it is to armed mobs. Its accessibility, in turn, depends on its adjacency to surrounding areas and the nature of their shared boundaries. As exemplified in chapters 4 and 5, a significant portion of the violence in the ethnically mixed areas of Ali Kazaure and Nasarawa Gwong was by mobile armed mobs from the surrounding areas. They invaded the area and engaged in violence presumably to defend co-ethnics and extend the frontiers of their territorial and political dominance.

Focusing on spatial and temporal dimensions in examining neighbourhood dynamics proved an adept way to bridge structural factors signposted in the literature with meso- and micro-level dynamics at the neighbourhood level. At the same time, it emphasised the dynamism of the entire process. This contrasted with the snapshot view – a frozen image rather than a moving picture – that is the frequent outcome of the cross-sectional approach used in most studies on the spatial patterns of violence. Instead, a view emerged to show how ethnic composition, social networks and neighbourhood location interact over time. By uncovering how Angwan Rogo progressively became more segregated, the study shed light on how its social networks became increasingly intra-ethnic. It also

showed how the social networks that crisscrossed its shared boundaries with the ethnically mixed Ali Kazaure became intra-ethnic. Further, it found that as group relations deteriorated in Nasarawa Gwong, residents' associations and vigilantes progressively became decentralised; this led to the formation of parallel networks emerging along ethnic lines and cross-boundary alliances with groups in the adjoining segregated areas.

The central proposition of this dissertation is that the spread of violence is contingent on a neighbourhood's ethnic composition in combination with its location and how this facilitates or hinders the mobility of armed mobs within and across neighbourhoods. This idea, however, should not be confused with the diffusion theory of ethnic violence (see Lobell and Mauceri, 2004; Myers, 2000). Diffusion theorists emphasise imitation as the primary agent of violence's spread. That is, groups in one country, region or neighbourhood instigate violence in their own setting because a similar group in another setting had done the same (Pitcher, Hamblin and Miller, 1978). The argument in this dissertation departs from this model, instead emphasising how the location of ethnically mixed areas between rivaling segregated localities make them sites of political and territorial contestations. Brought to light, thus, is the role of cross-boundary violent networks that originate from segregated areas but migrate to instigate violence in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods, often with active participation by their co-ethnics who live there. That said, diffusion remains important in explaining the spread of violence. In their study of xenophobic violence in Germany, Braun and Koopmans (2009: 111) found that social similarity explained diffusion of extreme-right violence, arguing that 'the effect of geographical distance that is found in many diffusion studies may actually be caused not by geographical proximity as such, but by the fact that proximate areas tend to be socially similar'. Some aspects of the 2001 violence in Jos were consistent with this social similarity hypothesis. In spite of distance, most segregated settlements in Jos experienced similar patterns of violence, where the dominant groups orchestrated a series of pogrom-like attacks on the minority group (Higazi, 2007). The striking similarity in how the attacks were coordinated suggests imitation might have played a role.

This study also contributed to discourse on the interrelation between social capital and ethnic violence. From one perspective, violence is taken as an explanatory factor and social capital as the outcome. A second perspective swaps this arrangement, with social capital as an explanatory factor and violence as the outcome. Literature on the divided city has detailed the devastating effects of ethnic violence on intergroup relations and social capital. Alongside physical destruction, social scientists emphasise ethnic violence's negative effects on the spatiality and social character of city (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006). The litany of tangible and intangible woes that characterises the violence-ridden urban context is encapsulated in the notion of the divided city (see Bollens, 1998). In this type of city, contestations between ethnic identities or ideological rivals have assumed violent dimensions, with visible consequences for the city's social and physical profile (Allegra, Casaglia and Rokem, 2012). Populations are segregated along ethnic or ideological lines, residential quarters become territorialised and the spatial practices of residents are restricted by fear or experience of actual violence (Bollens, 2000; Boal, 1996). The general conclusion is that these negative outcomes hurt and destroy social cohesion and erode social capital in the city and, for that matter, any other spatial unit (Fearon, Humphreys and Weinstein, 2009).

Conversely, the nature and dynamics of social capital can also serve as a window into why and how violence happens in particular sociospatial settings. One argument holds that whether a spatial unit is violence-prone or not depends on whether its civic networks' members are ethnically homogenous or heterogeneous. In a comparative study of three violence-prone cities and three relatively non-violent cities in India, Varshney (2001) found that spatial contexts dominated by intra-ethnic civic networks are likelier to experience ethnic riots than those dominated by inter-ethnic networks. According to this view, crosscutting networks serve the purpose of dissipating rumours, incentivising mutual benefit through interethnic cooperation and ultimately forging collaborative fronts for violence prevention (Varshney, 2001). The distinction between intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic civic networks is consistent with 'bonding' and 'bridging' types of social capital (see Leonard, 2004). Varshney (2001) posited that bonding promotes conflict and increases the likelihood of violence, whereas bridging dissipates distrust and

encourages cooperation. Brass (2004) took a slightly different approach though similarly emphasised the dynamics of social networks in his 'riot system'. A network comprising actors with far-ranging social statuses – from outcasts on the margins of the society up to government officials and politicians – suggests vertical social capital. Relatedly, Berenschot (2011b) illustrated his complex system of 'patronage networks'.

While the consequences of violence on the cityscape and the social fabric that binds it are admittedly far-reaching and pervasive, city-level studies tend to paint a rather unvarying portrait that ignores crucial nuances and context-specific details. Shifting the focus to a lower spatial scale – the neighbourhood – this dissertation presented a far more complex picture. It showed how ethnic violence's effects on spatial and social dimensions are much more multifarious, with negative as well as positive effects on social cohesion and social capital. Specifically, it demonstrated that the implications of ethnic violence for social networks in segregated and mixed neighbourhoods are differential and portend varied, often paradoxical, consequences in different settings. In the face of escalating violence, bonding social capital increases while bridging social capital collapses. This means segregated settlements develop more social efficacy, while diverse ones become more polarised. In both contexts, vertical social capital is enhanced. Ultimately, rather than destroying social cohesion and social capital, ethnic violence transforms them in various ways.

Practical implications

Ordering neighbourhoods into strongholds and frontiers and explaining how patterns of violence vary in the two settings has concrete significance for responding to violence and peace-building efforts in a divided city. It calls for authorities to pay special attention to the location of neighbourhoods in relation to adjoining neighbourhoods and to marshal responses that consider the group solidarity in the stronghold and the multilevel competition and contestations in the frontier. The sense of solidarity that pervades the stronghold should be a major consideration. Neighbourhood leaders play a key role in the dissemination of information when riots erupt. These established channels of communication can

serve peaceful purposes. The same solidarity that troublemakers hijack for violent ends can be leveraged to promote nonviolence as a viable alternative for responding to conflict. The very individuals who lead riots could be identified and conscripted for peace campaigns.

Correspondingly, authorities must also consider the peculiarity of group dynamics in the frontier. While working with a handful of neighbourhood leaders and influential individuals can go a long way in the stronghold, the frontier requires a more diffused approach that focuses on a cross-section of residents living in different parts of the neighbourhood. Peaceworkers must navigate the complex and often parallel channels of communication, using them to reach as many residents as possible. Furthermore, although a frontier is the site of recurrent violence, efforts at managing it must look beyond a neighbourhood's boundaries. The fact that many of the fighters who perpetrate violence in the frontier actually come from nearby strongholds implies that besides resolving internal rivalries, it is imperative to address struggles and competition between rival groups in the adjoining strongholds. Peace-building efforts should thus target not only the neighbourhood where violence occurred, but also areas where armed mobs originated.

To reiterate, the nature of the shared boundaries shapes the mobility of armed mobs and, consequently, the spread of violence within and across neighbourhoods. It is easier for authorities to police neighbourhood boundaries that are separated by barriers, such as arterial roads or other street infrastructure. Monitoring movements of armed mobs who used narrow and inaccessible alleys between contiguously connected neighbourhoods is another story. Logically, security measures, such as curfews, are more enforceable where there is organised street infrastructure rather than a network of alleys and footpaths that are unfamiliar and inaccessible to outsiders and security forces.

Limitations and biases

Although the study accomplished its central objectives, some limitations and biases proved unavoidable. To start with, the absence of census data at the neighbourhood level meant the lack of official neighbourhood population counts.

Size is a crucial variable in explaining propensity for violence. A way around this hurdle was drawing estimates based on information from neighbourhood leaders, which were cross-checked with a cross-section of residents in instances of seemingly preposterous claims. The study used ethnic composition of a primary school as a proxy for ethnic composition of the neighbourhood in which it was located. Helpful as this was, a group could have, simply by chance, been overrepresented or underrepresented within a school or a class, although these chance possibilities tend to have a way of balancing each other out. When some neighbourhoods had no public schools or student records were unavailable, rough estimates of ethnic composition were based on discussions with neighbourhood leaders in these areas.

Police records can also have biases. There are widespread allegations that the religion of the police commissioner in Jos at any given time tends to influence police engagement and how events are interpreted and recorded. When a Muslim holds the role, attacks against Muslim neighbourhoods allegedly receive more attention, and when a Christian holds the role attacks against Christian neighbourhoods allegedly receive more attention. Generally speaking, Muslims in Jos are very sceptical and suspicious of the police. However, since this study was more interested in violence's spread than details about its aggressors and victims, police bias may not have affected the findings in a major way.

Relying on interviews also came with a few concerns. One was the extent to which memory can be trusted. Since some of the events go back a few decades, their recounted details may have been blurred by the passage of time, trauma, repeated discussions and hearing the stories of others. Additionally, in relating highly politicised events, it is expected that respondents tend to perceive and convey accounts in a way that portrays them as victims and the other as the aggressor.

To minimise the effects of limitations and biases on the outcome of the study, two measures were taken. The first step involved a system of triangulating information from various sources by regularly comparing findings against archival material and other studies. This included an extensive review of official reports, memorandums and existing academic sources. The second step was a robust

'ground truthing' process that involved extensive informal discussions with a sizeable cross-section of residents that were randomly selected in each of the neighbourhoods. A few 'ground truthing' group discussions were also held especially in respect to neighbourhood boundaries, population size and ethnic composition. While these steps helped minimise the effects of these limitations and biases, they were not foolproof, and that should be kept in mind when reflecting on the study's findings and conclusions.

Final remarks and directions for further study

Above all, it would be useful to subject the two main concepts the study inductively built around - ethnic strongholds and frontiers – to statistical tests and see how the different propositions hold up in other cities. Something that can be tested is whether mixed neighbourhoods sandwiched between segregated settlements are indeed more vulnerable to violence than mixed areas not similarly located. It would also deepen our understanding to compare the proliferation of violent networks in segregated areas that border mixed areas and those that border segregated areas.

The concepts – strongholds and frontiers - need refinement in terms of what constitutes their distinctive components and internal dynamics. This study relied on information from neighbourhood leaders and other residents to estimate population size and neighbourhood boundaries, though elsewhere less subjective information could possibly be derived from census tracks and official city plans from population commissions and municipal planning agencies. The extent of the generalisability of the study's central arguments could be determined in research comparing other neighbourhoods across other cities struggling with similar conflagrations. No doubt, it would be interesting to examine neighbourhoods in the Global North and the Global South, examining how urban environments in different cultural and political contexts behave in the context of ethnic violence.

Another promising direction for study is a more fine-grained ethnography of armed mobs, their constellations and micro-dynamics. Such an academic venture would zoom in on the specific roles that actors – politicians, criminals, ethnic activists and ordinary residents – play in the production of violent outbreaks. It would be worthwhile to unpack these roles and unravel how they all interrelate. In

this same spirit, the study could take a further disaggregated approach to look at possible variations in the manifestation of strongholds and frontiers. It would be useful to develop typologies of these sociospatial configurations and the peculiarities that distinguish one from the other.

Given the available data and the various methodological constraints encountered in the course of the research, this study has been productive, and hopefully convincing, in its stated goals. This dissertation's aim was to demonstrate that in addition to a neighbourhood's ethnic composition, its location in relation to adjoining localities of similar or dissimilar ethnic makeup and their shared boundaries can either facilitate or hinder the mobility of armed mobs and consequently contribute to shaping spread and patterns of violence in a divided urban setting. Indeed, understanding the prevailing conditions that cause ordinary neighbourhood settings to morph into strongholds and frontiers – and how these emergent socio-spatial configurations shape violent events – can expand our scope of understanding ethnic violence and how to effectively respond to it. Grasping the finer details of how armed groups mobilise and move in different neighbourhood settings is invaluable for developing context-sensitive strategies to mitigate and even prevent violence.

References

- Allegra, M., A. Casaglia & J. Rokem (2012). "The political geographies of urban polarization: a critical review of research on divided cities." *Geography Compass*, 6(9), 560-574.
- Berenschot, W. (2011). "The spatial distribution of riots: Patronage and the instigation of communal violence in Gujarat, India." *World Development*, 39(2), 221-230.
- Berenschot, W. (2011). "On the Usefulness of Goondas in Indian Politics: 'Moneypower' and 'Musclepower' in a Gujarati Locality," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 34(2), 255-275
- Best, S. G. (2001). "Religion and religious conflicts in northern Nigeria." *University of Jos Journal of Political Science*, 2(3), 63-81.
- Best, S.G. (2007). *Conflict and Peace Building in Plateau State, Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum.

- Boal, F. W. (2002). "Belfast: walls within." *Political Geography*, 21(5), 687-694.
- Boal, F. W. (1972). "The urban residential sub-community: a conflict interpretation." *Area*, 164-168.
- Boal, F. W. (1996). "Integration and division: sharing and segregating in Belfast." *Planning Practice & Research*, 11(2), 151-158.
- Bollens, S. (1998). "Urban planning amidst ethnic conflict: Jerusalem and Johannesburg." *Urban Studies*, 35(4), 729-750.
- Bollens, S. (2000). *On narrow ground: Urban policy and ethnic conflict in Jerusalem and Belfast*. Suny Press.
- Brass, P. (2004). "Development of an institutionalised riot system in Meerut City, 1961 to 1982." *Economic and Political Weekly*, 4839-4848.
- Braun, R., & R. Koopmans (2009). "The diffusion of ethnic violence in Germany: The role of social similarity." *European Sociological Review*, 26(1), 111-123.
- Bunte, J. B. & L. T. Vinson (2016). "Local power-sharing institutions and interreligious violence in Nigeria." *Journal of Peace Research*, 53(1), 49-65.
- Calame, J. & E. Charlesworth (2011). *Divided Cities: Belfast, Beirut, Jerusalem, Mostar, and Nicosia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Cunningham, N. & I. Gregory (2014). "Hard to miss, easy to blame? Peacelines, interfaces and political deaths in Belfast during the Troubles." *Political geography* 40, 64-78.
- Danfulani, U.H.D. & S. Fwatshak (2002). "Briefing: The September 2001 Events in Jos, Nigeria." *African Affairs* 101 (403), 243-255.
- Fearon, J. D., M. Humphreys & J.M. Weinstein (2009). "Can development aid contribute to social cohesion after civil war? Evidence from a field experiment in post-conflict Liberia." *The American Economic Review*, 99(2), 287-291.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Language, counter-memory, practice: Selected essays and interviews*. Cornell University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The construction of society*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Goffman, E. (1971). *Relation in public*. England: Penguin Books Limited

- Goffman, E. (1969). "The insanity of place." *Psychiatry*, 32(4), 357-388.
- Higazi, A. (2007). "The politics of urban violence in Jos, Nigeria, from colonial rule to the 2007 elections" (*Violence urbaine et politique à Jos (Nigeria), de la période coloniale aux élections de 2007*, translated by Aurélie Roger), in: *Politique africaine* 2, 106, 69-91.
- Human Rights Watch. (2001). *Jos: A City Torn Apart*. New York: Human Rights Watch. (accessed at http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1201_1.pdf.; on 15 July 2016).
- Human Rights Watch (2009). *Arbitrary Killings by Security Forces: Submission to the Investigative Bodies on the November 28–29, 2008 Violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*. New York: HRW. (accessed at <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/07/20/arbitrary-killings-security-forces-0> on 6 June 2016).
- International Crisis Group (2012) *Curbing Violence in Nigeria (I): The Jos Crisis* (accessed at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/curbing-violence-nigeria-i-jos-crisis> on 5 July 2016).
- Jarman, N. & C. O'Halloran (2001). "Recreational Rioting: Young People, Interface Areas and Violence." *Child Care in Practice* 7 (1), 2-16.
- Kaufmann, C. 1996. "Possible and impossible solutions to ethnic civil wars." *International security* 20 (4), 136-175.
- Krause, Jana. 2011. "A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria." Working Paper. Geneva: Geneva Declaration Secretariat.
- Krause, J. (2017). "Non-violence and civilian agency in communal war: Evidence from Jos, Nigeria" *African Affairs*, 116(463), 261-283.
- Leonard, M. (2004). "Bonding and bridging social capital: Reflections from Belfast." *Sociology*, 38(5), 927-944.
- Lichbach, M. I. (1995). *The rebel's dilemma: Collective action and collective dissent*. University of Michigan Press.
- Lobell, S., & P. Mauceri (2004). *Ethnic conflict and international politics: explaining diffusion and escalation*. Springer.
- Myers, D. J. (2000). "The diffusion of collective violence: Infectiousness, susceptibility, and mass media networks." *American Journal of Sociology*, 106(1), 173-208.

- Nyam, A. D., & L. T. Ayuba (2016). "The growth of urban slums and conflicts in Nigeria: A case study of Jos and environs 1980-2010." *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 6(5), 364.
- Ostien, Philip (2009). "Jonah Jang and the Jasawa: Ethno-religious conflict in Jos, Nigeria" *Muslim-Christian Relations in Africa* (accessed at <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.542.9689&rep=rep1&type=pdf> on 13 March 2015).
- Pitcher, B. L., R.L. Hamblin & J.L. Miller (1978). "The diffusion of collective violence." *American Sociological Review*, 23-35.
- Scacco, A. (2012). *Anatomy of a Riot: Participation in Ethnic Violence in Nigeria*. New York University.
- Shirlow, P. & B. Murtagh (2006). *Belfast: Segregation, violence and the city*. Pluto Press.
- Tilly, C. (2000) "Spaces of Contention. Mobilization" *An International Quarterly*, 5(2), 135-159.
- Toft, M. D. (2005). *The geography of ethnic violence: Identity, interests, and the indivisibility of territory*. Princeton University Press.
- Varshney, A. (2001). "Ethnic conflict and civil society: India and beyond." *World politics*, 53(3), 362-398.
- Weidmann, N. (2009). "Geography as Motivation and Opportunity: Group Concentration and Ethnic Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53 (4), 526-543.
- Weidmann, N. & I. Salehyan (2013). "Violence and ethnic segregation: a computational model applied to Baghdad." *International Studies Quarterly*, 57(1), 52-64.
- Wilkinson, St. (2006). *Votes and violence: Electoral competition and ethnic riots in India*. Cambridge University Press.